United Nations
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Ramallah Office

PRESS RELEASE

Ramallah, 6 October 2016

UNESCO and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education celebrate

World Teachers` Day



Ramallah, 6 October 2016. World Teachers' Day in Palestine was celebrated on 5 October in Ramallah in a ceremony attended by hundreds of teachers from all over the country, with the participation of the Minister of Education and Higher and the Heads of UNESCO, UNICEF and ILO offices together with representatives from the Teachers' Union, UNWRA and key international donors of the Education Sector. This year World Teachers' Day marks the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. It is also the first world Teachers' Day (WTD) to be celebrated within the new Global Education 2030 Agenda adopted by the world community one year ago.

This year's theme, **"*Valuing Teachers, improving their Status*"**, highlights that teachers are fundamental for equitable and quality education and that according to the Education 2030 Framework for Action, teachers must be *"adequately trained, recruited and remunerated, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems".* Adequate Support to teachers is also reflected in the SDG Agenda, with the SDG 4 goal pledging to *"Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.* This goal cannot be achieved unless we increase the supply of qualified

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teachers and empower them to be agents of educational change in the lives of the students they teach.

During his welcoming remarks, the **Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr. Sabri Saidam** stressed on the importance of teachers for the future generation of Palestine and expressed his appreciation to all Palestinian teachers who excel in their profession, despite the exceptional challenges they are facing on a daily basis. He stated that "*the financial commitment towards Palestinian teachers will be fulfilled by the beginning of next year. We will also send a number of teachers to study abroad in order to train other teachers ensuring that all teachers are able to teach the new curriculum*."

Dr. Lodovico Folin Calabi, UNESCO Representative to Palestine and Head of Office, congratulated the Ministry of Education and Higher Education "*for taking the steps to improve the financial status of teachers this year*" and emphasized that "*in Palestine, we continue to stand for teachers. Standards for teachers, code of conduct and licensing scheme have been framed in the past years through UNESCO's close partnership with the Ministry of Education. No goal can be achieved in Education without qualified and motivated teachers in Palestine and in the world*."

"We all have in our memories our teachers, who led us to what we are today" said **Dr. Muhannad Beidas, chef of Education in West Bank at UNRWA**, praising the commitment of UNWRA teachers in their daily work and highlighting the training and development offered by UNWRA for thousands of teachers. The **Teachers' Union representative** urged all involved in doubling their efforts towards fulfilling the rights of Palestinian teachers in their daily struggle.

The opening remarks were followed by a film showing the challenges that teachers and students are facing on a daily basis to access their schools. Towards the end of the event, a round-table discussion took place with teachers Feda Za'atar and Jawdat Sisan, both in the top 50 winners of the Global Teacher Prize, on how they will be transferring their knowledge to other teachers in Palestine and the world.

World Teachers' Day held every year on 5 October around the world, is a UNESCO initiative, a day devoted to appreciating, assessing, and improving the educators of the world. The event is an extension of UNESCO's all year round work of promoting teachers, by ensuring the improvement of their status and continued training and development.

More information on World Teachers' Day is available at: http://en.unesco.org/events/world-teachers-day-0

More information on the *UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers* is available at: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001604/160495e.pdf

For more information on UNESCO's activities in Palestine, please visit www.en.unesco.org/ramallah

For more information on this event, please contact: Majd Beltaji, Public Information Officer of the UNESCO Ramallah Office, at m.beltaji@unesco.org