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**STATEMENT BY**  
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**INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**  
**INTRODUCING THE**  
**PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COMMITTEE FOR 2006 (CRP.1)**

*10 February 2006*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Bureau, I would like to introduce the **draft programme of work** of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the year 2006, contained in document **A/AC.183/2006/CRP.1**. The programme reflects the ongoing concerns of the Committee in relation to the present situation and explains how the Committee intends to carry out its mandated activities in the course of the year. The programme of work has been discussed by the Bureau of the Committee and, with your permission, I would now like to describe briefly its contents.

**Section I** (paragraphs 1 to 4) is largely procedural and summarizes the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly adopted at the 60<sup>th</sup> session containing the respective mandates of the Committee, as well as the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Department of Public Information.

**Section II** (paragraphs 5 to 14), outlines **issues of priority** in the Committee's programme of work for 2006. It reaffirms the Committee's view that its programme of activities, mandated by the General Assembly, contributes to focusing the attention of Governments, intergovernmental and civil society organizations and the general public on issues crucial for advancing a peaceful settlement of the conflict. The Committee congratulates the Palestinian people on the successful holding of the elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council. It expresses its sincere hope that the mandate the newly elected Council has received from the Palestinian people will lead to positive developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to new steps aimed at ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The opportunity brought about by the democratic elections must be built on and seized by the parties to try to revitalize peace negotiations based on the principles of international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions. The Committee will continue to promote support for the Road Map and the important work of the Quartet in pursuance of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine. In its activities, the Committee will continue to support all efforts by the parties towards fulfilling that goal and will mobilize all sectors of the world community with a view to assisting the Palestinian people to attain its inalienable rights.

While welcoming the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and four small settlements in the Northern West Bank, the Committee points to the urgent need to revitalize the economy of the Gaza Strip and to allow for an unhindered movement of people and goods into and out of Gaza.

The Committee reiterates its strong opposition to the expansion of settlements in the West Bank and efforts to complete the construction of the wall on Palestinian land, which constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law and numerous Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. The international community must ensure that the occupying Power abide by the provisions of the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice and subsequent General Assembly resolutions, including the establishment of a register of damage caused by the building of the wall.

As in previous years, the Committee will maintain its support for the Palestinian people and the political process through a variety of activities. The Committee will pay special attention to assessing the situation on the ground, and supporting the creation of conditions conducive to the resumption of peace negotiations, including the complete cessation of all acts of violence, such as military attacks, destruction and acts of terror. The Committee will highlight the specific responsibility of the occupying Power for ending its illegal policies and practices, such as the settlement activity, the construction of the wall, and various measures of collective punishment. The Committee will maintain its support for revitalized and active international involvement aimed at encouraging both parties to overcome the current impasse in the peace process, including through the Quartet and the continued personal engagement of the United Nations Secretary-General and the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process. The Committee will also focus on issues relating to the Palestinian economic recovery and the urgency of providing international assistance to the Palestinian people. It will lay special emphasis on raising greater international awareness of the plight of Palestinian women and children – the most vulnerable segment of the Palestinian society – suffering as a result of the occupation.

This Section also refers to the mandate given to the **Department of Public Information** by General Assembly resolution 60/38. In that resolution, the General Assembly requested the Department, *inter alia*, to expand its collection of audio-visual material on the question of Palestine and to continue the production and preservation of such material and the updating of the exhibit in the Secretariat. The Committee will continue to cooperate with the Department in this regard.

**Section III** (paragraphs 15 to 34), deals with the **proposed activities of the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights**. In *Sub-section A*, the draft outlines the action to be taken by the Committee in the course of the year, including the participation of its Chairman in relevant intergovernmental and other conferences and meetings, as necessary; inviting Palestinian officials and other Palestinian personalities to meetings with members and observers of the Committee and the Secretariat. It will continue consultations with various parties interested in its programme of work, including members of the European Union, the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and others. These exchanges should help to promote understanding of the Committee's mandate and objectives.

*Sub-section B* spells out this year's programme of international meetings and conferences. Here, the Committee intends to address such issues as the need to end the occupation of all Palestinian land; the importance of supporting the Palestinian Authority in its efforts to rehabilitate the economy, especially that of the Gaza Strip; the responsibility of all Governments for applying international law to all aspects of the question of Palestine in accordance with the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice; the urgency of resuming the political process and implementing of the Road Map; the adverse consequences of the settlement policy and the construction of the wall for the achievement of a two-State solution; the need to protect the Palestinian people; the humanitarian and socio-economic situation, including the plight of Palestinian women and children; and the role of civil society. In delivering its programme of meetings and conferences, the Committee will keep in mind the need for economy and most cost-effective utilization of resources. The Committee will also

continue to make an effort to encourage participation by countries and organizations, which so far have not engaged fully in its programme of work. This Sub-section lists a number of events to be organized by the Committee in 2006.

*Sub-section C* deals with the Committee's cooperation with **civil society** and stresses the importance of the role played by all sectors of civil society, including NGOs, parliaments and inter-parliamentary organizations, in upholding international legitimacy with regard to the question of Palestine through continued advocacy work and the mobilization of public opinion.

The Committee will continue to encourage the important work done by civil society in support of the Palestinian people in the region and worldwide. It invites accredited civil society organizations to share with it their insights into and reports on the situation on the ground and on relevant initiatives. Special emphasis is laid on developing closer cooperation with parliaments and representatives of inter-parliamentary bodies in order to encourage the discussion within the respective parliaments and among all strata of society of ways of supporting peace in the Middle East and resolving the question of Palestine.

*Sub-section D* describes the work to be carried out during the year on the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (**UNISPAL**), an activity mandated by the General Assembly in 1991. The Committee has requested the Division for Palestinian Rights to continue its work on further development, expansion and administering of the system, including the "UNISPAL" and "Question of Palestine" sites on the Internet. The Division will enhance the "Question of Palestine" site's portal designed under the guidance of the Bureau and will continue to redesign the various related web pages of the site.

*Sub-section E* is devoted to the **publications programme** – one of the central activities of the Division for Palestinian Rights, which contributes to heightening international awareness of the various aspects of the question of Palestine, involvement of the United Nations in the issue, and the work of the Committee, its mandate and objectives.

*Sub-section F* outlines other important elements of the programme of work of the Division, including the **training programme for staff of the Palestinian Authority**. The Committee considers that, in light of its importance and usefulness, the Division should continue the training programme in 2006. The Committee is of the view that, in selecting candidates for this annual programme, special consideration should be given to achieving gender balance.

With regard to the annual observance of the **International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People**, the Committee will commemorate this anniversary with a solemn meeting on Wednesday, 29 November 2006, and recommends that the usual programme of activities be envisaged, including a Palestinian exhibit or a cultural event.

In conclusion, I would like to say that, against the background of the evolving situation on the ground, the Bureau of the Committee, will continue to give thorough consideration to the various elements of the Committee's programme of work for 2006 and make adjustments as necessary. In doing so, it will strive to make it more responsive to the situation and, therefore, more effective.

I would like to express the hope that this draft will be acceptable to the Committee and will be adopted at this meeting.

Thank you.

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