

Dr. Shabaneh appreciates the contribution of UNSCO and UNFPA to resume population census in Gaza Strip

Dr. Luay Shabaneh, President of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) and the National Director of the Population, Housing, and Establishment Census, announced that the Bureau and National Team of the Census succeeded in keeping the independency of the statistical system far away from political attractions. Shabaneh indicated that any intersection between the technical and political work harms the proficiency of PCBS and its sound reputation which has been build during the last thirteen years.

The National Director of the census indicated that the PCBS is a professional institution that provides its information and services to all Palestinians, reaffirming the UN statistics commission's ten fundamental principles of official statistics which were endorsed by the Palestinian Government. These principles confirm the independency of PCBS. This independency was affirmed by the Palestinian Statistical Code of Practice of Official Statistics 2006 endorsed by the Palestinian government led by Ismail Haneya, Shabaneh said.

Dr. Shabaneh appreciated the decision of resuming the work on the census in Gaza, which was stopped by the fired government in Gaza. The resumption of the census operations came as a result of continuous and intensive efforts and support made by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator (UNSCO), and the strong support of the United Nations system for the completion of the census by PCBS. The United Nations, through the work of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), has provided financial and technical support to PCBS to ensure the successful conduct of the census. Mr. Shabaneh appreciated also the contribution of many Palestinian personalities amongst the legislative council member Mustafa Barghouti. This census will provide essential data on Palestinian society, and will be a vital resource for development planning and administration.

The National Director called all Palestinians in Gaza Strip to provide their support and cooperate with the census fieldworkers who are planning to start the fieldwork on December 25th 2007. The national team will undergo through an additional training day on December 24th 2007. The census fieldwork is planned to last until January 10th 2008, and the preliminary results are expected in mid March 2008.