



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **UN REPORT ON PALESTINIAN STATE-BUILDING EFFORTS**

12<sup>th</sup> April 2011

A UN report on progress by the Palestinian Authority (PA) in building institutions assesses that “*in six areas where the UN is most engaged, government functions are now sufficient for a functioning government of a state*”.

#### **A Decisive Period for Palestinian State-building**

The report, “Palestinian State-building: A Decisive Period”, has been prepared for the forthcoming meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in Brussels on 13 April 2011. The report reviews progress in implementing the PA’s August 2009 *Programme of the Thirteenth Government*, which is backed by the Quartet. The programme seeks to ensure as its target, Palestinian institutional readiness for statehood within two years.

United Nations Special Coordinator Robert Serry, whose office UNSCO prepared the report, said today, “*I commend what President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad have achieved. This is a decisive period, as we approach the September 2011 target for the PA’s institutions to be ready for statehood. It is also the target set by the parties to reach a negotiated permanent status agreement to create a Palestinian state at peace with Israel.*”

Commenting on what needs to happen in the months ahead, Mr. Serry continued, “*The PA is clearly on track and I know is committed to continuing its hard work. However the institutional achievements of the Palestinian state-building agenda are approaching their limits within the political and physical space currently available, precisely at the time when it is approaching its target date for completion. No-one should underestimate what is at stake now. What we urgently need are further steps on the ground that can enable a broadening of this progress. I believe Israel needs to roll back measures of occupation to match the PA’s achievements. I also stress the urgent need for Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations on a two-state solution to resume, if the state building and political tracks are to come together by September.*”

The report reviews developments in six key areas where the UN is most engaged and able to assess progress: governance, rule of law and human rights; livelihoods; education and culture; health; social protection; and infrastructure and water. In each sector, the report provides a detailed assessment of progress to date in light of strong Palestinian reform efforts and donor engagement. The report notes Israeli measures to facilitate movement and access which have also supported economic activity.

### Next steps on Gaza

The report underlines the UN's concerns about Gaza. Mr. Serry commented, "*recent escalations have been very worrying and I appeal once again for all to observe calm so that civilians are protected. Rocket fire must stop and Israel must show maximum restraint. This is also essential in moving forward to help meet the needs in Gaza.*"

The socio-economic situation in Gaza needs to be more fully addressed. Mr Serry said: "*I have noted Israeli steps over several months to implement cabinet decisions to adjust Gaza policy consistent with security. This has seen a welcome approval of \$155 million of UN construction projects as well as a broader range of consumer goods entering through the crossings. But much more is still needed. I am looking forward to the further approval of UN projects, a streamlining of coordination procedures, and the liberalization of the import of construction materials including aggregate, iron bars and cement. The people of Gaza need this, and it would send an important signal.*"

The report also points out that the persistent Palestinian divide hinders efforts to lay the economic and institutional basis for statehood when it comes to Gaza: "*The progress that has been achieved by the PA must be more meaningfully connected to all areas of de jure PA responsibility and to all Palestinian citizens.*" As noted in the report, the UN continues to support efforts to achieve real progress towards unity within the framework of the Palestinian Authority and the commitments of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Note to Editors: The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) is a 12-member committee that serves as the principal policy-level coordination mechanism for development assistance to the Palestinian people. The AHLC is chaired by Norway and co-sponsored by the EU and US. In addition, the United Nations participates together with the World Bank (Secretariat) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The AHLC seeks to promote dialogue between donors, the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Government of Israel (GoI).