Press Release
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The European Union supports the Palestinian Civil Defence: capacity building programme and provision of firefighting and rescue vehicles

The European Union and the Palestinian Civil Defence (PCD) celebrated in Ramallah today the conclusion of its capacity-building programme. At the ceremony, the Deputy EU Representative, David Geer, handed over nine fire-fighting engines and three rescue trucks to the Deputy Director General of the PCD Staff Brigadier Yousef Nassar.

The EU-funded Technical Assistance Progamme has worked with the PCD to strengthen its institutional and organizational capacity. It provided support to enhance the visibility of the PCD, particularly with local communities and youth.

The nine fire-fighting engines and the three rescue trucks are the second batch of equipment delivered to the PCD. The 4x4 firefighting engines are also equipped with tools to sweep accumulated snow and open closed roads. The three rescue trucks will help improve PCD response to emergencies. The vehicles will serve Ramallah, Nablus, Tulkarem, Tubas and Bethlehem Palestinian Civil Defence Regional Centres. In June last year, the EU handed over the first batch of equipment. It included five rapid response and nine administrative support vehicles, in addition to twelve mobile lighting masts and fifteen mobile electric generators. This contribution is part of a 20 Million Euro of EU larger infrastructure programme in the Security Sector. It included the construction of eight community police stations in the West Bank and a correctional facility in Jenin.

"In any country, the Civil Defence is at the frontline in saving lives and protecting properties. Well-equipped firefighters and rescue teams are the best guarantees communities have when in facing natural disasters," *said the* ***Deputy EU Representative David Geer.*** "The EU has chosen to support the Palestinian Civil Defence as it moves towards establishing a professional and reliable rescue force. EU-funded projects provided both the technical support and the equipment. Over

the last few years, we have witnessed remarkable improvements in the Palestinian Civil Defence capacity and responsiveness."

The delivered equipment will expand the coverage of the civil protection services to new areas in the West Bank. It will also reduce the response time to potential incidents and increase PCD's capacity to function effectively in the case of natural disasters. This contribution is delivered in line with the Master Plan for Capital Investment financed by the EU in 2012.

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