

segments of society in the national drive to develop and advance our institutions. We take fully into account that our people expect a government that provides them with security and basic services and fosters development in all spheres, while respecting their rights and liberties. We believe that building and sustaining effective institutions can only be accomplished through full partnership between the government and the citizens.

The present document sets out our national goals and the priorities and activities of the PNA institutions for the next two years. Moreover, the 13th government will do everything in its power to ensure that general elections will be held on their constitutionally mandated date in January of next year, in accordance with the law and highest international standards. This is a right of all citizens, and it is a constitutional requirement that should not be overlooked.

We look forward to continued regional and international support to establish Palestine as an independent, democratic, progressive, and modern Arab state, with full sovereignty over its territory in the West Bank and Gaza, on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Palestine will be a peace-loving state that rejects violence, commits to co-existence with its neighbors, and builds bridges of cooperation with the international community. It will be a symbol of peace, tolerance and prosperity in this troubled area of the world. By embodying all of these values, Palestine will be a source of pride to all of its citizens, and an anchor for stability in this region.

Salam Fayyad
Prime Minister

Introduction

The supreme goal of the national liberation cause, led by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, is to end the occupation, establish a sovereign and independent state on the 1967 borders with Jerusalem as its capital, and reach a just and agreed solution for Palestinian refugees in accordance with relevant international resolutions, and UN General Assembly Resolution 194 in particular. The Palestinian Declaration of Independence of 1988, and the Oslo Declaration of Principles of 1993, affirmed the willingness of the Palestinian people to reach an historic compromise to end the occupation of the Palestinian territory since 1967, and secure Palestinian self-determination in an independent, sovereign state with Jerusalem as its capital. As the natural extension of the PLO, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) is devoting all of its energy and capacity to realizing this national goal. Since 1993, we have made significant progress in building institutions to protect and serve our citizens. We have continued on this upward path in spite of the ongoing occupation, siege and military action against our people, including land confiscation, house demolitions, and military incursions. The path has been long and hard and the patience of our people has been sorely tested. Out of respect for our citizens, and in recognition of their desire to live free and peaceful lives under national independence, we must answer their demand to see the fruits of the state-building project. Against this background, the Palestinian government is struggling determinedly against a hostile occupation regime, employing all of its energies and available resources, most especially the capacities of our people, to complete the process of building institutions of the independent State of Palestine in order to establish a *de facto* state apparatus within the next two years. It is time now for the illegal occupation to end and for the Palestinian people to enjoy security, safety, freedom and independence.

The Government calls upon our people, including all political parties and civil society, to realize this fundamental objective and unite behind the state-building agenda over the next two years. We want to work in partnership with all our citizens to build the institutions of a free, democratic and stable State of Palestine that adheres to the principles of human rights and equality under the law, without discrimination on any grounds whatsoever. Together we must confront the whole world with the reality that Palestinians are united and steadfast in their determination to remain on their homeland; end the occupation, and achieve their freedom and independence. The world should hear loudly and clearly, from all corners of our society, that the occupation is the true impediment which has frustrated our efforts to realize the stability, prosperity and progress of our people and our right to freedom, independence and decent life. The world should also know that we are not prepared to continue living under a brutal occupation and siege that flouts not only the law, but also the principles of natural justice and human decency.

The window of opportunity to secure a viable two-state solution is now mortally threatened by Israel's settlement policy, the continuation of which will undermine the remaining opportunity of building an independent Palestinian State on the Palestinian territory occupied in 1967. The PNA therefore calls upon the people of Israel and their leaders, as well as leaders and citizens across the world, to ensure that a just peace prevails in the Middle East. This peace cannot be attained unless our people gain their national rights as defined by international resolutions including their right to live freely and decently in an independent state.

We are a partner for peace. Like all other peoples of the world, we aspire to live in peace, secure prosperity for our people, and bring stability to our region. But, like all peoples, we also seek justice. This cannot be achieved unless our people attain their legitimate, national rights as prescribed by international resolutions and implicit in the two-state solution. The PNA has made remarkable progress in establishing the rule of law and delivering public services under the occupation regime and in spite of the obstacles it has constructed. For its part Israel must immediately begin dismantling these obstacles, which undermine PNA's efforts. Israel must dismantle the infrastructure of the occupation and create the space for international efforts to reach a just and lasting peace.

Notwithstanding our people's suffering from Israel's policies and actions, the 13th Government is determined to dedicate efforts to building the Palestinian state. Based upon a Palestinian vision of the tasks that must be completed to build the State of Palestine, the Government hereby sets forth and communicates to our people, and all nations and friends in the international community, the basic principles of its program to translate this vision into a solid reality.

The establishment of a Palestinian state within two years is not only possible, it is essential. The establishment of this state is fundamental to security, stability and peace in the region. It will be a state that builds bridges with all the people of the world, not walls to deny them the joy of visiting this sacred land. It will be an emblem and protector of peace, tolerance and prosperity in this troubled region. Our Declaration of Independence, issued forth by the Palestinian National Council in 1988, called upon all peace-and-freedom-loving peoples and states to assist us in achieving our goal of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state. Twenty years on, we reiterate that call in anticipation of the good will and support of our Arab brethren and the international community of nations. We hope that they will continue to assist and support us to achieve this supreme goal.

Our Vision of the State of Palestine

Palestine is an independent Arab state with full sovereignty over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital. Palestine, the cradle of civilization and of the three monotheistic religions, will shine as a beacon of humanitarian values and religious tolerance across the world.

Palestine is a state which values highly its social capital, social cohesion and solidarity, and its Arab culture. The state will forever be a peace loving state that rejects violence; it is committed to peaceful co-existence with the world community of nations.

Palestine will be a stable democratic state with a multi-party political system. Transfer of governing authority is smooth, peaceful and regular in accordance with the will of the people, expressed through free and fair elections conducted in accordance with the law.

The state of Palestine respects human rights and guarantees equal rights and duties for all citizens. Its people live in safety and security under the rule of law, safeguarded by an independent judiciary and professional security services.

Foundational Principles

The foundations of the Palestinian state, and the rights, freedoms and duties of its citizens are clearly articulated in the Declaration of Independence of 1988, and the Basic Law of 2003. We are building a democratic system of government founded on political pluralism, guarantee of equality, and protection of all its citizens' rights and freedoms as safeguarded by the law and within its limits. These include the right to form political parties and engage in political activity without discrimination on any grounds whatsoever.

Political parties shall abide by the principles of national sovereignty, democracy and peaceful, regular transfer of authority. The Basic Law safeguards rights of minorities. In accordance with the law, the minorities must abide by the will of the majority.

Government is to be based on the principles of justice and rule of law, equality and tolerance, safeguarded by clear separation of powers of the executive, the legislature and judiciary. All government authorities, agencies, departments and individuals shall abide by the law and work in the service of citizens without discrimination on any grounds whatsoever. The independence and immunity of the judiciary are constitutionally guaranteed and the law shall punish any infringement on its dignity. Crime and punishment are to be determined under the law, under which all Palestinians are equal; collective punishment is absolutely prohibited.

All Palestinians are equal before the law. They enjoy civil and political rights and bear public duties without discrimination, regardless of race, gender, colour, religion, political opinion, or disability. Human rights and fundamental freedoms are binding and must be respected. The state shall guarantee religious, civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights and freedoms to all citizens and their enjoyment on the principle of equality and equal opportunity. A person may not be deprived of his rights, fundamental, or legal competence for political reasons.

The state is solely responsible for the safety and security of persons and property. Its security apparatus, which is built on professional grounds within limits of the law, shall work to protect the rights of every citizen so that he feels secure both at home and abroad. It is not permitted for individuals and groups to acquire, bear, or possess arms in a manner that is in violation of the provisions of the law. Without prejudice to the principle that the state solely has the jurisdiction in the security field, defending the nation is sacred duty and serving it is an honour for every citizen.

Shelter, education and health insurance are basic rights which will be preserved and protected by the state. The state also has an enduring obligation to care and provide for the martyrs, prisoners, orphans and all those harmed in the Palestinian struggle for independence.

Natural resources, archaeological remains, and historical and heritage sites in the State of Palestine are the property of the Palestinian people. The state shall preserve them and regulate their use in accordance with the law. Preservation of the Palestinian environment shall be the duty of the state and the society. Damage to the environment shall be prosecuted under the law.

The economic system in Palestine shall be based on the principles of a free market economy within the context of legitimate and responsible competition. The state shall strive to promote social, economic and cultural growth and scientific development of the Palestinian people while confirming its commitment to ensure social justice and providing protection to those with special needs and vulnerable groups.

National Goals

The PNA, including all its respective governing institutions and agencies, is mandated to manage the day-to-day affairs of the Palestinian people under the occupation. Through good performance the Government, as arm of the Executive, can significantly enhance the PLO's ability to manage the political struggle by creating a strong, united, internal and national front. First and foremost, the Government is required to develop policies and make decisions that bolster the Palestinian society's strength, cohesion, and perseverance. The Government also bears considerable responsibility for facilitating the national dialogue aimed at ending the state of political fragmentation and restoring national unity. The formation of a democratically-elected leadership that enjoys popular and factional support, as well as regional and international recognition, is an essential step towards realising the supreme national goal of establishing the State of Palestine. In pursuit of this supreme goal, the 13th Government hereby asserts its binding commitment to the following national goals on the basis of its absolute dedication, as the Government of the President, to the political platform of the PLO, including all its components and obligations, and all of its bilateral and multilateral agreements.

