Statement issued by the Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland, Simon Coveney TD:

Statement by the Tánaiste on the threat of demolition to a Palestinian community (Khan Al Ahmar)

The Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D., has expressed deep concern about the situation of the Palestinian community of Khan Al Ahmar, who are living under threat of forcible transfer, and has called for the threat against the community to be lifted. The Israeli authorities had indicated an intention to demolish the village, which is located close to a settlement bloc in the West Bank.

Speaking in the wake of last week's Israeli High Court judgement which removed the last legal hurdle to the demolition of the village, the Tánaiste said, *"I am extremely concerned about the situation of the Khan al-Ahmar community in the West Bank. This vulnerable Bedouin community, who have already been expelled once by Israel from their former homes in the Negev area, are again threatened unjustly with forced removal.*

International humanitarian law prohibits the forcible transfer of the protected population of an occupied territory, regardless of the motive.

I call upon the Israeli authorities to halt the demolitions of Palestinian property and the removal of Palestinian communities, actions which constantly erode the viability of a two-state solution."

ENDS