

**For the first time ... Palestine Hosts an International Meeting
The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics is hosting the Members of the
United Nations High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-
Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

H.E. Dr. Hamdallah: We are determined to achieve sustainable development by investing in the talents and capabilities of our people, especially our youth.

Ramallah – 07/11/2017, H.E. Dr. Rami Hamdallah said, "Palestine is suffering from the exceptional conditions resulting from the continuation of the Israeli occupation; Facing this challenge, we are determined to achieve sustainable development by investing in the talents and capabilities of our people, especially our youth, who constitute almost half of the Palestinian society".

This was mentioned during his speech at the Ninth Meeting of the United Nations High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Palestine, which was held on Tuesday at the Prime Minister's Office in Ramallah, in the presence of Ms. Ola Awad, President of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), Dr. Gabriella Vukovich, President of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Mr. Stefan Schweinfest, Director of the United Nations Statistics Division along with the Heads of 23 National Statistical Offices worldwide, in addition to a number of representatives of regional and international organizations as observers.

H.E. Dr. Hamdallah added, "This meeting reflects our determination to fully realize the goals of the 2030 agenda and to implement it fully. I truly commend your great efforts for achieving the sustainable development, Palestine hosted this meeting to reaffirm our commitment toward achieving the sustainable development goals".

H.E. the Prime Minister also said, "In order to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, our strategy focuses on the full participation of the private and public sectors in defining the national priorities, with particular attention to planning, projects implementation and designing of interventions".

"I would also like to reiterate that the priority of our government is *Our Citizens First*, where this has been expressed in the National Policy Agenda 2017-2022, which is strongly aligned with the highest purpose of the 2030 Agenda, no one is left behind. We highly appreciate the efforts made by the different United Nations Agencies as well as the international organizations towards supporting the implementation of the development plans that are being implemented in full coordination with the government and all parties concerned," H.E. said.

H.E. also added, "In the spirit of this cooperation, our government works to submit a voluntary report to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2018. In order to meet this obligation among others, we have formed a national team which is headed by the Prime Minister's Office to monitor and review the whole progress, and ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals are integrated within the National Policy Agenda."

"Our Government is developing appropriate frameworks for the implementation of these services with the full participation of all sectors. In addition, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, as a

provider of official Palestinian statistics, is developing data requirements in cooperation with all concerned partners".

"Palestine is currently undertaking the population and housing census in 2017. This census is the appropriate means of providing the necessary data for effective planning and integration of demographic indicators into the overall development planning process. This census comes at the right time to develop a solid baseline for progress on our national agenda "He said.

H.E. also informed that, " Our government is developing the appropriate frameworks for the implementation of the SDGs in full participation of all sectors. Moreover, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, as provider of Palestine's Official Statistics, is leading the development of the data requirements in cooperation with all relevant partners in Palestine".

H.E. concluded his speech stating that, " Palestine currently undertakes its Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2017. This census is the proper vehicle for providing the needed data for effective planning and the integration of the demographic indicators to the overall development planning process in Palestine. This census comes at the time to establish a solid baseline for progressing our National Policy Agenda."

It's worth mentioning that Palestine welcomed delegations of twenty two countries represented by heads of leading National Statistical Offices, a United Nations team represented by the Director of the Statistics Division (UNSD), in addition to representatives from a number of international and regional organizations as observers, and representatives of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and The Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), to participate in the activities of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, chaired by Dr. Gabriella Vukovich, President of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office.

The meeting was attended by representatives of all continents of the world as follows: Angola for East Africa, South Africa for Central and South Africa, Senegal for West Africa, Morocco for North Africa, Palestine and Iraq for West Asia, Mongolia and Kazakhstan for West-East Asia, Suriname for the Caribbean, Argentina, Ecuador, Costa Rica for Central South America, Hungary for Eastern Europe, Italy for southern Europe, Denmark and Switzerland for Northern and Western Europe.

PCBS has been keen to be actively present on the international statistical level as a part of its commitment to meet the requirements of the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 Agenda which aims to enable policy-makers to make the change by covering all sectors and segments of the Palestinian society based on the fundamental principles of official statistics. The SDGs slogan "Leave no one behind." Is perfectly in line with the Palestinian National Policy Agenda 2017-2022, which adopted "Citizens First" as its slogan.

Ms. Ola Awad, President of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, expressed her pleasure to host this meeting in Palestine, the meeting represents an exceptional statistical event and another step towards building the State of Palestine with its institutions despite the presence of the Israeli occupation. This meeting comes concurrently with implementing the Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2017, where the actual count will start on the first of December 2017, under the slogan "Hand in hand to build the homeland".

Awad expressed her appreciation to the attendees for their outstanding efforts and for being here in Palestine. She considered hosting this meeting in Palestine for the first time as a great achievement not only to PCBS but to Palestine.

Awad confirmed that the State of Palestine is committed to the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda despite the special circumstances of the Israeli measures and limited resources. Confirming that Palestine is part of this international declaration, which was adopted by 200 international leaders, noting that we are certain that the global goals of this agenda will be very useful to build the State of Palestine. Awad mentioned that adopting the Sustainable Development Goals agenda will lead to peace and justice for all .

During the meeting several issues were discussed including partnership, statistical coordination and capacity-building for monitoring sustainable development indicators and targets of 2030 . The SDGs' resolutions are adhered to at the international level and were adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission, the United Nations Economic and Social Council and the United Nations General Assembly .

On the margins of the meeting, the National Team for Sustainable Development Goals, led by the Prime Minister's Office, gave a presentation on the efforts made so far in implementing SDGs based on the Palestinian National Policy Agenda and the Palestinian priorities of sector strategies .