End the occupation of the Palestinian territory since 1967

In 1988, the Palestinian National Council issued the Palestinian Declaration of Independence and announced its readiness to enter peace negotiations with Israel on the basis of UN Resolutions 242 and 338. The PLO, the founder and nurturer of the Palestinian national struggle and the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, also offered in 1988 the Palestinian Peace Initiative, in which it officially endorsed the two-state solution in line with relevant international resolutions. Ever since, the Palestinians have been steadfast in pursuit of a peaceful resolution to the conflict as a means to bring about an end to the occupation, and to

secure liberty and self-determination on our homeland. In doing so, we honour the sacrifices made by people in their determination to remain on the homeland. This is our only homeland and we will never leave it.

In Oslo in 1993, the PLO agreed to form the PNA for an interim period, pending resolution of final status issues and the formation of an independent State of Palestine. Despite commitment by both the PLO and PNA to all provisions of agreements signed with Israel, the occupation, colonization and cantonization of our land have persisted and gathered pace as successive Israeli governments turned from the path of peace. Israel remains in full control of security and civil life in of the West Bank, whilst Gaza remains under siege and our people there are subjected to inhuman collective punishment. Furthermore, Palestinian life in Jerusalem is under daily attack through systematic violations perpetrated by the occupation regime

It is the right and the duty of all Palestinians to protect their land, reject the occupation and defy its measures. The Government bears special responsibility for nurturing our people's ability to persevere and protect their homeland. The Government is obligated to support our people in peaceful, popular movements to confront the occupying authorities' measures, including land seizure and confiscation, settlement activities, construction of Separation Wall, and house demolitions.

Convinced that strengthening PNA's institutions and bolstering the steadfastness of the Palestinians on their homeland is the basis for challenging the occupation and defying its measures, this Government affirms its commitment to the completing the work of the 12th Government, and all its predecessors, to building strong, sustainable, competent and effective democratic institutions capable of serving our people and protecting their interests. Inspired by this conviction, we hereby call upon our people to unite and work towards affirming our right and proving our ability to end the occupation, and thereby secure our freedom and independence.

Promote national unity

The Government emphasizes that national unity is the point of departure and the foundation of the Palestinian national cause. Protection and preservation of this unity is a national duty. Without it the compass of our national struggle will falter and we will stray from the true path to ending the occupation, our national integrity will fade away, and our very existence and steadfastness will crumble through separation and fragmentation.

The Government reiterates its commitment to national unity on the tenets and principles of the PLO. It considers that the current state of Palestinian political fragmentation is destructive and contrary to our national interest. In this context, the Government affirms its commitment to the principle of political pluralism. However, it does not deem the present split to be a legitimate representation of political pluralism, but rather a threat to such pluralism. Therefore, as a government, we emphasize the importance of concluding the national unity dialogue and ending the factional split so that all our energies can be devoted to defying and ending the occupation.

This Government will continue to work unceasingly to lift the siege on our people and to shoulder its responsibilities, particularly in the Gaza Strip. It will also dedicate itself and all its efforts to expediting an end to the state of division and restoring unity to our homeland and institutions, ensuring that national elections are held on their constitutionally mandated date in January 2010. This is a constitutional requirement and a natural right of citizens that must be respected and implemented.

Protect Jerusalem as the eternal capital of the Palestinian state

Jerusalem is our people's religious, cultural, economic and political center. It is the Flower of Cities and Capital of Capitals. It cannot be anything but the eternal capital of the future Palestinian state. Jerusalem is under threat: the occupying authority is implementing a systematic plan to alter the city's landmarks and its geographical and demographic character

in order to forcibly create facts on the ground, ultimately separating it from its Palestinian surroundings and eradicating its Arab Palestinian heritage. To achieve this goal, the occupying authority is pursuing its intensive settlement policy in and around Jerusalem, including land confiscation, expanding and distorting the city's structural plans, and, through the construction of the Wall, isolating it from its Palestinian surroundings. Inside the city, which has effectively been converted by these policies into an isolated and closed ghetto, the occupation regime has shut down our national institutions, neglected the development of Palestinian life, continued to demolish and evacuate Palestinian homes, and restricted access to sacred Christian and Islamic sites. If these measures continue, the possibility of establishing the Palestinian state and ending the conflict on the basis of the two-state solution will be terminally undermined.

The Government emphasizes its unreserved commitment to defending the Arab character and status of Jerusalem, and to restore its character as a city of peace, worship and tolerance that, with no barriers or walls, is open not only to our people but to all humankind. The Government will continue to do all that is possible to achieve this goal. The Government will work with all organizations to preserve the landmarks of Jerusalem and its Arab Palestinian heritage, develop the city, and secure its contiguity with its Palestinian surroundings. The Government will also dedicate all its capacities to confront the occupation regime's policies; continue to work on regional and international levels to stop these policies; support education, health, economic, cultural, and tourism activities; reopen Palestinian institutions; defy house demolition and evacuation orders; and resist all restrictions on our citizens, thereby safeguarding their struggle to remain steadfast in the capital city of their homeland.

Protect refugees and follow up on attainment of their rights

The majority of the Palestinian people are refugees and displaced persons living in the Palestinian territory and abroad. Most refugees live under oppressive and harsh conditions, lacking their most fundamental human rights, foremost of which is the right to live on their homeland. Though the issue of refugees will be addressed in the final status negotiations, it is certain that no political settlement can be accepted by Palestinians without a just and agreed solution to this fundamental issue in accordance with international resolutions, including UN General Assembly Resolution 194.

The refugee issue will remain under the jurisdiction of the PLO, through its Department of Refugees' Affairs. The Government affirms its full commitment to all PLO decisions in relation to this issue. Within limits of its jurisdiction, without derogation of PLO's responsibility, and in a manner that does not exempt the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) from its responsibilities, the Government emphasizes that it will do all within its power and authority to bolster on the legal rights and living conditions of refugees in the occupied territory, particularly in refugee camps, including the provision of all the resources it can afford to support and alleviate the suffering of refugees in all aspects of their lives.

Secure the release of prisoners

The continued detention of thousands of Palestinian detainees and prisoners in Israeli prisons and detention camps, in violation of international law and basic human rights, is of great concern to all Palestinians. First and foremost the suffering of these prisoners, who along with their families have made great sacrifices in pursuit of the national liberation cause, is a political and humanitarian issue.

Securing the freedom of all these heroic prisoners is an utmost Palestinian priority and it is a fundamental duty all Palestinians feel to honor their great sacrifices and end their suffering. In this context, the Government emphasizes its full commitment to the freedom of all Palestinian detainees and prisoners and will continue to strive to secure their liberty. Until this goal is achieved, the Government will work tirelessly to provide various forms of support to prisoners and their families. It will also work on all levels, with all relevant Palestinian and international organizations, to lobby and advocate for their release, restore their freedom, and reintegrate them into society.

Ensure human development

People are the most important and most precious asset in Palestine. They are central to our national struggle and our steadfast will to secure liberation from the occupation. They will be the essential driver of the development of the Palestinian state following independence. The Government attaches supreme importance to developing the capacities of all Palestinian citizens. The Palestinian people have suffered gravely from the anguish of the occupation and have shouldered heavy burdens. In addition to the suppression of human capacity in all spheres, the occupation's oppressive measures have left our people with physical disabilities and psychological pain. Therefore, care and attention to the physical and mental health as well as development of human resources are an utmost priority on the Government's agenda.

More than one third of the Palestinian people attend schools. A large number of Palestinian youths are also enrolled in academic and vocational courses at universities and other institutions providing higher education. We value knowledge, learning and education very highly. Provision of high quality education that encourages cultural openness and protects national heritage is a high priority on the Government's agenda. Accordingly, the Government is committed to providing all necessary support to promote the quality of education at all levels, to ensure that it keeps pace with international standards whilst ensuring that our curricula embody essential Palestinian Arab values of tolerance, mutual respect, family and social relationships, and pride in our culture and heritage. The Government will also ensure that the education system gives all our children the opportunity to acquire expertise and skills to enable them to serve their homeland and compete actively in a vibrant labour market.

The Government is committed to continually improving health care and social services to its people. We will give utmost attention to injured citizens, prisoners, martyrs and their families. We will also care for people with special needs and provide the facilities and means to secure their positive engagement in society and promote their full involvement in the development of our homeland.

The Government further affirms its conviction that the development of Palestine relies on the creation of generations of Palestinian possessing the confidence, expertise and skills to thrive in a healthy and positive environment, thereby reversing the negative impacts of the occupation. To this end, the Government is committed to policies and programs that will propel and guide these generations to overcome obstacles and build their capacities.

Achieve economic independence and national prosperity

Liberating the Palestinian national economy from external hegemony and control, and reversing its dependence on the Israeli economy, is a high national priority. A capable state is built on the foundations of a strong, sustainable, active and efficient economy. In spite of all Israeli restrictions, and recognising that sustainable development cannot be attained under the occupation, it is our national duty to do all that we can to pull our economy out of the cycle of dependence and marginalization. This is essential to our effort to build state institutions.

Accomplishment of this goal is essential to resisting the measures imposed by the occupation regime and ending the occupation itself. Achieving economic growth is a necessity so that we can promote our people's ability to persevere and remain on their homeland by alleviating the poverty and unemployment generated by the continued occupation. It will also promote the contribution of all segments of our society in the struggle to build an independent and self-sufficient state.

