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## ***OVER \$664 MILLION IS NEEDED FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR PALESTINIANS***

**Jerusalem** - United Nations humanitarian agencies along with international and national non-governmental organisations operating in the oPt (West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza Strip), appealed today for USD\$ 664.4 million to fund humanitarian assistance programmes. These programmes respond to the humanitarian situation in the oPt, targeting the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and parts of the West Bank where the Barrier, Israeli settlements, access, and planning restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities affect the livelihoods.

“Palestinians living in the occupied Palestinian territory, continue to face a crisis of human dignity”, stated the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in the oPt, Maxwell Gaylard. “The continued erosion of livelihoods and the denial of basic human rights together are compelling Palestinians to become more and more dependant on international aid,” he explained.

The 2010 Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) appeals to donors to fund 236 assistance projects carried out/or implemented by UN agencies and NGO’s in the areas of food security, agriculture, protection, education, health, water and sanitation, and coordination and support services. Hundreds of partners from UN agencies, the Palestinian Authority, and national and international NGOs have worked together in the last few months to develop the appeal into a needs-focused humanitarian response for the oPt.

“The humanitarian needs have increased, especially in the Gaza Strip following the devastation and destruction from Israel’s ‘Cast Lead’ military operation,” said Gaylard, the UN’s most senior official for humanitarian affairs in the oPt. “We are facing some difficult challenges in meeting these needs due to Israeli import restrictions from the blockade and the lack of political progress,” he added.

The humanitarian community in the oPt has called for certain measures to be implemented immediately in order to alleviate some of the worst aspects of the crisis. These steps include: lifting the blockade on the Gaza Strip; freezing all demolition and eviction orders in East Jerusalem and area C; improving further Palestinian access and movement; and opening up restricted and closed areas in the Gaza Strip and in area C for Palestinian planning, use and development.

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