

EDITORIAL

Dr. Imad Khatib, Secretary General

PALAST Strategy towards 2008 – 2012, more breakthroughs amidst surviving the Abnormal

Since its inception in 1997, PALAST has exerted all efforts to play its assigned role similar to that of counterpart academies while taking into account the “unique” Palestinian situation, where military occupation of areas of the West Bank still exists, and where more Palestinian lands are being confiscated for the sake of the expansion of existing Israeli settlements and/or the construction of the separation wall, in addition to the tough military measures imposed that affect the right of accessibility of the Palestinian

people, in particular university students and lecturers, therefore dividing the Palestinian communities from each other; namely the Gaza strip and the West Bank. In addition, the deteriorating economical situation that reached its peak in 2006 added a lot of burden on the Palestinian people and institutions, including PALAST, which led many to compromise many assigned activities and to concentrate instead on ways to survive the crisis. It is worth noting that due to the aforementioned situation, PALAST had to implement the activities

proposed in its strategy for the period 2001-2007 amidst extremely difficult conditions, constituting the worst case scenario for the implementation of those activities. On the track that enhances PALAST role in the national arena, several activities were implemented; including the recognition of PALAST by the Palestinian cabinet, in addition to the convening of a joint committee from PALAST and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) and the drafting of a joint document that elaborates on the

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ARTICULATING PUBLIC POLICY AS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE IN THE PALESTINIAN UNIVERSITIES

Dr. Ayman Yousef, Arab-American University

The attention to public policy as an academic and knowledge-based discipline had been increased and indeed accelerated to a large degree in the post Second World War period, especially in some reputed American and European universities, as well as in some of the select research centers. The evolution of this concept and its theoretical paradigms gained momentum because it was treated as an integral and essential part of studying political systems with clear and diverse implications on the local

communities, the local governance, the political culture, in addition to the reasonably rational decisions to run foreign policies and international relations.

There are many definitions for public policy and indeed there are differences of opinion and points of view among scholars and experts of public policy regarding the meaning, scope and components of public policy. Some view public policy as a purposeful and functioning program adopted by the government with the clear intention of assessing

its performance on the ground either individually or collectively. It is also viewed as a range of executive decisions taken by public authorities to achieve overall goals.

Public policy in its initial stages is merely an idea, then that idea becomes a suggestion to be further studied and explored by research institutes, and only then it is handed to the relevant decision-makers and governmental authorities for approval and implementation on the ground. There are so many overlapping politico-cultural and

socio-economical factors that are inherently involved in deciding the goals and decision-making.

David Easton, an eminent and leading figure in public policy used system analysis to shed light on the input-output relation in overall macro analysis. In his view, the inputs constitute the demands and pressures put by the public on the government regarding issues ranging from legislations, taxation policies and the functioning of the public institutions in all spheres including politics, economics, health, education, and tourism etc. On the other hand, the outputs cover the responses to the demands made by the masses in the form of policies and decisions related to the authoritarian distribution and allocation of resources.

When it comes to the Palestinian academic institutions and specialized research centers, public policy, both in theory and in practice, is highly vital because of its importance in fulfilling the following objectives:

1- Macro objectives and goals that determine the directions of policies while simultaneously attempting to build and create strong viable institutions that act as a strong base for the emerging future Palestinian state. Clear and pragmatic goals at this stage can actually contribute to the enhancement of the credibility of such a state.

2- Long-term objectives that span over a period of 3-5 years such as going ahead with the process of tangible and honest reforms and sustainable development in all spheres including political systems, separation of powers, independence of judiciary systems, a just and sustainable development, in addition to the overall reforms and relations between public institutions and civil

society organizations in terms of legal frameworks and funding sources and agencies.

3- Short-term objectives that are transitory in nature aiming to sustain the basic functioning of the public and private institutions in terms of guaranteeing efficient mechanisms of recruitment, promotion, supervision and budgeting. This process, when being in the open, enhances the trust relations between public authorities and the ordinary masses.

4- Daily routine objectives that ensure the efficiency and the productivity of the officials and the civil servants at the work place by exploring new horizons for them to develop their skills and capabilities. In this context, one of the objectives is to activate the role of certain sensitive departments and sections such as public relations to tackle the tasks before them more effectively. Through Public Relations, funds for workshops, seminars and visits abroad become available to civil servants, which in turn ameliorates their abilities.

This academic and scholarly program is justified on many grounds. Policy-making requires defining the basic and fundamental elements in this process such as the constitution, ideology and way of governance, and the three powers, namely public opinion, political parties and pressure groups. Since these items on the Palestinian agenda are not yet well defined, the output of such a program and research in this discipline can be of great importance to help sharpen the features of the emerging Palestinian political system. Students of public policy as well as scholars with their knowledge and research skills can provide governmental agencies with research for proper institutional build up.

It would be considered highly important if the public policy program can act as a link between the academia and the political decision-making machinery, as can be seen from the various countries and great powers in the world that benefit greatly from such a partnership.

Public policy inevitably opens spaces for debate and brainstorming among scholars, academicians and students of political sciences and public administration in general to tackle the issues on desk. One of these issues is the feature of mixing and overlapping prominent in the Palestinian political system which is a one of an authority rather than a state. Palestine is currently living under the impact of the authority as well as the national liberation and this dual task of institutionalization and liberation simultaneously has left its repercussions and consequences on the system itself.

This stage of ambiguity and general lack of clarity was exploited by some politicians and elites with vested interests as theirs prevailed on the account of the national interests. This led to a large scale of corruption, nepotism and favoritism in the public working places, and therefore, teaching public policy at this stage in academic institutions as an academic discipline will be of tremendous benefit. The departments of public policy, along with their good quality graduates, can also contribute to the training of civil servants, whether they are civilians or security forces, in order to ensure a more transparent administrative system.

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Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Palestine Academy for Science and Technology (Draft)

On the 23rd of Jan 08, the joint committee from the MEHE and PALAST met in the PALAST's offices in Ramallah to discuss how to proceed with the decision made by the Cabinet Ministers on the 14th of June 2005 in Ramallah regarding the relation between PALAST and MEHE.

Based on the common understanding for the need of the integration among the units forming the national science, technology and innovation (STI) system without interfering with the role and functions of each, and on the bases of the available documents and achievements done by PALAST, both the MEHE and PALAST raise the following facts to HE the Minister of MEHE and the Cabinet:

1. One of the most common important functions that belong to Academy of Sciences in different countries is acting as an advisory institute for the governmental and other national institutions to support the decision makers on issues related to STI. PALAST managed to reflect this role in carrying out studies in cooperation with relevant governmental institutions; e.g. micro-nutrition deficiency and food fortification with the ministry of health, strategic research agenda in ICT with the ministry of telecommunication and information technology, etc.
2. Over the past seven years, it appeared that PALAST has managed to build trustworthy relations on the national and international levels, which enabled PALAST to be a member in eight reputable international consortium's bodies and to present the civilized face of Palestine in that sense in addition to open avenues of cooperation and networking.
3. Significant achievements of PALAST related initiating

events such as the conferences; e.g. the Int. conf. on Water values and Rights with the Palestinian water Authority, and establishing relevant research infrastructure, e.g. the Environmental Field Center (EFC) in Jericho, the Museum and the Aquarium in Gaza. Such establishments serve the national needs.

4. The initiative carried out by PALAST and endorsed by the STI stakeholders in 2002 regarding the Science Fund, which is supposed to provide proper national funds for advancing research and researchers networking is very important and essential to be supported from the ministry and the cabinet.

5. PALAST was able to establish its headquarters in Jerusalem city and to get the recognition of several international bodies, which met with PALAST directors in its premise in Jerusalem. This should be supported and endorsed.

The joint committee considers that the a.m. facts are of paramount importance and in this sense provide the following recommendations:

1. It is essential to maintain the status of autonomy of this institution in line with similar institutions in other countries. This in turn will ensure the flexibility, needed to do its part at the international and national levels.
2. It is essential that the cabinet supports PALAST in its endeavor implementing its assigned roles. The close cooperation between MEHE and PALAST will facilitate and promote the institution performing its functions.
3. Support financially the institute to perform its functions effectively. The MEHE could closely work with PALAST assuring the proper implementation.

