



PRESS RELEASE

**United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon and
UNRWA Director in Lebanon visit Ein El Hilweh
Palestine Refugee Camp**

Beirut
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Today, the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Mr. Jan Kubis and the Director of UNRWA Affairs in Lebanon, Mr. Claudio Cordone, visited the Palestine refugee camp of Ein El Hilweh in southern Lebanon. It was Mr. Kubis' first visit to a Palestine refugee camp in Lebanon since taking up his functions as UN Special Coordinator in February.

Mr. Kubis was briefed by UNRWA representatives about the living conditions of Palestine refugees and the situation in the camp. Mr. Kubis and Mr. Cordone visited UNRWA's Bissan and Sammouh Schools and met with representatives of Palestinian Factions and Popular Committees of Ein El Hilweh and discussed with them the political, social and economic situation in the camp.

Mr. Kubis together with Mr. Cordone met with a group of Palestine refugee youth from Lebanon and Syria to discuss their aspiration and the socio-economic challenges they face, specifically those related to education and unemployment.

"I am grateful for the hospitality and warm welcome I received today from the residents of Ein El-Hilweh and I commend the efforts of my UNRWA colleagues, who continue to provide essential services to the Palestine refugees in Lebanon despite the financial constraints that the agency continues to face," Mr. Kubiš said. He welcomed the cooperation between Lebanese authorities and Ein El-Hilweh representatives and underlined the importance of ongoing dialogue between the Lebanese and the Palestinians, saying: "building mutual understanding and trust between the two communities remains key to improving livelihoods and preserving stability and security

in Ein El Hilweh and the neighboring areas”. He pledged continued efforts to encourage international support for UNRWA to ensure that humanitarian needs are met.

Mr. Cordone reiterated the Agency's commitment to implement its mandate on behalf of Palestine refugees. He said, “Our support to Palestine refugees is key for the implementation of the rights and dignity of Palestine refugees until a just and lasting solution to their plight is achieved. We continue to count on the support of the whole UN family in achieving our goals.”

Background Information

UNRWA is confronted with an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, the extent of their vulnerability and their deepening poverty. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions and financial support has been outpaced by the growth in needs. As a result, the UNRWA Programme Budget, which supports the delivery of core essential services, operates with a large shortfall. UNRWA encourages all Member States to work collectively to exert all possible efforts to fully fund the Agency's Programme Budget. UNRWA emergency programmes and key projects, also operating with large shortfalls, are funded through separate funding portals.

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