

## UN envoy 'deeply concerned' by growing tensions in Gaza stemming from pay cuts

8 April 2017 – The United Nations envoy for the Middle East peace process today called for Palestinian unity amid concerns over local pay cuts.

"I am deeply concerned by the growing tensions in Gaza," said Nickolay Mladenov, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

"While the Palestinian Government needs to ensure its [to ensure its fiscal sustainability](#) under increasingly difficult economic conditions, it is important that reforms or decisions to reduce expenditures are fairly distributed and made with consideration to the harsh conditions under which people in Gaza live," Mr. Mladenov noted.

He urged the responsible parties to work together to find a solution and called on all factions "to allow the Palestinian Government to assume its responsibility in Gaza."

Calling Gaza "an integral part of the future Palestinian state," Mr. Mladenov said that no efforts should be spared to bring about "real national reconciliation" that ends the divide.

"Leaders have a responsibility to avoid escalation and bridge the growing divide between Gaza and the West Bank that further fragments the Palestinian people," he added.

His comments come as tens of thousands of people reportedly took to the streets in Gaza today, following 30 per cent cuts to civil servants' salaries.