PALESTINE ACADEMY NEW MEMBERSHIP

PALAST is pleased to announce its new membership in a powerful consortium; the Mediterranean Inter Academy Council, which was initiated by the French Academy of Sciences. This initiative of a Scientific Mediterranean Area and an Academies' Network (The Mediterranean Inter-Academic Programme "PARMENIDES") in the Mediterranean region has been launched in order to gather, with a common goal of development and scientific excellence, Academies of Sciences from all the countries situated on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Academies from Italy, Spain, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia and Senegal, along with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (Egypt) and the Malta Council

for Science and Technology (MCST) have already manifested their interest in and support to the initiative endorsed by UNESCO, in addition to the InterAcademy Group for Development (G.I.D.) – Academy of Sciences, Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, National Academy of Medicine, Academy of Agriculture, Academy of Technologies and the Arab World Institute in Paris (IMA) on behalf of France. The recent initiative taken by the President of France, supported in Rome on the 20th December 2007 by the Prime Ministers of Italy and Spain, to launch a project of "Union for the Mediterranean Region" has given an important boost and a new and visible support to this initiative.

PALESTINE ACADEMY COOPERATIVE INITIATIVES

2ND INTERNATIONAL WATER CONFERENCE: WATER VALUES AND RIGHTS



The Palestine Academy for Science and Technology and the Palestinian Water Authority, are organizing the Second International Water Values and Rights Conference that will be held in April 2009 in Ramallah.

The organizing organizations would like to thank the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for their continuous cooperation in co-sponsoring this conference.

The objectives of the conference are to bring together scholars, scientists, experts and researchers, decision makers, and other stakeholders from

the public and private sectors to discuss issues related to water rights and the state of the art water and wastewater science and technology. The conference will also serve as an opportunity for all to interact with each other and with a prominent international group of invited speakers. It will furthermore tackle the pressing human rights and hydro political issues.

The Academy has received more than 70 Abstracts from seventeen countries (Palestine, Spain, Germany, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, France,

Lesotho, Jordan, Switzerland, Italy, United Kingdom, Egypt, Bangladesh, Israel, Nepal, India and USA), and expects to have the same number of peer-reviewers. Full papers shall be published in the conference proceedings.

The Academy and the PWA will invite key international speakers to participate in the conference.

For more info, Please visit the Conference Website:
www.waterrightsconference.org

JOIN-MED “ESTABLISHING THE EU-MED ICT RESEARCH NETWORK”

A complement to the outcomes achieved in MED-IST multilateral Euro-MED project, the JOIN-MED newly FP7 funded multilateral project is going to be launched after the kick off meeting which will take place in Tunis, Tunisia next February. The main objective of JOIN-MED is to create a sustainable network of ICT research organizations between Europe and the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC), reinforcing the Research Cooperation between these two regions on a wider scale, not only limited to Framework Program co-operation. This comes from the background that shows that

despite many contacts between research organizations in the MPC and the EU, co-operation between such organizations in joint activities is rare. “Co-operation” more often takes the form of exporting researchers to Europe, as can in particular be observed between Tunisia and France. The only organizations profiting from this exchange are the European ones and this profit is limited to the ‘exploitation’ of individual researchers, while it could be the entire research team in a situation of genuine co-operation. Currently no network or mediation

service exists; co-operation is based on personal contacts or the initiative of individual research institutes or universities, based on their own research priorities.

What is needed is a more systematic approach of research cooperation that is based on the research priorities of the MPC region. These are defined in a Policy Paper for ICT Priorities identified in the MED-IST project with a specific view on the FP7 co-operation and in the “Arab Strategy for Information Society and Communications Technology”, which defined the strategic

objectives of an Arab ICT Community.

The second objective of JOIN-MED is to consolidate an MPC research community, where researchers and private industry not only become a network but work together on joint projects. So far, R&D in the MPC is still driven by national initiatives with very little cross-regional co-operation. Unfolding the potential of the research capacity in the MPC co-

operation and cross-fertilization is a crucial prerequisite.

It is anticipated that the project will run over 30 months starting next February with Palestine Academy for Science and Technology representing Palestine, Universite Mohammad V-Souissi representing Morocco, Institut Superieur de Gestion et Planification representing Algeria, Centre National de L'Informatique representing Tunisia,

the National Council for Scientific Research representing Lebanon, the Higher Institute for Applied Sciences and Technology representing Syria, the Royal Scientific Society representing Jordan, the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology representing Egypt, ICT Consult representing Germany, PALNET representing Greece, and RCI Research and Consultancy Institute representing Cyprus.

COOPERATION WITH THE ITALIAN ORGANIZATION UN PUNTO MACROBIOTICO (UPM)

The Palestine Academy for Science and Technology signed an MOU with the Italian organization Un Punto Macrobiotico (UPM) to carry out a cooperative program that deals with the utilization of natural products including agricultural and other natural substances. The organization UPM was founded in Italy a long time ago by Mari Pianesi, the President of the UPM, who in the year 2000 proposed the mixed Ma-Pi (stands for Mario Pianesi) reforestation and the Ma-Pi diets; in particular Ma-Pi diet 2 for diabetes mellitus type 2. The project Ma-Pi diet was implemented in a few countries and promising results were achieved towards the aim of healing patients with diabetes type 2 and such results were published in scientific journals. The cooperation with UPM extends to training a physician; Dr. Mamoun Mansour, and a cook; Mr. Mohammad Elyan, in Italy and in China on how to carry out the Ma-Pi diet project. The training has started on November 12, 2008 and is expected to come to an end in February 2009. At the same

time, UPM has provided the proper seeds that will be cultivated in the Environmental Field Center in Jericho and an agronomist from PALAST will travel to UPM premises in order to get training on cultivating the wild seeds provided by UPM.

UPM has invited PALAST secretary general, Dr. Imad Khatib as a keynote speaker at the conference entitled "Environment, Agriculture, Food, Health, Economics" that was held in La Sapienza University in Rome on the 13th of November. The



UPM conference "Environment, Agriculture, Food, Health and Economics" at La Sapienza - Italy

conference was convened in cooperation with UNESCO, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the University of Rome 1 (La Sapienza) with the participation of several countries, including Palestine.

Mario Pianesi and Un Punto Macrobiotico

The founder and president of UPM, Prof. Mario Pianesi, who was born in Tirana in 1944 started early on in his life checking the effect of nutrition on his own body and at the age of 26, he started giving evening courses in nutrition while simultaneously learning from the book "Zen Macrobiotics" by Georges Ohsawa about the ancient Chinese theories of Yin and Yang and the 5 Transformations. In 1975, Professor Pianesi founded the first organic farming cooperative in Italy and later in 1980 he began to recover seeds of plants that have been abandoned in favor of hybrid seeds or the genetically modified ones (GMO). Since then, he continued his research of natural agriculture, proposing an original agricultural model of "policultura pianesiana" (Pianesian polyculture). He started obtaining seeds from the farmers and reproduced them in the fields in their wild state. Cereals, beans and vegetables were grown in the middle of fruit or other trees spaced at about 5 to 6 meters, in combination with hedges to produce a natural and balanced environment. With this system of polyculture, farmers have reported an increase in production and a significant reduction in costs, in addition to substantial positive effects on land that was previously turned alkaline from monoculture and intensive treatment with chemicals, achieving a pH reduction from 6.5 to 5.5 in just a few years.

