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**STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION OF INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY**

**Jerusalem, 12 August 2019**

Today the United Nations in Palestine celebrates International Youth Day under the theme “Transforming Education”.

Education is vital to shaping the future of any country. Empowering youth with a high standard of inclusive and accessible education helps to ensure that young people, especially the most vulnerable, have equal and better opportunities.

Youth in Palestine face substantial challenges. Life under military occupation, high poverty rates, shrinking economic opportunities, and an uncertain future are all leading to an alarming sense of hopelessness among young people.

I have no doubt that youth in Palestine have the creativity, potential and capacity to make change happen – for themselves and for their communities. With the right opportunities they can be the drivers of achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 agenda.

This, however, requires an education system which seeks to include, to empower, and to develop appropriate skills, in step with the requirements of the labour market of the future.

Let us, then, on this International Youth Day 2019, recommit to ‘Transforming Education’. Our collective attention and investment is required. Our young people expect it of us.

[ENDS].