Jerusalem, 22 February 2017

Local Statement on Israeli demolitions of Palestinian structures in Area C

The European Union Representative and the EU Heads of Mission in Jerusalem and Ramallah issue the following statement.

The EU missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah deplore the continuing demolitions of Palestinian structures in Area C in 2017 and the stop work orders, increasing the threat of demolition, on Palestinian structures in Khan al-Ahmar, location of a school which serves five local communities, issued by Israel in the occupied West Bank on 19 February.

So far in 2017, 218 Palestinians have been displaced due to demolitions, confiscations and evictions of 135 structures in Area C only. More than half of the displaced persons were children. In East Jerusalem, 63 people (among whom 31 children) have been displaced due to demolitions, confiscations and evictions of 31 structures in 2017.

During last year, 6,088 Palestinians were affected by 872 demolitions in Area C, among whom 1,663 were children, and humanitarian structures provided by the EU or EU Member States worth approximately EUR 536,000 were destroyed or confiscated. EU humanitarian activities are carried out in full accordance with International Humanitarian Law, with the sole aim of providing humanitarian support to the most vulnerable population.

In line with its long-standing position on this issue, the EU calls upon the Israeli authorities to halt demolitions of Palestinian houses and property in accordance with its obligations as an occupying power under international humanitarian law, and to cease the policy of settlement construction and expansion, of designating land for exclusive Israeli use and of denying Palestinian development.

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