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European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, Carlos Moedas, visits Palestine[1]

Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, visited Palestine today.

Commissioner Moedas is responsible for the EU's Horizon 2020, the world's largest public research programme with a budget of €80 billion over seven years. The benefits of the participation in the programme go beyond the financial assistance, notably access to knowledge, world class research and innovation infrastructures, European and international networks and alliances as well as opportunities to tackle global challenges together. Palestinian public and private institutions are eligible to participate in Horizon 2020.

Commissioner Moedas said: *"Research and innovation have a huge potential both to improve the quality of life for many and tap into extraordinary human capacities. Palestinians, like many of their neighbours, have a large population of young people. Programmes such as Horizon 2020 can help us capture the skills and energy of this generation and build for the future."*

In the course of his visit, Commissioner Moedas met, among others, the Palestinian Minister of Education and Higher Education, Dr Sabri Saidam, and heads of Palestinian universities and research institutions.

As part of the EU Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), Palestine is participating in the development of a common knowledge and innovation space between the EU and its neighbours. In recent years 85 private and public Palestinian institutions have participated in predecessor programmes to Horizon 2020 receiving more than €6 million. Some success stories have included the use of technologies for cultural heritage, first medical responses in disasters, climate change and energy. One case in particular involving An-Najah University led to the design of a collective solar water heater system for the Arab Women's Union hospital in Nablus. Other participating organisations have pioneered multilingual and multimedia tourist guidance systems for use in the city of Bethlehem.

Palestine is also an active partner in the bi-regional Euro-Mediterranean research and innovation dialogue and participates regularly in meetings of EU-Mediterranean Senior Officials.

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[1] *This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.*