**Secretary-General Voices Deep Concern for Humanitarian, Political, Security Consequences of Funding Constraints at Palestinian Refugee Agency**

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The following statement was issued today by the Spokesman for UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon:

In a letter transmitting the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) Commissioner-General’s Special Report to the General Assembly, the Secretary-General expresses his deep concern over the financial situation confronting the Agency and the humanitarian, political and security consequences that will result if adequate and sustainable financing for 2015 and beyond is not made available immediately.

The Secretary-General emphasizes that at a time when crises and human suffering are growing throughout the Middle East, it is imperative that UNRWA, a pillar of stability for a registered population of some 5 million Palestine refugees, is provided with the resources necessary to enable it to continue providing services including education for half a million Palestine refugee children.

The Secretary-General reiterates his full support for the Commissioner-General’s proposals to ensure immediate attention to the gravity of the situation caused by UNRWA’s unprecedented financial shortfall for 2015 and to address urgently the chronic funding issues faced by the Agency for 2016 and beyond.  The Secretary-General, who has personally spoken to several world leaders in the past few weeks on this topic, calls on all donors to urgently ensure that the $100 million required be contributed to UNRWA at the earliest possible date so that the children of Palestine can begin their 2015-2016 school year without delay.