



## Human Development Report 2009/10 occupied Palestinian territory

### The Report in Brief

The Palestinian Human Development Report 2009/10 Investing in Human Security for a Future State is the fifth volume in the series of Palestinian Human Development Reports sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Report has been authored by an independent writing team comprised of international and Palestinian academics and development practitioners. The Report was prepared in the tradition of independence. Human development reports are deliberately not official UN or UNDP documents: they intend to stimulate and inform a dynamic, new, public discourse across the oPt and beyond. They do not reflect the official views of either organization, and some of the views expressed by the authors are not shared by UNDP or the UN.

The authors note with considerable concern that since the publication of the first Palestinian Human Development Report in 1997, Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) have witnessed more violence – from the second intifada up to the Israeli entitled 'Operation Cast Lead' – and endured an increasingly overpowering and intrusive occupation system that penetrates their political, economic, social and cultural lives. Concomitantly, following the Oslo Accords in 1993, there has been an increased emphasis, from the Palestinian political representatives and the international community, on State-building in the oPt. However, it is evident that the State-building process and accompanying development policy has been largely abstracted from the needs of the Palestinian people. By utilizing the concept of human security, the PHDR 2009/10 calls for reconsideration of the State-building process in the oPt, involving people-centred development policies, and improved preparedness from systemic shocks, increased militancy and outside intervention. Human security is a pre-requisite for human development, and its widespread absence in the oPt has greatly impeded Palestinian progress.

### Methodology

The methodology for the Report was designed to be participatory and to integrate public opinion and perceptions wherever possible. An Advisory Board co-chaired by the UNDP and the Ministry of Planning, involving a number of key Palestinian figures, was formed to lead the preparation process of the Report. After a theme was selected, reflections were gathered in a series of workshops in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, involving a range of commentators and research centres. Eighteen background papers were commissioned and prepared by fifteen local and three international individuals/ organisations. In addition to this, an extensive survey was undertaken: *Palestinian Perceptions towards the Human Security Situation in the occupied Palestinian territory (2009)*, which has also been published as an independent document.

An independent Palestinian consultancy firm (Near East Consulting) was commissioned to conduct the human security survey; the findings and analysis drew on 4,700 randomly sampled telephone interviews with Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, including East Jerusalem. To ensure that the perceptions and analysis were accurately captured and conceptualised, the PHDR team and Near East Consulting took a number of steps to ensure reliability, including an examination of sampling and sample design, the interview process, fieldwork procedure for interviewers, the questionnaire, pre-testing, fieldwork, data cleaning and manipulation, data weighting and analysis.

After draft zero was produced the findings and recommendations were released for further consultation with a range of stakeholders in focus group discussions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A completed first draft was then submitted for external review by a range of experts.<sup>1</sup> The PHDR 2009/10 builds on the scholarship of the UNDP's 1994 Global Human Development Report and the Arab Human Development Report 2009, both of which developed the theme of human security.

### The concept

Human insecurity is the result of pervasive, recurrent or intense threats, and can only be remedied by the protection and empowerment of people. While the human security paradigm places a concern with human life and dignity at the fore, it is considered to be the rearguard of human development.<sup>2</sup> This Report explores the facets of human security (economy, food, health, environment, political, personal, community) from the perspective of establishing freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity.

The consideration of these themes marks a move away from traditional concepts of security, where security was narrowly defined, in defensive terms, as security of territory from external aggression. The reframing of the concept of 'security', to one that places the security of individual on par with the State is essential when reflecting on Israel and the oPt, and is particularly significant given the application of a security based discourse by the State of Israel to legitimise its actions in the oPt.

### The status and trends of human development

The Report presents an overview of traditional development indicators, in addition to reviews of employment, poverty including food security, health including nutrition, women's empowerment and gender equality, education, and environmental sustainability.

The authors find a clear correlation between sectoral authority and the ability to positively affect human development in the oPt. They present a commanding argument that until Palestinians are afforded full economic and environmental control, specifically control over

macro-economic policy, trade, livelihoods, water resources and borders, sustained development will remain elusive.

## Territorial fragmentation and political polarization

Since 1967, the territorial breakup of the oPt has become gradually more pronounced. The State of Israel has systematically segregated Palestinians communities into a series of fragmented archipelagos (referred to variously as isolated islands, enclaves, cantons, and Bantustans) under a system that has been deemed "one of the most intensively territorialized control systems ever created".<sup>3</sup> Israel controls Palestinian air space, territorial waters, natural resources, movement and the macro-economic instruments that enable economic autonomy.

The Report contends that the territorial fragmentation of the oPt has severely weakened the central authority of the PA. A territory carved into small, disconnected enclaves, subject to Israeli military and economic closures, unable to offer justice to its dispersed people, and without its most sacred symbols of religion and identity, can hardly be viable and functioning. The more the central authority and central institutions of governance are eroded, the Report concludes, the greater the potential for political polarization. The consequence is that political difference is not resolved democratically but through force.

