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**Statement on the occasion of International Women's Day 2020**

**Jerusalem, 8 March 2020**

On this International Women's Day, the United Nations acknowledges and celebrates the contributions of Palestinian women to the development of their communities. In this context, we commend and support the ongoing efforts of civil society actors and the Government of Palestine to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

Today is also a day to reflect and to agree on joint action. The United Nations stands ready to assist the Palestinian people in the implementation and monitoring of its State obligations and to continue to support and assist Palestinian women and girls across a broad range of areas in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, with specific focus on implementing Goal 5 on "Gender Equality".

While we celebrate progress and achievements, we must also recognize the continued challenges that Palestinian women face, including in the context of the continued Israeli military occupation. Across the West Bank and Gaza Strip, we continue to work with all stakeholders to improve women's safety and security, livelihoods, employment opportunities, political participation, access to education, health care and other services.

Finally, this year, the global community marks twenty-five years since the adoption of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and twenty years since the adoption of Security Council Resolutions 1325(2000) on women peace and security. The year 2020 is a pivotal year for joint accelerated efforts for the promotion, protection and full realization of women and girls' rights.

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