PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

One-Service-Centre for Women and Girls Victims of Violence Opens in Palestine

Ramallah, 26 April 2017 – Today, the Palestinian government opens a new model to provide protection, privacy and dignity to women and girls who are victims of violence. A One-Service-Centre that is designed to facilitate access to services for victims of violence was officially opened in the presence of Major General Hazem Attallah, Chief of the Palestinian Civil Police, and Dr. Sabine Machl, UN Women Special Representative. A number of representatives of the security, justice, government, civil society, and international institutions were also in attendance.

The One-Service-Centre is the result of long-standing efforts put forth by the Palestinian government, civil society and women's organizations to enhance protection for women and girls victims of violence and to improve access to security and justice services. The idea of establishing a One-Service-Centre was pursued by the Family and Juvenile Protection Unit within the Palestinian Civil Police, to ensure the provision of security, health care, prosecution and social services in one location. The Centre is also equipped to provide victims with temporary 24-hour safe accommodation, when necessary.

"*The primary endeavor of the One-Stop-Centre is to strengthen the relationship between service providers while fostering greater performance and accountability by facilitating effective and inclusive services in one location for women and children who are exposed to violence*", said Major General Atallah. The Chief of Police also expressed his commitment to increase awareness of society on the work of the One-Service-Centre and to ensure an inclusive service delivery.

The Attorney General Dr. Ahmad Barrak, gave his support to this initiative and said "*we hope this will increase women's access to justice and protection. A major result of a functioning One-Service-Center is the enhanced trust and credibility of the justice system in Palestine.*"

Concluding the ceremony, Dr. Machl reaffirmed that UN Women and its partners are committed to preventing violence against women and children and increasing the reporting and prosecution of abuse cases. Plans are in place to establish additional One-Service-Centers in other locations in Palestine based on the success of the pilot model. "*The success of the One-Service-Centre will strongly depend on the commitment and coordination of administrators from key security and justice institutions, while also ensuring the adoption of a policy framework, specially trained staff, and sufficient financial resources*", Dr. Machl said.

The One-Service-Centre is administered by the Family Protection and Juvenile Unit at the PCP. The establishment and operationalization of the One-Service-Centre are supported by the UN Women/UNDP Joint Programme for Strengthening the Rule of Law in Palestine (SAWASYA).

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Background Information:
The Palestinian Civil Police's Family and Juvenile Protection Unit was established in the year 2009, due to the significant increase in the number of cases of domestic violence. The first branch office of this unit was established in the governorate of Bethlehem in 2008, and this unit has now (11) branch offices covering all West Bank governorates. It currently includes approximately 110 officers and non-commissioned officers, males and females, and the number of women working in this department represents 33% of the total number of workers, significantly above the PCP average of 3.5% women. During the first year of its establishment, this department received 35 violence against women cases. However, the number of cases has multiplied over time and reached approximately 7000 cases in the last 2 years.

One-Stop-Centres (OSC) are a model for facilitating services to survivors of violence against women and girls in a comprehensive manner, where specialized staff from different sectors are housed together in one facility. For more information on the model see: http://thisweekinpalestine.com/one-stop-center/

Note to editors:

- "Sawasya" is the UNDP/UN Women Joint Programme "Strengthening the Rule of Law: Justice and Security for the Palestinian people" (2014-2017). Launched in May 2014, the Programme aims at strengthening the capacities of, and public confidence in, rule of law institutions in improving access to justice, security and protection services for the Palestinian people, with a particular focus on women and children. Sawasya partners with 13 official institutions related to justice and security as well as more than 50 civil society organizations and universities throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Joint Programme is generously funded by the Government of Netherlands, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation.

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