



**Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator  
for the Middle East Peace Process**

**Press Release**

**UN Report Warns Current Negative Trends on the Ground  
are Imperiling the Viability of a Two-State Solution**

Thursday 14 April, Jerusalem – The viability of a two-state solution is in danger due to the negative trends on the ground, including recent violence, ongoing settlement activity, demolitions, incitement, and the absence of Palestinian unity, according to the latest report issued by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO). The report will be presented to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) at the bi-annual meeting in Brussels on April 19, 2016.

The report notes that since the last meeting of the AHLC in New York on September 30, 2015, the international community, led by the Middle East Quartet, has continued its efforts to establish an environment conducive to a return to meaningful negotiations to end the occupation and resolve the conflict. “To this end, the Middle East Quartet decided to prepare a report on the situation on the ground, including recommendations that can help inform international discussions on the best way to advance the two-state solution,” it adds.

Despite international efforts, the report stresses a number of factors that continued to prevent progress towards peace.

On the Israeli side, the report highlights a worrying trend which points to an increase in settlement activities and a further consolidation of Israeli control over the West Bank. It notes several moves in this direction since the beginning of the year, such as the classification of new ‘state land’ in the Jordan Valley, the approval of several plans in settlements and a surge in demolitions of Palestinian structures in Area C.

The report highlights that the demolition of Palestinian homes and livelihood structures more than doubled in the reporting period as compared with the previous six months, noting that the total demolitions by mid-April already exceeded the total recorded in all of 2015. It also expresses concern over Palestinian access to land and natural resources in Area C, among other development factors.

On the Palestinian side, despite continuing reconciliation discussions held in February and March between Fatah, Hamas and other Palestinian factions in Qatar, the report notes that Palestinian factions have been unable to reach consensus on achieving genuine Palestinian unity on the basis of non-violence, democracy and the PLO Principles – a crucial element for reuniting the West Bank and Gaza under a single, democratic and legitimate Palestinian authority. “The formation of a National Unity Government and the holding of elections are vital to laying the foundations of a future Palestinian state,” the report notes.

In the occupied Palestinian territory, the report warns that there is a protracted humanitarian crisis. “Some 1.1 million people in the West Bank and some 1.3 million in Gaza, over 900,000 of them refugees, need some form of humanitarian assistance in 2016.”

The report stresses that the human rights situation degenerated with the dramatic rise in clashes between Palestinians and the Israeli Security Forces (ISF) in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, increased instances of punitive measures against families of alleged perpetrators of attacks, and administrative detentions.

Turning to the Gaza Strip, the report notes that there has been steady progress on the reconstruction of Gaza, and that more than 90 percent of health and education facilities damaged or destroyed during the conflict in 2014 have been repaired, but that structural barriers continue to impede recovery. It adds that, although the temporary Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM) has enabled a significant increase in the entry of construction material to Gaza, only the lifting of the closures would allow the people in Gaza to rebuild their lives and livelihoods. It also cites energy and water shortages in Gaza as particularly urgent and chronic.

*Note to Editors: The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) serves as the principal policy-level coordination mechanism for development assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). The AHLC is chaired by Norway and co-sponsored by the EU and the US. In addition, the United Nations participates together with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The AHLC seeks to promote dialogue between donors, the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel. The full report to the AHLC prepared by the Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process is attached to this release and includes an executive summary of its main conclusions.*