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Bulletin
**on action by the United Nations system and
intergovernmental organizations
relevant to the question of Palestine**

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I. SECRETARY-GENERAL INFORMS SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT OF HIS DECISION TO ESTABLISH A PANEL OF INQUIRY ON THE FLOTILLA INCIDENT

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on 2 August 2010 addressed the following letter to the President of the Security Council, informing him of his decision to establish a Panel of Inquiry into the Gaza aid flotilla incident. The text of the letter is reproduced below (S/2010/414):

In the light of the statement of the President of the Security Council dated 1 June 2010 (S/PRST/2010/9), I have the honour to inform you that I have today decided to establish a Panel of Inquiry on the flotilla incident that occurred on 31 May 2010. I have taken this step after intensive consultations with the leaders of Turkey and Israel and with their concurrence. I thank them both for their spirit of compromise and forward-looking cooperation.

As publicly announced today, the Panel will be led by the former Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr. Geoffrey Palmer, as Chair, and the outgoing President of Colombia, Mr. Álvaro Uribe, as Vice-Chair. Two additional members, one each from Turkey and Israel, will join them.

I trust that the Panel will discharge its responsibilities with the fullest cooperation of the relevant national authorities of the two countries. It will also give me recommendations on the prevention of similar incidents in the future. I trust, further, that this will have a positive impact on the overall Turkey-Israel relationship and the situation in the Middle East.

I anticipate that the Panel will begin its work on 10 August 2010, and submit its first progress report by mid-September.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

II. SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT ISSUES STATEMENT ON THE PANEL OF INQUIRY ON THE FLOTILLA INCIDENT

Following Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's decision to establish a Panel of Inquiry into the Gaza aid flotilla incident, the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Vitaly Churkin (Russian Federation), on 3 August 2010 read out the following press statement (SC/10001):

The members of the Security Council welcomed the establishment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the Panel of Inquiry on the flotilla incident of 31 May 2010.

The members of the Security Council look forward to a successful implementation by the Panel of its mandate, as announced by the Secretary-General, as based on the

statement of the President of the Security Council of 1 June 2010, which called for a prompt, impartial, credible and transparent investigation conforming to international standards.

The members of the Security Council welcomed the commitment of Israel and Turkey to provide full cooperation to the Panel.

III. SECRETARY-GENERAL NAMES ISRAELI AND TURKISH MEMBERS OF THE PANEL OF INQUIRY ON THE FLOTILLA INCIDENT

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on 7 August 2010 issued a statement on the naming of the Israeli and Turkish members of the Panel of Inquiry on the flotilla incident. The following is a reproduction of the text (SG/SM/13050).

I am very pleased to announce today the Israeli and Turkish members of the Panel of Inquiry on the flotilla incident of 31 May 2010.

Israel's Panel member is Joseph Ciechanover. Turkey's Panel member is Özdem Sanberk. Both men have distinguished records of public service.

I look forward to meeting them in New York on 10 August when they will join

the other Panel members: the former Prime Minister of New Zealand, Geoffrey Palmer, who is the Chair of the Panel; and the outgoing President of Colombia, Álvaro Uribe, who is Vice-Chair.

As I said when announcing the Panel, I hope the Panel will fulfil its mandate based on the presidential statement of the Security Council and with the fullest cooperation of the relevant national authorities of the two countries.

IV. INTERNATIONAL INDEPENDENT FACT-FINDING MISSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ON GAZA FLOTILLA OPENS IN GENEVA

The following is a Human Rights Council press release issued on 10 August 2010 on the international independent fact-finding mission of high-level experts to inquire into the Gaza flotilla incident:

The international independent fact-finding mission of high-level experts appointed by the President of the Human Rights Council to inquire into the Gaza flotilla incident on 31 May 2010 held its inaugural meeting at the Palais Wilson in Geneva yesterday.

Further to an urgent debate held on 1 and 2 June, the Human Rights Council decided to dispatch an independent fact-finding mission to determine whether any violation of international law, international humanitarian and human rights law had taken place.

The mission of high-level experts is chaired by Judge K. Hudson-Phillips, former judge of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, and has two other eminent members. Sir Desmond de Silva, Queen's Counsel, was Chief Prosecutor of the Sierra Leone War Crimes Tribunal and Ms. Shanthi Dairiam was a human rights expert of Malaysia and former member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

The Chairman indicated that in approaching the task the mission had been given the authority to settle its own terms of

reference taking into account the resolution of the Council. He indicated that the mission interprets the resolution as requesting it to ascertain the facts surrounding the flotilla incident and then give an opinion as to whether there had been any violation of the law.

Judge Hudson-Phillips emphasized that the mission intended to approach its task in a totally unbiased manner, free from any assumptions or prejudgments.

The Chairman of the mission noted that the mission's principal task is to conduct an inquiry into legal issues and possible violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. He hoped that the mission would be permitted

full access to all relevant persons and material in all of the countries concerned, so as to enable the mission to ascertain the proper factual basis for its legal opinion.

To this end, the mission intends to make contacts with all ambassadors of the countries involved in the coming days. It is its intention to travel to the region in order to interview persons and gather first-hand information as far as possible.

As requested by the Human Rights Council's resolution, the mission will present its report at the next session of the Council in September.

V. ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS BRIEFS SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION

On 17 August 2010, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Oscar Fernandez-Taranco briefed the Security Council on "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question". The following are excerpts from the briefing (S/PV.6372):

We are nearing a turning point in the efforts to promote direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Since May, the parties have engaged in seven rounds of proximity talks, mapping out areas of mutual interest and laying out their respective issues of priority. We appreciate the constructive involvement of the United States mediation in this regard, and the tireless efforts of Senator Mitchell, who again met with President Abbas and Prime Minister Netanyahu on 10 and 11 August, respectively.

The Secretary-General is himself personally active in this regard. He remains in contact with Senator Mitchell and has spoken directly to the Palestinian, Israeli and Arab leaders to encourage movement in the peace process. On his behalf, Mr. Serry has been fully engaged in coordination and consultation with other Quartet envoys.

Success will require sustained regional and international support. In this regard, we welcome the decision taken by the Arab League Foreign Ministers in Cairo

on 29 July to give their backing, in principle, for President Abbas to enter into direct negotiations when he deems it appropriate. President Abbas also continued his consultations with Arab leaders, meeting with King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia on 4 August, with President Mubarak of Egypt and King Abdullah of Jordan on 12 August, and with Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani of Qatar on 13 August. Prime Minister Netanyahu also met with King Abdullah of Jordan on 27 July.

