

EGYPT



مصر

The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

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**Statement
Of the Delegation of the Arab Republic of Egypt**

**Before
The Special Political and Decolonization Committee**

On Agenda Item: 31

**“United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian
Refugees in the Near East”**

**New York
1 November 2006**

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to express our gratitude to Mrs. Karen Koning AbuZayd, the Commissioner-General of the UNRWA, for her briefing at the opening of the debate on this item, which represent a special importance for Egypt based on its firm commitment to defend the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people till the establishment of there independent and sovereign State with Jerusalem as its capital.

Mr. Chairman,

Undoubtedly the UNRWA had played an important role, and for more than half a century, to address humanitarian situation of the Palestinian refugees and to present support for them, but, and unfortunately, the suffering of the Palestinian people continues to increase because of the continued deterioration in the humanitarian conditions in the West Bank and Gaza, and because of the occupation practices like continued military assaults and severe restrictions on freedom of movement, which impede the appropriate atmosphere for settlement efforts and impose more burden on the work of the agency which also suffers from reiterated blockage of cross borders and escalation of violence, in addition to the financing gap that affects its capability to continue providing services to more than 4.3 million inscribed Palestinian refugees.

Mr. Chairman,

Related to what comes before, Egypt express its concern toward what had been mentioned in the report of the Commissioner-General about the increase of difficulties and harder ship that faces UNRWA' s as result of occupation practices and lack of political horizon for political settlement. Egypt would like also to emphasize the importance of exercising much more efforts by the Agency in order to achieve its great humanitarian assignment and to improve its role in the relief of the Palestinian people tragedy, taking into account the important observations stated in the report, which need a new comprehensive vision that guarantee its effective treatment as follows:

First: The continuous severe deterioration in the humanitarian, political, and economic situation in the occupied Palestinian territories during the period of the report, which cover also the first half of the actual year. Averages of poverty, unemployment, food insecurity and economic stagnation continued to increase because of the suspension of international assistance, also level of basic public services in the sectors of health, water, and energy had been retreated, in addition to the augmentation of the displaced people numbers as result of violence and Israeli aggressions.

Second: The continuance severe movement restrictions and blockage policy combined with curfews, side by side with the establishment of military zones and check points by Israeli army, which increase the suffer of population in the occupied Palestinian territories and impose restrictions and difficulties that impede the agency from providing needed humanitarian services for Palestinian refugees, specially in what related to the provision of emergency assistance to address Israeli military operations consequences. In this context, I would like to highlight what was reflected in the report about the effect of Israel blockage policy, and how it had impeded refugees from accessing to their families, places of work, schools, medical services, and same in Gaza which faces now a very difficult humanitarian and political situation that we are wary about the dangerous of its continuation.

Third: The importance of removing all restrictions imposed by the occupied authorities on the ability of the agency to provide humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza refugees camps. The reports give us a live picture of several cases where UNRWA's staff has been target to significant movement restrictions and detention; also UNRWA's vehicles have been restricted from moving which affected the agency work and ability to exercise its mission.

Fourth: The importance of easing freedom of movement in the occupied Palestinian territories and across borders, related to the implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access, combined with the permanent reopening of "Rafah" cross border and other cross borders to guarantee the delivery of food supply and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians, to tone down their extreme feelings of frustration and isolation, and to set up better circumstances for rebuilding of confidence and moving towards the resumption of settlement process.

Fifth: Poverty and humanitarian hardship had increased because of the construction of the Wall in the West Bank. The Wall that Egypt reemphasizes its illegality and the importance of stopping its construction and demolishing its existing parts. This should be in respect from Israel to the International Court of Justice advisory opinion on the illegality of the construction of the Wall on the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and in consideration of the humanitarian, economic, and political consequences of that construction.

Six: The agency ability to do its role in Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan could be affected negatively in the future because of the lack of political horizon and the suspension of all peace negotiations aiming to establish the independent Palestinian state and assuring Israel evacuation from all occupied Arab territories in 1967, that's should be trough the start of final solution negotiations in order to reach a comprehensive settlement to the Israeli Arab conflict and fare from any unilateral measures.

Seventh: The importance of addressing, and in the best effective way, the financial problem of the agency and the diminution of its resources, through the respect of the priority that represent the Palestinian refugees problem, and to strength the donor countries interest in providing needed finance and responding to the international humanitarian appeals and special appeals related to emergency assistance, that's in order to make the agency capable of achieving its assignment and responding to the needs emerging from Israel continued incursions in the Palestinian cities and camps. We welcome in this regard the enlargement of the membership of the agency Advisory Committee and the convening of its inaugural session in February 27, 2006 then its meeting in June for considering the agency strategy for development.

At the end, and in addition to what had been stated, the delegation of Egypt would like to reemphasize its full support to the efforts done by the UNRWA, and its willingness to present all needed support to help the agency in achieving its noble mission and fully carrying its role in serving the brother Palestinian People.

Thank you Mr. Chairman,