Professor Pianesi founded the association Un Punto Macrobiotico (UPM) in 1980 and in his studies of the ancient Chinese theories that took several years, he tried to confirm theories of various branches of science, and then promoted them within the UPM centers. Later, he began to give public conferences that have continued uninterrupted to our present day. He has given different courses for physicians, teaching diagnosis and nutrition according to the two ancient Chinese theories. In addition, he was among the first to become acquainted with iridology, i.e. the diagnosis of illnesses from the appearance of the iris. In seeking to unite traditional Chinese and modern science, as president of UPM, he organized a series of conferences dealing with different themes, starting with "Macrobiotics and Science" in 1995, "Culture" in 2000, "From Ancient Chinese Theory to the Sustainable Pianesian Development" in 2002, "Rice: Fundamental Food for Human Health" in 2004, and "Environment, Agriculture, Nutrition, Health, Economy" in 2006 to coincide with the World Food Day. All these conferences still take place annually, in cooperation and/or sponsorship of UN-FAO, UN-WFP, IFAD, UNESCO, the European Parliament and several Ministers and Public and Scientific Institutions of several countries of the world.

In 2001, UPM organized its first initiative at the Senate of the Italian Republic presenting the transparent label designed by Pianesi, and approved so far by 88 senators and in 2008 he organized a similar initiative at the European Parliament. In the same year, the Association launched the "Ma-Pi 2 Diabetes Project" in Asia, South America and

North Africa. This project proposes a simple, economic and efficient solution for the diabetes problem, which nowadays constitutes a great burden on economic and public health structures all over the world. By means of clinical trials of this purely diet-based therapy, using Pianesi Ma-Pi diets, it has been scientifically proven that it is possible for diabetes patients to give up the use of all medications including, insulin, hypoglycemic drugs and others. The "Ma-Pi 2 Diabetes Project" plans for a study of 30 diabetic patients, who volunteer to follow an alimentary regime exclusively based on the Ma-Pi 2 diet for three months, according to an international protocol that has already been adopted in the projects carried out so far.

The project was carried out by several scientific institutions in different countries that published the results of the research carried out and currently other institutions are underway implementing the research project.

Mario Pianesi has received recognition from local, provincial and regional groups for his extensive and diverse work in the service of the environment, agriculture and health, among these was the recognition from the President of the Italian Republic and from the Society of Natural Science in Tunisia. In 2005, he was asked to serve on the UNESCO Scientific Committee for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and in 2006, he received the award as "Best work in diet therapy" from the Medical Diet congress in Dijan, China and in 2007, he was given the degree "Honoris Causa" from the Academy of Science in Mongolia.

ASBIMED - Assessment of the bilateral scientific co-operation between the European Union Member States (MS) and the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MP)

The Palestine Academy had signed a partnership agreement back in 2006 with the "European Commission", for the implementation of the research project entitled "Assessment of the bilateral scientific co-operation between the European Union Member States (MS) and Turkey, and the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MP)" (ASBIMED).

The ASBIMED project aims at the evaluation of scientific research projects of the EU Fifth and Sixth Framework Program implemented through EU funding in order to put a new vision for future funding of the EU Seventh Framework Program FP7 for the period extending from 2007 till 2013.

The ASBIMED project will contribute

to identifying the national priorities of S&T that would assure sustainability of the funded projects and programs especially in the infrastructure of the national science, technology and innovation.

For more information about ASBIMED, please visit (<http://www.asbimed.net>)

ESTIME- EVALUATION OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL CAPABILITIES IN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES

The Palestine Academy has signed a partnership agreement in 2006 with the "Institut de Recherche pour le Développement", a French public and technological establishment, referred to hereinafter as 'IRD', for the implementation of the research project entitled "Evaluation of Science, Technology and Innovation capabilities in the Mediterranean Countries" (ESTIME). This project involves eight research partner countries of the Mediterranean (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the Palestinian Territories) and is financed through the Euro-Mediterranean sixth framework program (FP6) from 2004 till February 2007.

The ESTIME project aims at describing the scientific and technological capabilities of the Mediterranean countries. The project is due to contribute to attaining closer links between the European research space and the Mediterranean ones, by providing precise indications on research, technological development, and innovation in the Mediterranean countries, supported by empirical investigations and a thorough revision of information resources. The main purpose is to provide a description and an analysis of the scientific and technological research systems in the Mediterranean participating countries (MPC).

PALAST has prepared and circulated comprehensive institutional questionnaires to all Palestinian universities and research centers. The questionnaires were analyzed and data was interpreted. The second task was to conduct a series of more than twenty qualitative interviews with known researchers, from academic institutions in order to attain a diverse and comprehensive view of the state of

play of scientific research in Palestine and to hear their recommendations and experiences.

In addition, PALAST is currently implementing a third task, which is establishing a bibliographical database, in the aim of measuring research activities in Palestine. Such a bibliographical database is not yet in existence; PALAST will undertake a preliminary recollection of bibliographical material that would ultimately lead to the measurement of research activity in Palestine.

Based on the outcomes of the tasks, a final report on S&T was developed by PALAST in February 2007, which included three sections. The first explored the national research system in Palestine, and included a brief background on the institutional framework and the scientific and technological potential. This section also shed light on the funding of research and policy in S&T.

The second section reviewed the dynamic of research and means of activating and developing scientific research in Palestine, based on previous studies in addition to our own study. This section also reviewed the cooperation and coordination mechanisms among institutions.

The third section focused on the uses of research and the work done in the country on the uses of research, in addition to the role of intermediate organizations in promoting innovation. It also shed light on Innovation and R&D in enterprises.

For more Information about ESTIME, please visit; <http://www.estimate.ird.fr/>

GLOWA – JORDAN RIVER II- PHASE II CLIMATE CHANGE MODELING

In the second Phase of GLOWA-Jordan River, PALAST continued the progress in working on the different climate change scenarios. PALAST worked in cooperation with PIK using the STAR statistical downscaling model and running simulations based on the ECHAM 4.0 model run that used SRES A1B-Scenario for the domain chosen that extends 29o-34o and from 34o-36o Latitude and Longitude respectively on an 8km x 8km grid resolution. Two runs were done for two time slices, the first with climate observation parameters that covers the period 1958 – 1996 using data from the PIK meteorological data bank in order to develop the trend needed for the simulated time slice. The second run simulates the climate trend for the time slice 2007 – 2045. The two

sets of data include the following:

1. Observation of climate data for the time slice 1958-1996, which include:

- Daily maximum air temperature (Tmax)
- Daily minimum air temperature (Tmin)
- Daily average air temperature (Tav)
- Daily precipitation

2. Simulation of climate data for the time slice 2007-2045, which include:

- Daily maximum air temperature (Tmax)
- Daily minimum air temperature (Tmin)
- Daily average air temperature (Tav)
- Daily precipitation

