

**UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov's
opening remarks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov**

Moscow, 11 May 2018

(In Russian)

Thank you very much for your opening words,

We are very concerned that there is a conflagration of conflicts currently in the Middle East that are raising tensions on all levels, including the situation in Syria, the situation in Yemen, and most certainly on the Palestinian track.

On the Palestinian track, we feel that there [is a] combination of three very important factors coming together now.

Firstly, is the lack of a political process that brings the Israelis and the Palestinians together on the basis of internationally recognized parameters for solving the conflict and for achieving the two-state solution. The Secretary-General has made it very clear that there is no Plan B except the two-state solution; for Israel and Palestine to live in peace and security together.

Secondly, we have the problem with the humanitarian crisis in Gaza which is extremely dangerous. The economy has collapsed. We are seeing on a daily basis the suffering of people that needs to be addressed very quickly.

Thirdly, there is the security incidents that can always bring us back into another confrontation on the ground.

We are working very hard to avoid all of these risks and to find a way to bring back the Middle East Quartet as the key forum in which we discuss both the political process and the perspectives for resolving the conflict. But also, to put the Israeli-Palestinian situation in a broader regional context that it is important today.

I'm particularly worried about today and the coming days with the US embassy move to Jerusalem on Monday and with the planned protests in Gaza.

I take this opportunity again to call on Israel to be very careful and calibrated in how it uses force in addressing the protestors in Gaza. But I also call on Hamas and the leaders of the protests in Gaza to prevent friction and to prevent situations in which provocations can happen.

Nobody in the Middle East now needs another war and we need to make everything that we can possible to prevent such a conflict and to find the political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian track just as every other conflict in the Middle East; be that Yemen or Syria or elsewhere, demands a political rather than a military solution.

So thank you again and I look forward to our discussions with you later today.

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