The Government is committed to continuously developing all segments of the Palestinian economy, building a free and competitive economic system through close cooperation between a competent, capable and visionary public sector and a pioneering private sector committed of achieving prosperity for our people. The Government is also committed to economic policies and development plans that focus on developing domestic capacities and resources, creating an environment that attracts investment, and laying the foundations of sustainable growth and development which will ultimately reduce dependence on external aid. Although the

achievement of this target under the occupation's disruptive and restrictive policies and measures is extremely difficult, the Government confirms its duty to support and channel all available capacities towards this endeavor in cooperation with our Arab brethren and international friends. In the near term, we aim to provide essential economic stimulus to alleviate poverty. Our longer term objective is to build a vibrant, knowledge-based economy capable of producing competitive goods and delivering high quality services. A solid economic foundation will be the basis of our people's prosperity and social welfare.

Bring equality and social justice to all citizens

We are building a Palestinian state to secure a peaceful and prosperous future for Palestinians in their homeland. Palestinians must enjoy equality, rights and freedoms across the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including Jerusalem, as one political and geographical entity. The Israeli occupation regime's policies and actions have subjected our people to violence and oppression, most particularly in Jerusalem, in Gaza, and in West Bank towns and villages isolated by the Wall, in the 'seam zone' and in Area C.

In the face of restrictions imposed by the occupation regime, the Government struggles each day to deliver support and assistance to our citizens, especially isolated communities and other marginalized and vulnerable groups. The Government is committed to delivering essential services to all communities to ensure a decent quality of life, in spite of the occupation, and to solidify the foundations of our future state. Our commitment to a free market economy is firm. We will not allow monopolies and other forms of economic opportunism and exploitation that undermine social justice and equity. The Government is also obligated to provide social protection and development to all citizens. In this context, the Government will continue to develop its policies, consolidate the social security system and implement empowerment programs to ensure a decent standard of living for all citizens. The Government believes that a free market economy, properly regulated in the public interest, can be harnessed to elevate the standards of housing, education, health, and other social and cultural services to our citizens.

In firm belief in the equality of men and women, the Government expresses its conviction and commitment to empower women and guarantee equal opportunities. This is essential to ensure that we mobilize the full capacity of our society and work together towards ending the occupation and establishing an independent state that guarantees equality and social justice for all citizens.

Consolidate good governance

Achieving our national goals depends on the adoption of the basic principles and practices of good governance throughout the public sector, the private sector and civil society. In the light of the occupation regime's continued measures that hamper the efficiency and effectiveness of our national institutions, the establishment and promotion of good governance in the occupied territory is elevated to the status of a national goal in and of itself. The basic aim is to meet the demand of our people for transparent, accountable institutions that deliver services, social development, economic growth, and career opportunities free from favouritism and wastefulness. Achieving this goal requires commitment and determined effort from all corners of our society.

The Government is committed to building effective institutions, consolidating the rule of law and serving its citizens. It is a champion of judicial independence, individual and collective political and civil rights, and democratic freedoms. The Government will reinvigorate public oversight mechanisms; promote integrity, transparency, and accountability; and, fight all kinds of corruption and favouritism. It will also embrace and promote the principles of competence, professionalism, and merit-based recruitment and promotion in the public sector and, in doing so, empower civil servants to perform their jobs efficiently and effectively.

Bring safety and security across the homeland

Guaranteeing security, safety, peace and tranquillity within Palestinian society is a fundamental duty of the state. The social and economic well-being of citizens, the protection of their individual rights and freedoms, the preservation of our national unity, and the safeguarding of our pluralistic and democratic political system is absolutely dependent on an effective and efficient state security apparatus which adheres to the rule of law, and respects the independence of the judiciary and equality of all before the law. The prosperity and well-being of citizens requires the full accountability of the security establishment to the political leadership and its operation in accordance with the law.

The Government is committed to the continued modernization and professionalization of the Palestinian security services under the banner of 'One Homeland, One Flag and One Law'. These agencies must be subject to the rule of law and to oversight by the legislative and judicial authorities. The Government will continue to apply the law and adopt a code of conduct to hold accountable all security services employees in line with human rights and freedoms. Abiding by the principle of judicial independence, we will prohibit politically-motivated arrests and detention that have no legal basis.

Build positive regional and international relations

The State of Palestine can and must play a vital role in driving regional and global stability and prosperity. Palestinian communities in the homeland and all over the world have demonstrated their ingenuity, their enthusiasm, and their determination to make a positive contribution to the societies in which they live. Palestinians are active and productive members of the global community and have played a key role in promoting the principles of democracy, tolerance and openness. Even under great adversity, particularly in the occupied territories, we have shown our collective will to build, not to destroy. We have been able to do this through our own steadfastness and human capacities and with the generous moral and financial support from our Arab brethren and our friends in the international community. We cherish this support and look forward to it continuing as we tread the path to peace, freedom and independence.

The Government is committed playing its part in securing a just settlement to the conflict and regional peace. We will do this through actively supporting the efforts of, and in solidarity with, the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of our people. We will also support the maintenance of constructive relations with our brethren in the Arab and Islamic worlds, and in the broader international community. Liberated from the shackles of occupation and discrimination, we have almost boundless potential to build a better future for ourselves, for our neighbours in the region, and for the global community.

Institutional Development

Success in achieving national goals requires that high priority be given to developing the public institutions in the PNA. Maintaining an efficient and effective public sector that provides citizens with high quality services and value for money is a constant challenge. Like all governments around the world, we need to be responsive to political, economic, social and cultural changes in their countries and to adapt public sector structures, institutions and staffing accordingly. For us, however, the challenge is deeper and more complex. We have to develop our public institutions to bear the responsibility and burden of ending the occupation and establishing an independent state in the face of exceptional adversities that we must confront and overcome. To this end, the Government is committed to consolidating and building on the achievements of previous governments in building a responsive, transparent, accountable, efficient and effective Palestinian public sector. We embrace this task as part of our duty to do all in our power to serve our citizens, despite the severe constraints imposed upon us by the occupation regime. We have called upon Palestinian civil society and the private sector to join us in this mission in the belief that, working together, we can build even better institutions to accelerate the development of a free and sovereign State of Palestine.

The Government has identified its main institution-building priorities in five core areas: the legal framework; organizational structures and processes; the use of technology in government; management of national financial resources; and management of human

resources in the civil and security sectors. These are our top priorities, to which we will devote most of our attention over the coming months prior to the national elections in January 2010. We will also continue to give attention to the many other ongoing institutional reform activities set forth in the PRDP 2008-10.

Unification and modernization of the legal framework

The Palestinian legal framework comprises an array of laws and regulations inherited from a succession of foreign regimes – Ottoman, British, Jordanian, Egyptian and Israeli. In some cases the laws and regulations applied in the West Bank differ from those applied in Gaza. This, coupled with the fact that aspects of the legal framework are outdated, presents all manner of challenges to ensuring good governance.

One of the highest priorities of the Government will be to finalize the ongoing comprehensive review of the Palestinian legal and regulatory framework. It is essential that this review and modernization of the legal framework is taken forward in a coordination fashion, sector by sector, through full consultation between all relevant government, civil society and private sector institutions. We are also working to build effective justice sector institutions to ensure that all laws, regulations and procedures are consistently applied and enforced throughout Palestine.

Rationalization of government organizational structures and processes

The organizational structure of the government, both in terms of the number of ministries and agencies and their internal structures, is of moderate size and uncomplicated by regional standards. Nevertheless, this structure will be subject to a general review in order to address major deficiencies and to eliminate any duplication that wastes Palestinian resources. All citizens are entitled to be served by an economical and well-managed public sector organized to deliver high quality social, justice and security services at a reasonable cost.

The Government will launch a review of its organizational structure and core processes. This review will be conducted on a sector-by-sector basis through a participatory and consultative process, and will be rooted in the foundational principles mentioned above, particularly the separation of powers, efficiency and effectiveness.

Information and communications technology

The more widespread use of information and communications technology (ICT) in the Palestinian public sector represents a huge opportunity to increase its efficiency and effectiveness in delivering services to our people. It also provides many opportunities for greater government transparency, accountability and better communication with citizens. There is a vibrant ICT sector in Palestine which can contribute to and benefit from a government-wide initiative to computerize public sector services and processes.

Many ministries and agencies are already in the process of increasing the use of ICT in schools, hospitals and offices. The Government will work with relevant academic and private sector institutions to ensure a comprehensive and coherent strategy for accelerating the adoption of state-of-the-art ICT in the public sector. The strategy will be founded on the basic principle that local capacity and businesses will be the preferred providers of ICT goods and services.

Financial resources management

The occupation regime has placed severe limitations on the fiscal and monetary policy instruments available to the PNA to manage the Palestinian economy. This, along with the suffocating economic impact of the occupation, has rendered the PNA's fiscal position especially vulnerable to the fluctuation of political and security relations with Israel and the international community. Over the years the PNA has sought to deal with economic stagnation and contraction, and resultant rises in unemployment and poverty, through increases in public sector employment and salaries. During periods of acute instability, these measures helped

prevent complete collapse of the Palestinian economy and social order. However, there have been significant consequences for the PNA's fiscal situation, limiting the resources available to fund other operating and development expenditure.