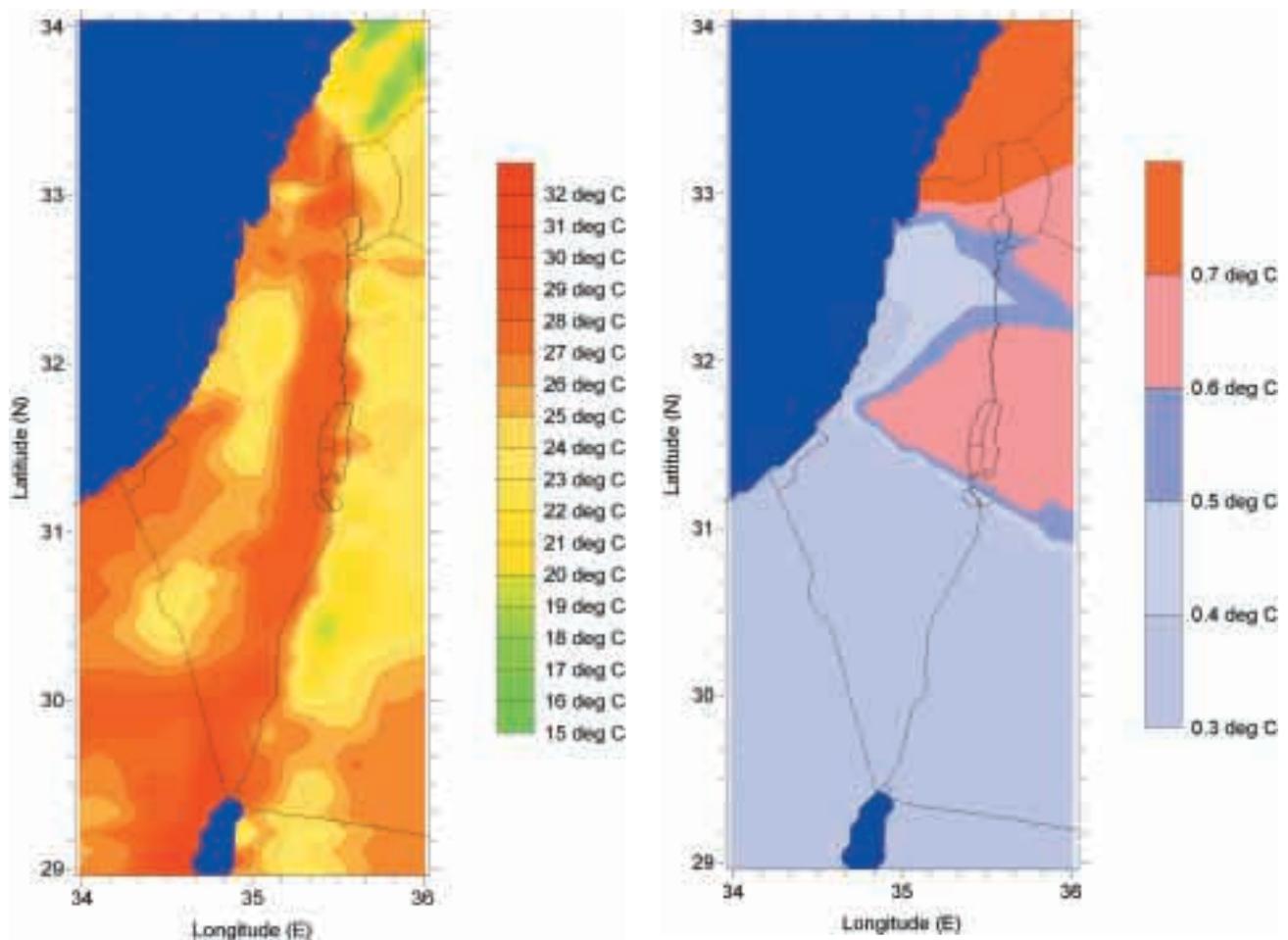


Figure 1: Annual Average temperature for the observation time slice (1958-1996) and temperature changes for the scenario A1B for the time slice (2007-2045)

Based on the analysis of the data obtained, the simulation indicated an increase of average temperature over the simulation period (2007 – 2045) that reaches 0.75 °C (Figure 1 below). With regards to precipitation, the simulation showed an expected decrease in rainfall mainly in the northern part of the domain. Figure 2

showed the observed precipitation distributed and the change during the course of 2007-2045.

The output data was investigated and is prepared for use by other interested GLOWA Jordan River project groups.

For more information about GLOWA-Jordan River: (<http://www.glowa-jordan-river.de/>)

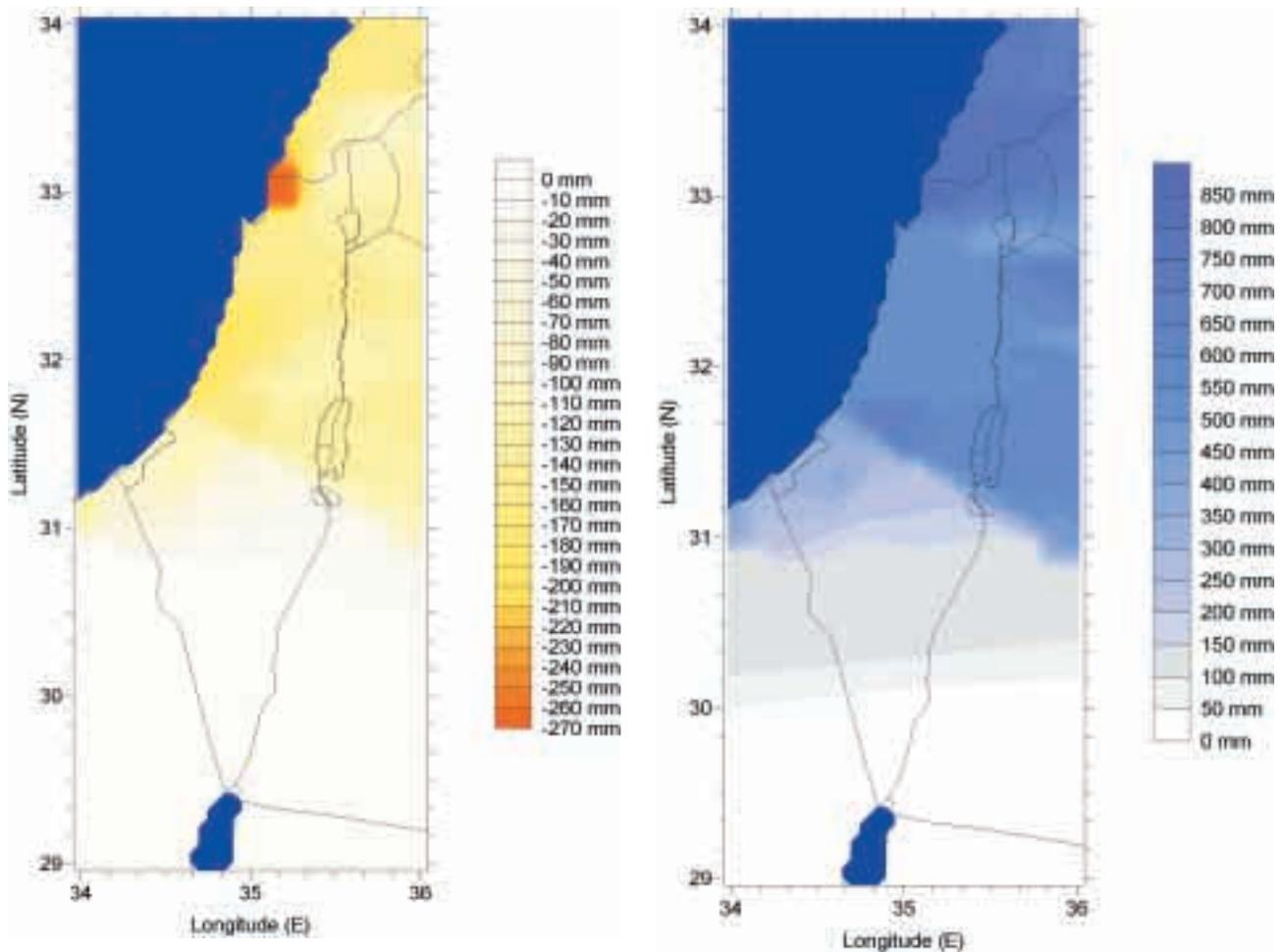


Figure 2: Annual Average Precipitation for the observation time slice (1958-1996) and changes in Precipitation for the scenario A1B for the time slice (2007-2045)

THE MEDITERRANEAN INTER ACADEMIC NETWORK FIRST MEETING – TOWARDS A MEDITERRANEAN SCIENCE AREA

In its capacity of representing science and technology in Palestine, the Palestine Academy for Science and Technology took part in the first meeting of the Mediterranean Inter Academic Network that was held in Paris during the 25th and 26th of

June 2008. The main topics that were addressed during the meeting included establishing the network and formulating its expected mission. The participating academies have agreed to establish the European Mediterranean

Academic Network (short EMAN) and a founding statement and a charter will be developed it. The participants agreed to have the forthcoming meeting of EMAN in Italy in 2009.

MED-IST- MEDITERRANEAN INFORMATION SOCIETY TECHNOLOGY

The Palestine Academy has signed a partnership agreement with the “European Commission” in February 2007, for the implementation of the research project entitled “Mediterranean Information Society Technology” (MED-IST). The MED-IST Project involves participants from two European countries (Greece and Germany), in addition to seven MEDA countries (Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon and Syria).

