

## **Statement of Shared Commitments on UNRWA**

We acknowledge and appreciate the work of the United Nations system under the leadership of Secretary-General in the region of the Middle East. In this regard, we particularly emphasize the vital role of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), in accordance with its General Assembly mandate, in providing life-saving assistance to generations of Palestinian refugees through the provision of essential education, health, relief and social services programmes and emergency assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. In this regard we commit to continue:

- Recognizing the important and indispensable role of the Agency in its 75 years of existence and work in assisting the Palestinian refugees and contributing to regional stability, and expressing support for UNRWA to effectively uphold its mandate in all fields of operation;
- Underlining that UNRWA is the backbone of all humanitarian response in Gaza, and recognizing that no organization can replace or substitute UNRWA's capacity;
- Expressing appreciation to the United Nations Secretary General and UNRWA Commissioner-General for their dedication to the UNRWA mandate and mission, consistent with the relevant UN resolutions, and with humanitarian principles, including the principle of neutrality, as demonstrated also by the immediate establishment of the external independent review of UNRWA, the Secretary-General's endorsement of the review's recommendations, and the Commissioner-General's commitment to implement the review's recommendations,
- Underscoring the need for the United Nations Secretary General, UNRWA, and Member States to expeditiously implement the recommendations of the independent review group report;
- Welcoming the immediate initiation of the OIOS investigation into serious allegations made against a number of UNRWA employees, calling for a full and thorough investigation of the allegations, and reiterating the need for full accountability;
- Underscoring appreciation and admiration for the work of the staff of the Agency in all fields of operation in fulfillment of the Agency's mandate and respect for the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence;
- Emphasizing the role of UNRWA as a pillar of regional stability and a lifeline of hope and opportunity for the millions of Palestinian refugees it serves, including children and women, and in this regard recognizing serious humanitarian, political and security risks that would result from any interruption or suspension of its vital work;
- Highlighting concerns about the extremely critical financial situation of the Agency,
- Recognizing the efforts of donors and host countries to respond to the Agency's financial crisis, and the importance of sufficient, predictable and sustained funding support to the Agency;
- Underlining the importance of cooperation of all States and other UN bodies with UNRWA;
- Drawing attention to deliberations at the United Nations in order to further advance the visibility of and support to UNRWA's important work.