The parties are currently holding internal discussions with a view to deciding on whether they will enter into direct talks. We urge them to be forthcoming in their deliberations and are hopeful that leaders on both sides will seize this opportunity and engage in a path of decisive progress towards a sustainable, mutually acceptable two-State solution within a realistic time frame. To support them in taking this step, we remain in close contact with Quartet partners to promote the start of meaningful direct negotiations as soon as possible.

If these negotiations are to succeed, it is crucial to maintain an enabling climate on the ground. Parties should adhere to their Road Map commitments and obligations under international law, as re-emphasized by the Quartet on 19 March in Moscow.

The partial moratorium on settlement construction in the West Bank is due to end on 26 September. We urge the continuation of the settlement halt beyond its scheduled expiry and its extension to all settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. Let me recall that, under the Road Map, Israel is obligated to freeze all settlement activity, including natural growth, and to dismantle outposts erected since March 2001.

On the occasion of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, Israeli authorities removed three obstacles to movement in the West Bank, extended the operation hours of some checkpoints, and slightly eased access to Jerusalem for Friday prayers on the Temple Mount. The number of obstacles to movement throughout the West Bank remains over 500. Easings on movement and access should be expanded, including with regard to barrier-related obstacles.

We are also concerned about the increase in the demolition or dismantlement of Palestinian-owned structures in Area C that has displaced or otherwise affected 212 people. The situation is particularly worrisome in Al Farisiye, in the northern Jordan Valley, where two families currently face the demolition of the shelter provided to them by the Palestinian Authority with international support, following their eviction from their homes earlier this year.

During the reporting period, Israeli security forces conducted 313 incursions in the West Bank, resulting in one Palestinian being shot dead by Israeli soldiers on 22 July while he attempted to intrude into the settlement of Barkan. Overall, 15 Palestinians were injured and 162 Palestinians arrested, while three Israeli soldiers were also injured. Demonstrators against the barrier often clashed with Israeli forces, resulting in nine Palestinians being injured while others were arrested or suffered from gas inhalation.

Violence by Israeli settlers against Palestinians amounted to 22 incidents, resulting in seven Palestinians being injured and damages to property. Following the demolition by Israeli forces of structures in the Bracha settlement near Nablus on 26 July, Israeli settlers attacked the Palestinian

village of Burin on the same day and again on 30 July, as part of so-called price-tag retaliation.

On 15 August, the Palestinian Authority, under Prime Minister Fayyad, issued a report taking stock of progress on the Government's two-year State-building agenda, observing that substantial progress was made in building sound institutions and a stable society. The United Nations welcomes this achievement. However, without significant additional external financing, the Palestinian Authority will face a serious liquidity crisis in September and will have difficulty paying August salaries. Financing to date of \$507 million falls almost \$200 million short of the budget. The Palestinian Authority has also nearly exhausted the scope for loans from commercial banks. Current initial estimates of donor commitments through 2010 suggest that the financing deficit will exceed \$300 million. To reinforce stability, which is critical in the context of renewed negotiations, donors must reaffirm their support.

In Jerusalem, the comparative restraint of the past few months has been eroding as announcements of construction, demolitions and evictions have recommenced. This included the deplorable forcible takeover by Israeli settlers of a building housing nine Palestinian families, on 29 July, in the Muslim Quarter of East Jerusalem's Old City. On 27 July, the Jerusalem municipality demolished five commercial structures in the area of Hizma village, affecting the livelihoods of the families involved. On 2 August, the Jerusalem municipality authorized the construction of 40 homes in the East Jerusalem settlement of Pisgat Zeev.

The situation of the four Hamas-affiliated Legislative Council members remains unresolved. The trial of one has been postponed until November. He remains in Israeli custody, while the three others are still in the care of the International Committee of the Red Cross. We call on the Israeli authorities to find a positive solution to this unsustainable situation.

We continue to follow the impact of the new Israeli policy on Gaza following the announcement on 20 June by the Israeli Government of a package of measures aimed at easing the blockade, and on 5 July the move by Israel from a positive list of goods allowed into Gaza to a negative list of goods whose entry is prohibited or restricted. The volume and variety of supplies entering Gaza have continued to increase over this reporting period. The weekly average of imported truckloads has reached 1,006 — an almost 30 per cent increase over the average from the last reporting period, which was 780, and an 80 per cent increase over the 2010 weekly average before the policy change, which at the time stood at 553.

The Israeli decision to allow 100 million new Israeli shekels in cash into Gaza, as well as the exchange of 31.5 million in spoiled new Israeli shekel banknotes since mid-July was an important step in alleviating the immediate liquidity crisis in Gaza, and is welcome. Further steps and regularized banking arrangements will be critical to meeting cash needs and salary payments.

While these are positive developments, imports into Gaza still remain far below the weekly average of truckloads before the closure was instituted in 2007.

The current extent of easing cannot meet the crucial longer-term construction and rehabilitation needs of Gazans and resuscitate the legitimate economy. To achieve this, the Quartet called in its statement of 21 June for a comprehensive solution that would ensure the unimpeded flow of humanitarian aid, commercial goods and persons to and from Gaza; address Israel's legitimate security concerns, including an end to weapons smuggling into Gaza; and promote Palestinian unity based on the Palestine Liberation Organization's commitments and the reunification of Gaza and the West Bank under the legitimate Palestinian Authority and consistent with resolution 1860 (2009).

The Rafah crossing remained open for humanitarian purposes and transit to other countries for foreign visa holders, including for religious pilgrimages. Egypt continues its efforts to counter smuggling along its border with Gaza, discovering and closing some 17 tunnels that were used to smuggle cement, steel and other construction materials.

Similarly, while we welcome Israel's recent approval of 11 United Nations construction projects in Gaza, we are nonetheless concerned about bottlenecks in project implementation if the current cumbersome procedures for approval and entry of materials are not streamlined. Procedures have already resulted in substantial delays in projects previously approved. The Khan Younis housing project, approved at the time of the Quartet meeting on 19 March, took three months to move from approval in principle to approval in practice. Due to strict requirements imposed on project approval and entry, project costs have doubled.

In view of the newly approved projects, it will be important to improve the efficiency of the applicable procedures. We look forward to continued effective dialogue with the Israeli authorities to facilitate the smooth implementation of these and future United Nations projects in priority areas.

