



**Statement by the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process,  
Mr. Robert Serry, on the occasion of International Women's Day**

Thursday, 8 March 2012  
Ramallah

The United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Mr. Robert Serry, met today with members of the Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC), high representatives of the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW), and other leaders from the Palestinian women's movement, to extend his best wishes on the occasion of International Women's Day, celebrated annually by the United Nations in honor of women worldwide.

The meeting discussed issues faced by Palestinian women as a result of conflict and marginalization, as well as the need to intensify women's involvement in the Palestinian statebuilding effort and in the Middle East Peace Process. The participants stressed the urgency of accelerating progress on Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

"Today we mark the importance of equal participation of women in all realms of life, including in the political sphere, and of their contribution to international peace and security," Serry said. "I recognize the distinct impact especially on Palestinian women and children of the ongoing conflict and occupation. In the face of these difficulties, it is only more impressive to see the tireless efforts of Palestinian women for their rights, freedom and dignity, and I commend them for their dedication."

"We, as the United Nations, are committed to support women's initiatives towards their full inclusion in their societies – it is fundamental to democracy and justice. I look forward to continuing our dialogue with women leaders and civil society organisations." Serry added.

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