



18th Palestinian Government

PM Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh

First Summary of Government Performance

(15 April 2019- 30 August 2019)



Cabinet Secretariat of Council of Ministers

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Prime Minister Statement



I am pleased to announce the first performance report for the 18th government covering the period from the end of April until the end of August of the year 2019. This report includes the most important decisions made by the government, the works it carried out and the achievements it made based on the directions of His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas urging to exert the largest possible efforts to meet the needs of our people wherever they may be and to provide them with the elements of resilience they need to remain in this land and to develop it. To implement the goals set out in my inauguration speech as Prime Minister of this government, the government prepared its first workplan during its first few weeks in office in coordination between all its ministries and governmental departments. The plan was ratified by the Council of Ministers on 20 May 2019 and was pivoted on strategic elements including detachment from the occupation and its economy, enhancing our resilience and presence in our state, expanding freedoms and respecting human rights, enhancing our national economy and investments, creating job opportunities for our youth, fighting poverty, ending the political division and redirecting Gaza to the Palestinian establishment, and alleviating the suffering of our people in the southern governorates. Unlike previous plans, this plan has included key axes, a clear definition of the activities to be carried out, the time schedules required for its implementation, estimated financial costs, and measurement and target indices.



In its strategic interventions and services provided to its citizens, the government has focused in this first plan (and will do so in future plans) on ten strategic axes. The first axis involves the advancement of agricultural, tourism and industrial production, establishing and empowering industrial cities and free zones, and creating developmental entrepreneurial projects and business and technological startups. The second axis includes combating unemployment and poverty. The third axis concentrates on empowering women and youth. The fourth axis deals with promoting education and technical and vocational training. The fifth axis focuses on protecting public freedoms and promoting transparency and trust between the citizens and the government. The sixth axis works on strengthening investment into clean energy. The seventh axis focuses on providing clean and safe sources of water. The eighth axis addresses developing and improving the quality of public services, especially in marginalized areas, Jerusalem and the old city of Hebron. The ninth axis works on enhancing international diplomatic relations and relations with neighboring Arab countries as a gateway towards the strategic Arab depth of Palestine. Finally, the government concentrated in its tenth axis on reform and developing laws, regulations and procedures to ensure the implementation of its plan and directions in accordance with global government performance management and excellence.

It should be mentioned that achievements made till this point in time happen to coincide with highly complex and difficult political and economic conditions imposed by the occupation, a US financial and political blockade, Israeli seizure of our funds and continued assaults by the occupation in an attempt to steal our lands and properties and destroy our homes, especially in Jerusalem and its surroundings. These conditions have been the most difficult throughout the history of the Palestinian National Authority and the Palestinian Cause. Nevertheless, the government is working seriously and steadily through its dedicated employees to provide the best it can to our citizens and to meet its obligations and fulfill its promises towards them.

I find it important to deliver my deepest gratitude and highest appreciation to all our civil servants for their commitment and endurance of these difficult financial conditions. Through their hard work they have expressed the highest levels of patriotism and support for our national struggle towards freedom and independence. I would also like to stress my determination to work during the



next stage to overcome these challenges, advance the quality of the government's performance, raise the efficiency and effectiveness of our national institutions, provide needed services to our people, and promote trust and loyalty to our homeland.

Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh

Prime Minister



Executive Summary

Based on the directions of His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas urging us to exert the largest possible efforts to meet the needs of our citizens and provide them with all means of resilience, in implementation of the inauguration speech of Prime Minister Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh, and in consideration to the achievements made in accordance with the national policies agenda, the first workplan for the 18th government was set in coordination between all government ministries and national institutions and with the large efforts exerted by the Cabinet Secretariat of the Council of Ministers. The plan was ratified by the Council of Ministers on 20 September 2019 and included key axes explained through clear activities, time schedules for implementation, estimated financial costs and clear measurement indices. More than 100 main interventions were planned and they included 207 main activities, which were measured by 277 indices.