On a separate note, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) warned on 16 August that it is running an \$84-million deficit that could soon force it to shut schools and clinics in the Gaza Strip. I call on the international community to help UNRWA fulfil its important mission in health, education and social services in Gaza and elsewhere in the region.

Palestinian efforts continued during the reporting period to overcome the electricity crisis that is causing hardship for the population in Gaza and endangering the operation of hospitals and such. We urge the Palestinian parties involved to resolve their internal disputes and to achieve a sustainable solution to restore a reliable electricity supply for Gaza.

The date of 4 August marked the 1,500th day since the capture of Israeli Corporal Gilad Shalit. We very much regret that international calls for his release, immediate humanitarian access and the completion of a prisoner exchange agreement have not been heeded.

During the reporting period, Palestinian militant groups fired six rockets and three mortars from Gaza into Israel, causing no injuries. In a serious incident, a Grad rocket was fired on 30 July from Gaza on the Israeli town of Ashkelon, causing no injuries. We continue to condemn rocket fire

that indiscriminately targets civilians. This attack was followed by an Israeli air strike on Gaza overnight that killed one Hamas commander. Israeli security forces conducted 11 air strikes and 11 incursions into Gaza, resulting in the deaths of three militants; two militants were injured, as were 22 civilians and five policemen. We urge calm and full respect by all parties of international humanitarian law. Israeli security forces continue to restrict Palestinian access to land areas in Gaza located up to 1,000 to 1,500 metres from the Green Line and sea areas beyond three nautical miles from shore, thereby severely impacting livelihoods.

I am disappointed to report a lack of progress in intra-Palestinian reconciliation within the framework of the Egyptian-mediated proposal, in spite of mediation visits to Gaza by prominent independent Palestinian figures. We urge Palestinian factions to work together to overcome Palestinian internal divisions. In a positive development, on 11 August a number of prisoners were released in Gaza as a humanitarian gesture for the start of Ramadan, in parallel with a release of prisoners in the West Bank, which I referred to earlier.

On 2 August, the Secretary-General announced the launch of a Panel of Inquiry on the flotilla incident of 31 May. This unprecedented development followed intensive consultations with the leaders of Israel and Turkey. The Secretary-General thanked the leaders of the two countries for their spirit of compromise. The Panel is composed of former Prime Minister of New Zealand Mr. Geoffrey Palmer, as Chair; former President of Colombia Mr. Álvaro Uribe; an Israeli Panel member, Mr. Joseph Ciechanover; and a Turkish Panel member, Mr. Özdem Sanberk.

The Secretary-General expressed his hope that the Panel would fulfil its mandate in light of the statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2010/9) and with the fullest cooperation of the relevant national authorities of the two countries. The Panel will examine and identify the facts, circumstances and context of the flotilla incident, and recommend ways of avoiding future incidents. For that purpose, the Panel will receive and review reports of national investigations into the incident and request such clarifications and information as it may require from relevant national authorities. For the conduct of its work, the Panel will decide what steps it will take and will work with the national authorities. It is not designed to determine individual criminal responsibility.

The Panel convened in New York for two full days on 10 and 11 August. Its members met with the Secretary-General, who outlined the nature of the task he envisaged for them. The Secretary-General stated his hope that the agreement concerning the Panel would impact positively on the relationship between Turkey and Israel, as well as on the overall situation in the Middle East. The Panel began its substantive discussions on how it will conduct its work. The members of the Panel will meet again in early September. They will strive to produce for the Secretary-General an interim report on 15 September.

Under the chairmanship of Justice Turkel, the Israeli Commission to examine the maritime incident of 31 May 2010 continued its work and heard the testimonies of Prime Minister Netanyahu, Minister of Defense Barak and Army Chief of Staff Ashkenazi during the week of 9 August. On 12 August, the Turkish Government also announced the establishment of a national

commission of inquiry on the events of 31 May.

...

We remain convinced that direct and meaningful negotiations are the only avenue towards a comprehensive, sustainable solution that fulfils the aspirations of the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples and ends the occupation that began in 1967. The United Nations stands ready to provide support to this process, in accordance with

relevant Security Council resolutions and within the framework of relevant international agreements. Strong leadership from both parties to make progress at the negotiating table and realize the aspirations of both peoples will be required, as will the continuation of the parallel process of Palestinian State-building, sustained regional and international support and the pursuit of a comprehensive regional peace as envisaged in the Madrid terms of reference, Security Council resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.

VI. SECRETARY-GENERAL ISSUES SECOND REPORT ON FOLLOW-UP TO THE INQUIRY INTO GAZA CONFLICT

On 18 August 2010, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/254 the texts received by the Secretariat following requests for written information on any action taken on investigations into the Gaza conflict by the Permanent Mission of Israel, the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine and the Permanent Mission of Switzerland. The text of the report is reproduced below (A/64/890):

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/254 contains the texts received by the Secretariat following requests sent to the Permanent Mission of Israel, the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine and the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations for written information concerning any steps taken concerning the Gaza conflict investigations.

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 64/254 of 26 February 2010, entitled “Second follow-up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict”, in which the

Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it, within a period of five months, on the implementation of the resolution. To fulfil that request, it was therefore necessary to ascertain what steps the parties named in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of the resolution had taken.

2. On 27 May 2010, the Secretary-General drew the attention of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations to resolution 64/254, with the request that the Permanent Mission provide the Secretariat with written information by 12 July 2010 on any steps that the Government of Israel might have taken or was in the process of taking further to the call of the General Assembly in paragraph 2 of the resolution.

3. On 16 July 2010, the Secretariat received a document from the State of Israel

entitled “Gaza operation investigations: second update”. The full text of the document is attached as annex I to the present report.

4. On 27 May 2010, the Secretary-General drew the attention of the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations to resolution 64/254, with the request that the Permanent Observer Mission provide the Secretariat with written information by 12 July 2010 on any steps that the Palestinian side might have taken or was in the process of taking further to the exhortation of the General Assembly in paragraph 3 of the resolution.

5. On 12 July 2010, the Secretary-General received a letter of the same date from the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations transmitting a letter dated 11 July 2010 from President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority and the report of the Palestinian Independent Commission Investigating in Follow-up of the Goldstone Report, including a general introduction to the report. The full text of the letters, the general introduction to the report of the Palestinian Independent Commission Investigating in Followup of the Goldstone Report and the report itself is attached as annex II to the present report.

