With funding from Sweden, Norway and Austria UNDP Signs Agreements in Support of East Jerusalem Youth and Health Sectors

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East Jerusalem, 17 March 2016 – With funding from the Governments of Sweden, Norway and Austria, UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People signed agreements, worth USD 1.27 million, in support of the resilience of Palestinians residing in East Jerusalem. The four projects target three hospitals (Makassed, Augusta Victoria and St John Eye hospital), in addition to the Welfare Association (Taawon).

On behalf of the donors, Dr Johan Schaar, Head of the Swedish Development Cooperation, highlighted the importance of this programme in strengthening the role of Palestinian institutions and supporting the steadfastness and resilience of East Jerusalem residents. "We are building on the experience of the leading

institutions we are signing the agreements with today in supporting the East Jerusalem population to live in dignity".

The signing ceremony represented the launch of the fourth phase of the Community Resilience and Development Programme (CRDP) implemented by UNDP, with funds from the Governments of Sweden, Norway and Austria. The four new East Jerusalem projects will improve access to health services and facilitate employment opportunities for fresh graduated youth in East Jerusalem.

The representatives of the three hospitals, Dr Rafiq Husseini (CEO Makassed Hospital), Mr Walid Nammour (CEO Augusta Victoria Hospital), and Tom Ogilvie-Graham (CEO St. John Eye Hospital), emphasised the importance of these projects in filling a major gap in East Jerusalem and West Bank health services. This support will allow the hospitals to provide health care facilities to an increased number of patients, create job opportunities and support the resilience of the Palestinian population and institutions in the city

During this phase, the programme will implement projects based on a community driven cluster approach in East Jerusalem, Qalqilya and Tubas governorates in order to empower local communities and strengthen their resilience both in Area C and East Jerusalem. Partnerships and modalities of implementation will be carefully designed to facilitate a complementary approach and a transitional process from humanitarian interventions towards development.

Dr Tafeeda Jarbawi, Director General of the Welfare Association (Taawon), explained that the project will provide employment opportunities to 150 Jerusalemites. The internship/apprenticeship model that will be implemented through this round of funding currently has a 70% success rate of placing youth in permanent positions after their internship.

"CRDP is an important programme that complements other initiatives implemented by UNDP in Area C and East Jerusalem to provide basic services and economic empowerment for the Palestinians to improve their livelihoods and resilience," said Roberto Valent, UNDP Special Representative of the Administrator. "We are proud that through this partnership between Sweden, Norway, Austria, and Jerusalem institutions, we will be able to provide support to residents who are in dire need of medical services and employment opportunities," he added.

The signing ceremony was held on Thursday 17 March 2016 in the presence of Dr Johan Schaar, Head of Sweden Development Cooperation, Mr Maher Daoudi, Senior Programme Manager Humanitarian Assistance (SIDA), Dr Andrea Nasi, Head of Austrian Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority, Ms Riham Kharroub, Programme Manager, Austrian Representative Office, Dr Maha-Noor Khan, First Secretary at the Representative Office of Norway to the Palestinian Authority, Dr Rafiq Husseini, CEO Makassed Hospital, Mr Walid Nammour, CEO Augusta Victoria Hospital, Tom Ogilvie-Graham, CEO St.

John Eye Hospital, Dr Tafeeda Jarbawi, Director General of the Welfare Association (Taawon), and Mr Roberto Valent, UNDP Special Representative of the Administrator.

Since its inception in September 2012, the Community Resilience and Development Programme (CRDP) supports the resilience of Palestinians living in various marginalized communities in Area C and East Jerusalem. Led by the Palestinian Government, CRDP is funded by the Governments of Sweden, Austria, and Norway for the amount of over USD 19.7 million, and implemented by UNDP. With over 52 projects implemented so far, CRDP aims at improving access to public services, economic and social development, and empowering local institutions.

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