



**Statement by the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process,
Mr. Robert Serry, on his visit to Gaza**

Gaza, 11 December 2014

In a visit today to Gaza, Mr. Serry informed interlocutors that by the end of this month more than 20,000 homeowners are expected to be able to procure construction material for urgent repairs of their dwellings. However he stressed that this can only be the beginning of an effective process to rebuild Gaza and much more needs to be done. In this regard, he emphasized to Gaza Ministers of the Government of National Consensus and interlocutors of the private sector the importance of their direct engagement to address large scale reconstruction challenges and to prioritize projects for this purpose through the temporary mechanism, noting that implementation of the first projects could start as early as next week.

It must be noted that the mechanism is an enabler to open up Gaza for reconstruction, which was endorsed by the Cairo Conference in the context of the need for a durable ceasefire and an empowered Government of National Consensus, led by President Abbas, which is able to take its rightful responsibilities in Gaza, including manning the crossings.

Unfortunately the operating environment continues to face many challenges, including a fragile and informal ceasefire which has not yet solidified, and a lack of empowerment of the Government of National Consensus in Gaza with no control over the crossings. These difficult issues, coupled with insufficient financial assistance from donors, have only worsened the atmosphere in an already devastated Gaza.

Mr. Serry remains gravely concerned about the dire situation in Gaza and intends to brief the Security Council next week on the need for all stakeholders and the international community to make good on their calls made at the Cairo Conference to give Gaza more than hope, to give Gaza materials with which to rebuild their lives and to create conditions that will lead to the end of the blockade. This includes progress on all fronts, progress which must be made now lest we see Gaza fall back into yet another conflict.

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