State of Palestine
Office of the Prime Minister
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The Palestinian Cabinet Meeting Brief Statement

The Palestinian Cabinet reiterates full support to the speech of President Abbas at the United Nations, upholds the decision of the Palestinian leadership to appeal to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and reviews the outcomes of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) meeting.

During its weekly meeting held in Ramallah today, the Palestinian Cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Dr. Rami Al- Hamdallah,

- **R**eiterated its full support to President Mahmoud Abbas speech at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and considered it a comprehensive speech that highlighted the core elements of the International Law, UN resolutions protecting Palestinian rights and the Arab peace initiative.
- **S**tressed that the Palestinian fundamental rights are not open to bargaining, primarily the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent State of Palestine on 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and the importance of finding a complete solution to the refugees' issue based on UNGA Resolution No. 194.
- **A**nnounced to mobilize support for endorsing the initiative of President Abbas to hold an international peace conference this year, with the formation of a multilateral international mechanism to solve all permanent status issues and restore hopes for peace.
- **R**eaffirmed its total support to the Palestinian leadership efforts in submitting a new appeal to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) regarding the Trump administration decision to move its embassy from "Tel Aviv" to occupied Jerusalem in a direct violation to the International Law and globally recognized agreements.
- **W**elcomed the decision of the Group of 77, which represents 134 member countries at the United Nations, to endorse President Mahmoud Abbas and the State of Palestine to chair the Group in 2019. The Cabinet announced that the Palestinian Government would exert all possible efforts in cooperation with related bodies to facilities and achieve the objectives of the Group.
- **D**iscussed the meeting of Prime Minister Dr. Rami Al- Hamdallah with the AHLC held in New York last week. The meeting concentrated on building and strengthening the Palestinian economy by ending the Israeli occupation, which is the main obstacle to economic growth and development in the State of Palestine. The meeting stressed strengthening the rule of law, enabling the Government control over the so-called Area "C", ending the ongoing, illegal blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip, and facilitating the transfer and flow of goods between the West Bank and the Strip. In addition, facilitating both exports and imports movement, expanding the fishing area in the Gaza strip, and maintaining access to implement solar energy projects, as well as reducing dependence on donor countries and ensuring access to natural resources in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Moreover, the meeting advised to carry investments in industrial areas and to review

the Paris Convention and taxes system for Palestinian businesses. In this regard, the Cabinet noted that despite the reduction of international aid to more than 60%, and the illegal Israeli control of 65% of the Palestinian tax revenues, the Government was able to stretch its institutions over the past five years and to keep the debts of local banks at a minimum level of 10% of the GDP. Tax rates were reduced gradually from 20% to 10% for the vast majority of taxpayers too. The Government also succeeded to maintain its responsibilities towards its citizens, reduce spending and fiscal deficit from 15% to 4% of the national GDP.

- Hailed the statement of the AHLC, which commended the financial performance and reforms of the Palestinian Government and welcomed the progress made by the Government in developing a long-term vision through the National Policy Agenda for the years 2017-2022. The AHLC also urged donor countries to cover the deficit in the Government's general budget and to meet their financial commitment for the Gaza Reconstruction process. The AHLC stressed the need to end all outstanding financial files with the Israeli side. Moreover, the Committee urged both the Israeli and Palestinian sides to reach agreements on establishing projects that contribute to the development of the Palestinian economy, especially in the water and energy sectors. It also demanded that Israel should cease its restrictions against the Palestinian Government to enable its work in the so-called Area "C".
- **E**xpressed its sincere gratitude to the European Union for providing 40 million Euros worth of additional support to the UNRWA to sustain providing services to Palestinian refugees, especially in the education and healthcare sectors.
- **R**ejects threats made by the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu regarding the deduction of Palestinian tax revenues, in particular, the amounts allocated to Palestinian prisoners and families of martyrs, who are the most affected segment by the Israeli violations and war crimes. On this note, the Cabinet called upon the international community and all UN institutions to defend the Palestinian citizens against the Israeli violations represented by the continuation of the illegal Israeli occupation, violations against Jerusalem, colonial settlements expansion, the 11 years blockade on Gaza, and the destruction of projects funded by international support.
- **C**ondemned the latest Israeli violations against Palestinian citizens during their peaceful marches in the Gaza Strip as soon as the UNGA meetings finished, which resulted in killing seven citizens causing injuries to another 500. Citizens. Hence, the Cabinet called upon the international community to take its responsibility and provide immediate protection to the defenseless Palestinian citizens.
- **R**eviewed a report on the latest developments related to the reconstruction process of the Gaza Strip, which indicated that 130,000 out of 162,000 partially housing units were repaired, while 9830 out of 11,000 totally damaged housing units were reconstructed.
- **R**evised the latest developments of the Italian grant projects in the Gaza Strip, especially the self-financing projects where 281 apartments across the Strip were repaired with a value of €1 million. Moreover, 17 totally damaged residential buildings in Al-Nada neighborhood were reconstructed with the cost of €1.1 million, and another four partially damaged residential buildings in the area of Al- Nada district towers were repaired with the cost of €506,000 as well as repairing other 11 damaged buildings with a cost of 4.5 million Euros. In addition to that, works for rehabilitating the infrastructure of the region were completed with a value of 1.2 million euros, as well as works for reconstructing the

Italian compound at an estimated cost of about 3.8 million euros and the project to re-establish 12 residential buildings at an estimated cost of €4.2 million.

- **H**ighlighted that the Government is exerting all possible efforts to coordinate the entry of needed building goods and material for the reconstruction process of the Gaza Strip. The Cabinet also clarified that the delay of the reconstruction process is due to the continued siege imposed on the Strip, preventing the entry of many reconstruction supplies, the continued division and the inability of the Government to perform its tasks in Gaza. Moreover, the lack of commitment by donor countries to meet their financial commitments they pledged and the financial crisis facing the Government.
- **D**iscussed a report on the priorities of infrastructure projects in the southern governorates, which includes intervention priorities for water, sanitation, environment, roads, transport and housing projects with a total cost of USD 973 million.

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