



# BANGLADESH

Please check against delivery

## **Statement by**

**Mr. Tareq Md. Ariful Islam  
First Secretary**

**Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations**

## **On Agenda Item 30:**

**United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine  
Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)**

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Fourth Committee**

New York, 02 November 2005

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by congratulating Madame Karen Koning AbuZayd on her appointment as the Commissioner-General of the UNRWA. I would take this opportunity to affirm my delegation's unqualified support in the dispensation of her duties in the coming years. I also express profound appreciation to her for presenting the comprehensive annual report of the UNRWA. Deep appreciation is also due to Mr. Peter Hansen for his unprecedented nine years of laudable helmsmanship of the Agency.

Mr. Chairman,

The facts contained in the report regarding the behaviour pattern of Israeli authorities are a matter of deep concern. My delegation recognizes the vital role of UNRWA and its contribution to the survival of the Palestinian refugees in the occupied territories. At the same time, we note with concern the decreasing response of the international community to the Agency's appeal for assistance and the resulting under-funding & severe budget shortfall. Besides, as anticipated by the Agency, implementation of the Israeli disengagement plan and the Agency's medium-term plan would require considerable extra-budgetary contributions. In view of the deepening humanitarian crisis, unabated depression of the Palestinian

economy and the growing needs of the refugees, we appeal to the international community to enhance their contributions. We should not eschew our collective moral responsibility to help the Palestinian people towards the fulfilment of their just aspirations for a normal and peaceful life.

Mr. Chairman,

We are happy to know about the Agency's continued endeavour to promote income-generating activities, particularly through the self-sustaining, market-oriented micro-finance and micro-enterprise programme. Bangladesh being the birth-place of the concept of micro-credit finance, it is gratifying for us that operation of this programme was further expanded and it continued to attain financial self-sufficiency, despite severe economic decline in the Palestinian territories. Given the success of the programme, Bangladesh would be happy to share its experiences in this regard to the benefit of the Palestinians as a whole.

Mr. Chairman,

It is encouraging to note the establishment of a comprehensive follow-up process by the Agency to implement the major recommendations of the Geneva Conference held in June 2004. It is also satisfying to find that the Agency has responded well on the recommendations by already embarking on the implementation phase, such as, setting up a working group on stakeholder relations, setting up the Camp Development Unit, undertaking a project to survey and monitor the refugees' socio-economic situations etc. We commend the progress made in the implementation of the Refugee Records Project. This would help ascertain the refugee needs and improve the Agency's refugee management system. We welcome the finalization of the Agency's medium-term plan which would help identify priorities and chalk out long term strategies. My delegation also appreciates the continued undertaking of the UNRWA to improve its management and programme practices through implementation of its internal reform programme.

Mr. Chairman,

We would urge the United Nations to arrange hazard payment for the 12,000 strong contingents of local staff of the Agency who although arguably most exposed to immediate danger, were the only UN staff members not to receive the same.

In closing, may I acknowledge with gratitude the continuing support and services extended by the donor and host countries and relevant agencies to the Palestinian refugees and towards the sustenance of UNRWA and its operations. The Commissioner-General and all the staff of the Agency also deserve a special word of thanks for their unwavering dedication, commitment and hard work in the face of continued adversities.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.