To support the plan's implementation, the government issued during the past period more than 190 decisions made throughout 18 meetings of the Council of Ministers. The decisions were in the areas of economic, administrative, social, governance, infrastructural and energy development. These decisions were implemented to a degree of over 75%, whereas, remaining decisions were implemented according to schedule. To enhance the roles of ministries and governmental departments in implementing the workplan, the government formed 28 committees which held more than 45 meetings and issued more than 55 recommendations. Those recommendations were transformed into decisions during Council of Ministers meetings. These decisions all contributed to preparing, implementing and achieving the objectives of the government's activities. Despite the difficult financial conditions facing the Palestinian government, it was able to provide funds amounting to \$215 million during its recent period in office. The achievement rate of the government's plan has exceeded 84% throughout all its ministries.

During its recent time in office and amidst the difficult conditions facing the Palestinian Cause, the government began establishing and applying a new strategy related to **developmental economic issues aiming at detaching from the Israeli occupation's economy and enhancing the resilience of Palestinians in their lands**. Among these strategic elements was the government's adoption of the **spiral planning model in the agricultural, industrial and tourism fields** to maximize benefits and revenue drawn in by the competitive characteristics of the Palestinian regions and to increase job opportunities within those regions. The first agricultural spiral was launched in the Qalqilya governorate with a cost of



\$24 million of which the government is to contribute to \$4 million of funding during the year 2019. Within the same orientation towards detachment from the occupation, the government worked on stopping the draining of funds used for medical transfers to Israeli hospitals at a cost exceeding \$75 million annually and on providing these services at the same level of quality through local, Jordanian and Egyptian hospitals of which agreements were signed with for this purpose. The government also issued a decision to stop importing cattle from Israeli farms which costs \$85 million annually and to work on importing cattle from abroad directly. Moreover, efforts are still being exerted to recover the funds of the Blue tax imposed on Palestinian fuel at a value of \$36 million annually.

Also, among the important strategic elements is the **orientation of the government towards its Arab depth to enhance the competitiveness of the Palestinian economy and Palestinian products through activating relations and increasing commercial exchange with Arab countries**. For this purpose, two high level government delegations headed by the prime minister visited the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Republic of Iraq. These visits led primarily to strengthening ties and enhancing harmony towards all positions, and secondly to the signing of a number of agreements and memorandums of understanding with the two sides in areas of agriculture, industry, health, transport and energy. The most important of these agreements was the purchasing of oil and delivering it through Jordan. This step shaped a precedence in the varying of sources of petroleum products and detachment from Israeli companies. Agreements with Jordan included shared recognition of quality evaluation and product matching reports which allow accepting goods exchanged between the two countries without any technical hindrances to increase the value of commercial exchange to \$500 million annually. The relationship with the Republic of Iraq included an agreement to supply Palestine with Iraqi petroleum at preferential prices. Also, for the first time, new doors were opened to export Palestinian industrial and agricultural goods to Iraq including medicines and agricultural products such as potatoes etc., as well as opening doors for the Palestinian private sector to participate in commercial exhibitions in Iraq free of charge, such as the Baghdad International Fair 2019.

In **higher education, education and vocational training**, a clear policy was adopted in regards to vocational education which included a plan to **found the first university for vocational and technical education and training** in Palestine by allocating \$4 million of funds to begin implementing the plan by constructing a building at a cost of \$4 million. Work has begun to implement the university founding plan through accreditation programs. The government has directed local universities to open vocational education and training faculties within their



