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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 Rashid Nasseb Almansoori**

Member of the Delegation of the United Arab Emirates

before

the Fourth Committee  
Special Political & Decolonization  
61<sup>st</sup> Session of the General Assembly

on the item entitled:

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

New York, 31 October, 2006

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, my Delegation 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, which has clearly reflected the dire humanitarian situation and difficult conditions of the Palestinian displaced refugees in internal and external refugees camps which have resulted from the continued Israeli occupation of their homeland.

Mr. Chairman,

For the 56<sup>th</sup> consecutive year and since its establishment in 1949, the annual report of UNRWA (contained in document A/61/13) has once again reflected the increased suffering of the Palestinian people and their difficult conditions, which are worsening day after day due to the continued Israeli occupation of their cities and villages, the escalation of military aggressions, and the strict blockades imposed by Israeli forces on Gaza, who are armed with the most dangerous weapons. This is in addition to the deliberate destruction caused to some Palestinian camps during the Israeli treacherous war against Lebanon last July.

Throughout the Israeli gradual occupation of the Palestinian territories, which resulted in the displacement of more than 3.5 million persons, we have never experienced any interruption in their illegal measures in the Palestinian territories which aimed at confiscating and destroying more Palestinian land and properties, including the land used for building the separation wall, and which have resulted in displacing more Palestinians and building new settlements for absorbing thousands of immigrants from all over the world, in absolute disregard for the relevant UN resolutions which have unanimously considered such Israeli practices as null and void.

Mr. Chairman,

The United Arab Emirates, which has been following closely the growing responsibilities of UNRWA in meeting the increasing humanitarian, social and economic repercussions in the Palestinian territories resulting from the continued Israeli aggressions, the wide scale destruction caused to the Palestinian infrastructure, and the suspension of assistance from donor countries, would like to underscore its strong condemnation of the policies followed by the Israeli Government in placing obstacles in the way of the work of the Agency. These obstacles, which included restrictions on movement and detention of the Agency's personnel, imposition of heavy fees on relief supplies, and deliberate destruction of some of its service facilities, have resulted in disrupting most of the UNRWA programs which aimed at extending relief assistance in the areas of health, sanitation, including provision of safe drinking water, education and energy services. This has led to increasing the levels of unemployment, poverty, spread of chronic diseases and food insecurity among the Palestinian refugees, and resulted in one of the most serious breaches of 1946 Convention, which calls for respect for the immunities and privileges of the UN staff, and the 1967 Comay-Michelmore Agreement between Israel and UNRWA, which calls for Israel's respect for the special humanitarian mandate undertaken by the Agency inside the occupied Palestinian territories.

Therefore, the United Arab Emirates, which reaffirms its moral, financial and economic support to the humanitarian programs and activities undertaken by the Agency with a view to improving the living conditions of the displaced Palestinian refugees in the five regions, including its other contributions for rebuilding the Palestinian infrastructure destroyed by the Israeli aggressions, would like to stress the importance of the following:

- I Reaffirming the continued primary responsibility of the international community, particularly the United Nations and its specialized agencies, towards finding a just and lasting solution for the Palestinian refugees, which enables them to exercise their voluntary right to return to their homeland and be compensated for the material and moral damages caused to them during the past decades in implementation of resolution 149, which affirms the natural and legitimate right of the Palestinian refugees to voluntarily return to their homelands and be compensated for the material and moral damages caused to them.
- II Calling upon the international community, especially donor countries and agencies, including specialized financial institutions such as World Bank and others, to maximize their contributions and financial donations to the programs of UNRWA in order to enable it to overcome the major financial difficulties and problems facing its budget, and ensure continuation and expansion of its humanitarian services to the Palestinian camps refugees without affecting their quality or quantity.
- III Calling upon Israel, the occupying power, to cease its policy of repeated attacks and blockades 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 accordance with its legal obligations, and relevant international legitimate resolutions and provisions of international law, including the 1967 Comay-Michelmores Agreement and the Fourth Geneva Convention and its protocols.
- IV Reaffirm the importance of fulfilling the mandate of UNRWA in the five main regions of operations including Gaza Strip, West Bank, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, 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.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, we affirm that the Palestinian refugees' problem cannot be resolved without achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting solution for the Palestinian cause and the Middle East that includes establishment of an independent Palestinian State with Al-Quds Al Sharif as its capital.

Thank you Mr. Chairman,