PRESS RELEASE

# West Bank Palestine Refugee Wins Education 'Nobel' Prize

## UNRWA Commissioner-General Pays Tribute to "Unique Achievement"



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Palestine refugee and West Bank teacher, Hanan al-Hroub, has been awarded the Global Teacher Prize, known as 'the Education Nobel', for her work with traumatized children in the West Bank.

Speaking at the ceremony in Dubai where she picked up the million dollar award, Hanan, a Palestine refugee from Dheisheh camp in Bethlehem, announced she

would use the prize money to support other Palestinian teachers. “Teachers could change the world,” she said.

UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl paid tribute to her “unique achievement,” saying her work with traumatized children was a “beacon of hope and an inspiration to the next generation. Hanan, I salute your courage and determination to continue with your education mission. Allow me to speak for the entire UNRWA family in sending our heartfelt praise and admiration.”

Hanan al-Hroub, herself a student from an UNRWA school, was in the finals with candidates from the UK, India, Kenya, Finland and the United States. She specializes in supporting children who have been traumatized by violence.

The Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, was among those in the audience. Both England’s Prince William and Pope Francis sent messages to Hanan, which were played at the ceremony.

The top 10 finalists were invited on stage by a video message from physicist Stephen Hawking and were congratulated by video messages from US Vice-President Joe Biden and former US President Bill Clinton.

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**Background information**

UNRWA is confronted with an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, the extent of their vulnerability and their deepening poverty. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions and financial support has been outpaced by the growth in needs. As a result, the UNRWA Programme Budget, which supports the delivery of core essential services, operates with a large shortfall, projected for 2016 to stand at US$ 81 million. UNRWA emergency programmes and key projects, also operating with large shortfalls, are funded through separate funding portals.

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, and microfinance.

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