premises until work begins in this university. In a similar context, the Ministry of Education has opened two new vocational schools and 21 new vocational units. It has also provided access to 50 workshops and has opened 52 new 10th grade school classes. It has integrated grades (7-9) in vocational education programs including around 1300 male and female students. The government has begun to rehabilitate regular and vocational school laboratories in the Ministry of Education at a cost of \$2 million. The Ministry of Labor has increased vocational training programs to 25, of which 16 grant a vocational diploma certificate to habilitate more than 8000 graduates annually in governmental and private centers. Work is under way for horizontal expansion through the establishment of more vocational training centers in all governorates and for vertical expansion through increasing the enrollment capacities of existing centers, varying provided programs, applying the method of learning at the workplace, and introducing evening vocational training that suits the requirements of the job market. Integrated education programs have been introduced at Palestine Technical University, the Islamic Orphanage House in Jerusalem has been transformed into an industrial school and Al-Ummah College in Jerusalem has been transformed into a university college. To help citizens, certificate accreditation services issued by Higher Education institutions are now available in governorate directorates and online applications for certificate equalizations have now been provided for service recipients. In the field of education, the 2019 Secondary School examinations were held without any obstacles and printing of school books for both regular and parallel education was carried out at a cost of \$6 million. Jerusalem teacher salaries were paid completely including the Jerusalem allowance. Agricultural centers were being prepared for agricultural education and preparation of industrial and vocational schools has begun at a cost of \$2 million. The Council of Ministers scholarships for outstanding students have been approved at a cost of \$500,000 and have begun to be paid to students who graduated from secondary school in the year 2019.

The government's strategy in the field of social development focused on its efforts to combat poverty and reduce unemployment, especially in marginalized regions, the separation wall, Area c, Jerusalem and Gaza. The government spent an amount of \$35 million as cash transfers to 106,000 needy families including 70,000 families in the Gaza Strip, health insurance services were provided to 106,000 families in the West Bank and Gaza, regular food aid through vouchers was paid to 163,000 individuals in the West Bank and Gaza, seasonal food aid was provided to 9000 poor families in the Gaza Strip, and economic empowerment projects were provided to around 400 families in the West Bank and Gaza at a cost of \$800,000. The Ministry of Social Development



began reorganizing its procedures in the southern governorates to ensure follow up and supervision over its programs that are implemented in the Gaza Strip to enhance the role and presence of the Palestinian government. It has also begun to review and audit the lists of beneficiaries of the cash transfer program.

Moreover, 180 projects have been funded in Gaza as compensation for agricultural damages at a cost of \$4 million. Loans and in-kind, cash and health aid were provided to more than 9000 orphans, 2300 university students and around 180,000 needy families. Funding worth \$2.5 million was allocated to the West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem in the form of aid for needy children through food parcels, Eid clothing and school bag programs.

In the aim of enhancing the resilience of citizens **in marginalized areas, Area c, East Jerusalem and the old city of Hebron** and alleviating their sufferings and protecting them, the government has- since its formation- monitored all assaults on citizens and their properties. These assaults included (10 intentional killings, 1819 injuries, 1167 arrests, 1268 incursions into cities and villages, 39 cases of assault by settlers on citizens and their properties, uprooting of trees, 51 cases of bulldozing of farmland and wells, demolition of homes, as well as 30 cases of assaults in Jerusalem including demolishing and confiscation of houses and bulldozing of lands within the occupation's attempts of the Judaization of Jerusalem). The Wall and Settlement Resistance Committee, the General Authority of Civil Affairs and the Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs have collected and documented legal papers and have followed up procedures concerned with lifting abuses off citizens and their properties at a cost exceeding \$400,000 during the past four months. Also, legal clinics have been activated in Jerusalem benefitting more than 1200 Jerusalemites and engineering clinics have benefitted more than 90 Jerusalemites to face threats of demolition and to provide them with building licenses. In addition, the government has followed up its reclaiming of the corpses of martyrs detained by the Israeli occupation. The government paid during its term more than \$30 million of due payments to Jerusalem hospitals in return for the services they provide to patients. It has also worked on providing humanitarian aid and financial and social support to people living in these areas who were damaged by the occupation's measures. This support has included land reclamation, construction of agricultural roads and drilling of agricultural wells to promote the presence of those people and facilitate their access to their land to guarantee its preservation and use for agricultural production. Vaccinations and drug doses were also provided to protect livestock in general and animal breeders in marginalized areas in particular.