The Report finds that political polarization between Fatah and Hamas, has especially affected social cohesion in the oPt. This phenomenon has been greatly exacerbated by an increase in political violence and the suppression of civil rights by the authorities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Report argues that some sort of national reconciliation process may be necessary to overcome the damaging effects of political violence and redress the marginalization of ordinary Palestinians from the political process.

## Freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity: human security in the oPt

The human security paradigm, informed by the UN's concept of 'In larger freedom', provides an important entry point for redefining engagement with Palestinian development issues in a more useful way. This approach takes into account both the ravages of prolonged occupation and the failings of conventional development techniques.

The pillars of human security, when understood in terms of their contribution to the basic goals of freedom from want, freedom from fear, and freedom to live in dignity, can bring about multiple benefits. The merit of this approach is that it allows neutral donors to ask what types of programmes could address Palestinian needs without contributing to the downward spiral of legitimacy which has beset Palestinian political representatives and institutions from the Oslo years to the present day. The Report gives a careful assessment of the multi-faceted insecurities faced by Palestinians; it also gives examples of existing Palestinian initiatives that are beginning to tackle these problems.

The Report finds that in the Palestinian case, as in other cases of occupation, the freedom to live in dignity is palpably absent. The Report finds that building a self-sustaining economy, working on consensus regarding liberation strategies and galvanizing a popular movement aimed towards the realization of civil and political rights will be the key to alleviating insecurity.

## Towards Cohesion: Investing in Human Security in the oPt

The on-going realities of occupation and the political polarization it creates result in a situation in which people in the oPt face multiple risks and threats, and live with broad-based insecurity. Whilst acknowledging that a continuation of the status quo is untenable, the Report supports a pragmatic approach to promoting human security whilst Palestinians are still under, or emerging from, occupation. Assuming a prolonged transition to sovereignty and self-determination within a state of internal incoherence, and following from its emphasis on popular mobilisation, the Report focuses on participatory State-building as critical to the promotion of political and social cohesion and overall human security in the oPt.

It is argued that social, economic and political participation is crucial both for building a viable Palestinian State and for galvanising a large scale civil rights movement. The participatory Statebuilding priorities are highlighted as: gaining territorial integration/contiguity, economic integration, social cohesion, sovereignty and political reconciliation. To this end, a reformulation and reactivation of the long-serving principle of *sumud*<sup>4</sup> with proactive emphasis in the face of the prolonged occupation, is proposed as one strategy for popular mobilisation which could contribute to these priorities. Another important recommendation emerging from the Report is the need for an internal, indigenous reconciliation mechanism. A '*National Sulha*' is proposed to repair some of the damages of political polarization and the resultant political violence.

The Report strongly suggests that if Palestinians deem that a two-State solution is part of the preferred resolution to the conflict, then in order that a sovereign Palestinian State is viable, such a State must have popular legitimacy and not be driven by either top-down or external actors. In its assistance to the emerging Palestinian State, the international community, and particularly the UN, must maintain neutrality and adopt a Do No Harm<sup>4</sup> approach to the provision of aid, whilst simultaneously honouring their obligations under international law, and ensuring compliance amongst the conflicting parties.

## Framework for moving forward

Determined and courageous actions are necessary now to achieve the human security of Palestinians and ensure their self-determination and sovereignty. The framework for moving forward focuses on making the findings operational.

A snapshot of the priorities highlighted include: ensuring aid be de-linked from the political process so that institutional arrangements can be established to ensure that the rights of Palestinians are protected and their needs are addressed; establishing a Commission for Effective Governance to monitor implementation in the short to medium term, building accountability and lending credibility to the State-building project.

The Report finds that the biggest obstacles to Palestinian unity remain the occupation, especially through its imposition of limited movement and access between the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and the current internal political divisions. If these issues are addressed in line with international and Palestinian law, opportunities for reconciliation and national unity will be improved. Ensuring the accountability of political leaders, ending the siege of Gaza and encroachments into the West Bank including East Jerusalem are immediate and essential actions, and will hopefully have a catalytic effect on human security in the oPt at large.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Mary Kaldor, Professor of Global Governance, London School of Economy; Mient Jan Faber, Professor of Human Security in War Situations, Free University, Amsterdam; Sally Stares, Postdoctoral fellow, Methodology Institute, London School of Economics; George Gicaman, Director of Muwatin, and Professor of Philosophy in Bir Zeit University; Jamil Hillal, scholar and major contributor to all previous PHDRs.

<sup>2</sup>UNDP (2009) 'Arab Human Development Report 2009: Challenges to Human Security in Arab Countries'.

<sup>3</sup>David Delaney, 'Territory: A Short Introduction', Blackwell Publishing (2005).

<sup>4</sup>Mary B. Anderson (1999) 'Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace - or War', Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

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