



**Statement by UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process,
Tor Wennesland, on the demolition of a Palestinian primary school in
occupied West Bank**

Jerusalem, May 2023

“I am deeply disturbed by the 7 May demolition by Israeli authorities of a European Union-funded Palestinian primary school for the children of Jubbet adh Dhib village, east of Bethlehem, in Area C of the occupied West Bank, directly affecting the education of at least 40 children.

The demolition followed an Israeli court order citing safety concerns in response to a petition by a settler organization. Currently, 58 schools, serving 6,500 children, face the threat of demolition due to a lack of building permits that are almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain.

A child’s right to education must be respected. I call on Israeli authorities to cease such demolitions and evictions which are illegal under international law, and to approve plans for Palestinian communities to build legally in Area C to address their development needs, including for schools.

As I reiterated at the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) meeting in Brussels last week, such acts that negatively impact basic service delivery for Palestinians threaten stability and undermine the Palestinian Authority. Moreover, persistent drivers of conflict, including demolitions, breed a climate of mistrust and tension between Palestinians and Israelis and undermine the prospect of achieving a political solution.”

[ENDS]