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The EU Representative and Prime Minister Hamdallah lay the first stone for the Waste Water Treatment Plant in Tubas

Prime Minister Dr. Rami Al Hamallah and the EU Representative Ralph Tarraf together with the Head of the Palestinian Water Authority and Tubas Governor laid the first stone for the construction of the wastewater treatment plant in Tubas. This large-scale project will serve around 34,000 people living in Tubas, Tayasir, and Aqqaba. It will also provide treated water for agricultural use for farmers in the Governorate that relies significantly on agriculture.

Currently, there is no any sewage network in the area. The wastewater from Tubas area flows untreated into the environment reaching agricultural areas and surrounding villages either through the cesspits and vacuum trucks. By helping to build the new collection and plant, this project will significantly reduce health risks for the population of Tubas and contamination of the environment. It will also allow the re-use of treated wastewater in agriculture hence conserving limited groundwater resources in Palestine.

"*Access to clean water is a fundamental human right. Palestinians are not just facing severe drinking-water shortages but also limited quantities for agricultural use. This comes together with the issue of untreated waste water which has very negative consequences on health and environment,"* said the **EU Representative, Ralph Tarraf** at the stone-laying ceremony. *"This project will help address these issues in the northern Jordan valley which is known historically as the food basket of Palestine. Around 34,000 Palestinians living in Tubas governorate will be connected to the sewage network. Farmers will be able to use the treated water to develop their land and expand cultivated areas. This will increase their income and contribute directly to the economic development in the governorate,"* added the **EU Representative**.

The €22 million project consists of a Wastewater Treatment Plant, sewage collection network, and an irrigation scheme for the reuse of treated water. The wastewater treatment plant has a capacity of 4,300 m³ per day and the sewage collection network covers 53 km (with 13 km of house connections). The project also includes the installation of an irrigation infrastructure with a pumping station, two steel reservoirs of 1,000 cubic meters, and 4.3 km of distribution pipes. The project is expected to be completed in September 2017.

Background:

The EU is a major actor in water and environmental protection in Palestine. Since 2011, it has invested nearly €95 million in the water, sanitation and solid waste management sectors. In the West Bank, apart from Tubas, the EU is supporting the development of wastewater treatment plants in particular areas where water supply is scarce, such as Hebron and Nablus. In Gaza, the EU is investing both in large-scale solid waste management programmes as well as in medium-scale projects with high impact on the well fare of the population, such as the construction of desalination facilities that will provide safe water to thousands of Gazans.

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