PRESS RELEASE

# Malaysian Prime Minister Renews His Support for Palestine Refugees and UNRWA in a Meeting with Deputy Commissioner-General



*The Prime Minister of Malaysia, His Excellency Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, center, today received UNRWA Deputy Commissioner-General Sandra Mitchell, left, who was accompanied by UNRWA Director of Finance, Shadi El-Abed, right. © 2018 UNRWA Photo by Katherine Reyes*

Kuala Lumpur
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The Prime Minister of the Federal Government of Malaysia, His Excellency Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, today received Deputy Commissioner-General, Sandra Mitchell, to renew his strong support for Palestine refugees and the role of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

In particular, the Prime Minister expressed his full commitment to launch the UNRWA Dignity is Priceless campaign in Malaysia. The launch of the campaign in Malaysia will serve as a catalyst for facilitating increased private giving in the country in support of UNRWA and Palestine refugees.

The Prime Minister committed to 'support strongly and morally' the promotion of private giving to UNRWA through the launch of the campaign in Malaysia in the coming weeks.

The Deputy Commissioner-General stated that, "UNRWA is very grateful for Malaysia's long-standing support to Palestine refugees and for the Prime Minister's generous commitment at a deeply challenging time for the refugee community."

This important meeting took place at a time when UNRWA faces unprecedented financial shortfall this year amidst continued volatility in the region.

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**UNRWA**

UNRWA is confronted with an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, the extent of their vulnerability and their deepening poverty. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions and financial support has been outpaced by the growth in needs. As a result, the UNRWA programme budget, which supports the delivery of core essential services, operates with a large shortfall. UNRWA encourages all Member States to work collectively to exert all possible efforts to fully fund the Agency's programme budget. UNRWA emergency programmes and key projects, also operating with large shortfalls, are funded through separate funding portals.

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5.4 million Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA across its five fields of operation. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance.

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