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HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS
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BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

N. 0365

Mercoledì 13.05.2015

## Joint Statement of the Bilateral Commission of the Holy See and the State of Palestine at the conclusion of the Plenary Meeting (13.05.2015)

On 13 May 2015, the Bilateral Commission of the Holy See and the State of Palestine, which is working on a Comprehensive Agreement following on the Basic Agreement, signed on 15 February 2000, held a Plenary Session in the Vatican to acknowledge the work done at an informal level by the joint technical group following the last official meeting held in Ramallah at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine on 6 February 2014.

The talks were chaired by Mgr Antoine Camilleri, Under-Secretary for the Holy See's Relations with States, and by Ambassador Rawan Sulaiman, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Multilateral Affairs of the State of Palestine.

The discussions took place in a cordial and constructive atmosphere. Taking up the issues already examined at an informal level, the Commission noted with great satisfaction the progress achieved in formulating the text of the Agreement, which deals with essential aspects of the life and activity of the Catholic Church in Palestine.

Both Parties agreed that the work of the Commission on the text of the Agreement has been concluded, and that the agreement will be submitted to the respective authorities for approval ahead of setting a date in the near future for the signing.

The members of the Delegation of the Holy See were:

1. Mgr Antoine Camilleri, Under-Secretary for Relations with States;

2. His Excellency Archbishop Giuseppe Lazzarotto, Apostolic Delegate to Jerusalem and Palestine;

3. His Excellency Archbishop Antonio Franco, Apostolic Nuncio;

4. Father Luciano Lorusso, Under-Secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches;

5. Mgr Alberto Ortega, Official of the Section for Relations with States of the Secretariat of State;

6. Father Emil Salayta, Judicial Vicar of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

The members of the Palestinian Delegation were:

1. Ambassador Rawan Sulaiman, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Multilateral Affairs;

2. Ambassador Issa Kassissieh, Representative of the State of Palestine to the Holy See;

3. Mr Ammar Hijazi, Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Multilateral Affairs;

4. Mr Azem Bishara, Juridical Counsellor of the PLO.

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