State of Palestine

Office of the Prime Minister

For Immediate Release

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The Palestinian Cabinet Meeting Brief Statement

The Palestinian Cabinet warns against plans to eliminate the Palestinian issue, hails the inauguration of "Mahmoud Abbas" city for pilgrims, and calls for immediate payments of water bills.

During its weekly meeting held in Ramallah today, the Palestinian Cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Dr. Rami Hamdallah, welcomed the participation of Mr. Nabil Abu Rudeina, newly assigned Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Information in the 17th National Consensus Government, and wished him every success in his new duties.

The Palestinian Cabinet called upon Hamas movement to abandon its rejection of unity, end its control of the Gaza Strip, and to stop trading our national principles with humanitarian aid, at the expense of the unity of the Palestinian citizens and their homeland. The Cabinet demanded Hamas to immediately abide by President Mahmoud Abbas' plan and fully relinquish its control over the Gaza strip without dividing tasks and powers.

The Cabinet also stressed that the Government did not impose any sanctions on the Gaza Strip, and that the cuts in salaries, promoted, as sanctions imposed on the Strip, are temporary measures. Therefore, the Cabinet confirmed that around 15,000 civil servants and 20, 000 military personnel of the Palestinian Government receive 50% of their monthly salaries. The Cabinet reassured that all their rights are preserved, noting that it spent $96 million in the Gaza Strip last month, despite all the obstacles it faces due to the internal division, holding the Strip revenues, financial crisis and cuts in international aid by 70%.

In this regard, the Cabinet hailed all exerted efforts to achieve national reconciliation and end the internal division especially the role played by Egypt in achieving the Palestinian national reconciliation and in supporting the Palestinian issue at all levels.

In a different context, the Cabinet denounced the US Senate bill on US aid to UNRWA, which recognizes 40,000 Palestinian refugees instead of 5.2 million. This law obliges the UNRWA to take care of 40,000 Palestinian refugees only neglecting the rights of the rest of Palestinian refugees who depend completely on services from the UNRWA. The Palestinian Council considered

this law as part of the US administration policy aimed at abolishing the Palestinian “Right of Return” and taking the Palestinian Refugees issue off the negotiations table after recognizing Jerusalem as "the capital of Israel" and relocating its embassy there.

Further, the Cabinet condemned the Israeli occupying forces (IOF) for building a new synagogue and settlement units in Silwan neighborhood to the south of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Occupied Jerusalem, and considered such move a blatant challenge to the Arab and Islamic nations and the international community. The Cabinet stressed that Israel, the Occupying Power, encouraged by Trump Administration, continues to challenge and ignore the resolutions of the international legitimacy, which requires the international community and the UN Security Council to exercise its authority and stop the serious violations of the international humanitarian law, human rights law and international criminal law, and to abide Israel to stop confiscating more Palestinian land and building illegal, colonial settlements.

Moreover, the Cabinet thanked the European Union and the Netherlands for providing €10.62 million to help pay salaries and pensions, as well as operating the largest solar power field in the Gaza Strip, which will provide 0.5 MW of electricity per day to operate the Southern Gaza Water Desalination Plant.

The Cabinet also welcomed the inauguration of “Mahmoud Abbas” city for pilgrims at the King Hussein crossing, stressing that the opening of the pilgrims' city comes within the direction of the leadership and the Government to serve the pilgrims and facilitate their movement and to provide them with all needed amenities. The total cost of completing the first stage of the city is roughly 4.7 million shekels. The Cabinet thanked the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, for helping in achieving needed work at the crossing to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian citizens when travelling and the Palestinian General Authority for Crossings and borders, which works24/7 amid hard conditions.

Apart from that, the Cabinet discussed the recommendations of the committee formed to investigate the needs and demands of organizations for people with disabilities regarding their health rights and insurance systems. As recommended by the committee, the Cabinet stressed the need to take the necessary measures to amend the legal framework ruling the access of people with disabilities to health and medical services to ensure equal rights and justice for all Palestinian citizens in harmony with the law.

Before concluding its session, the Palestinian Cabinet endorsed the recommendations of Harmonization of laws and treaties Committee regarding a draft resolution on protecting families from violence upon the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, in addition to harmonizing the law with the Palestinian legislations.

Finally, the Cabinet approved the agreements signed between the Palestinian and Cuban Ministries of Education and Higher Education and the Teacher Creativity Centre aimed at developing the teaching sector in the State of Palestine.

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