6. On 27 May 2010, the Secretary-General drew the attention of the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations to resolution 64/254, with the request that the Permanent Mission provide the Secretariat with written information by 12 July 2010 on any steps that the Government of Switzerland might have taken or was in the process of taking further to the recommendation of the General Assembly in paragraph 4 of the resolution.

7. On 12 July 2010, the Secretary-General received a note verbale of the same date from the Permanent Mission of Switzerland transmitting a report entitled “Status of the talks on follow-up to paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 64/254”. The full text of the letter and the report is attached as annex III to the present report.

8. The present report follows the report of the Secretary-General of 26 July 2010 to the General Assembly (A/64/867) submitted pursuant to paragraph 5 of resolution 64/254, in which it was reported that the submissions received from the parties totalled approximately 382 pages. In that report, the Secretary-General indicated that, for technical reasons, he was unable to issue the documents or his observations at that time and that he would report further as soon as the technical process of translation was completed.

II. Observations

9. At the beginning of 2009, I visited both Gaza and southern Israel in order to help end the fighting and to show my respect and my concern at the death and injury of so many people during the conflict in and around Gaza. In March 2010, I again visited Gaza and Israel. I was, and remain, deeply affected by the widespread death, destruction and suffering in the Gaza Strip, as well as moved by the plight of civilians in southern Israel who have been subject to indiscriminate rocket and mortar fire.

10. I reiterate that international human rights and humanitarian law need to be fully respected in all situations and circumstances. Accordingly, on several occasions, I have called upon all of the parties to carry out credible, independent domestic investiga-

tions into the conduct and consequences of the Gaza conflict. I hope that such steps will be taken wherever there are credible allegations of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.

11. It is my sincere hope that General Assembly resolution 64/254 has served to encourage investigations by the Government of Israel and the Palestinian side that are independent, credible and in conformity with international standards.

12. I recall that on 25 March 2010 the Human Rights Council adopted resolution 13/9, in which it decided, in the context of the follow-up to the report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission, to establish a committee of independent experts in international humanitarian and human rights laws to monitor and assess any domestic, legal or

other proceedings undertaken by both the Government of Israel and the Palestinian side, in the light of General Assembly resolution 64/254, including the independence, effectiveness and genuineness of those investigations and their conformity with international standards. Also, in resolution 13/9, the Human Rights Council requested me to transmit all the information submitted by the Government of Israel and the Palestinian side pursuant to paragraphs 2 and 3 of General Assembly resolution 64/254 to the committee of independent experts. I am accordingly sending today a letter to the High Commissioner for Human Rights requesting her to transmit the documents received from the State of Israel and the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations to the committee of independent experts.

VII. QUARTET ISSUES STATEMENT SUPPORTING ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS

The following statement was issued on 20 August 2010 by the Quartet (SG/2161).

The representatives of the Quartet reaffirm their strong support for direct negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians to resolve all final status issues.

The Quartet reaffirms its full commitment to its previous statements, including in Trieste on 26 June 2009, in New York on 24 September 2009, and its statement in Moscow on 19 March 2010, which provides that direct, bilateral negotiations that resolve all final status issues should “lead to a settlement, negotiated between the parties, that ends the occupation which began in 1967 and results in the emergence of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace

and security with Israel and its other neighbours”.

The Quartet expresses its determination to support the parties throughout the negotiations, which can be completed within one year, and the implementation of an agreement. The Quartet again calls on both sides to observe calm and restraint, and to refrain from provocative actions and inflammatory rhetoric. Welcoming the result of the Arab Peace Initiative Committee in Cairo on 29 July, the Quartet notes that success will require sustained regional and international support for the negotiations and the parallel

process of Palestinian State-building and the pursuit of a just, lasting and comprehensive regional peace as envisaged in the Madrid terms of reference, Security Council resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative. The Quartet principals intend to meet with their colleagues from the Arab League in

September in New York to review the situation. Accordingly, the Quartet calls on the Israelis and the Palestinians to join in launching direct negotiations on 2 September in Washington, D.C., to resolve all final status issues and fulfil the aspirations of both parties.

VIII. SECRETARY-GENERAL WELCOMES RESUMPTION OF ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS

The following is the text of the statement issued by the Spokesperson for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on 21 August 2010 on the Middle East Peace Process (SG/SM/13067).

The Secretary-General welcomes the decision by both Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to begin direct negotiations, following the statement of the Quartet and at the invitation of the US Government. The Secretary-General believes that negotiations are the only way for the parties to resolve all final status issues and he calls upon both sides to show leadership courage, and responsibility to realize the aspirations of both peoples. We

should all be aware that this is an opportunity that must not be wasted. The Secretary-General underlines the importance of the international community's support to the negotiations and to the achievement of a comprehensive peace in the region in line with the Madrid terms of reference, Security Council Resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative. This opportunity must be seized so that the hope of a better future for the people of the region to live in peace, security and freedom can be fully realized.

IX. SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES ISSUES REPORT

On 27 August 2010, Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon transmitted to the General Assembly the forty-second report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories pursuant to GA resolution 64/91. The following is a reproduction of the summary and the conclusions and recommendations of the report (A/65/327):

Summary

The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories is composed of

three Member States: Sri Lanka (Chairman), Malaysia and Senegal.

The present, forty-second, report to the General Assembly reflects the information gathered during the Committee's

mission to the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic from 8 to 19 June 2010. In these three countries, the Committee interviewed 43 Palestinian, Israeli and Syrian witnesses and representatives of non-governmental organizations. In addition, it met with government representatives, representatives of regional and intergovernmental organizations, staff of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, United Nations officials and experts from specialized United Nations agencies. The Committee also reviewed numerous relevant documents and research materials, including a written submission by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic.

The present report consists of several sections. Most significantly, section V sets out information concerning the human rights situation in the occupied territories. Section VI consists of an overview of Israeli practices affecting the human rights of Syrian Arab citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan; and section VII presents the conclusions of the report and the recommendations of the Special Committee to the General Assembly.

The Committee found there to be a long-standing pattern of violations of human rights by Israel, which are systematic and persistent. It found that Israel continued to fail to protect the occupied population and to meet its obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law. The Committee was concerned about the impact on women and children, who are particularly affected by the occupation and its associated regime. It concluded that a culture of impunity reigned, assisting in the repetition of the violations raised in previous years by this Committee and others.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

95. This report of the Special Committee was based on oral and written testimonies and evidence collected from Palestinian, Israeli and Syrian witnesses, United Nations agencies and experts, international non-governmental organizations and government officials. In addition to this valuable material, the Committee would have benefited from visiting the occupied territories to see first-hand the situation on the ground and to discuss their findings with Israeli Government officials. However, the visit request was left unanswered.

