Secretary-General's Message at Opening of the 2017 Session of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

February 16, 2017

[Delivered by Ms. Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de Cabinet]

UN Meetings Coverage

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Mr. Chairman, Excellencies and distinguished delegates,
I am pleased to deliver a message from the Secretary-General to you today.

Mr. Chairman, I congratulate you and your distinguished colleagues, on your election to the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.
Since its establishment by the General Assembly in 1975, this Committee has played an important role in advocating for a just and peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on two States.

This year Palestinians will enter the sixth decade of occupation. A political horizon towards a two-State solution is slipping away. Meanwhile, in Gaza, Palestinians are subjected to stifling closures.

The parties and the international community must act to establish an environment that is conducive to a return to meaningful negotiations and that will advance our common goal: an end to the occupation that began in 1967, and the establishment of a sovereign, independent State of Palestine, living side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition with the State of Israel.
The United Nations will continue to strongly support this process.

The recent announcement by the Palestinian Government to hold municipal elections throughout the country on 31 May, if they can take place both in Gaza and the West Bank, should present an opportunity to renew the democratic legitimacy of the Palestinian leadership and institutions.
I encourage all to participate in these elections.

The formation of a single, legitimate, inclusive Palestinian government, on the basis of the PLO principles would greatly contribute to advancing the Palestinian cause.

Two years ago, Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a universal, integrated and transformative plan of action for people, the planet and prosperity, pledging to leave no one behind.

Palestinians and Israelis must be part of this effort and achieve, as they deserve, a future of peace, security and prosperity.

I count on the unique role that this Committee plays towards achieving this goal.