



**Statement by the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the occupied
Palestinian territory, Maxwell Gaylard, on
Continuing Demolition of Water Cisterns in the West Bank**

01 February 2011

The United Nations has joined with the Palestinian Water Authority in condemning the continuing demolition of water cisterns in areas of the West Bank of the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), which are under the full control of the Government of Israel.

The United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for the oPt Mr Maxwell Gaylard, said: “It is difficult to understand the reasoning behind the destruction of basic rain water collection systems, some of them very old, which serve marginalized rural and herder Palestinian communities where water is already scarce and where drought is an ever-present threat.”

The removal of such critical infrastructure places serious strains on the resilience and coping mechanisms of these communities, who will become increasingly dependent on economically unsustainable sources such as tankered water. Such deliberate demolitions in occupied territory are also in contravention of Israel’s obligations under international law.

In 2010, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) recorded the demolition of 27 water cisterns and other rain water collection systems in the West Bank.

ENDS.

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