

**Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General
on Israeli settlement activity**

The Secretary-General is deeply concerned at the decisions announced by the Government of Israel in response to the decision of UNESCO's General Conference in favour of Palestinian membership. Israeli settlement activity is contrary to international law and the Roadmap and prejudices final status negotiations. The Secretary-General calls on the Government of Israel to freeze all settlement activity and to continue to transfer VAT and customs revenues that belong to the Palestinian Authority and are essential to enable it to function, in line with Israel's obligations.

As the Secretary-General has indicated, he is also concerned at the implications for UNESCO's funding of the decision of UNESCO's General Conference. The decision was the prerogative of Member States, and he wishes to work with them on practical solutions to preserve UNESCO's financial resources.

The Secretary-General is worried at the trajectory of developments between Israel and the Palestinians and calls on the parties to act responsibly and seriously for peace. He calls on both parties to refrain from provocations and work with the Quartet towards serious proposals on borders and security in the coming three months, in the context of a shared commitment to resume direct negotiations.

New York, 2 November 2011