State of Palestine

Office of the Prime Minister
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For Immediate Release

PM Hamdallah: We will continue to support the resilience of our citizens in Khan Al Ahmar

Ramallah - Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah today visited Khan Al Ahmar and condemned in the strongest possible terms the Israeli plan to demolish the entire community, including the "Tyre school".

On Sunday February 19 2017, the Israeli Civil Administration distributed 42 stop working orders,threatening to destroy nearly every structure in the Khan Al Ahmar-Abu el Helu Bedouin community, located in the Jerusalem periphery and in "Area C" of the West Bank. In 2016, the communities of Khan Al Ahmar experienced no fewer than eight separate waves of demolitions and confiscations, with 35 structures demolished or confiscated (including 24 donor-funded), displacing 66 residents and further affecting 14 residents.

"*We will continue to build and protect the rights of our citizens, we will continue to educate our kids and we call upon the international community to put pressure on the Israeli government in order to safeguard our citizens' rights of education and livelihood*", said Hamdallah.

These demolitions are a clear violation of international law, including Fourth Geneva Conventions articles 49, forbidding the forcible transfer of a protected population, and 53, forbidding the extensive destruction and appropriation of property, and would be considered "grave breaches" under article 147 of the Conventions' Additional Protocols, as well aspossible war crimes under the Rome Statute.

Khan Al Ahmar is one of 46 Palestinian Bedouin herding communities, comprising together over 7,000 residents, the majority of which are refugees, that the Israeli government is seeking to relocate, in order to go forward with the contentious "E1" plan, which entails the construction of thousands of additional settlement units in an area between East Jerusalem and the illegal

settlement of "Maaleh Adumim", where several of these Bedouin communities are currently located. *The Palestinian government will continue to support the resilience of those communities*, stressed Hamdallah.

The plan has been strongly opposed by the international community; the US administration deemed it “especially damaging” to efforts to achieve a two-state solution, while European countries called it a “red line” that Israel should not cross.

Hamdallah concluded: “*If implemented, the “E1 plan” will not only physically isolate East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank, but would also create a contiguous series of illegal settlements stretching from East Jerusalem to the Jordanian border, thereby dividing the West Bank into two parts and rendering the viability of a Palestinian state virtually impossible*”.