The Government will continue with policies and measures designed to restrict growth of the public sector wage bill. Most importantly, we will strengthen and rehabilitate our national economy to create job opportunities in the private sector. We will also continue to integrate policymaking, planning and budgeting processes as an important element of a strategy to make government more accountable for the national resources it spends, including development projects financed by the donor community, in line with a national policy framework that reflects a truly Palestinian vision and Palestinian priorities. The Government will also continue the work of previous governments to upgrade its expenditure and accounting systems and processes in order to further enhance transparency and accountability for public finances.

Human resources management

The effective functional performance of any organization depends on the quality and dedication of its employees. This requires a culture and work ethic geared towards continuous capacity development and performance improvement. Building this culture depends on internal human resources management systems and processes that guarantee effective recruitment, training and staff performance evaluation. An appropriate system of incentives is also required to encourage and reward good performance, whilst proactively addressing poor performance.

The 13th government will launch a review of human resources management systems and procedures to identify and implement key reforms to public sector recruitment, personal development and staff performance evaluation mechanisms. We are determined to implement professional, merit-based systems and processes that will ensure equal opportunity and fairness in recruitment and promotion decisions. We will also review public sector pay and pensions to ensure that they provide an appropriate incentive structure for staff of all categories and grades. Implementing these new arrangements will require some fundamental changes to the Civil Service Law and related executive regulations.

The majority of public sector employees work hard to deliver basic health, education and security services in our clinics, our hospitals, our schools, our universities, and on our streets. In too many cases, particularly in Gaza, they sometimes do this at great personal risk. In recent years, successive governments have struggled to pay their employees on a regular and timely basis. Despite financial difficulties it faces, the Government will continue to make every effort to ensure that all of its financial obligations, including its employees, are settled in a timely manner. The Government calls upon all civil servants to re-dedicate themselves to the service of the nation and the public interest. Their commitment and hard work is essential to the collective national effort to defy and end the occupation. They play a critical role in supporting and preserving the steadfastness of Palestinian citizens in their struggle for freedom and independence.

Sector Priorities, Policies and Programs

To translate public policies into results the Government has identified sector priorities as a preliminary step. Priorities, policies and programs are presented in four sectors – governance, social, economy and infrastructure. Below is a summary of sectoral priorities, policies and programs, which ministries and non-ministerial agencies will implement in each sector.

Governance

In a modern state, the governance sector – its structures, its systems and its operating procedures – must embody the supreme values of the society as well as the basic principles on which the state is founded. Governance affects all walks of life across all sectors. Accordingly, it can be considered as cross-sectoral. However, in the Government's program, it is viewed as

a separate sector in which cross-cutting institution-building issues need to be addressed. Policy priorities in the sector may be summarized in five domains.

Public administration: The Palestinian Government is committed to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of all its institutions. The Government will develop and modernize its organizational structures, upgrade the capacity of human resources, update legislation and regulations, and install state-of-the-art ICT equipment in order to upgrade performance. To ensure an institutional performance that meets the highest international standards, the Government will bring and maintain its working methods in line with the basic principles of transparency, accountability, and separation of powers.

Civil and criminal justice: The Government will develop and consolidate civil and criminal justice system bolstering the principle of the separation of powers, building capacities of human resources within the judiciary, police, and civil defence, enacting modern legislation, and providing appropriate infrastructure to ensure enhanced performance.

Security services: To safeguard citizens' security and protect their property, the Government will promote the professional and effective performance of the security establishment. The Government will finalise the restructuring of security agencies based on professional grounds. It will also provide suitable training, equipment, and infrastructure to help the security sector improve its performance. In order to attain the highest professional standards, the Government will hold security agencies accountable by promoting the separation of powers and by developing oversight bodies and mechanisms.

Local government: The Government affirms the significant role which local government units play in delivering services to citizens. The Government is committed to developing the capacities of local government units, promote their participation in the development process, and help them attain financial and administrative independence. The Government will also promote accountability of local government units by developing oversight systems within relevant central institutions.

Fiscal stability: The Government will seek to secure the future fiscal stability of Palestine to enable it to fulfil the fundamental responsibilities of a self-sufficient state. The Government will continue to develop the financial system on transparent grounds. It will control expenditure, minimize the budget deficit, and promote economy in service delivery. On the revenue side, the Government will promote growth of the private sector so as to provide job opportunities and expand the tax base.

Objectives and activities of sector institutions

All PNA institutions, including ministries and governmental agencies, have a role in implementing programs to meet governance sector objectives. Below is a summary of the key objectives and related activities of the main governmental bodies in the sector.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has the following objectives:

Enhance capacities of the Palestinian diplomatic corps through:

- Building a professional, politically committed diplomatic corps at MoFA and at embassies as well as pump new blood in this sector.
- Finalising construction of the new MoFA building, regulating the Diplomatic Training Institute, and purchasing the largest number possible of embassies.

Contribute to promoting the international position of Palestine through:

- Developing Palestine's international relations with various states and international organizations and broadening scope of cooperation with them on all levels, particularly in the fields of politics, culture and economy.

- Communicating with Palestinian communities overseas, empowering them to support the Palestinian cause and the perseverance of citizens in the occupied Palestinian territory.

Enhance effective service delivery to citizens through:

- Developing communication mechanisms between embassies and MoFA to facilitate service delivery to citizens outside the homeland.
- Deliver certification services to citizens in cooperation with other governmental bodies operating in the Palestinian governorates.

Ministry of Interior

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) has the following objectives:

Impose public order, establish the rule of law and preserve public safety, thereby consolidating security and safety as well as safeguarding rights and freedoms through:

- Developing the capacity of, restructuring and reorganising the security establishment, and regulating each security agency in accordance with the law and relevant regulations.
- Continuing to train security staff, building security offices and headquarters, and providing modern equipment to help the security agencies perform their assigned tasks.
- Completing development of laws regulating the functions of security agencies and preparing a code of conduct in order to protect citizens and safeguard public freedoms.

Deliver effective and efficient services to citizens, expatriates and visitors to the PNA-controlled territory in line with the law through:

- Developing the organizational structures, systems and process of the MoI.
- Building directorate offices and public service centers that offer high quality services.
- Automating service delivery and establishing connectivity with other institutions (e.g., the Civil Registry).
- Developing the Law on Nationality and Passports.

Ensure transparent and accountable administrative and financial performance through:

- Implementing administrative and financial reforms in all branches of the security sector, including centralization of financial management and clarifying the jurisdiction of each branch to ensure effective integrated operations.
- Ensuring integrated and cooperative systems and working methods throughout the MoI in a manner that unifies and centralizes its administrative and financial management.
- Developing a policy framework and strategic plan for implementing security sector development programs and projects.

Develop the MoI's relations with the local, regional and international communities through:

- Guiding activities to represent Palestine as a full member on the Interpol.
- Developing MoI's operation on committees established by the Arab Council of the Ministers of Interior as well as rejuvenating MoI's role in the Mediterranean Civil Protection Program.
- Develop a code of conduct for the Palestinian civil society activity.
- Building media capacities of MoI so that it can effectively communicate with the Palestinian civil society.

Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) has the following objectives:

Reduce reliance on international aid through:

- Controlling and rationalising expenditure, particularly recurrent expenses.
- Increasing domestic revenues and unifying the tax system.
- Increasing property tax collection by local government units.
- Amending the Income Tax Law, thereby broadening the tax base and keeping pace with developments in the national economy.

Enhance competent management of the public finances through:

- Developing financial policies and public finance management methods.
- Establishing a department for research and studies in the area of public financial management.

Increase efficiency of public service delivery through:

- Promoting capacities of MoF staff and providing them with modern tools, including legislation, regulations, and functional procedures.
- Finalize current work on computerising tax assessment and collection, enabling better management of taxpayer accounts.

Promote concepts of transparency and accountability in the management of public finance through:

- Enhancing the effectiveness of financial auditing throughout PNA institutions by adopting a decentralized auditing system.
- Developing the Public Procurement Agency as an independent body that reports to the Council of Ministers.
- Developing financial legislation and regulations and completing the implementation of an integrated accounting system.

Promote full Palestinian participation in international trade as a sovereign entity:

- Becoming a full member on the World Customs Organization.
- Developing qualified staff to operate customs departments at international ports (including land, sea, and airports).

Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development

The Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development (MoPAD) has the following objectives:

Promote efficient and effective allocation of limited national resources through:

- Providing necessary technical support to develop capacity of governmental bodies in policy making and planning.
- Monitoring and evaluation of governmental bodies' performance against agreed targets.
- Preparing national development plans, in coordination with all governmental bodies, the private sector and civil society, to clearly define national and sectoral policies, priorities and programs
- Working with the donor community to enhance aid effectiveness.
- Leading and coordinating the development of national spatial plans.

Promote citizens' trust and confidence in the PNA through:

- Managing the process of developing human resource capacities throughout the PNA.
- Providing technical support for governmental institutions to develop their organizational structures and ensure efficient and transparent working methods documented in formal procedures manuals.
- Coordinating efforts to automate governmental functions.
- Supporting the Ministry of Finance's efforts to develop financial management and control systems in all governmental bodies.

Ministry of Local Government

The Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) has the following objectives:

Empower local government units and build their institutional capacities through:

- Developing consolidated administrative structures, administrative manuals and financial policies, and a computerized, integrated accounting system.
- Finalizing the modernization of spatial planning, developing policies and guidance for land use, and upgrading the capacity of the Higher Zoning Council.
- Developing strategic and developmental planning capacity at the local level.
- Establishing staff training centers at local government units.

