

UN envoy urges Palestinian unity to resolve electricity crisis in Gaza

19 April 2017 – The United Nations envoy for the Middle East peace process today called on authorities in Gaza to work together with the international community to resolve a new energy crisis after the area's only power station shut down, saying the consequences of the crisis should not be underestimated.

All in Gaza must share the burden by [paying their bills](#). It is the poorest Palestinians in Gaza who pay the price for exceptions and privileges that others enjoy," said Nickolay Mladenov, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

He urged the de facto authorities in Gaza to ensure that collection rates are improved and that revenue collected in Gaza is returned to the legitimate Palestinian authorities in order to keep fuel and electricity supply flowing.

According to media reports, the two factions have been fighting over unpaid bills and taxes, forcing the local energy authority to shut down power.

Mr. Mladenov noted that Palestinians in Gaza have lived in a protracted humanitarian crisis and should not be held hostage by disagreements, divisions and closures.

The social, economic and political consequences of this impending energy crisis should not be underestimated," he stressed.

The UN envoy said the international community can finance and support investment in upgrading the electrical grid but it cannot do it alone. He urged the Palestinian Government to facilitate buying fuel for the Gaza Power plant, and voiced support for reforming the Gaza Electricity Distribution Company.

He also called on Israeli authorities to facilitate the entry of materials for repairs and maintenance of the power grid and plant, and noted the need to also upgrade Egyptian power lines.