The overall objective of MED-IST is to bring the Mediterranean Partner Countries closer to the European Framework Program in the field of Information Society Technologies. This will be done through an open consultation process where the national bodies responsible for formulating their research strategy will come together with the active research community to review current research policies and develop appropriate guidelines in view of both their own needs and the IST priorities of FP7. This consultation process will not only lead to recommendations for each MPC but also for the Framework priorities that take the specific needs of the MPC into account. The final outcome will be recommending guidelines for a strategic research agenda focusing on a closer co-operation between Europe and the MPC.

Furthermore, MED-IST will target the research communities directly with active promotion events for

the Framework Program opportunities as well as identifying suitable research organizations and IT companies in that region, and providing them with the relevant training on the procedural aspects, in addition to assisting them in finding partners for cooperation in Europe. The aforementioned is to be done through the means of focused workshops/tutorials that will be organized in order to train the identified organizations on the procedures and opportunities for co-operation in the IST program. These workshops will serve to address the training needs and research & development capabilities of the MPC organizations.

MED-IST has already prepared a “Directory of MPC Organizations” that includes research institutes, universities, IT companies, technology developers as well as independent researchers. This Directory will be one of the key elements in building new networks between Europe and the MPC.

Finally, the MED-IST project will develop an Internet Portal supporting all activities of the project, in addition to serving as a common information point for the MPC for IST in FP7 and as an interactive collaboration platform.

The project is to be implemented in cooperation with Palestinian Stakeholders that include research institutes, universities, IT companies, technology developers as well as independent researchers.

SECRETARY GENERAL'S VISIT TO JORDAN

The Academy secretary general, Dr. Imad Khatib, paid a visit to the Jordan Higher Council of Science and Technology in September 2008 where he met Dr. Anwar Batikhi, the HCST Secretary General and congratulated him for assuming his new post. Both Drs. Batikhi and Khatib discussed ways of cooperation in the future. In his visit to the Islamic World Academy of Sciences, Dr. Khatib met with Mr. Muneef Zou'bee, IAS General Director, and discussed several issues of mutual interest including the Palestine Academy participation in the upcoming IAS 16th Conference of Science Technology and Innovation.

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND MEETINGS HELD BY THE ACADEMY IN THEIR COOPERATIVE INITIATIVE

MEETING “THE ROLE OF THE PALESTINE ACADEMY FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION TOWARDS DEVELOPING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN PALESTINE”

On 8 January 2007, the Academy held a meeting, entitled “The role of the Palestine Academy for Science and Technology in the international dimension towards developing S&T in Palestine”, on the Palestine Academy premises in Ramallah.

The Academy was extremely honored to have Professor. Dagfinn Føllesdal, Professor at Stanford University and former President of the Norwegian Academy of Sciences, and Professor Sari Nusseibeh, President of Al-Quds University, as the keynote speakers at the meeting. Scientists from Palestinian universities, Norwegian counselor Ms. Signe Guro Gilen and Deputy Norwegian Representative Ms. Grete Löchen were among the attendees.

The Academy secretary general, Dr. Imad Khatib, welcomed Professor Føllesdal, Professor Nusseibe and the participants and gave a brief outline of the current work and activities taking place at the Academy.

In his speech, Professor Føllesdal presented his reflection following his visit to the Palestinian territories saying that the situation

in general is that of deterioration, including the educational system which is affected by the measures of the Israeli occupation either through the physical targeting of the educational system infrastructure or through the withholding of the PA tax revenue and aid from other countries

that the illegal Israeli settlements, the separation wall and the military check-posts have all adversely affected the educational system and he stressed that the Israeli people should be aware of the hardship their government imposes on its neighbors. Professor Føllesdal



which in turn was reflected on the people who had not received salaries for several months. Professor Føllesdal stressed that those countries who voted for the establishment of the state of Israel in 1947 have responsibilities and obligations to help and support the Palestinians including their educational system. He added

quoted an old saying relevant to what is currently happening throughout Palestine: “If you want to destroy the future of a country, then destroy its educational institutions.”

As for Professor Sari Nusseibe, he gave a brief speech regarding the problems that the educational system in Palestine faces. In

particular, he described the effect of the separation wall on the educational institutions and how it makes it increasingly difficult for students, academic staff, and people in general to commute freely. Professor Nusseibe also stressed the need for more cooperation on the academic level between international academic institutions and the Palestinian ones in the fields of joint research, mobilization and exchange of staff, etc. Speakers also included Dr. Radwan Barkat, dean of Scientific Research at Hebron University and Professor Munther Dajani, dean of Political Sciences at Al-Quds University. The participants discussed several ideas of cooperation that may be

initiated between the Palestinian academic institutions on the one hand and the international concerned academic institutions on the other. The head of the Norwegian Representative Office mentioned that the Norwegian Center for International Cooperation in Higher Education has several programs in support of joint collaboration and that the programs could be accessed through the Norwegian Embassy. In addition, cooperation with the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters could be established in areas related to organizing scientific symposia, hosting Palestinian researchers at Norwegian research centers, in addition to hosting university

students for special training courses and seminars. On the level of high schools, a recommendation was also presented to foster closer ties between Norwegian schools and Palestinian schools (a system of Friendship Schools).

The Academy welcomed the significant ideas and suggestions made by the distinguished participants and hopes to follow them up aptly.

The Academy also took the opportunity to hand Professor Dagfinn Føllesdal an award to celebrate his Honorary Membership to the Palestine Academy and as a token of appreciation to his support to human rights issues.

MED-IST CONSULTATION WORKSHOP IN PALESTINE

Under the Auspices of His Excellency Kamal Hasonah, Minister of Telecommunication and Information Technology to the Palestinian National Authority, Palestine Academy for Science and Technology organized a Consultation Workshop for the MED-IST project "MEDITERRANEAN INFORMATION SOCIETY TECHNOLOGIES" on 22 November, 2007 that took place at the City Inn Hotel in Al-Bireh city.

The Academy presented the overall objectives and aims of the Med-IST project on behalf of PLANET, followed by a presentation on the Palestinian



ICT Strategy, which was presented by Mr. Jamil Zagharneh on behalf of the Ministry of Telecommunication and

Information Technology, followed by Dr. Radwan Tahboub, Director of Friends of Fawzi Kawash IT Center of



Excellence (FFKITCE) at the Palestine Polytechnic University who gave a presentation regarding the “IT Centers of Excellence Role in Developing the ICT Sector in Palestine”. Finally, Palestine Academy for Science and Technology summarized the analysis of the information gathered from the Scoping Questionnaire for the Establishment of National ICT Research Priorities for the Future Palestine-EU Research Collaboration. This Questionnaire was disseminated to all ICT Stakeholders in Palestine and its main objective was to identify those priorities that have a high potential of future collaboration within the European Framework Program 7 for Research and Development (FP7). These will reflect the interests and needs of the

individual Mediterranean Partner countries as well as the region as a whole, and will be identified through dialogue with the key stakeholders in the countries, such as research organizations, policy makers and administrators, the ICT industry, etc.

The Questionnaire contained a set of seven questions directed to the wider ICT research community and included the following five parts - Part 1: Personal Background Information; Part 2– Identifying the Current Research Landscape; Part III – Future Threats and Challenges; Part IV – Future ICT Research Priorities; and Part V – Additional Information.

The outcomes of the consultation workshop included:

- A clear and up-to-date picture of the ICT research capacities

of Palestine in the terms of FP7.

- An overview of current strengths and weaknesses of the national ICT research systems.
- The identification of key future challenges to be faced in Palestine.
- A list of ICT priorities for Palestine.

The results will be analyzed and used to develop.

- A Strategic Research Agenda for Palestine, reflecting the Information Society Technology (IST) priorities of Palestine in relation to the priorities within the FP7 ICT theme for the period of the coming five years.
- A Policy Paper with “Recommendations for shaping EU scientific co-operation with the MPC Region in the field of ICT research: 2007-2013” .

