



## **Bangladesh**

**Statement under the Agenda Item 49: *United Nations Relief Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)* in the Fourth Committee of the 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly on Wednesday, 02 November 2016 in Conference Room 4**

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**Mr. Chairman,**

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) under this agenda item.

My delegation reiterates its appreciation for the invaluable work done by United Nations Relief Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) under difficult circumstances. We thank the Commissioner-General of UNRWA for presenting his comprehensive annual report and his briefing to this Committee on the challenges faced by the Agency during the reporting period.

The absence of a peaceful, just and viable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict contributes to a strong sense of dispossession and injustice among the Palestine refugees. This is further exacerbated by the recurrent armed attacks, violence, expansion of settlements, and other human rights violation many of them witness close to or around their shelters or settlements.

We thank UNRWA for its relentless efforts to provide sustainable, efficient and quality services to the Palestine refugees. We remain confident of the Agency's capacity to fulfill its humanitarian and human development mandates by providing, under enabling circumstances, protection and essential services to the Palestine refugees. We commend the framework set out in UNRWA's Medium-term Strategy for 2016-2021, outlining its strategic outcomes addressing the rights and protection, health, education, livelihoods and basic human needs of the Palestinian refugees.

We remain gravely concerned over the safety and security of the UNRWA staff. There can be no justification for killing and abduction of UN personnel serving on the ground. There can also be no excuse for the wanton destruction of emergency shelters, homes, schools and civilian infrastructure supporting innocent civilian, including refugees among different vulnerable groups. Bangladesh underscores the need for according the highest priority to the protection and safety of UN personnel serving in UNRWA and

other volatile and complex situations, and urges the Security Council to continue remain seized with this critical concern.

The Palestine refugees based in the Syrian Arab Republic are faced with heightened vulnerabilities and deserve added attention from the international community. We take note with appreciation UNRWA's efforts to maintain cooperation with the host country as well as the host communities; and call upon all concerned to ensure the Agency's unhindered access and assistance to the Palestinian refugees.

Currently, UNRWA is providing services to nearly 5.4 million Palestinian refugees, and thus needs sufficient resources to respond to the growing need for humanitarian and emergency services. As the Commissioner-General has noted, UNRWA is now facing a shortfall of funding to the tune of about USD 74 million. We urge international donors to continue supporting the cause of the Palestinian refugees through provision of increased, predictable and sustainable resources for UNRWA and its operations.

Bangladesh will continue to do its part in maintaining advocacy for the Palestinian refugees in line with our unstinting commitment to the international protection regime. As a nation that experienced a large scale refugee crisis during our War of Liberation, Bangladesh expresses its full empathy and solidarity with the protracted plight of the Palestinian refugees around the world.

The international community must deliver on its commitment to 'leave no one behind' by giving due attention to the rights and needs of the Palestinian refugees.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.