



**Statement by United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process,
Nickolay Mladenov, on the return of Gaza crossings to the control of the Palestinian Authority**

Jerusalem, 1 November 2017

"I welcome the full return of the Gaza crossings to the control of the Palestinian Authority. This is a landmark development in the implementation of the intra-Palestinian agreement, signed in Cairo on 12 October. The positive momentum should be maintained and the Palestinian Government must be fully empowered to function in Gaza.

The return of the crossings should facilitate the lifting of the closures, while addressing Israel's legitimate security concerns, and unlock increased international support for Gaza's reconstruction, growth, stability and prosperity.

I take this opportunity to remind all factions in Gaza of the importance of maintaining security and ending militant activities that undermine peace and security for both Palestinians and Israelis alike.

The United Nations will continue to work with the Palestinian leadership, Egypt and the region in support of this process, which is critical for reaching a negotiated two-state solution and sustainable peace."

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