- Merging local government units, where necessary, in order to facilitate better service delivery.
- Developing laws, regulations, and procedural manuals on local government.

Build the MoLG's capability to oversee the local government sector through:

- Developing a strategic plan for MoLG capacity development.
- Developing a new organizational structure, administrative manuals and computerized systems to enhance the performance of staff.
- Developing a training plan for staff and developing monitoring and performance evaluation methods.

Promote democracy, transparency and civil society participation in the local government sector through:

- Conduct elections at local government units in a regular fashion.
- Monitor and evaluate the performance of local government units.
- Raise public awareness of the concept of local government and promoting partnership between MoLG, local government units and citizens.

Promote the concept of partnership between local government units and public and private sectors to promote local development and fiscal independence through:

- Promoting participation of local government units in local and national development.
- Generating opportunities to increase the financial resources of local government units.
- Encouraging adjacent municipalities to work jointly in launching and implementing development projects.
- Encouraging the private sector and civil society organizations to cooperate with local government units to implement development projects.
- Promoting partnership with the private sector to help deliver and manage services cost effectively.

Ministry of Justice

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has the following objectives:

Protect citizens' fundamental rights and freedoms through:

- Developing, in cooperation with all relevant public institutions, an integrated civil and criminal legal framework which safeguards separation of powers and ensures the integrated operation of all sector institutions.
- Developing the forensic medicine capacity.
- Following up on the execution of court judgements.
- Monitoring administrative performance in prisons to safeguard human rights.
- Developing and implementing a legal aid programs for citizens who are incapable of defending themselves for financial reasons.
- Contributing to developing and rejuvenating the Bureau of the Legal Counsel and Legislation.

Enhance justice sector performance through:

- Supporting the development of professional capacities, including members of the public prosecution service and judges.
- Supporting the development of specialization in the justice sector, developing specialist courts and specialized staff in fields of commercial disputes, labour, etc.
- Supporting the continuing education through the Palestinian Judicial Institute.
- Constructing justice facilities, including courthouses and public prosecution offices, throughout governorates.
- Supporting computerization in the justice sector, including the police, public prosecution and courts.

Ministry of Waqf and Religious Affairs

The Ministry of Waqf and Religious Affairs (MoWRA) has the following objectives:

Promote awareness and understanding of the Islamic religion and culture and disseminate the concept of tolerance in the religion through:

- Developing and implementing programs of *Shari'a* education as derived from the science of the Holy Qur'an and Prophet's heritage.
- Empowering mosques as a center of guidance, through improving their infrastructure and services.

Promote service delivery to citizens through:

- Developing buildings and services, and maintaining mosques.
- Supporting the activities of the Hajj and 'Umrah.
- Supervising *Shari'a* education, including at the College of Preaching and *Shari'a* Science as well as the Islamic Orphanage.

Protect and promote effective and efficient management of Zakat funds and Waqf properties through:

- Improving the management of the Zakat funds and ensuring equitable distribution.
- Following up on the survey of the Waqf properties.
- Creating a computerized database to keep all information on Waqf properties.
- Developing policies on the best utilization of Waqf properties.

Financial Administration Control Bureau

The Financial Administration Control Bureau (FACB) has the following objectives:

Contribute to protecting the public funds and properties through:

- Auditing governmental and non-governmental bodies to ensure that functions are carried out in line with applicable laws and regulations.
- Developing performance of FACB staff by training, exchanging international through training and developing necessary systems and tools to enhance performance.

Promote the concept of oversight and accountability in PNA institutions and civil society organizations through:

- Cooperating and communicating with bodies subject to FACB control.
- Publishing a monthly bulletin on the FACB activities and programs.

General Personnel Council

The General Personnel Council (GPC) has the following objectives:

Promote transparency and accountability in public sector recruitment and promotions through:

- Developing appropriate regulations, mechanisms and standards in recruitment and promotion processes.
- Ensuring that the Law of Civil Service and relevant bylaws are duly enforced and updated.
- Establishing interconnectivity between GPC and the General Directorates of Salaries at the Ministry of Finance.
- Developing staffing tables and job descriptions for all governmental institutions.

Contribute to enhance public administration through:

- Taking part in developing modern policies and mechanisms in administration.
- Recruiting qualified human resources and providing staff training programs.

Department of the Chief Justice of the Family Courts

The Department of the Chief Justice of the Family Courts has the following objectives:

Enhance the performance of the religious (*Shari'a*) judicial system through:

- Building capacities and increasing the number of *Shari'a* court judges, as well as providing necessary equipment.

- Constructing *Shari'a* courthouses, throughout the Palestinian countryside.
- Automating operations at *Shari'a* courts.

Safeguard citizens' rights through:

- Developing and approving laws that regulate functions of the *Shari'a* courts.
- Adopting a system to archive documents, both manually and electronically, in order to curb fraud, particularly in relation to inheritance, Waqf properties, marriage, divorce, etc.

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) has the following objectives:

Develop essential ICT infrastructure to support governmental policies and programs through:

- Building central and administrative registers.
- Carrying out various censuses, including the agricultural census.
- Establishing a system for monitoring social, economic, environmental, and governance conditions.
- Publish statistical data in a manner that serves users' needs and promotes scientific research.

Contribute to building statistical capacities throughout governmental bodies through:

- Developing capacities of relevant staff within ministries and governmental agencies.
- Assisting all governmental bodies and local government units in developing working methods and databases.

Social

The conditions under which the Palestinian people now live are probably the harshest ever. Witnessing forced migration, displacement, imprisonment, assassinations, impoverishment and deprivation, Palestinian families and society are suffering terribly. Nevertheless, Palestinian society remains cohesive. The Palestinian people are proud of their heritage and culture. Policy priorities in the sector may be summarized in four domains.

Preserving social cohesion: To counteract the negative effects of fragmentation of the Palestinian homeland and displacement of the Palestinian people, the Government will develop special programs to strengthen and consolidate social cohesion.

Providing social protection: Palestinian society suffers from impoverishment and marginalization more than any other society with comparable education sector indicators. This is an inevitable result of the Israeli occupation regime's ongoing destruction of Palestinian physical, social and economic infrastructure. The Government will provide a social safety net to bring short term relief from the occupation regime's impact. In the medium term, following establishment of the Palestinian state, the social safety net will provide social protection to marginalized and deprived social groups.

Preserving cultural heritage: The Government will preserve Palestinian cultural heritage and its character of religious and intellectual pluralism. The Government will also promote and consolidate Palestinian values inherited over successive generations, including social solidarity, close family ties, loyalty and integrity.

Promoting equal opportunities: The Government believes that providing equal opportunities for all citizens is a foundation of social justice and will enable channelling of all the society's energies towards building our modern state. To consolidate the principle of equal opportunities, the Government will provide quality education and health care to all citizens regardless of social class.

Objectives and activities of sector institutions

Below is a summary of the key objectives and related activities of the main governmental bodies in the sector.

Ministry of Social Affairs

The Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) has the following objectives:

Provide social protection to poor and marginalized groups through:

- Making cash transfers to severely impoverished families; families affected by the occupation regime's policies in Gaza, areas adjacent to the Separation Wall, Jerusalem, and in the Jordan Valley; and, to orphans.
- Providing food packages to families amongst the poorest 60% of Palestinian families which do not receive cash assistance and to pregnant and breast feeding mothers within the poorest 40% of the population. In addition, MoSA will provide a hot meal to children at nurseries in areas classified as pockets of poverty.
- Providing health insurance to those under the extreme poverty line by targeting the poorest 70 % of the most impoverished households; the elderly who are located within the poorest 30% of the population; disabled members of households located within the poorest 30% of the population; and all citizens from households under the extreme poverty line.
- Providing social care, rehabilitation and protection to physically disabled citizens and the elderly under the extreme poverty line, in addition to taking care of delinquent minors, rehabilitating the disabled, and providing protection and shelter to orphans and to children, women and elderly persons who are victims of violence.
- Economically empowering the poor by providing training and funding to SMEs run by economically deprived households, the disabled, female-headed families, and impoverished new graduates from universities and other tertiary education establishments.

Enhance the targeting and effectiveness of social protection activities through:

- Developing a unified social safety net and upgrading social protection legislation.
- Reviewing and developing MoSA's organizational structure and working methods to improve staff performance.
- Institutionalising and enhancing working relationships with domestic and international governmental and non-governmental organizations providing humanitarian aid.
- Supporting, in cooperation with UNRWA, service delivery to refugees in refugee camps.
- Promoting, in cooperation with other relevant bodies, steadfastness of citizens living in uniquely threatened areas, such as Jerusalem, communities affected by the Wall and settlements.

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has the following objectives:

Provide opportunities to access and benefit from the 'Education for All' Program through:

- Building classrooms throughout the occupied territory.
- Providing text books, stationery and equipment.
- Ensuring an appropriate learning environment for persons with special needs.
- Supporting education in Jerusalem.
- Providing loans to enable students to enrol in higher education.
- Encouraging enrolment at vocational and technical educational centers.

Enhance the quality of regular and vocational education through:

- Developing curricula.
- Promoting the use of ICT in education.
- Developing teaching techniques and enhancing the capacity of teachers.
- Developing a teaching monitoring and evaluation system.