PLENARY MEETING ON THEORETICAL PHYSICS AND ETHICS OF SCIENCE

Within the scientific activities carried out by the Palestine Academy for Science and Technology, the Academy held a plenary meeting on 21 February 2008 entitled "Theoretical Physics and Ethics of Science" on the premises of the PRCS Building in Al-Bireh.

The Academy hosted scientists from France, Italy and the United States of America who, along with scientists from universities and institutions in the Palestinian Authority, gave lectures on science and ethics.

The Academy was extremely honored to have the honorary member Professor. Gerard Toulouse, Professor at Paris University and currently Chair of the Standing Committee on Science & Ethics of All European Academies (ALLEA), in addition to being Chair of the Committee for Exact and Natural Sciences of the French National Commission for UNESCO. The focus of his work has been on theoretical physics, moving from studies of matter (condensed matter, phase transitions, and disordered systems) to studies of life (neural networks and brain theories) and higher functions of the mind (cognition and ethics). Prof. Toulouse has received several international distinction awards such as the British-French Holweck Prize (1983) and the European Cecil Powell Memorial Medal (1999).



The Academy secretary general, Dr. Imad Khatib, welcomed all keynote speakers at the meeting, in addition to the rest of the participants from the different universities and institutions and gave a brief outline regarding the work and current activities of the Academy.

During the first session, Dr. Imad Al-Khatib welcomed Professor Gerard Toulouse, honorary member of the Palestine Academy and the Director of scientific research at Paris University in addition to being an eminent scholar on the subject of scientific ethics and society.

Professor Toulouse then presented the evolution of the concept of scientific ethics from the perspective of science and its relationship to peace and war, in

addition to the ethics of Biotechnology that concern human beings and other organisms, and finally outlining the subject of scientific ethics and its relation to sustainable development. Professor Toulouse reviewed the efforts done by the International Foundation UNESCO on the subject of scientific ethics. In the same session, Dr. Gabi Baramki reviewed the concept of scientific ethics and the duty of scientists in areas exposed to war and conflict. He then moved to the specific and unique Palestinian arena, where it is obvious that since no Israeli scientists or scientific institutions oppose the repressive practices of the Israeli occupation, scientific ethics oblige Palestinian scientists to have no academic or scientific cooperation with Israel. Only when the repression and



occupation end, cooperation between the aforementioned scientific institutions becomes more feasible.

During the second session, Dr Gabi Baramki, who has served as a member of the General Council of Pugwash, the Nobel Peace Prize winner Assembly opposing nuclear weapons and war, gave an overview of the Assembly and shed light on some controversial issues in the region of the Middle East. He specifically emphasized the fact that Israel views itself being above the law, since it is the only country in the region that possesses nuclear weapons therefore posing a threat on the entire region without having any objection from the rest of the world, while other countries in the region are prevented from having similar initiatives and

programs, which is morally wrong.

As for the third session, Dr Imad Al-Barghouthi welcomed Dr. Yali Amit, professor of computer sciences and specialist of system development (identifying image components) at the University of Chicago. Dr. Amit pointed out that a lot of the scientists who work in the region refuse job offers that have to do with the research and the development of systems for guiding missiles as they are in direct contradiction to scientific ethics.

Then Professor Miguel Virasoro from the University of Rome, former director of the Abdul Salam Center of Physics in Trieste, Italy, presented the Centre, which was established by the Pakistani scientist Abdul Salam, and

reiterated that the center hosts many scientists from all over the world, including Palestine. He also talked about the work of the Third World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) in Italy, and the availability of scientific research grants for Palestinian scientists. This was followed by a presentation by Dr. Sami Jaber, Dean of Scientific Research at An-Najah University regarding theoretical physics.

At the end of the meeting, the Academy welcomed the significant ideas and suggestions made by the distinguished participants and hoped to follow them up aptly in due time. Moreover, the Academy also took the opportunity at the end of the meeting to hand over an award to Professor Gerard Toulouse as a token of recognition to his work in the field of scientific ethics.

WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACT GLOWA JORDAN RIVER PROJECT

As participants in the Scientific research project GLOWA-Jordan River, and in collaboration with our partners from the German scientific institutions, PALAST held a workshop on the 12th of June 2008 in Ramallah entitled "Climate change and its impacts", that was attended by various members from the prime minister council, ministries, governmental and nongovernmental institutions, in addition to universities and research institutes.

The workshop helped to shed light on topics related to different scenarios regarding climate change in the coming 50 years. Dr. Omar Kittaneh, president of the Energy and Natural Resources Authority, commenced by presenting ways to reduce the use of conventional energy by means of replacing it with alternative energy, through the implementation of a project in



Jericho with the European countries; that aims to generate electric power through solar energy that is available throughout the year.

Then Dr. Ayman Rabi, from the Palestinian Hydrologists Group

summarized the components of the GLOWA –Jordan River project financed by the German Ministry of Science and Scientific Research.

Afterwards, Dr. Imad Khatib, General Secretary of Palestine Academy for Science and Technology, discussed the foreseen scenarios and results that PALAST came up with, regarding the study of climate change, followed by Dr. Sameer Shadid from An-Najah National University who discussed the negative impact of climate change on water resources especially when rain fall is scarce.

Finally, Mr. Azmi Haj Mohamed, from the Ministry of National Economy, presented the possible effects of climate change on the global economy, and said that the continuous rise in prices of basic materials is not expected to change in the next ten years.



MED-IST CONSULTATION WORKSHOP IN PALESTINE

Under the Auspices of His Excellency Kamal Hasonah, Minister of Telecommunications and Information Technology, Palestine Academy for Science and Technology organized the second mentoring workshop for MED-IST project "MEDITERRANEAN INFORMATION SOCIETY TECHNOLOGIES" that took place at the Grand Park hotel in Ramallah on the 12th and 13th November, 2008. Mr. Fakher Sawalha, from the Royal Scientific Society in Jordan; the Jordanian partner for the implementation of this project participated in the mentoring workshop, and Mr. Thies Wittig; a German IT consultant gave lectures during the two-day workshop.

Dr. Imad Khatib, Secretary General of PALAST, opened the workshop by welcoming the attendees from the local institutions, ministries and private companies. Dr. Khatib added that the main aim of this workshop was to develop the local institutional capacity to deal with the European framework Program FP7 through which the European Union supports proposals for projects in the field of IT.

Then Mr. Jamil Zagarnah, from the



Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology, emphasized that the ministry, in cooperation with academic institutions are striving to improve the scientific research in the IT sector and the ministry had already set the strategy supporting this issue.

Afterwards, Mr. Ihab Jabari, executive director for PITA (Palestinian IT Association), stated that the association supports any partnership between the academic, research and private sectors, however such a cooperation would necessitate a

clear strategy from the government. Finally, Mr. Thies Wittig, the German Expert, emphasized the importance of the workshop in developing abilities in the field of understanding European funding and partnership building between Palestinian and European institutions.

The two-day workshop gave away valuable information, about how to deal with project documents and financial matters, in addition to the process of building partnerships between institutions and the methods that the European Union follow in order to assess the proposals that would ultimately ensure funding.

The participation of the attendees towards the end of the workshop was very effective, in that some of them managed to present proposals complying with the requirements of the funding program.

Certificates were distributed to the various participants who had taken part in the two-day workshop as a token of recognition from the Academy and the Med-IST representative.



CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND MEETINGS ATTENDED BY THE ACADEMY IN THEIR COOPERATIVE INITIATIVE

The MED-IST 2nd Plenary meeting in Amman

The Academy took part in the 2nd Meeting of the Med-IST project which took place in Amman, Jordan, from 22 to 23 April 2007, where the key issues discussed during the meeting included a scoping Questionnaire for the establishment of the national ICT Research priorities in addition to the future Palestine-EU Research Collaboration, namely the consultation on the national research priorities being launched by the MED-IST partners in order to achieve strategic cooperation between the MED-IST MPC countries and the EU. The main objective of this questionnaire was to identify the priorities that have the highest potential for future collaboration within the European Framework Program 7 for Research and Development (FP7). These will reflect the interests and needs of the individual Mediterranean Partner countries as well as the region as a whole, and will be identified through dialogue with the key stakeholders in the countries, such as research organizations, policy makers and administrators, the ICT industry, etc. The Questionnaire contained a set of seven questions directed to the wider ICT research community and included the following five topics - Part 1: Personal

Background Information; Part 2– Identifying the Current Research Landscape; Part III – Future Threats and Challenges; Part IV – Future ICT Research Priorities; and Part V – Additional Information.

Expected outcomes of the consultation include

- A clear and up-to-date picture of the ICT research capacities of each participating MPC in the terms of FP7.
- An overview of current strengths and weaknesses of the national ICT research systems.
- The Identification of key future challenges to be faced by each MPC.
- A list of ICT priorities for each country.

The results will be analyzed and used to develop

- A Strategic Research Agenda for each participating MPC country, reflecting the IST priorities of that country in relation to the priorities within the FP7 ICT theme within the next five years.
- A Policy Paper with “Recommendations for shaping EU scientific co-operation with the MPC Region in the field of ICT research: 2007-2013”.

The Questionnaire was sent to the EU in early 2008 to help shape the future EU-MPC ICT research co-operation strategy based on common EU-MPC research priorities. Further information, including a downloadable copy of this document, is available from the project website at www.med-ist.eu.

GLOWA-Jordan River Project

Dr. Nabil Shaheen participated on behalf of PALAST in the GLOWA Jordan River Status Conference, which took place in Stuttgart during 19-22 September, 2006.

Dr. Ayman Al Haj Daoud has visited Potsdam Institute of Climate Impact, PIK in Potsdam/Germany during the period 26 Nov– 09 Dec 2006 and worked in collaboration with PIK on running the modified statistical scenario model STAR, which has also been used in GLOWA-Elbe. This work is part of the role that PALAST will assume in implementing project 3 of the main GLOWA-Jordan River research project.

ESTIME Project

The Academy, being the main Palestinian partner of the project, has participated in the meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership project ESTIME, which took place in Casablanca, Morocco, from the 23rd till the 25th of November, 2006. During the meeting, the Palestine Academy Secretary General, Dr. Imad Khatib presented the “Potential of Innovation in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA)”.

Medibtikar workshop in R&D and Innovation Statistics

The Academy participated in the Medibtikar workshop which took place in Amman, Jordan, from 23 to 25 April 2007. The project Medibtikar is supported by the European Commission and seeks to promote the development of the innovation systems in the MEDA region and to provide the MEDA countries with new instruments regarding competitiveness and innovation, in addition to reinforcing their development in order to achieve a good level of services and to create an effective link between research and industry.

Target of the Workshop: Help the national statistical offices to produce better statistics, useful both for the regular reporting of the Unesco Institute of Statistics (UIS) and the emerging MedIS exercise; a crucial support tool for innovation policy in the beneficiary countries.

This "Workshop covered crucial areas of training on the production of R&D and Innovation statistics. The invitees were agreed upon by the Medibtikar team and the National Focal Points (NFPs) in Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, Lebanon, Tunis and Turkey. The training concentrated on using the standard Frascati and Oslo Manuals, which are used to describe the surveys of STI and is considered as R&D benchmarking for innovation. Important elements of coordination in an effort to improve synergies, networking and



benchmarking were the exchanges with the ESTIME project of FP6 and the Tunisian and Egyptian cases. The outcome was judged very positively by the participants, leading to the suggestion for a broader follow up event, to include all MEDA beneficiary countries, represented by both statistical units and policy makers, in addition to adopting more ambitious curricula, since the basic ones are already covered.

This workshop was a follow up to the workshop organized in January in Tunis for the North African countries aiming to create a network of statistically competent people able to produce standardized statistics and interact with the MEDA countries in order to discuss common issues.

MED-IST Consultation Workshop in Amman

The Academy took part in the Med-IST Consultation workshop which took place in Amman, Jordan on the 4th of September, 2007, where the specific purpose was to help the EU to better focus future ICT Calls for Proposals on common EU-MPC research priorities. The MED-IST ICT research priority setting was achieved through a consultation process that involved representatives from the ICT research and business communities, the civil society, and the public sector in Jordan.

Kick off meeting of Med-IST Project

The Academy, being the main Palestinian partner of the project, has participated in the kick-off meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership project, which took place in Cairo, Egypt, on the 12th and 13th of February 2007. During the kick off meeting, the secretary general, Dr. Imad Khatib, presented a short profile and relevant country information on ICT in Palestine. Muntaser Abu Lafi, an IT expert, and Eng. Tarek Arafat also participated in this meeting representing the technical partner from Palestine for the Med-IST Project.

The PEACE Programme, International Conference on Research Development in Palestinian Universities UNESCO, Paris, 4-5 November 2007

PALAST took part in the Seventh session of the General Assembly meeting of the PEACE (Palestinian European American Cooperation in Education) program that took place on the premises of UNESCO in Paris/France during 5-6 November, 2007. In its capacity as a national institute, PALAST had presented the Science Fund initiative that is directed mainly to the networking of researches pertaining to the Palestinian institutions, in addition to providing the national means for conducting directive researches.

Moreover, the idea of publishing the Palestinian Journal of Research and Innovation was also presented and discussed. The objectives that have to be pursued in the field of research were presented in the initiative and these included: The activation of research and innovation; the establishment of a trustworthy peer reviewed scientific platform; the creation of links between the private and public sectors and the various research entities; the creation of links between research institutions and the national strategy and finally the creation of a culture of scientific research and innovation.

The PEACE Program has 61 members at present, namely: 50 European universities and all the 11

Palestinian universities. It has a core of active member-universities which offer grants, initiate or take part in academic programs, in addition to paying membership fees to PEACE. The newly elected members of the executive bureau are:

President: Prof. Radwan Barakat, Dean of Research, Hebron University.

Vice-président: Prof. Annick Suzor-Weiner, Vice-président, Université Paris-Sud 11.

Secretary General: Representative of the University of Granada (to be designated).

Treasurer: Prof. Daoud Zadari, President, Palestinian Polytechnic University, Hebron.

And the members include the following:

Prof. Espen Bjertness, Academic Head, Section for Preventive Medicine and Epidemiology, University of Oslo.

Dr. Imad Hodali, Assistant President, Al-Quds Open University.

Prof. John Morgan, University of Nottingham (to be confirmed by his University).

Prof. Kim Van der Borght, Faculty of Law, Vrije Universiteit, Brussels.

Science Academies and Councils of the Middle East Region, Fourth Leadership Meeting, Seville- Spain, 22 March 2007

The leaders of the Science Academies and Councils of the Middle East Region met up with the U.S. National Academies in Seville, Spain on March 22nd, 2007. The meeting coincided with the Symposium on Frontiers of Science and Engineering sponsored by the Science Academies and Councils and the University of Seville. The leaders of science academies had discussed possible areas of

cooperation. Dr. Walid Al-Turk, the Secretary General of the Jordan Higher Council of Science and Technology was elected president of the association until the next meeting, which was set for January 11-13, 2008 in Jordan. It was decided to identify possible scientific areas of cooperation that are important for the member academies.

Tunis Project Meeting, Tunis 27-28 November 2007

In its capacity as a member in the Euro-Mediterranean project, Mediterranean Information Society (MED-IST) funded through the European FP6, PALAST took part in the 3rd project meeting held in Tunis/Tunisia during 27-28 November 2007. Along with PALAST representing Palestine, partners from Jordan, Tunisia, Lebanon, Syria, Morocco, Algeria, and Egypt also took part in the meeting where the focal point was the progress made on the project work plans.

