Office of the Quartet

**International Partners Meeting on Palestine**
**Sunday, 26 May 2024**
**Brussels, Belgium**

**Remarks by Dr John N. Clarke**
**Head of Mission**

Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Allow me to make three points in response to Prime Minister Mustafa's presentation.

First, let me add our thanks to the Prime Minister and his Cabinet, including those Ministers present today with whom we remain closely engaged. Working with them in recent weeks we have seen a very welcome sense of purpose, energy, and engagement both with Palestinians and the international community in support of the Nineteenth Government's agenda.

Second, to recognize that the reform agenda – which first and foremost is for the benefit of Palestinians – is not implemented in a vacuum but rather within a political reality that also requires action on the part of the Government of Israel. Nowhere can this be seen more clearly than in the previous reduction and current suspension of clearance revenue transfers and the ongoing threat to correspondent banking relations, which taken together, threaten a complete economic collapse. Quick action is undoubtedly needed on both of these issues, but they must be seen as only the first steps towards achieving the broader objective of re-establishing a trajectory towards the PA's financial independence and sustainability.

Third and finally, to welcome the Government's focus on the resumption of basic services in the Gaza Strip – that is, energy, water, and telecommunications as well as the increased entry of goods through the Assisted Basic Commodities and Distribution (or ABCD) initiative. This will have a critical humanitarian impact, enable the return of displaced Gazans to their homes and will help set important precedents and parameters on the entry of materials, crossing locations and capacities required. Demonstrable progress in these areas will, in addition, anchor the PA's role in Gaza and provide a fulcrum for engagement in other key areas, including security arrangements as referred to by the Prime Minister.

In this manner, what we achieve now will benefit those most in need and, in addition, help realize a long overdue two state solution.

Thank you very much.