Improve performance of higher education facilities through:

- Matching higher education with the requirements of the domestic labour market and national needs.

- Promoting a culture of scientific research in Palestine and exchanging expertise with other nations.
- Promoting the financial independence of higher education institutions.

Increase effectiveness of service delivery through:

- Developing MoE's the organizational structure and working methods and its laws and regulations.
- Computerising data and financial administration systems.
- Developing the administrative and financial regulation pertaining to the Student Loans Fund.
- Enhancing cooperation with educational institutions and civil society organizations.

Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health (MoH) has the following objectives:

Ensure easy access to high-quality health care services by all Palestinian citizens through:

- Completing the health care services network in the field of primary health care.
 - Construct 6 health directorates in Jenin, Tulkarem, Hebron, Bethlehem, Tubas, and Dura.
 - Refurbish and 25 level 2 and level 3 health care clinics.
 - Construct 10 new clinics.
- Completing the health care services network in the field of secondary and tertiary health care (hospitals). This program will include the following:
 - Upgrade and reequip governmental hospitals as well as expand hospitals of Jericho, Beit Jala, Jenin, Rafidia, Hebron, Yatta, and Palestine Medical Compound in Ramallah.
 - Build a new hospital with a capacity of 50 beds in Tubas.
 - Rehabilitate the mental health care facility in Bethlehem.
 - Develop a plan to construct a hospital for cancer treatment and a center for blood diseases.
- Developing MoH human resources, including:
 - Developing and recruiting medical specialists.
 - Enhancing capacity of health care sector employees by implementing residency programs for medical specializations.
 - Adopting a decentralized administrative and financial approach in operating the Palestine Medical Compound in Ramallah to enable recruitment of specialists from the private sector and from abroad.

Ensure sustainable health care service delivery through:

- Rationalizing procurement of services from abroad as well as recruiting and developing local capacity to provide specialist healthcare services.
- Computerizing hospitals and developing health care information systems.
- Approving and enforcing a modernized law on health insurance.
- Eliminating the abuse of the free health insurance.
- Developing various new national health strategies, including a Drugs Strategy, a National Anti-Cancer Strategy, and a National Nutrition Strategy, and revising outdated national strategies.

Ministry of Labour

The Ministry of Labour (MoL) has the following objectives:

Safeguard workers' rights through:

- Developing labor laws and regulations and monitoring their enforcement.
- Developing and regulating union activity in Palestine.
- Appointing inspectors and providing them with continuing education.

- Creating a social security system that safeguards workers' rights and provides health care services for them and for their families.

Enhance the skills of Palestinian workers to enable them to compete in the global economy through:

- Rejuvenating the National Vocational and Technical Education and Training Strategy.
- Matching vocational and technical training with labour market needs.
- Upgrading and invigorating a labour market information system and activating the Palestinian Employment Fund.
- Enhancing the quality of vocational and technical education and training in cooperation with relevant PNA bodies.
- Distributing vocational and technical training centers throughout the occupied territory.

Rejuvenate the role of cooperative organizations, and promote participation and accountability mechanisms within these organizations through:

- Approving a Palestinian Law on Cooperatives, developing by-laws, and enhancing oversight of cooperatives.
- Implementing programs for building the capacities of cooperative movements.
- Establishing of cooperative organizations and encouraging communal activities.

Ministry of Women's Affairs

The Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) has the following objectives:

Enable women's participation in policy and decision-making through:

- Enacting and enforcing legislation to ensure women's participation.
- Ensuring that various governmental policies and programs heed gender issues and women's participation.
- Providing support to women to access decision-making centers.
- Launching a dialogue with various Palestinian political parties to ensure women's representation.
- Promoting partnership with the civil society and private sector in gender issues.
- Developing and implementing public awareness programs.

Assessing the Government's commitment to gender issues through:

- Monitoring and evaluating commitment and progress made by ministries in relation to gender issues.
- Developing the capacity of gender units to monitor and evaluate the gender sensitivity of ministries' operations.
- Participating in monitoring and evaluation of implementation of Millennium Development Goals.

Alleviate the impact of poverty on women in cooperation with governmental and non-governmental institutions through:

- Developing a national strategy to promote women's participation in the labour market.
- Reviewing and developing national policies to elevate women's participation in the labour market.
- Encouraging women to enrol at vocational and technical educational centers.
- Developing programs that provide finance for women to establish SMEs.
- Work with MoSA to provide aid to needy female-headed households.

Fight violence against women through:

- Enacting and enforcing legislation.
- Developing a national strategy to combat violence against women.
- Developing and implementing public awareness programs.
- Contributing to developing plans for establishment of centers to protect abused women.

Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture (MoC) has the following objectives:

Preserve the Arab cultural identity of Jerusalem through:

- Promoting Palestinian cultural activities and events in the city.
- Developing Palestinian cultural infrastructure.

Maintain Palestinian national cultural heritage and identity through:

- Using physical heritage (including traditional industries and handicrafts) to generate national income.
- Documenting collective oral history and transmitting it to future generations.
- Developing programs to protect national culture from negative impacts of globalization and confronting attempts to replace the national cultural identity.
- Encouraging cultural exchange between Palestinians at home, in the Diaspora and inside Israel.
- Promoting cultural exchange with Arab countries and with the entire world.

Encourage culture and ensure equitable service delivery through:

- Cultural development of vulnerable communities and groups.
- Working with relevant institutions to promulgate laws to rejuvenate cultural life in all its forms.
- Establishing, equipping and operating cultural infrastructure, including theatres, museums and libraries.
- Developing the MoC's organizational structures, working methods and the capacity of its staff.

Ministry of the Wall and Settlement Affairs

The Ministry of the Wall and Settlement Affairs (MoWSA) has the following objectives:

Promote steadfastness of citizens affected by the Separation Wall in cooperation with other ministries and agencies through:

- Developing and implementing development projects west of the Wall.
- Contributing to providing basic needs of citizens, including implementation of social aid programs.

Resist Wall construction and settlement activity through:

- Lobbying Arab and international support, emphasising relevant international resolutions.
- Launching media and political activities that highlight the ICJ Advisory Opinion on the Wall and to reaffirm UN resolutions regarding illegal settlements.
- Providing necessary support to popular committees in their peaceful resistance against the Wall.
- Coordinating the national effort, including between official bodies and civil society organizations, to document changes on the ground and to provide up-to-date and accurate data on Israeli violations.

Ministry of Detainees' Affairs

The Ministry of Detainees' Affairs (MoDA) has the following objectives:

Work towards releasing all prisoners and detainees from Israeli prisons through:

- Lobbying Arab and international support for prisoners and publicizing their predicament.
- Ensure that the issue of prisoners remains at the top of Government's policy agenda and a core issue in negotiations with Israel.
- Provide support and legal aid to prisoners.

Secure a decent standard of living for prisoners and care for their children and families through:

- Enhancing health care, social and financial services delivered to prisoners' families.
- Providing higher education opportunities and offering grants to prisoners and their families.

- Enabling prisoners to gain employment in governmental functions.
- Working with relevant organizations to provide vocational and technical training to help released prisoners compete in the labour market.
- Developing a program to launch SMEs managed by released prisoners.

Improve MoDA service delivery through:

- Upgrading MoDA's administrative, financial and oversight systems.
- Building the capacity of staff, developing procedures manuals, and providing essential infrastructure.

Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs

In coordination and cooperation with relevant PNA ministries and governmental agencies, the Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs (MoJA) has the following objectives:

Preserve the Arab identity of Jerusalem as the eternal capital of the Palestinian people and prevent attempts to alter its demographic character and cultural landmarks through:

- Lobbying Arab and international support for Jerusalem.
- Maintaining Jerusalem as a top priority on the Government's agenda and highlighting its predicament in the media.
- Launching a programs to promote the steadfastness of Jerusalemites, including:
 - Strengthen Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem, providing financial support to help them deliver services to citizens.
 - Provide necessary legal support for Jerusalem inhabitants to enable them confront Israeli policies and measures, including house demolitions and withdrawal of ID cards.
 - Provide necessary engineering expertise to prepare and submit structural plans for houses under threat of demolition and for zoning of unclassified land to convert them into residential areas.
 - Provide urgent aid to evicted families.
 - Develop programs to address drug addiction and consolidate social cohesion in the city.
 - Provide support to housing projects in Jerusalem.
 - Provide, in cooperation with relevant PNA institutions, support to secure basic educational needs, including construction of classrooms, improvement of the educational environment, and provision of adequate income for teachers
 - Provide support to the commercial and tourism sectors in Jerusalem by offering loan facilities, restoring closed commercial premises and developing a program to provide funds for SMEs.

Palestinian Pension Agency

The Palestinian Pension Agency (PPA) has the following objectives:

Protect retirement funds through:

- Collecting pension contribution arrears.
- Enhancing pension fund management techniques.
- Developing and enforcing a sustainable law on retirement.

Increase functional effectiveness and efficiency through:

- Developing the PPA's organizational structure, working methods and capacity of its staff.

Economy

Rebuilding the Palestinian economy is critical to our goal to establish an independent Palestinian state. This requires the lifting of the burden of restrictions and sanctions imposed by the occupation regime on the Palestinian economy. These include closures, military checkpoints, and other arbitrary measures which fragment the Palestinian territory and impede movement of people and goods; the Separation Wall which deprives our economy of essential resources, including land and water; complete isolation of the Gaza Strip; isolation of Jerusalem; continuing settlement activity; and the general suffocation of economic activity.