To enhance the resilience of prisoners and their families, the government paid \$36,433,000 to rehabilitate freed prisoners and integrate them into society. This was carried out through: conducting training courses for 45 freed prisoners, issuing and activating 600 health insurances for freed prisoners and their families, providing loans for 40 projects for prisoners, providing university education services inside Israeli prisons as 90 new prisoners have been enrolled and 1035 prisoners have registered for the current semester, providing university education services to freed prisoners as 35 freed prisoners have been sponsored and 350 prisoners have been registered. The financial files of the prisoners have been followed up and their financial allocations amounting to \$24 million have been paid. Legal services have been provided to freed prisoners, salaries for 5101 prisoners inside Israeli prisons have been paid, as well as salaries for freed prisoners. “Canteen” allocations have been paid to 5101 prisoners inside Israeli prisons and the fees of 55 lawyers have been paid at a cost of \$500,000. Vocational training allocations have been paid to 50 freed prisoners and media coverage has been provided for prisoners’ issues and solidarity events.

Regarding the government’s plan for the health sector, it has taken and implemented important steps to advance this sector through several axes such as medical transfers, medical insurance, quality services and legal environment. Among the most important decisions made by the government and currently being implemented is the governance of medical transfers **including ending medical transfers to Israeli hospitals** and replacing them with Jordanian and Egyptian hospitals with which four agreements have been signed for this purpose. Efforts have also been exerted to invest in our local hospitals to raise their capacities in providing a wide range of medical services, while the government seeks to guarantee full medical insurance to all citizens to benefit from those services. To raise the quality of medical services, the government has spent no less than \$15 million to supply medicines, rehabilitate infrastructure and purchase devices and equipment. It has also provided medical transfer services to citizens at a cost of \$40 million during the term of the current government. The secretariat has also finalized the assessment of health governorates (primary care) according to the criteria of service quality standards resulting in the setting of plans to enhance and honor the winning directorates. A plan is also set to assess directorates according to standards for essential and advanced services.

The government’s achievements in the health sector included many interventions such as providing vaccines for the year 2020 in coordination with UNICEF at a cost of \$9 million, the second stage of spraying to combat disease carrier animals at an estimated cost of \$5 million, and launching a laboratory for tissue implantation and another laboratory for cancer diagnosis and gene testings at an



estimated cost of \$1 million. Moreover, the new floor at the Halhoul Health Directorate was launched at an estimated cost of \$60,000. The interventions also included annual drug pricings of 91 imported medicines and 20 local medicines, as well as working to apply the family doctor system in all state governorates. A convoy of medicines was sent to the Gaza Strip and a Palestinian medical mission was sent to accompany pilgrims at an estimated cost of \$360,000.

In the area of supporting youth, entrepreneurs and women, the government's strategy included the establishment of a state ministry specialized in entrepreneurship and empowerment. This ministry began performing its activities by preparing a study on creative and innovative youth and presented a strategy to advance this sector with the participation of all partners. The First International Conference on Entrepreneurship was held as a platform gathering Palestinian entrepreneurs from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem allowing them to network with more than 100 European and international companies, investment funds and entrepreneurial institutions. In participation with the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology, 30 entrepreneurs were trained and supported and 30 practical models of marketable products were developed. Also, 10 young companies were marketed and more than 25 youth entrepreneurs from Jerusalem were supported and encouraged and a number of them were sent to participate in the World Economic Forum held in China in 2019. 110 microprojects were implemented (46 in the northern governorates and 63 in the southern governorates) at a cost of \$1.15 million, creating 276 jobs for youth.

In support of women, a decision was made to raise the legal age of marriage to 18 years and tens of workshops were held to spread awareness on women's rights to political participation and to enhance religious, health and cultural awareness among women from a gender-based perspective. 26 economic projects were implemented under the supervision of the Ministry of Local Government to empower women members of local councils. The government also approved the formation of the Gender Policy Institute. Stemming from its belief in the importance of promoting national dialogue and activating partners of women issues, the Ministry of Women's Affairs formed a board of advisors consisting of around 48 expert members from the public sector, civil society and private sector. The 26th October of each year was also named as Palestinian Woman Day.

