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Permanent Mission of the
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المعثة الدائمة
لدولة الامارات العربية المتحدة
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Statement by

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Member of the Delegation of the United Arab Emirates

before

**the Fourth Committee
60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

on the item entitled:

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

New York, 1 November 2005

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, I would like to thank Ms. Karen Abuzayd, the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near-East (UNRWA) for the valuable information contained in her opening statement today which has clearly reflected the suffering of the Palestinian refugees inside the occupied territories and in the neighboring countries.

I also wish to express our government's appreciation to Mr. Peter Hansen, the former Commissioner-General of UNRWA for his great efforts throughout the last 9 years until his retirement from this office last March towards alleviating the suffering of the Palestinian refugees and fulfilling their basic needs under the difficult and unbearable conditions of occupation.

Mr. Chairman,

Although more than 58 years have passed since the start of the Palestinian Question which witnessed displacement and deportation of thousands of Palestinians, the conditions of the Palestinian population have worsened year after year due to the continuation of occupation, confiscation of Palestinian lands, practices of extreme violence, extrajudicial killings and collective punishment which included the bombing, the demolition of houses as well as the imposition of curfews and internal and external closure on cities, villages and refugees camps in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The situation has further worsened after construction started in the separation wall, which resulted in the destruction of additional thousands of acres of Palestinian lands, including natural resources and water, displacement of additional thousands of Palestinians, restriction on movement, and disruption of educational, economic and social activities. All these conditions have aggravated the humanitarian crisis of the Palestinians and led to raising the levels of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy among the Palestinian refugees who have been denied the right to return to their homeland for the last five years by the consecutive Israeli governments, and who have suffered from the massacres and war crimes committed in cold blood by the Israeli forces especially in Jenin Camp which was totally destroyed as the world looked on.

The Palestinian refugees and their camps were not the only targets of these violations and practices, as the operations of UNRWA and the movement of its staff in the occupied territories were also impeded and interrupted according to the field reports issued by the agency. Recent reports have referred to various matters including the continuation of building a separation wall inside the West Bank which has resulted in the isolation and impoverishment of the Palestinian people living in the adjacent areas, especially families who lived in the area between the wall and the truce line of 1949. The separation wall has also impeded the efforts of the UNRWA to provide emergency humanitarian services to the affected families.

Mr. Chairman,

While we appreciate the efforts of UNRWA towards improving living conditions and providing healthcare, educational, social and environmental basic services to more than 4 thousand Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, we are concerned about the extreme conditions of deprivation and unemployment resulted in some refugee camps due to the imposition of some local laws. We are also alarmed at the insufficient financial resources available to the agency and the adverse impact of that on the infrastructure of the agency and its ability to execute its limited number of development programs and plans and providing quality service programs including the emergency assistance programs executed in Palestinian refugee camps.

Therefore, we call upon states and donor financial institutions such as the World Bank to double their regular and non-regular contributions to UNRWA and to strengthen their efforts aiming at fulfilling the humanitarian needs of the Palestinian refugees inside and outside the occupied territories.

Mr. Chairman,

We have been following closely the developments and implications of the Palestinian cause especially in Gaza Strip, and we consider that the problem of the Palestinian refugees is an inseparable part of this cause as it should be solved within the framework of a just, lasting and comprehensive solution for the Palestinian question and the situation in the Middle East. Such solution must also ensure the unconditional repatriation of the Palestinian refugees and compensation for their financial and moral losses in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, especially resolutions 181 and 194.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, the UAE, which spared no effort in supporting and providing humanitarian and financial assistance to the Palestinian refugees including the reconstruction of camps destroyed by the Israeli military force, the Jenin camp in particular, emphasizes the continuing responsibility of the international community, including the United Nations and its specialized agencies, towards finding a solution for the problem of the Palestinian refugees within the framework of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution for the Palestinian cause.

Thank you Mr. Chairman,