

STATEMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST QUARTET

The following statement by the Middle East Quartet (United Nations, Russian Federation, United States, European Union) was issued on 11 April 2012:

The Quartet — United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, United States Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton — met in Washington, DC on 11 April 2012. They were joined by Quartet Representative Tony Blair and by Foreign Minister of Jordan Nasser Judeh, who briefed the Quartet on Jordan's engagement. The Quartet underscored its support for the positive efforts by King Abdullah of Jordan and Foreign Minister Judeh.

Following its consultation in New York on 12 March 2012, the Quartet reaffirmed its commitment to all elements of its statement of 23 September 2011 and renewed its call on the parties to meet those objectives. The Quartet welcomed plans for dialogue between the parties, and discussed ways to support these efforts.

The Quartet took particular note of the 21 March 2012 Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) meeting in Brussels, and underscored the need for continued international support for the Palestinian Authority's important institution-building efforts. The Quartet encouraged the Palestinian Authority to continue working toward this end. In this regard, the Quartet called on the international community to ensure the contribution of \$1.1 billion in assistance to meet the Palestinian Authority's 2012 recurrent financing requirements. The Quartet welcomed the efforts by the parties to resolve outstanding issues related to tax and customs revenue collection and urged their conclusion as soon as possible.

The Quartet noted with concern the increasing fragility of developments on the ground and called on the parties to work constructively together to take concrete steps to address the Palestinian Authority's fiscal challenges, preserve and build on the Palestinian Authority's institutional gains, and expand economic opportunities for the Palestinian people.

In this respect, the Quartet reaffirmed its commitment, as expressed in its 23 September 2011 statement, to examine possible mechanisms it can actively support going forward, individually and together, to advance peace efforts and strengthen the Palestinian Authority's ability to meet the full range of civil and security needs of the Palestinian people both now and in a future state. The Quartet encouraged the parties, in this context, to cooperate to facilitate the social and economic development of Area C, which is of critical importance for the viability of a future Palestinian state as well as for its Palestinian inhabitants to be enabled to lead a normal life. The Quartet asked Quartet Representative Blair to continue his intensive work with the parties toward this end.

Noting the significant progress on security achieved by the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, the Quartet calls on the Palestinian Authority to continue to make every effort to improve law and order, to fight violent extremism, and to end incitement. The Quartet emphasized the need to continue assisting the Palestinian Authority in building its law enforcement capacity. The Quartet also expressed its concern over ongoing settler violence and incitement in the West Bank and calls on Israel to take effective measures, including bringing the perpetrators of such acts to justice.

The Quartet condemned rocket attacks from Gaza and stressed the need for calm and security for both peoples. The Quartet underscored the importance of continued steps to address the needs of Gaza's residents, and welcomed the Israeli Government's approval at the AHLC meeting of UN priority infrastructure projects in Gaza. Reaffirming its previous positions, the Quartet considers that the situation in and around Gaza remains fragile and unsustainable as long as the West Bank and Gaza are not reunited under the legitimate Palestinian Authority adhering to the PLO commitments.

Reminding both parties of their obligations under the roadmap, the Quartet reiterated its call for them to avoid actions that undermine trust and to focus on positive efforts that can strengthen and improve the climate for a resumption of direct negotiations on the basis of the Quartet's September 23 statement.

The Quartet expressed concern about unilateral and provocative actions by either party, including continued settlement activity, which cannot prejudice the outcome of negotiations, the only way to a just and durable solution to the conflict.

The Quartet underscored its commitment to remain actively engaged in the coming period.
