



**STATEMENT OF THE BUREAU
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE
INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

28 February 2024

**Bureau Calls for Solidarity and Support to Sustain UNRWA Amidst Smear Campaign,
Funding Suspensions and Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza**

The Bureau of the Committee reaffirms its unwavering support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and its indispensable mission, in accordance with its General Assembly mandate to ensure the well-being, protection and development of the Palestine refugees pending a just solution to their plight on the basis of resolution 194 (III) of 1948. Following the letter from UNRWA's Commissioner-General to the President of the UN General Assembly on 22 February 2024, the Bureau expresses its grave concerns about the catastrophic conditions in Gaza and the hindrances to UNRWA's mandate implementation.

The Bureau recognizes UNRWA's role as a lifeline for Palestine refugees for the past 75 years, offering not just essential services but a sense of hope and stability amidst protracted crisis and injustice. Throughout nearly five months of Israel's war on Gaza, UNRWA has stood as the humanitarian entity with the capacity for large-scale aid delivery to the more than 1.9 million Palestinians displaced, the majority of whom are sheltering at its own facilities, and to facilitate also the work of other humanitarian entities. Recent reports of malnutrition, threats of famine, the spread of disease, and limited access to essential health care among Palestine refugees highlight the urgent need for increased support to UNRWA to implement the Provisional Measures ordered by the International Court of Justice.

The Bureau, therefore, strongly appeals to donors who have suspended funding to UNRWA to reverse such decisions, which severely jeopardize the Agency's humanitarian and stabilizing efforts across the region, particularly in the war-torn Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The Bureau supports the Secretary-General's decision to task an independent investigation into allegations that some UNRWA staff may have been involved in the attacks on Israel on 7 October 2023 and expects Israel's full cooperation with the UN Office for Internal Oversight's investigation.

The demonization of the Agency must stop. The Agency's role extends beyond humanitarian efforts - it symbolizes the international community's commitment to justice, human rights, peace, and refugee rights. Supporting UNRWA means standing with the Palestinian people until the achievement of a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine in accordance with UN resolutions and international law.

The Bureau once more reiterates its urgent appeal for an immediate and lasting ceasefire in Gaza, an end to the forced displacement of Palestinians, and unobstructed access to humanitarian assistance.

END

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