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Press Release

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Call for urgent action to stop demolition of Palestinian village in occupied West Bank

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) calls on the Malaysian government to urgently take all measures necessary to stop the impending illegal demolition of the Palestinian village of Khan al Ahmar, located in the occupied West Bank.

SAM is a member of Friends of the Earth International (FOEI) and we have been alerted by our Palestinian member of FOEI, PENGON, about the grave and outrageous situation in the village where Israeli settlers in unlawful settlements, which have yet to be demolished by the Israeli government in line with international law, have redirected their wastewater last week and flooded the Palestinian village area with sewage.

We are informed that the Israeli High Court on 5 September this year, rejected the petitions by the residents of the Palestinian village of Khan al-Ahmar and allowed the Israeli authorities to proceed with the plans for demolition. Any day now, the Israeli authorities could start demolishing this community, including its school, and evict the residents from their homes, including many children.

We are informed that Khan al Ahmar is a Palestinian Bedouin village, inhabited by the Jahalin tribe, located in Area C of the West Bank, between the Israeli settlement of Ma'aleAdumim and one of its elite suburbs, KfarAdumim. This places it within the so-called E1 area, i.e. land that Israel has slated for the construction of the illegal settlements that cut East Jerusalem off from the rest of the West Bank and split the West Bank into two.

The residents of Khan al Ahmar were forcibly expelled from the village of Tel Arad in the Negev Desert in 1951 and settled on private Palestinian land. Subsequently, Israel illegally expropriated this land and declared it State land in 1975, zoned for an industrial zone and later for the settlement of Ma'aleAdumim.

Residents of this community have very few sources of income left, suffer a serious lack of health, education and welfare services, and live without basic infrastructure such as an electricity network, a sewage system and proper roads.

SAM strongly condemns the planned demolition of Khan al-Ahmar, as the Israel's settlement policy is illegal under international law, as reconfirmed by Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016), and actions taken in that context, including the demolitions of Palestinian communities and possible forced transfers of population.

We therefore urge the Malaysian government to immediately:

- Denounce the impending destruction of Khan al Ahmar and Israel's policy of planned and systematic displacement of people and demand the suspension of cooperation agreements by other governments with Israel, diplomatic visits and other forms of special economic or diplomatic relations until Israel stops its policy of illegal population transfer and violation of international law and

- Work with its alliances in other countries to demand an urgent and independent investigation into the case of Khan al Ahmar and Israel's illegal displacement policy, including the use of environmental harm as an instrument of displacement, and that includes recommendations on concrete and effective measures to uphold state duty to ensure respect by Israel of its obligations under international law.

SAM has alerted Wisma Putra about the matter and we look forward to the leadership of Malaysia in supporting the fight of the people of Khan al Ahmar and to seek all measures to end Israel's aggression and violation of international law in this regard.

S.M.Mohamed Idris
President
Sahabat Alam Malaysia