96. The information received by the Committee showed a long-standing pattern of systematic violations of international human rights and humanitarian law by Israel. The culture of impunity, by which perpetrators of violations anticipate that they will not be brought to justice for their crimes, has allowed these violations to occur each year. Efforts to redress this situation should include criminal responsibility for perpetrators and the right to an effective remedy for victims.

97. The Committee was extremely concerned about efforts by Israel to transfer the occupied population from strategic areas of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in contravention of its obligations under international humanitarian law. Forced evictions, home demolitions, the wall and revocation of residency rights resulted in forced displacement. Moreover, new legislation in the form of Military Orders Nos. 1649 and 1650 opened the door to wide-scale forced transfer or deportation.

98. The Committee was equally concerned about policies of collective punishment of the occupied Palestinian population, whether by means of the blockade on Gaza's 1.5 million inhabitants or by the restrictions on movement, including those resulting from the wall and its gate and permit regime. This overall closure policy, coupled with policies of separation of the West Bank from the Gaza Strip, resulted in a broad range of violations, not only of the right to freedom of movement but also of others, such as the rights to health, education and an adequate standard of living. In addition, the Committee noted ongoing practices and policies that discriminate against the Palestinian and Syrian populations, in contravention of Israel's international obligations.

99. Despite a partial and temporary moratorium in the West Bank brokered by the United States of America, evidence showing Israel's determination to continue its longstanding settlement enterprise in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and in the occupied Syrian Golan, was of great concern to the Committee. Israel's actions in this regard violate international humanitarian law, United Nations resolutions and political agreements, such as the road map for peace.

B. Recommendations

100. The Special Committee wishes to make the following recommendations, including reiterating some of the recommendations made in its previous report (A/64/339):

(a) The General Assembly should:

(i) Consider all means at its disposal to enable the Special Committee to fulfil its

responsibilities, as mandated by the General Assembly, including with regard to access to the territories occupied by Israel since 1967; and allow access to United Nations agencies to the occupied Syrian Golan;

(ii) Urge Member States to implement the recommendations of the Special Committee, and intensify diplomatic efforts, including the imposition of appropriate sanctions to enforce Israel's compliance with relevant United Nations resolutions, particularly Security Council resolutions, and with international humanitarian and human rights law;

(iii) Urge the Security Council and Member States to ensure the implementation of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, in which the Assembly requested Israel to comply with its legal obligation to cease the construction of the wall in the occupied territory; dismantle the segments already built; repeal all legislative and regulatory acts adopted in view of the construction of the wall; and make reparation for the damage arising from its construction;

(iv) Urge the Security Council and Member States to enforce Security Council resolution 497 (1981) and similar relevant resolutions on the status of the occupied territories, including the occupied Syrian Golan, which declared the annexation of the occupied territories illegal;

(v) Request the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to take concrete measures, in respect of their obligations under article 1, to ensure respect for the Convention by Israel.

(b) The Government of Israel should:

(i) Stop its policies of confiscating land and of expanding settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan, which are contrary to international law; and ensure that Israeli forces protect Palestinian civilians and their property against settler violence, by carrying out prompt and thorough investigations and bringing to justice those responsible;

(ii) Restore freedom of movement for Palestinians throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory by lifting the closure regime, and stop building roads accessible only to Israeli settlers and citizens and preventing access by Palestinians, in particular women and children, to their fields, schools, places of work, hospitals and other health-care facilities, as well as the passage of ambulances;

(iii) End the closure and collective punishment of the people of Gaza, and take urgent steps to end the current man-made crisis;

(iv) Cease construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and comply fully with the provisions of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and all provisions of General Assembly resolution ES-10/15;

(v) Guarantee to prisoners and detainees from the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan a fair trial and detention conditions, in accordance with international humanitarian and human rights law;

(vi) Establish an independent and transparent system of accountability that

ensures prompt and impartial investigations, that perpetrators are brought to justice and that victims enjoy the right to an effective remedy;

(vii) Refrain from obstructing the work of human rights defenders and peaceful civil activists and support and protect them in the context of their work;

(viii) Stop all measures that result in the forcible displacement of Palestinians from their land, including by repealing Military Orders Nos. 1649 and 1650 or amending them to ensure their compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law;

(ix) Urgently comply with resolution 497 (1981), which annuls the Israeli decision on the annexation of the occupied Syrian Golan, and end its occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan;

(x) Implement the concluding observations and recommendations of United Nations treaty bodies and special procedures mechanisms, and the recommendations of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to the Human Rights Council;

(xi) Facilitate visits of separated families located in the Syrian Golan and the occupied Syrian Golan, pending a resolution to the conflict;

(xii) Clear all landmines in occupied territory, notably in the occupied Syrian Golan;

(xiii) Cooperate with the Special Committee and grant it full access to the occupied territories, in order to fulfil its

mandate and with a view to holding direct consultation with the Israeli authorities concerned on issues of concern.

(c) The Palestinian Authority should:

Abide by its obligations under international human rights and international humanitarian law.

X. DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION REPORTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS ON RECONSTRUCTION OF GAZA AND EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL ASSISTANCE IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

Under items 36 and 37 of the provisional agenda of the Executive Board, the UNESCO Director-General on 30 August 2010 issued the reports on resolutions and decisions concerning the educational and cultural institutions in the Occupied Arab Territories as well as the reconstruction and development of Gaza. Excerpts of the texts of the reports are reproduced below (UNESCO 185 EX/36 and UNESCO 185 EX/37:

Implementation of 35C/Resolution 75 and 184 EX/Decision 30 concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories

Summary

This document is presented in compliance with 35C/Resolution 75 and 184 EX/Decision 30. It summarizes progress made by UNESCO since the 184th session of the Executive Board in providing assistance to the Palestinian people and their educational and cultural institutions, as well as to such institutions in the occupied Syrian Golan.

I. Introduction

1. The present document reports on progress achieved in the implementation of UNESCO assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA) and to relevant stakeholders

in the Palestinian Territories and the occupied Syrian Golan, since February 2010.

2. The first part of the present document reports on progress achieved in providing assistance, in the Organization's fields of competence, to the Palestinian people and its institutions. Part II provides information on UNESCO's assistance in the occupied Syrian Golan. Information regarding UNESCO's response to the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip is reported in document 185 EX/37.

