The donor coordination group for the Palestinian people, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC), meets in Brussels on 19 March

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 19 March 2013. The meeting will be hosted by Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, and presided by Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide in his capacity as chair of the AHLC. Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad will attend the meeting.

The first AHLC meeting hosted by the EU High Representative in Brussels in April 2011, welcomed the assessment that the Palestinian Authority (PA) had crossed the threshold for a functioning state in key sectors and that Palestinian institutions compared favourably with those in established states.

The forthcoming meeting will focus on ways to address the deepening financial crisis of the PA, including strengthening its fiscal sustainability, improving the regularity and predictability of financial resources provided to the PA, increasing private sector-led growth, promoting access and movement throughout the Palestinian territory, facilitating Palestinian exports and improving the situation in the Gaza Strip. Developments since the last meeting in September 2012 in New York will be assessed based on reports from the parties, the UN, the World Bank, the IMF and the Office of the Quartet Representative.
"Only a political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can bring lasting security, peace and prosperity to the region. The EU remains convinced that a comprehensive negotiated peace must entail a two-state solution with Israel and a sovereign, democratic, contiguous and viable State of Palestine living side by side within agreed borders in peace and security. This meeting of the AHLC has a key role to play in strengthening the commitment to achieve this goal by sustaining the Palestinian Authority. This is all the more urgent in light of the deteriorating financial situation of the PA", 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 supporting Palestinian institution building.

Media Advisory

- Doorstep statements by HR Ashton and FM Eide 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 Eide at the end of the meeting at approximately 18.00, foyer in front of the Schuman room, and availability for the press of selected participants.
- Images will also be available on EbS.
- Journalists not accredited to the EU institutions have to send an e-mail to Iulia.Costea@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.

The contacts:

Maja Kocijancic +32 2 298 65 70 Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu
Michael Mann +32 2 299 97 80 Michael.Mann@eas.europa.eu
Lars-Erik Hauge +32 494 535 820 Lars-Erik.Hauge@mfa.no