Statement by the Russian Federation

at the 71st execution session of the Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD

Geneva, 10-11 and 16-18 February 2022

Agenda item 5 - Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people

Dear Ms. President,

Dear Ms. Secretary General of UNCTAD,

Dear colleagues!

We note the importance of the ongoing work of UNCTAD to provide assistance to the Palestinian people. During the global crisis associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, this activity is in high demand.

According to UNCTAD's assessment, the current economic situation in Palestine is of great concern. In 2020, the Palestinian economy experienced the second largest decline (-11.5%) since the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority in 1994. Unemployment, on average, rose to 26% and in the Gaza Strip to a record 47%.

We oppose trade restrictions, which significantly impede the recovery of the economy and trade relations of Palestine with foreign partners. These restrictive measures also make it much more difficult to import medical equipment, artificial ventilation devices and personal care products that are vital during the fight against the pandemic.

We support the strengthening of UNCTAD's program of assistance to the Palestinian people, as provided for in paragraph 127 (bb) of the Bridgetown Pact and paragraph 55 (dd) of the Nairobi Maakifiano.

The key role of donors and the international community in the process of restoring the industrial and tourism infrastructure as well as the Palestinian healthcare system weakened by restrictive economic and quarantine measures cannot be underestimated.

It is clear that the economic situation in Palestine can change dramatically only if the conflict between Palestine and Israel is peacefully resolved.

We see the primary task in achieving lasting stabilization, refusing provocations and unilateral steps by the parties to create irreversible facts "on the ground", restoring the political horizon for reviving the peace process on a generally recognized international legal basis, including the two-state formula.

Thank you.