

STATEMENT ON GAZA, OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

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(New York, 13 June 2012) The blockade of Gaza, now entering its sixth year, has had a devastating impact on the lives and livelihoods of the 1.6 million Palestinians who reside there. More than 80 per cent of families are dependent on humanitarian aid, and Gaza remains subject to severe restrictions on imports, exports and the movement of people, by land, air and sea.

This amounts to a collective punishment of all those living in Gaza and is a denial of basic human rights in contravention of international law.

While some steps have been taken to ease its impact, it is vital that the blockade be lifted immediately, so that essential services and infrastructure can be maintained. The opportunity to develop a sustainable economy would also reduce dependence on humanitarian assistance.

The rights of all civilians, Palestinian and Israeli, must be protected and respected at all times, within the framework of international law. All have a right to live free from the fear of indiscriminate violence and to live in peace, security and dignity.

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