Restrictions imposed by the occupation regime are the major obstacle stalling Palestinian national efforts to initiate an economic recovery that will lay the ground for sustainable economic and social development.

In spite of domestically-supported and internationally-endorsed efforts made by successive Palestinian Governments to create an enabling investment environment and promote partnership with the private sector – the main driver of development in Palestine – such efforts have often been obstructed by Israeli restrictions. The 13th Government is committed to applying political pressure, backed by international support, to eliminate Israeli measures that are suffocating Palestinian economic recovery.

To initiate a sustainable economic recovery and to rebuild the national economy as a pillar of a modern Palestinian state, the Government has defined policy priorities in the sector in seven domains.

Creating an enabling investment environment: The Government will promote investment in Palestine through, inter alia, tax incentives to local and foreign investors. The Government will also develop the package of modern investment laws and regulations to promote investment and economic activity.

Promoting the role of private sector in social and economic development: Private business is an integral part of Palestinian society. The Government will act to enhance the role of the private sector in national development. The Government will also support the development of Palestinian private sector institutions to increase their capacity to represent the interests of their members.

Support Palestinian products and expertise: In all its procurement activities, the Government will give priority to Palestinian goods and services without prejudice to competition on grounds of cost and quality.

Developing national resources: Palestine is abundant with human resources, but has limited natural resources. Therefore, the Government will focus on developing human capital through an education system that meets the needs of a labor market in a productive and globally-competitive national economy. On the other hand, the Government will develop techniques to conserve and manage our limited natural resources for the benefit of the Palestinian society and economy.

Developing infrastructure: Insufficient and inadequate infrastructure is a major factor driving up the cost of production. The Government will develop national infrastructure, including industrial zones, electricity networks, roads, crossing points, and other critical infrastructure to reduce production costs and enable Palestinian products to be more competitive in the domestic, regional and international markets.

Transmit knowledge and support Palestinian innovation: In light of the rapid pace of globalization, Palestinian businesses need international exposure to benefit from international expertise and promote Palestinian goods and services overseas. The Government will support international knowledge transfer and marketing activities in order to develop and enrich the national economy. In addition, the Government will encourage Palestinian innovation through promoting research and development.

Expand bilateral and multilateral cooperation: The Government will develop and sign agreements on commercial cooperation with states that grant Palestine preferential treatment, and raise awareness and utilization of existing agreements. The Government will also continue efforts to enrol Palestine as a full member on the World Trade Organization, World Customs Organization and other international bodies.

Objectives and activities of sector institutions

Below is a summary of the key objectives and related activities of the main governmental bodies in the sector.

Ministry of National Economy

The Ministry of National Economy (MoNE) has the following objectives:

Safeguard independence of the Palestinian economy through:

- Ending Israeli hegemony over the Palestinian economy.
- Diversifying markets and export destinations, with special focus on ties with Arab countries.
- Consolidating economic and commercial relations with other commercial partners, including Islamic states, EU, European Free Trade Association, and the USA.

Stimulate economic recovery and develop an enabling environment for business and investment in Palestine through:

- Developing enabling legislation and regulations and removing bureaucratic impediments.
- Developing investment-enabling infrastructure, including industrial estates.

Promote Palestinian competitiveness through:

- Developing human resources to compete in the global economy.
- Creating an economy based on knowledge and modern technology.
- Contributing to development of policies to effectively manage natural resources.
- Modernize, broaden and enhance the productive base of the Palestinian economy.

Provide protection to Palestinian consumers through:

- Contributing to developing and putting in force a Consumer Protection Law.
- Building the capacity of the Palestinian Standards Institute.

Ministry of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) has the following objectives;

Improve food security and promote self-sufficiency through:

- Establishing agribusiness projects that generate income and employ large numbers of workers.
- Marketing and raising the quality of national agricultural products.
- Enhancing household production by poor families.

Promote economic viability and inward investment in the agricultural sector through:

- Promoting economically viable crops.
- Encouraging the establishment of private companies to market agricultural produce.
- Protecting national agricultural products from unfair and anti-competitive market practices.
- Developing and improving livestock productivity.
- Encouraging financing of agricultural businesses.

Promote effectiveness of agricultural service delivery through:

- Modernizing the MoA's organizational structure, building capacities of staff to enable them to provide enhanced services.
- Updating the national agricultural sector strategy.
- Upgrading the MoA's infrastructure.
- Finalizing development of a legal framework to regulate the agricultural sector.
- Establishing unions and specialized boards providing agricultural services to farmers.

Develop, manage and utilize natural resources (land and water) through:

- Reclaiming and rehabilitating land, constructing agricultural roads, and digging collection wells.

- Developing water sources used for agricultural purposes, promoting the competent use of irrigation, and using treated saltwater and wastewater in cultivation.
- Launching a tree-planting project in Palestine (5 million trees).

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) has the following objectives:

Promote Palestinian tourism products through:

- Diversifying tourist products and promoting tourism services.
- Developing and enhancing cultural heritage resources.
- Enriching tourists' cultural experience.
- Creating an enabling investment environment for the tourism sector.
- Implementing model projects in selected areas, including the *Jericho 10,000* project; development of sustainable tourism in Jericho; construction of the *Riwayah* museum in Bethlehem; rehabilitation of Tal Balata; administration of the Sabastiya site; and establishment of tourist information centers in Jericho, Nablus and Al 'Eizariya.

Promote and market Palestine as a distinctive tourist destination through:

- Developing a promotion strategy that markets Palestine as a unique tourist destination.
- Using the media, ICT, and tourist exhibitions to promote Palestinian tourism.
- Promoting the culture of tourism in the society – guiding citizens to engage positively with tourists and to protect cultural heritage sites.
- Promoting internal tourism.

Enhance MoTA's performance through:

- Developing MoTA's organizational structure, working methods and working relationships with relevant local and international organizations.
- Developing capacities of the MoTA staff.

Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology

The Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology (MoTIT) has the following objectives:

Build national human resources capacities in cooperation with relevant governmental bodies through:

- Contributing to development of educational curricula that promote the use of ICT.
- Contributing to the development of distance learning.
- Supporting scientific research and bringing international ICT expertise to Palestine.

Enhance consumer protection through:

- Contributing to development and enforcement of the Consumer Protection Law.
- Regulating the ICT sector and promoting competition in the ICT market.

Contribute to enhancing government performance and transparency through:

- Finalising the first phase of the e-government project.
- Establishing a national ICT center in cooperation with relevant PNA bodies.

Increase ICT sector revenues through:

- Rehabilitating the postal sector to provide effective and competitive postal and financial services.
- Promoting partnership with the private sector to promote the sector domestically and internationally.
- Encouraging international ICT corporations to appoint direct agents in Palestine, rather than dealing with Israeli agents.
- Supporting ICT business' participation in local and international exhibitions.
- Supporting development of emerging ICT enterprises and inventions.
- Supporting the Palestine Information and Communications Technology Incubator (PCTI).

Palestinian National Authority, Program of the Thirteenth Government, August 2009

Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State

Foreword

This document presents the program of the 13th government of the Palestinian National Authority. The program, which sets out our national goals and government policies, centers around the objective of building strong state institutions capable of providing, equitably and effectively, for the needs of our citizens, despite the occupation. We believe that full commitment to this state-building endeavor will advance our highest national priority of ending the occupation, thereby enabling us to live in freedom and dignity in a country of our own.

It is time for our people to obtain their unconditional freedom and national rights as required by international law. This calls for positive and proactive steps, both nationally and internationally, in order to end the occupation and reach a just and lasting political settlement in our region. For our part, we have to dedicate ourselves to the task of state-building. This will be critical to our success. In parallel, we have to be fully engaged with the international community, and we should work to secure the full backing of our Arab brethren and the political and economic support of our friends around the world.

The establishment of an independent, sovereign, and viable Palestinian state is fundamental for peace, security and stability in our region. Whereas Israeli settlement policies and activities continue to undermine the viability of the two- state solution, our government is determined to preserve and advance this solution concept through our full commitment to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) program. We call on our people to unite behind this program and the government's vision to transform it into a reality. This is the path to freedom. This is the path to the creation of the independent state of Palestine on the Palestinian territory occupied in 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital. And, yes, this can and must happen within the next two years.

The work of our government will be guided by international law and the precepts of good governance, as we work to ensure the fulfillment of our commitments toward our citizens and our partners in the international community. Despite the occupation practices, which have severely hampered our progress, we have demonstrated in recent years the will and capacity to build toward statehood. This government is fully committed to building on the accomplishments of the previous governments, and it will work to further develop effective institutions of government based on the principles of good governance, accountability and transparency.

The determination of our people to end the occupation and establish our independent state underpins our confidence in their support for the goals and policies outlined in this document. It is through the support of our people that we will succeed in our mission. Through their commitment to the PLO program- the program of self-determination, the right of return and the establishment of an independent state- combined with the sense of accomplishment and self-empowerment that has started to emerge as a direct consequence of the success of the national stabilization effort over the past two years, we are confident that the Palestinian people will fulfill their national aspirations, provided, of course, that we also succeed in restoring the unity of our homeland and institutions.

