

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Permanent Mission of the  
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  
to the United Nations  
New York



البعثة الدائمة  
لدولة الامارات العربية المتحدة  
لدى الأمم المتحدة  
نيويورك

**Statement by**

**Mr. Hamad Obaid Alzaabi**

**Member of the Delegation of the United Arab Emirates**

**before**

**the Fourth Committee**

**62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**on the item entitled:**

**United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the  
Near-East (UNRWA)**

**New York, 7 November 2007**

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Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Delegation of the United Arab Emirates, I would like to thank Ms. Karen Abuzayd, the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near-East (UNRWA) for the valuable information contained in her opening statement today and her recent report included in document (A/62/13) which has clearly reflected the suffering of the Palestinian refugees in the occupied territories and in the neighboring countries.

Mr. Chairman,

The UAE Delegation, which has closely monitored the substantial efforts made by UNRWA in the area of providing basic humanitarian services to more than 4,600,000 millions Palestinian refugees, is deeply alarmed at the continuing deterioration of the human and social conditions of the refugees during the last few months, especially in north and south Lebanon where the violent attacks which targeted Nahr Al Bared Camp have resulted in the displacement of all of its inhabitants once again and caused significant losses in its infrastructure. This is in addition to the losses caused in Gaza and West Bank as a result of the systematic Israeli aggressive acts against the Palestinians which included excessive violence and mass punishment in all its forms, such as bombing, destruction, imposition of curfews and internal and external closures in cities, villages and refugees camps. Other Israeli practices included the ongoing construction of the separation wall in the West Bank and around Jerusalem, resulting in the destruction of additional thousands of acres of Palestinian lands, including their natural resources and water, the displacement of additional thousands of Palestinians, and disruption of their educational, economic and social activities. All these conditions have aggravated the humanitarian and social crisis of the Palestinians and led to raising the levels of deprivation, poverty and unemployment especially among the Palestinian refugees who suffered more than their share over the last six decades due to Israel's denial of their legitimate right to return to their homeland, which they were forcibly uprooted from.

Our sense of disappointment was heightened by these violations and other Israeli restrictions which have severely damaged the structures and installations of UNRWA in Gaza and West Bank and its humanitarian relief activities aimed at helping Palestinian refugees and enhancing their development, which, in our opinion, requires the international community, represented in the United Nations, to shoulder its moral, legal, and humanitarian responsibilities in order to resolve the refugees question in accordance with the principles of international legality, including facilitating access of Palestinian refugees to humanitarian and emergency assistance and other developmental assistance.

While we strongly condemn grave violations and crimes committed by Israel in the Palestinian territories and camps, we affirm that the settlement of the Palestinian refugees issue is an inseparable part of the final resolution of the Palestinian question, which means a just, lasting and comprehensive solution for this question including the

exercise of the unconditional right of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and be compensated for the financial and moral losses they suffered over the years of their displacement, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, especially 181 and 194. In this context, we also reiterate our position calling upon the international community to demand Israel, the occupying power, to cease its constant attacks against the Palestinian refugees camps, and remove all obstacles placed in the way of the Agency and its emergency and relief assistance programs directed to the Palestinian communities in observance of its legal obligations, and in accordance with the relevant international legitimate resolutions and provisions of international law, including the 1967 Comay-Michelmore Agreement and the Fourth Geneva Convention and its protocols.

Mr. Chairman,

While the UAE appreciates the programs of and measures taken by UNRWA towards improving healthcare, educational and social services provided to the Palestinian refugees communities, we are concerned at the continuing financial shortfall in the Agency's regular budget, where the financing gap has become US\$ 71.5 millions in 2006, anticipated to reach US\$ 100 millions this year, which has adversely affected its development programs and plans in many areas of its operation, as well as the quality and type of services provided to the refugees, including the implementation of urgent humanitarian relief programs and emergency plans for camps which are affected by violence and blockades.

Therefore my country reiterates its call to all State members including donor countries and regional and international donor institutions to double their regular and non-regular contributions to UNRWA's budget, and in this context we declare that our country has decided to double its annual contribution towards UNRWA's budget in order to enable it to perform its humanitarian mandate for which it was established, and implement projects aimed at adequately meeting the needs of refugees, especially in densely populated areas where population levels have exceeded relevant international standards, and in order to meet other humanitarian needs resulted from the worsening conditions of refugees and the reduction of its services in areas of education, health, relief and social services, microfinance and structures, and development of camps. In this context, we emphasize the importance of the following:

- 1- Assist the agency to accomplish its management reform especially in areas of human resources, leadership and management, organizational processes and program management in order to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of its programs, and improve methods of providing its services to the refugees.
- 2- Reaffirm the importance of enabling the agency to fulfill its mandate in the five main regions of operations without discrimination, both at the levels of humanitarian services and privileges and immunities granted to its workers in

parallel with the privileges granted to the UN personnel who are working in the region, especially risk allowances since events have proved that UNRWA's staff are the most vulnerable in the areas where they perform their humanitarian operations due to the increasing Israeli aggressive acts.

- 3- Help the agency to develop the infrastructure of the Palestinian camps, and provide welfare programs for women, older persons, children and youth including those with disabilities, in order to increase their access to education, whether vocational or technical, create new jobs, maximize their economic independence, and reduce the extreme poverty in their communities.
- 4- Enable the agency to involve refugee communities in the process of designing and implementing social services for refugees, especially the most vulnerable, the poorest and the most affected refugees, including the implementation of emergency programs aimed at addressing violence and crises in their communities and areas.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, the UAE reaffirms its solidarity and support to the Palestinian refugee issue, and hopes that our deliberations would continue on this item and would help in alleviating their sufferings, improving their humanitarian conditions, ensuring their safe return to their stolen homes and in establishing their independent Palestinian State, with Al Quds Al Shareef as its capital.

Thank you Mr. Chairman,