



**Statement by the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process,
Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, on Palestinian Unity Talks**

Jerusalem, 9 February 2016

"I welcome the ongoing Palestinian unity talks hosted by Qatar. The United Nations supports all efforts undertaken to advance genuine Palestinian reconciliation on the basis of non-violence, democracy and PLO principles.

I urge all sides to follow up on these discussions in good faith and implement previous agreements, in particular those brokered by Egypt. The formation of a National Unity Government that abides by the PLO programme and the conduct of long-overdue elections are important elements of this process.

The Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza, have suffered enough. They deserve to see the West Bank and Gaza reunited under a single, democratic and legitimate Palestinian authority. This is an essential step towards lifting the closures, ending the occupation and achieving a negotiated and lasting resolution of the conflict that allows for two states -- Israel and Palestine -- to live side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition."

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