I. UNESCO's assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territories

Education

3. During the period under review, and in parallel to its education response to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, UNESCO

consolidated its assistance to the PA Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE). This is in accordance with the four major priority areas agreed upon during the 8th Joint UNESCO/PA Committee Meeting (March 2008), namely: teacher education, educational planning, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and science education.

4. The focus of UNESCO's technical assistance to the MoEHE in the area of **teacher education** remained on the implementation of the National Teacher Education Strategy (TES). Within the programme on **"Quality Systems for Quality Teachers"**, funded by the European Union (€3.6 million), technical assistance continued to be provided for developing systems and operational frameworks needed for the successful implementation of the TES, particularly through support to the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession (CDTP). As part of this programme, major CDTP's achievements include: National Professional Standards for Teachers; a licensing scheme; a code of conduct for teachers and a teachers' database. A comprehensive Communication Strategy was also developed for the CDTP, whose implementation is under way. Finally, a stakeholders' workshop was organized in Ramallah in May 2010 in partnership with ILO, UNRWA and the MoEHE, focusing on awareness-raising regarding the ILO/ UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers (1966), and on addressing some of the major challenges of the national teacher education reform.

5. In the area of **educational planning and management**, UNESCO continued to support the development of MoEHE's capacities in planning, administrative and managerial skills, both at the central and decentralized levels, through promoting the

implementation of the Education Development Strategic Plan (2008-2012) in a System Wide Approach (SWAP) context and developing the capacities of the National Institute for Educational Training (NIET). In this context, three educational planners from the MoEHE participated in two advanced courses at IIEP on strengthening the capacities of the MoEHE to plan, implement, review and manage its national Education Development Strategic Plan.

6. In the field of **Non-Formal Education** UNESCO supported the establishment of a Non-Formal Education Supportive Centre in the old city of Nablus, together with French cooperation. Respective financial contributions were US \$23,400 and €10,000. The aim of this Centre is to provide better learning opportunities for children and youth, enhance their educational abilities and prevent them from dropping out of school. The centre is currently providing catch-up courses to assist 134 Palestinian pupils, from 2nd to 6th grades in different subjects and free-of-charge tutoring for students preparing for their final end-of-school Tawjihee exam. The centre will also provide an outreach facility for educational, cultural and social activities in two area C communities, identified by the United Nations HCT, as being of priority concern.

Culture

7. During the reporting period, UNESCO broadened its strategic cooperation with PA line ministries and local authorities, as well as with civil society for the safeguarding of Palestinian cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible.

8. In February 2010, UNESCO, in cooperation with the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) and major Palestinian

Universities, organized three seminars on “Urban Conservation Planning” in Hebron, Ramallah and Nablus, targeting civil society, in particular university students, to address one of the priority sectors for the safeguarding of Palestinian cultural heritage.

9. The MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F) Joint Programme for “Culture and Development in the oPt”, led by UNESCO, in cooperation with FAO, UNIFEM and UNDP and funded by the Government of Spain (\$3 million, of which \$1,514,437 is implemented by UNESCO) entered its second year of implementation. Main achievements included: (i) the endorsement of the MoC “Sector Strategy for Culture and Heritage” by PA relevant bodies; (ii) the delivering of the first training course on “Culture and gender mainstreaming”, while other six topics were jointly identified for the inter-ministerial capacity-building programme for PA civil servants; (iii) a partnership between the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music and two community-based organizations to initiate a two-year music-teaching programme in Hebron’s governorate.

Bethlehem and its Governorate

10. Within the project **Riwaya Museum – Bethlehem**, funded by the Government of Norway (\$1,323,631), substantive progress was made regarding refurbishing the premises of the basement of the Bethlehem Peace Center which will host the museum.

11. Within the framework of the **Bethlehem Area Conservation and Management Plan**, funded by the Government of Italy (\$500,000), the “Guidelines for the Conservation and Rehabilitation of the Historic Towns of Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour” were

endorsed by all key stakeholders in March 2010, thus marking a milestone towards the protection of historical urban fabrics in the Palestinian Territories. The publication of the project results and the final evaluation will conclude the current phase of the project, which shall enable UNESCO to submit a proposal for the second and last phase addressing the preparation of the set of plans identified during the first phase.

12. The project **Safeguarding Historical and Environmental Resources Towards Sustainable Development in the Bethlehem Governorate**, funded by the Government of Norway (\$115,000), is concluded: the “Battir Landscape Plan”, a first-of-its-kind tool for the safeguarding of cultural landscape, has been submitted for approval to the Local Village Council. The first direct achievement of the plan is the approval in June 2010 of a €625,000 project to establish the Battir Landscape Ecomuseum, funded through the Palestinian Municipality Support Programme by the Italian Decentralized Cooperation. In May 2010, UNESCO signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Battir Village Council to provide the new project with technical assistance for its implementation, while progressing with the formulation of another United Nations Joint Programme: “Safeguarding Bethlehem Western Villages”.

Nablus

13. In the context of the project **Old City of Nablus Renovation – Restoration and Adaptive Re-use of Khan al-Wakala**, funded by the European Union (\$2,387,822), the Yard School for the Conservation of the Khan using traditional building techniques was reactivated for the implementation of the conservation works, as well as the

reconstruction of the main entrance of the building. In July 2010, a new contract with Towers Nablus for Investment and Construction for the finishing works was awarded for \$773,213.

14. Further to the signature of the Plan of Operations of the project **Tell Balata Archaeological Park – Scientific Research, Conservation and Site Management** funded by the Government of the Netherlands (\$431,655) in July 2010, the University of Leiden started the field work jointly with MoTA, bringing archaeology students from the Netherlands to work together with their Palestinian colleagues to clean the archaeological site and prepare it for excavations.

Jericho

15. The project **Protection of the mosaics at Qasr Hisham Archaeological Park – Archaeological excavations and executive design for the protective shelters of the Great Bath Hall and visitors’ facilities at the site**, funded by the Czech Republic (\$56,540), was completed. In May 2010, a two-week workshop to develop the concept design for the entire site of Qasr Hisham was organized. On this occasion, Professor Peter Zumthor launched the proposal of translating his idea of an “emotional reconstruction” of the Great Bath Hall, named “House of the Mosaics”, into an actual design that is currently being considered for funding from interested donors for the realization of the structure.