As a strategic objective to build trust with citizens and the society and to safeguard freedoms and transparency, the government greatly values group work and communication with private sector institutions, civil society organizations, media institutions and the society as a whole. Within this context, four national work teams were established including members from private sector institutions,



experts and specialists in areas such as health, economics, vocational education and energy. These teams held more than 10 meetings and issued more than 25 recommendations to support governmental action in these fields. Also, a delegation of (9) representatives of the private sector participated in the government's visits to Iraq and Russia through which foundations were placed to establish joint investments in a number of fields such as shoe making, furniture, medicines and agricultural products. To enhance transparency, this government, in an unprecedented move, has begun to **publish decisions made by the Council of Ministers** through a special electronic platform and has redesigned and updated the electronic page concerned with governmental services on the Cabinet Secretariat website.

The government has also opened **communication channels and has held meetings with civil society organizations, media institutions and the public**. For example, it has held more than 30 meetings of which 150 were held with the governorates and 150 with civil society institutions and universities. It has also issued more than 465 licenses for civil associations, held 50 press conferences and interviews with both local and international media outlets, issued about 40 governmental press statements to promptly present important information to the public, and has held more than 150 meetings with the public and various clans. During the term of the 18th government, more than a total of 2900 complaints were received by all governmental institutions through the electronic complaint system (with a 50% decrease from the same period of the previous year). More than 75% of these complaints were addressed. To enhance the rights of the Palestinian citizen, the government has ratified a decision to prevent the use of personal data related to citizens for any commercial purposes without the written consent of the citizen.

In the field of government services, the government has paid clear attention to the quality and accessibility of its services. For example, **it has finalized a unified window for a number of combined services** such as those of the Land Authority, the General Directorate of Customs, the payment of violations at crossings in Jericho, receipt of investor applications via the electronic platform, the unified investment window in industrial areas, and the provision of electronic services for certificates issued by the Ministry of Higher Education. In addition, 12 post offices were opened for the Ministry of Justice with an instruction manual for authentication services. Medical transfer services were governed, vaccination services were provided and 40% of Palestinian lands were surveyed. In the services context, **the government has adopted a national program of distinction to upgrade the quality of services in accordance with international criteria and requirements**. For example, a government distinction center system



and an implementation and training plan for government institution staff have been prepared and approved in accordance with these criteria with a budget exceeding \$1 million for two years. In the context of this program, the government has begun a long journey of transforming its services to an electronic and smart method. The first complete service of **“obtaining a driving license” through an electronic/ smart method through signing up to an electronic payment system has been achieved.** The electronic payment system is considered the main leverage of smart governmental services. Also, the Palestinian geolocation system was connected to the government computer center to enhance the continuation of the operations of the center and its electronic services in providing location information and in increasing the number of its beneficiaries to become 4000 visitors per day. **Calibration laboratories of the Accreditation Commission** have been opened **at a cost of €4 million**, therefore, raising the quality of national products and facilitating Palestine’s joining of international trade agreements.

The government’s strategy included the infrastructure, energy, water and environmental sectors. For example, within the roads sector, the government completed implementing, rehabilitating and constructing 70% of the main roads leading to the entrances of cities and towns with a total length of more than 37 km divided into 14 projects. It also completed repairing 73 roads in the northern governorates, completed the construction of 26 km of road links and completed constructing agricultural roads with a length of 24.3 km. It also began working on a number of new road projects at a cost of \$4.1 million in 6 regions. In the housing and Gaza reconstruction sector, Gaza reconstruction projects were enlisted and an initial design was made for a new housing complex targeting marginalized areas and areas falling under the threat of settlement construction. Also, the preparation of a general framework for a comprehensive housing plan was completed.

