Press Release
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My Green Jerusalem: EU supports hundreds of Palestinian youth in cleaning the streets of East Jerusalem

The Office of the European Union Representative supported more than 300 Palestinian students in cleaning the streets of East Jerusalem. This is part of "My Green Jerusalem" initiative which aims at raising environmental awareness and promoting positive social engagement among the students. Ten schools in East Jerusalem joined the initiative which includes a number of activities throughout the month of October.

The European Union Representative joined today hundreds of Palestinian students from ten schools in East Jerusalem as they launched the EU-funded environmental initiative "My Green Jerusalem". The students cleaned the streets in the Old city, Sheikh Jarrah, Wadi Al Joz, Al Thuri, Zaayem, Ras Al Amooud and Beit Hanina.

The initiative amasses efforts of seven Palestinian organisations supported under the EU East Jerusalem Programme. In preparation for the activity, the students were trained by EU grantee CESVI on trash collection and separation methods. Young volunteers from Yabous and PalVision accompanied the students in the activity. The collected trash was categorized into environmentally-friendly bags, whereas recyclables will be utilized to create green works of art. The art works will be presented later this month in a public exhibition.

"*I usually don't find a garbage bin nearby, so I end up throwing trash on the street, but I think I will start to pay more attention after today and keep it with me until I find one*," said Raed from Saint George's School while adjusting his gloves. "*Knowing that I will be using the trash I'm collecting now in making something beautiful makes me happy*," commented Dana, a student from Nur Al Quds School in Ras Al Amoud.

The **EU Representative Ralf Tarraf** who joined the students in Wadi Al Joz said: "*I am happy to join the students as they try to make their neighbourhoods a better place to live in. They have the right to walk through clean roads and pathways on their daily journeys to receive an education. Living in a clean environment is a right as is education. The beauty of this event is that it combines both."*
"*Palestinians and particularly youth face a tough reality in East Jerusalem. The absence of efficient municipal services in many areas of the city has a severe impact on the well-being of the kids and the families. This endangers the Palestinian presence in the occupied city. Through our projects and interventions, we will continue to work on preserving its Palestinian identity."*

The EU is adamant on supporting projects in East Jerusalem to reinforce the resilience of Palestinians in East Jerusalem. The EU funds this activity under the EU East Jerusalem Programme. The East Jerusalem Programme is a multi-sectoral investment that has grown to over 10 million Euros annually. The programme covers areas ranging from education to health; social inclusion to private sector development; community empowerment to human rights. Through this programme, the EU has worked consistently with Palestinian partner organizations to support the development of a vibrant and diverse civil society in East Jerusalem.

Photos from the My Green Jerusalem here

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