Jordan Valley

16. Within the framework of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security Joint Programme **Livelihood Protection and Sustainable Empowerment of**

Vulnerable, Rural and Refugee Communities in the Jordan Valley funded by the Government of Japan (\$4,629,085, of which \$1,033,620 is earmarked for UNESCO), UNESCO started consultation with the community-based organization Jordan Valley Solidarity Campaign, in order to establish a partnership in the targeted communities. Field visits focusing on the revival of earthen architecture will be undertaken during the mission of the Director of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security in July 2010.

Social and Human Sciences

17. UNESCO’s assistance continued to focus on reinforcing the institutional and human capacities of the **Palestinian Women’s Research and Documentation Centre (PWRDC)**. In the field of research, the Centre has developed a new strategy for the selection of research topics and studies to be commissioned in order to enhance its quality. Since January 2010, fact sheets and policy papers on different topics related to gender were produced, while the Centre’s library is being enriched with new books for public and research use as well as an academic database. In addition, two conferences on the situation of women in the Palestinian territories were conducted, with around 70 participants from line ministries and civil society. Additional outreach and training activities were also conducted for staff of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (along with other ministries), women’s civil society organizations and research institutes to train and sensitize a new generation of researchers on gender issues in their research and work.

Communication and Information

18. On the occasion of the **World Press Freedom Day** (WPFD) on 3 May, UNESCO supported the participation of a MAAN News Agency's staff at the WPFD Conference, which was held in Australia. UNESCO also supported the Birzeit University Media Development Center to design and produce a one minute animated TV spot for the WPFD, broadcasted in five local television stations from 29 April to 3 May 2010. Birzeit University also provided editing, layout, design and illustration for a handbook on good practices in journalism to be published soon.

19. A work plan, time schedule and project proposal for the **promotion and safeguarding of the Palestinian audiovisual heritage** are under preparation.

20. A local consultant was engaged to conduct a 20-hour training programme for 12 Palestinian participants (journalists and media students) under the project **Developing Humanitarian news reporting in WAFA** (\$20,000 funded from IPDC). The training took place at the end of June and provided basic skills to cover humanitarian news and the production of humanitarian news items.

21. Also during the reporting period, the second phase of a two-year project **Strengthening Palestinian Participatory Democracy and Public Dialogue** (\$240,000 funded by UNDEF) began in January 2010. Activities are focused on promoting participatory democracy through public debates, workshops and talk show programmes on local radio and television. Radio training for media professionals has already been completed in Ramallah and

TV-training will take place over the coming months. As part of this project, a blog site of Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, housed on AMIN's website, is to be launched imminently.

22. Finally, with the aim of **Capacity-building on the reporting on climate change and humanitarian information in media**, UNESCO is working with WATAN TV to train 20 media professionals in reporting on sustainable development and climate change. Twelve monthly television magazine programmes will be produced and broadcasted on the same subject with public campaign events to be organized through schools, municipalities, communities, institutions and supermarkets.

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Report by the Director-General on the reconstruction and development of Gaza: implementation of 184/EX/Decision 31

Summary

This document is presented in compliance with 184 EX/Decision 31. It summarizes progress made by UNESCO since the 184th session of the Executive Board in providing assistance to the reconstruction and development of the Gaza Strip.

...

Education

3. Implementation of all the five projects funded by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah's Office (Qatar) is now well under way, namely: (i) emergency support to higher education institutions; (ii) training on the

Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies; (iii) provision of emergency secondary education in non-UNRWA schools; (iv) promotion of schools as safe zones; (v) crisis planning and management for affected school principals and district-level officials. In March and June 2010, the Steering Committee for the UNESCO/Office of Her Highness' Partnership on Education in Conflict-Affected Areas met in Doha and gave a positive evaluation to the progress achieved in the implementation of the five projects. During the reporting period, the following activities were implemented.

4. **Support to higher education.** An assessment report regarding e-learning capacity in Gaza universities was completed in January 2010. Based on its findings, planning of activities to re-equip scientific university laboratories is under way, in line with the recent changes regarding access of goods to the Gaza Strip. Also under this project, fee waiver grants to support students in four universities (Al Aqsa, Al Azhar, Islamic University and Al Quds) are being finalized for the first semester.

5. Over seven hundred educational staff from the Ministry, NGOs and universities have been taking part in training sessions on **the INEE minimum standards**. The training led by master trainers (trained in 2009) will be completed in August 2010.

6. Under the **provision of emergency secondary education** project, 3,209 twelfth grade (final year) students benefited from two months of intensive Tawjihee exam preparation classes and 262 teachers were trained in 25 educational locations across the Gaza Strip. In addition to this, remedial educational classes (including a component

of psychosocial support) were offered to over 1,500 students in tenth and eleventh grades of secondary school. Classes were led by 150 teachers who received 2 to 3 days of training in appropriate pedagogical methods prior to the beginning of the project. Planning is currently under way for summer camps that will take place in July and August 2010.

7. **Schools as safe zones.** A consultant has been identified to formulate a capacity development plan benefiting local organizations to strengthen their monitoring, reporting and advocacy around the Right to Education in the oPt. In addition, key issues regarding access and quality will be highlighted over the summer period in an education-related campaign conducted with other United Nations and INGO partners, with input from UNESCO.

8. **Crisis planning and management.** With a view to supporting the gradual recovery and strengthening of the education system, a psychosocial assessment on the impact of the Gaza crisis on the education system by the Colombia Group for Children in Armed Conflict was completed in June 2010. The study will now be promoted and integrated into project planning for the education sector for both UNESCO's work and that of the broader humanitarian community.

9. In the area of **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**, an overall assessment of TVET opportunities for youth in Gaza with a particular focus on girls and women was conducted in late January 2010, which pointed out urgent needs and longer-term gaps to be addressed. These findings were presented at a stakeholder workshop held in Gaza in May 2010, which discussed how to

best ensure a coordinated response to address these gaps.

Culture

10. In April 2010, on the occasion of the annual celebration of the World Heritage Day, UNESCO supported the Islamic University of Gaza (IUG) in organizing the **“Second International Conference on Architectural Conservation”**. The conference focused on knowledge sharing in the field of conservation, rehabilitation and management of historic buildings and sites, as well as facilitating regional and international partnerships and networking. As part of this cooperation, the IUG Engineering Studies and Consultancy Centre submitted a proposal to UNESCO concerning the **“Conservation of the site of Tell Umm Amer (Saint Hilarion Monastery)”**, which was included in the “Inventory of Cultural and Natural Heritage Sites of potential Outstanding Universal Value in Palestine”. The proposal was subsequently presented to the French Cooperation, which, in June 2010, approved a fund of €80,000 to support the emergency activities for the protection of the site.

