The donor coordination group for the Palestinian people, the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC), meets in Brussels on 21 March

Brussels, 16 March 2012 - The annual spring meeting of the donor coordination group for the Palestinian people, the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC), will be held in Brussels on 21 March 2012. The meeting will be hosted by Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, and presided over by Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre in his capacity as chair of the AHLC. Prime Minister Fayyad and the Quartet Envoy Tony Blair will attend the meeting.

The first AHLC hosted by EU High Representative in April 2011 welcomed the assessment that the Palestinian Authority had crossed the threshold for a functioning state in key sectors and that Palestinian institutions compared favourably with those in established states. The September AHLC meeting in New York commended the building of robust state institutions and the revival of the Palestinian economy as an international success story.

“All participants to the AHLC meeting have a responsibility in guaranteeing that these achievements are maintained and that the state-building process will be matched with progress in accomplishing a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The overarching objective of the EU remains the creation of an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable State of Palestine, living side by side with Israel in peace and security. This is all the more urgent in the current regional context”, said Catherine Ashton ahead of the meeting.

Since its establishment in 1993 the AHLC has served as the principal policy-level coordination mechanism for development assistance to the Palestinian people. The strategic role of the AHLC is to underpin political efforts to achieve a two-state solution including by supporting Palestinian institution building.

At the upcoming meeting, the outlook for 2012 will be assessed with a focus on the Palestinian macroeconomic situation and the budget of the Palestinian Authority. The meeting will discuss steps that can be taken to enhance the sustainability of the Palestinian Authority, strengthen private sector-led growth, and improve the situation on the ground. Developments since the last meeting will be assessed based on reports from the parties, the UN, the World Bank, the IMF and the Quartet Representative.
Media advisory:

- Doorstep statements by HR Ashton and FM Støre at VIP corner, Berlaymont, at 14.30
- Tour de table at the beginning of the meeting at 14.55 (meeting point for interested photographers/cameramen at registration desk at the reception of the Berlaymont at 14.50)
- Concluding remarks by FM Støre at the end of the meeting at 18.30, foyer in front of the Schuman room, and availability for the press of selected participants
- Images will also be available on EbS.
- The journalists not accredited to the EU institutions have to send an e-mail to COMM-SPP-HRVP-ASHTON@ec.europa.eu, if they wish access the Berlaymont press centre. They have to have a valid press card and a letter of recommendation from the editor.