State of Palestine

Office of the Prime Minister

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PMO: Statement on Area C and Israeli military order 1797

On May 9, 2018, the Israeli occupation military published military order 1797, with the main objective of expediting Israel's unlawful demolitions of Palestinian infrastructure in the so-called "Area C" of occupied Palestine. The new unlawful order further expands the authority of the occupation civil administration to unilaterally target and demolish Palestinian structures within 96 hours, irrespective of the status of the underlying land or the issuing of building permits.

The Palestinian government, represented by H.E Prime Minister Dr.Hamdallah, strongly condemns this new violation stating that *"this illegal development would generate more crimes against Palestinian rights of access to a safe and stable living environment and would worsen the already dire conditions of 393,000 Palestinian citizens".*

The Palestinian government has also consistently strived to support Palestinian citizens residing in the so-called "Area C", which includes supporting their resilience and protection from Israeli violations. However, its important to mention that Palestinians living under a belligerent military occupation are, under the international humanitarian law, a "protected population", which obligates the occupying power to protect the occupied population. Israel has not merely neglected its duties as an occupying power, but rather has proactively and willfully done the opposite, flagrantly violating the inalienable rights of the occupied Palestinian population.

Despite, the international community constant rejection and condemnation of the Israeli illegal colonial practices, the new order comes as a measurement against International aid actors to prevent any legal action against future Israeli illegal orders, which has proven quite successful in preventing or delaying of the illegal demolitions until now. Therefore, Israel is using the new order to continue its unlawful demolition policies to drive Palestinian citizens away from their land and pave the way for the establishment of additional illegal colonial settlements.

The Palestinian government strongly urges third states, international partners and the international community at large to take concrete steps against the Israeli occupation government to rescind the illegal Military Order, which violates article 49 and 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. As well as, the recent UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres statement, that "forcible transfer does not necessarily require the use of physical force by authorities, but may be triggered by specific circumstances that leave individuals or communities with no choice but to leave; this is known as a coercive environment" (A/HRC/34/38, March 2017).

The Palestinian government also claims the international community to not only hold Israel accountable for its numerous violations of the rights of the Palestinian people, but also to tackle the root of the problem, namely Israel's seemingly open-ended belligerent occupation, which prevents Palestinian citizens from ever achieving a just and fair peace based on the internationally-backed two-State solution.