The government also implemented several initiatives in the energy and water sectors. For example, the Jenin electricity plant is operating at a capacity of 80 megawatts, solar energy has been installed in 41 schools, the (SUNREF) project for renewable energy has been launched with a capacity of 12 megawatts, and complete energy auditing practices and procedures have been established and implemented in 4 Palestinian regions. Also, several water projects have been implemented in the West Bank and Gaza including the completion of water processing stations in the Gaza Strip at a cost of \$120 million. Water processing pumps and equipment and water pipes have been supplied and installed in several areas in the West Bank at a cost of over \$60 million. Also, electronic meters have been repaired at a cost of \$34 million.



The government formed a national committee to study and evaluate the electricity sector, a committee to review the financial status of the electricity company in the Jerusalem governorate and a committee to study the electricity debts due by local councils. The government issued three decisions related to maintaining the environment and investing in the areas surrounding Zahrat Al Finjan landfill at a cost of more than \$1.7 million to prevent an environmental crisis and to allow the investment of lands lying in that wide fertile area.

In the political and diplomatic field, the government has paid large attention to **combating the Israeli narration on the Palestinian right** in Palestine. During the past four months of this government's term and following the directions of **His Excellency the President** and in integration with those directions and with the efforts exerted in this field, the government was able to achieve several important accomplishments on the international front in support of our Palestinian cause. These included **the approval of 4 decisions at the UN Human Rights Council in favor of the Palestinian Cause including its support of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, the recognition of the government of "Saint Kitts and Nevis" of Palestine as a sovereign and independent state, the signing of agreements to a development cooperation program between Mali and Palestine, the decision by the European Court consultant to label settlement goods as illegal, the decision of the UNESCO to classify Jerusalem and Hebron as world heritage sites, and an unprecedented vote at the UN in favor of a decision on Palestinian women** in which it considered the Israeli occupation as a main obstacle hindering the development of Palestinian women.

In the field of governance and institutional administrative, financial and legal reform, the government has made several decisions and has begun to implement the initiatives and projects related to them such as the authorization of local elections in 17 local authorities (elections have been held in 7 authorities and councils have been formed and recommended in another 7). Several regulations have been approved concerning the Scientific Research Council, incentives related to information technology, the Excellence Government Center, amendments to the water law and appointing a new Board of Directors for the Water Regulatory Council, the approval of 4 laws and 2 regulations upon the second voting of the Council of Ministers. In regards to administrative and financial reform, the government studied the status of current government funds and took a decision to integrate a number of those funds and transform them into a **government bank for development and investment, being the first governmental development bank in Palestine formed upon the authorization of the President**. It also set out to carry out a number of reforms in the field of documenting **government projects in the form of a unified central database, updating the bylaws of non-profit companies, placing new criteria**



for the purchasing of real-estates by non-Palestinian nationals and reshaping and activating the General Petroleum Commission. To achieve more transparency and justice, the government has worked on **reviewing and checking the lists of beneficiaries of the cash transfer programs in the southern governorates** to ensure fair distribution of cash.

The Cabinet Secretariat has followed up the implementation of the government's plans in cooperation and in coordination with all ministries and government departments and has provided technical and administrative support through its preparation of monthly progress reports revealing the rate of intervention implementation and the rate of achievement of objectives. The Cabinet Secretariat has worked in a group to achieve desired goals through the departments of planning, reform and quality government performance.

In addition to the general challenges facing our Palestinian state in the areas of politics, finance and the political division, certain issues require institutional interventions by ministries and government departments under the leadership and direction of the prime minister to enhance the institutionalization of government work and to raise the efficiency and effectiveness of those institutions. Those issues requiring interventions may be summarized as follows:

- The lack of unified and centralized databases and statistics that may allow the follow up of decisions and plans and the absence of performance indices and measurement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the government's work as required.
- A poor institutional performance-based work culture and environment and a lack of global standards for quality work.
- Poor planning, follow up and evaluation and poor technical capabilities in some main administrative work fields.
- The presence of many institutional problems at ministries and government departments such as outdated organizational frameworks.
- Poor coordination and cooperation between governmental institutions and poor coordination, cooperation and information influx within the administrative units of the same institution.
- The need to amend a number of applied laws and policies to conform with work requirements.