The establishment of a Palestinian state requires collective dedication to this national goal, which is shared by the various political and social organizations, academic and cultural institutions, non-government organizations, local government councils, the private sector, the land-protection and anti- settlements and anti-Wall committees, and the national organizations of women and youth. Therefore, this government's program seeks to involve all sectors and

- Supporting installation of the *IT Garden*.

Palestinian Land Authority

The Palestinian Land Authority (PLA) has the following objectives:

Promote effective public service delivery through:

- Creating a central computerized database that includes all registers, plans and documents of the PLA.
- Constructing PLA branch offices throughout Palestinian governorates.
- Building capacity of PLA staff.

Protect and maximize utilization of governmental land through:

- Listing and registering state land.
- Developing clear policies on the use of state land.

Protect citizens' properties through:

- Continuing work on the land settlement project in the West Bank.
- Computerizing documents and plans.

Palestinian Capital Market Authority

The Palestinian Capital Market Authority (PCMA) has the following objectives:

- Enhancing the legal framework relating to the PCMA and the insurance, securities, and real estate mortgage sectors to ensure greater supervision, accountability and transparency.
- Promoting cooperation with governmental bodies and other partners to increase effectiveness of PCMA- related operations.
- Building the capacity of staff.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure development is not an end in itself; it is a means to bring about social and economic development. Public infrastructure is a means to deliver basic services to citizens and businesses domestically, and to connect us with the rest of the world. Public infrastructure in Palestine currently varies from one area to another due to population distribution and limited financial resources on one hand, and the actions of the Israeli occupation regime on the other. To develop the infrastructure in Palestine to promote social and economic development, the Government has defined policy priorities in six domains.

Develop infrastructure in rural and marginalized areas: In the 21st century, the lack of water, electricity networks, and roads in certain marginalized Palestinian communities is almost beyond belief. The Government will strive to build infrastructure in the in rural and marginalized areas, thereby advancing social justice, equitable distribution of resources and citizens' steadfastness on their homeland.

Develop and maintain existing infrastructure: Existing infrastructure does not meet citizens' needs. This is partially due to the lack of infrastructure maintenance. The Government will promote the importance of infrastructure maintenance and provide the necessary budgetary allocations, thereby prolonging the life of public infrastructure. The Government will also continue to implement projects for the development and rehabilitation of infrastructure throughout the Palestinian territory. The Government will give priority to the most underdeveloped areas, taking into account population levels in order respond to needs of the natural growth.

Develop large infrastructure projects: Israel seizes control of water resources and land in Area C, which consists of vast, uninhabited areas located outside the major population centers. These areas are natural locations for large infrastructure projects, such as wastewater treatment plants, landfills, water pipelines, and main roads. However, Israel has prevented the

PNA from developing many essential projects. Consequently, several donor-funded projects are indefinitely suspended. The Government will work with the international community to apply pressure on Israel to bring an end to these obstructive practices.

Develop regional infrastructure: Development of regional infrastructure, such as the Arab Electricity Network, will enhance competition and hence service delivery to Palestinian consumers. Regional infrastructure will promote competitiveness of the national economy through modern transportation networks that are interconnected regionally and internationally. Therefore, the Government will work with regional and international partners to develop the regional infrastructure in Palestine.

Ensure local participation in developing infrastructure: In order to increase the social value of infrastructure projects, the Government will develop techniques to maximize the utilization of the domestic labour force and local products in infrastructure construction.

Improve local implementation capacity: Limited domestic capacity, stunted by a multiplicity of Israeli measures, has left the national construction sector without essential human capital and equipment needed to implement large-scale infrastructure projects. The Government has adopted a two-pronged approach to increase infrastructure project implementation capacity. In the near term, in light of the urgent need to reconstruct the Gaza Strip, and in view of massive destruction caused by the Israeli offensive, the Government will favor Arab construction businesses. In the medium term, the Government will assist domestic construction businesses by providing programs to develop the capacity of local manpower and providing financial support to procure capital equipment.

Objectives and activities of sector institutions

Below is a summary of the key objectives and related activities of the main governmental bodies in the sector.

Ministry of Transport

The Ministry of Transport (MoT) has the following objectives:

Ensure smooth and safe movement of persons and goods through:

- Developing plans and standards to improve local, main and interconnecting roads and railways and expanding their scope to cover all residential areas, including remote and marginalized areas.
- Developing plans to establish a safe passage to connect northern and southern governorates (the West Bank and Gaza).
- Taking part in the development of legislation and plans for building modern seaports, crossing points, and airports, including construction of the Palestine International Airport in the Jordan Valley and resumption of control over the Qalandiya Airport.
- Preparing for reconstruction of the Yasser Arafat International Airport and Gaza Port, as well as rehabilitating and developing the fishing harbour.
- Providing support to and reorganizing the Palestinian airlines.
- Developing the public transportation sector.
- Developing traffic safety standards, including standards associated with the design of roads, management of traffic and certification of vehicles.
- Developing mechanisms to involve the private sector in the development and management of a cost-effective transportation infrastructure.

Promote effective and transparent public service delivery through:

- Developing laws and regulations governing the transportation sector.
- Developing modern, automated working methods.
- Building a modern information management system.
- Building a metrological information system.
- Developing and implementing a system to properly manage and regulate the public transportation sector.

- Building the capacity of staff.

Ministry of Public Works and Housing

The Ministry of Public Works and Housing (MoPWH) has the following objectives:

Reconstruct Gaza, including rehabilitation of crossing points and reconstruction of houses, public and private buildings and infrastructure destroyed by the occupation regime.

Deliver appropriate services to citizens and governmental bodies through:

- Rehabilitating the existing road network and constructing new roads.
- Building a geographical information system that includes data on all roads and development projects.
- Developing necessary plans to integrate settlement infrastructure into the Palestinian infrastructure in light of the settlement evacuation experience in Gaza in 2005.
- Identifying strategies for reducing construction costs, working in cooperation with the Engineers Syndicate and other relevant partners.
- Developing strategies to promote the use of solar power through the construction industry.

Contribute to rationalising government expenditure on roads and buildings through:

- Establishing regular maintenance units throughout Palestinian governorates.
- Constructing public buildings throughout governorates, replacing old rented buildings with modern ones, and providing building complexes for the civil and security sectors
- Complete the construction of ministries complex in Ramallah, pending the relocation of the Government to Jerusalem.

Increase home ownership through:

- Developing affordable housing policies and programs for low and medium income households.
- Developing programs to provide long-term home loans.
- Deliver basic infrastructure for private and public housing projects, including those constructed by cooperative housing societies.
- Assisting residents of Jerusalem and areas adjacent to the Separation Wall to obtain appropriate housing and support their efforts to procure construction licences.

Enhance the performance of the MoPWH through:

- Building the capacity of staff.
- Introducing information management, geographical information and electronic archiving systems, and establishing systems interconnectivity between governorates and the MoPWH.

Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources Authority

The Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources Authority has the following objectives:

Ensure that the electricity supply is delivered to citizens through:

- Developing and rehabilitating internal electricity networks and main electricity lines.
- Completing the Rural Electricity Project to provide electricity to all citizens, with particular focus on locales affected by the Separation Wall and other marginalized and remote areas.
- Rehabilitating the Gaza electricity generation station.

Reduce the cost of electricity consumption through:

- Setting plans for interconnectivity with Arab regional electricity and gas networks, and for procuring petroleum.
- Continuing work towards effective exploitation of the gas field off the Gaza coastline and using natural gas to generate electricity.
- Developing alternative energy sources, including renewable energy.

- Improving the financial performance of the electricity sector by applying the Electricity Law, incorporating distribution companies, reducing net lending, and curbing illegal consumption.

Palestinian Water Authority

The Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) has the following objectives:

Protect Palestinian water sources through:

- Ensuring that all Palestinian water rights are secured.
- Developing regional cooperation in the management of water resources.
- Developing effective water management methods.
- Developing legislation to protect and preserve water resources.

Ensure that water-related services are delivered to all residential locales in Palestine through:

- Developing main water networks and pipelines, and digging new wells.
- Developing and implementing a program for the maintenance of wells and water networks on a regular and emergency basis.
- Concentrating on supplying water to rural areas, remote and marginalized areas, and areas affected by the Separation Wall.
- Devising plans and studies for constructing water purification plants in the Gaza Strip.

Reduce water consumption through:

- Rehabilitating the main water networks and pipelines in order to reduce water losses.
- Eliminating illegal consumption of water and reducing net lending.
- Establishing the National Water Undertaking to supply water on a wholesale basis and restructuring the water distribution sector, creating water and wastewater service boards pending the creation of Regional Water Undertakings.
- Ensure that wastewater services are delivered to all communities.
- Developing sewerage networks, main pipelines and wastewater treatment plants.
- Developing and implementing regular and emergency programs to maintain main water networks and pipelines as well as purification plants.
- Improving management of treated wastewater and developing techniques for disposal of waste residue.
- Developing low-cost water purification stations and mechanisms to treat wastewater in rural and small communities.

Palestinian Environment Quality Authority

The Palestinian Environment Quality Authority has the following objectives:

Provide protection to citizens against environmental pollution through:

- Developing environment-related laws, regulations and standards.
- Raise public awareness on environmental issues.
- Contribute to protecting public health by developing policies and programs for solid waste collection and disposal.

Conserve environmental diversity and protect the marine and coastal environment through:

- Developing policies, standards, programs and systems to protect environmental diversity.
- Developing policies, standards, programs and systems to protect the marine and coastal environment.