Communication and Information.

11. The **Communication and Information** Sector has conducted several activities in response to the Gaza emergency. Under the initiative “Empowering the Isolated and Marginalized Young People in the Gaza Strip”, funded by UNESCO’s Goodwill Ambassadors Ute-Henriette Ohoven and Marianna Vardinoyannis (for the total of US \$55,000), training in blogging were carried out in the Gaza Strip for the benefit of journalists, women, academics and NGOs. Six workshops were conducted for 33 trainees and one workshop was addressed to AMIN’s staff in Gaza. A video-conference between bloggers in Gaza and the West Bank was also organized in June 2010.

12. As part of the project “Strengthening the safety and protection of journalists and the press freedom in the Gaza Strip” funded by Finland (\$143,884) planning advanced for a safety training workshop to take place in September 2010. It will target 40 Palestinian journalists providing much needed psychosocial support and protective training allowing the journalists to identify the risks involved in various reporting situations, provide emergency first aid to fellow journalists following attacks and deal with stressful situations.

XI. SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR REPORTS ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

On 30 August 2010, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon transmitted to the General Assembly the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Richard Falk. The summary and recommendations of the report are reproduced below (A/65/331):

Summary

The present report considers developments relevant to the obligations of Israel under international law, as well as the situation of people living in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Emphasis is given to the cumulative impact of Israeli policies in the West Bank and East Jerusalem arising from prolonged occupation, which exhibits features of colonialism and apartheid, as well as transforming a de jure condition of occupation into a circumstance of de facto annexation.

These developments encroach on the inalienable Palestinian right of self-determination in fundamentally detrimental ways. Attention is also devoted to habitual concerns involving settlement growth in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, the problems posed by the continued construction of the separation wall, issues of collective punishment, and a variety of other human rights concerns, including concern over the health-related and other adverse impacts of the continuing blockade of the 1.5 million residents of Gaza, consideration of the “Freedom Flotilla” incident of 31 May 2010 and the continuing effort to assess whether Israel and the responsible Palestinian authorities have carried out adequate investigations of war crimes allegations arising from the Gaza conflict of 2008-2009.

IV. Recommendations

19. A study of the legal, political, social, cultural and psychological impact of prolonged occupation should be undertaken by the Human Rights Council, perhaps in conjunction with the Government of Switzerland, which is reportedly considering a similar inquiry.

20. Palestinian legal rights, including the right of self-determination, must be fully respected and implemented in all attempts at a peaceful resolution of the conflict between the two peoples.

21. The recommendations of the Goldstone report should be implemented without further delay, in accordance with the conclusions reached by the Committee of Experts established by Human Rights Council resolution 13/9.

22. The United Nations should lend its support to the worldwide boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign, so long as Israel unlawfully occupies Palestinian territories, and the United Nations should endorse a non-violent “legitimacy war” as an alternative to both failed peace negotiations and armed struggle, as the best available means of promoting the rights of the civilian population of the occupied Palestinian territory, as specified by international humanitarian law.

XII. BUREAU OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE ISSUES STATEMENT ON THE RESUMPTION OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

In a letter dated 31 August 2010, the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People Paul Badji transmitted to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon the Bureau's statement issued on the same day on the resumption of peace negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians on the permanent status issues. The text of the statement is reproduced below (A/64/909-S/2010/467):

The Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People welcomes the decision of the Israeli and Palestinian sides to resume direct negotiations towards resolving all permanent status issues. We wish to express our appreciation to the members of the Quartet, including the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to the Arab League, and other members of the international community for their untiring and constructive efforts in support of this initiative. The summit to be convened in Washington, D.C. by the United States Administration to launch the negotiations is broadly supported by the international community.

We are looking forward to a serious, time-bound, credible and comprehensive political dialogue with a clear agenda and terms of reference aimed at resolving, by the 2011 target date, as called for by the Quartet, all the permanent status issues, including the status of Jerusalem and the question of Palestine refugees in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions, bringing about an end to the Israeli occupation, and leading to the establishment of a viable, sovereign and contiguous Palestinian State on the basis of the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living in peace and security with its neighbours.

For the ultimate success of this endeavour, it is imperative that the parties scrupulously comply with their existing commitments, particularly those undertaken within the framework of the Road Map, and refrain from unlawful measures, destabilizing unilateral steps on the ground and provocations, which could jeopardize the outcome of the negotiations. To this end, the current Israeli partial moratorium on settlement construction must be maintained and expanded to include a complete ban on all settlement construction without exception, including in East Jerusalem. Israel should dismantle settlement outposts without delay and conditions, as called for in the Road Map. The evictions, house demolitions and revocations of residency rights in East Jerusalem also must stop.

It is crucial that during this round the parties build on the progress achieved during the previous rounds of permanent status negotiations. We are also looking forward to a sustained and vigorous engagement by the international community, extending beyond the inaugural summit, which would translate into a credible mechanism to hold the parties to their obligations, monitor progress, and ensure that the negotiating process is conducted in good faith. The planned presence of representatives from Egypt and Jordan during the talks in an observer capacity is a groundbreaking and welcome

step, which should be sustained and built upon.

The Bureau wishes to emphasize the importance of supportive diplomatic action within the region, including by the League of Arab States, and centred around the Arab Peace Initiative. Potential progress on the Israeli-Palestinian track should be buttressed by a parallel revitalization of the other tracks of the Middle East peace process, leading to a reinvigorated engagement with all stakeholder Governments and culminating in a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict as a whole.

Sustained action by the international community in the diplomatic arena in pursuit of a political settlement should go hand in hand with increased and generous support by donors for the Palestinian Authority's plans to build the essential institutional foundations of a future Palestinian State. For its part, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People will continue its constructive engagement in support of the Middle East peace process, until the conflict is resolved in all its aspects in accordance with international law, and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty, and the right of return of the refugees are fully realized.

XIII. UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL COORDINATOR FOR THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS ISSUES STATEMENT ON THE KILLING OF FOUR ISRAELIS IN HEBRON

The following statement was issued on 31 August 2010 by the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Robert H. Serry:

The UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert Serry, is shocked by the news of this evening's killing of four Israelis in an attack on a car in the West Bank. We condemn this murderous act and call for those responsible to be brought

to justice. Robert Serry urges all parties not to allow the enemies of peace to affect the negotiations about to be launched, and to progress with determination and courage on behalf of both peoples, towards a final settlement.