The meeting was opened by the Chef de Cabinet of the Ministry for the Communication Technologies of

Tunisia, who reiterated the support of the Ministry to the MED-IST project. The project manager, Raphael Koumeri from PLANET, gave a brief update on the situation with the partners regarding the overall progress of the project. During the discussions, the priorities of the participating countries were presented, which are in line with those challenges identified by the European countries and imbedded as priorities for the EU FP7 funding. A schedule for the consultation workshops in partner countries were set and a tentative date for a post mentoring workshop was also agreed upon.

Fifth Meeting of Council of Presidents of the Federation of Middle Eastern and US National Academies of Science

The leaders of the Science Academies and Councils of the Middle East Region have met with the U.S. National Academies in the Dead Sea, in Jordan between 13-15 January, 2008. Each academy was represented by experts who had worked together for two days to prepare draft projects, so that several proposals are submitted for the consideration of the assembled academy leadership. The purpose of this meeting was to identify areas of priority in order to attain cooperation, in addition to the preparation of a set of initiatives that can be carried out,

for the benefit of the region and the member academies. The following main topics were discussed during the three-day meeting

- Micronutrient Deficiencies.
- Strengthening Science Curricula at Universities and communication among researchers.
- Water resources.
- Pollution and land degradation.
- Renewable energy development.

MED-IST Mentoring Workshop in Amman, 17 April 2008

The Academy took part in the Med-IST Mentoring workshop which took place in Amman, Jordan on 17 April 2008. The specific objective of this workshop was to give MPC a good understanding of the concept of Proposal Writing, that can ultimately help everyone become a successful and recognised partner, in addition to strengthening the scientific and technological bases of European industry and encouraging its international competitiveness whilst promoting research activities in support of other EU policies.

GLOWA Jordan River Status Conference 2008

During June 25 – 28, 2008, the GLOWA partners met in the GLOWA Jordan River 2008 conference that took place in Aqaba – Jordan. The conference addressed the final results that the working groups have achieved in the second phase of the project. The second phase was due to be finalized towards the end of August 2008 when the new phase III was going to be launched which is to put more concentration on stakeholders. The Palestine Academy research team has finalized the statistical analysis of the climate scenario studies.

Medibtkar 4th Regional Workshop on Innovation Statistics and the Meeting on “Network on Evidence-Based Innovation Policy (NEBIP)”

Palestine Academy took part in the 4th Regional workshop on Innovation Statistics in the Mediterranean countries, which was held in Casablanca between 2-5 June 2008, which also included the participation of Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Turkey. The Workshop focused on the production, utilization and reporting of statistics in the Mediterranean countries, in addition to the presentation of best practices and training in specific topics to support the beneficiaries in improving their statistical coverage.

For the first time, it attempted to inform and coordinate various activities around the topic undertaken by a

variety of organizations. Participants in the workshop were mainly the members of NEBIP (the Network for Evidence-Based Innovation Policy in the Mediterranean countries), which was created during the second year of Medibtkar as a follow up and as a complement to the Med-IS (Mediterranean Innovation Scoreboard). Beside Medibtkar experts, external experts from MERIT in the Netherlands and NIFUSTEP in Norway gave presentations in order to allow the participants to network with new institutes and initiatives in Europe. To obtain more information about this activity, please visit the following link; <http://www.medibtkar.eu/The-4th-Regional-workshop-on.html>

Association of Middle East and United States National Academies of Sciences, Planning Group on Board on Nutrition Meeting

The Science Academies and Councils of the Middle East Region met up with the U.S. National Academies in Jerusalem between 09-11 July, 2008. Each academy had nominated experts in Nutrition to attend the meeting and they subsequently worked together for two days to review and revise the draft by laws for Board on Middle Eastern Food and Nutrition Board. During the meeting, the Academies identified several individuals for consideration for membership and possibly to chair the Middle East Food and Nutrition Board. Several Recommendations were to be made to the Association of Middle East and United States National Academies of Sciences in addition to the Middle East Food and Nutrition Board, in order to consider the following topics as candidates for projects early in the calendar:

a. The impact of increasing world food costs and potential food scarcity on the nutrition of the region, and the recommendation of preventative actions.

- b. Status review and the formulation of recommendations for monitoring progress in the prevention and amelioration of micronutrient deficiencies.
- c. Review of indicators of status of nutrition prevalent throughout the region, with recommendations for a set of common indicators of nutritional statuses.
- d. Review of the appropriateness and applicability of the new WHO growth curve standards to the Middle East Region, with recommendations regarding their use.
- e. Workshop or consensus study on “The Precautionary Principle: Inhibitor or accelerator of nutritional health interventions?”
- f. Review of needs and opportunities for capacity building in the food and nutritional sciences currently and in the future.



The IAS 16th Conference in Kazan

The Palestine Academy for Science and Technology, in its capacity as a member of NASIC, participated in the Islamic World Academy of Science (IAS) 16th Conference. The Conference was held in Kazan, capital of the autonomous Republic of Tatarstan in the Russian Federation, between 25-28 August 2008, under the patronage of His Excellency Mr. Mintimer Shaimiev, President of the Republic of Tatarstan. The conference addressed the theme of Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development in the Islamic World: Politics and Policies Rapprochement.

The conference, which was held in the Kazan Korston hotel, was an open international scientific activity in which over 130 participants representing over 25 countries took part. Among the participants were the representatives of over 20 academies of sciences from around the world including the American, French and Russian academies of sciences; as well as the majority of academies of sciences in the OIC. Alongside the conference, the IAS and the UNESCO organized a special symposium at Kazan State University regarding the "History of Islamic Science, Technology and Innovation."

The 17th Meeting of the General Assembly of the Islamic World Academy of Sciences as well as the 32nd and 33rd Meetings of the IAS Council were also arranged in conjunction with the conference, that was jointly organized by the following organizations:

- Islamic World Academy of Sciences (IAS), Amman, Jordan.
- Tatarstan Academy of Sciences, Kazan, Tatarstan.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Paris, France.

It was sponsored by the following organizations:

- Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
- OIC Ministerial Committee on Scientific and Technological Co-operation (COMSTECH), Islamabad, Pakistan.
- OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), Vienna, Austria.
- Perdana Leadership Foundation, Putrajaya, Malaysia.
- Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- Fouad Alghanim & Sons Group of Companies, Safat, Kuwait;

- Saudi Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), Rabat, Morocco.
- Arab Potash Company, Amman, Jordan.
- World Islamic Call Society, Tripoli, Libya.
- Royal Jordanien Airlines, Amman, Jordan.

The inaugural session of the conference was held at the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences Building in Kazan. The chief guest was the President of the Republic of Tatarstan; Mintimer Shaimiev, who delivered his speech at the start of proceedings. It was followed by the speech of the President of the IAS and the messages of the two IAS Patrons; H E the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and H R H Prince El-Hassan Bin Talal of Jordan. The inaugural session of the conference concluded with the award ceremony in which newly elected Fellows of the IAS received their Certificates of Fellowship from the President of the Republic of Tatarstan, which was followed with the President of Tatarstan receiving his Certificate of Honorary Fellowship of the IAS from the President of the IAS.

The first day of the conference included keynotes by Prof. R. I. Nigmatullin, Director of the P. P. Shirshov Institute of Oceanology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, who presented a paper entitled Ecology and Energy: Myths, Reality and Prospects; followed by Prof. A. H. Zakri FIAS, Director of the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies in Japan who presented a policy paper entitled Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development; in addition to Prof. Maria da Graca Carvalho, Director General, Bureau of European Policy Advisers of the European Commission, who presented an overview paper on Europe of Knowledge: The Knowledge Society and the Role of Universities.

Two further keynotes were also presented on the first day of the conference; The Kyoto Protocol: The Pros and Cons which was presented by Prof. Mikhail Zalikhanov, Fellow of the Islamic World Academy of Sciences and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Sustainable Development in the Russian State Duma; in addition to Sustainable Development: A Global Imperative, which was presented by Prof. Michael Clegg, Foreign Secretary of the US National Academy of Sciences and a regular participant in the IAS Conferences.

The first day also included the Ibrahim Memorial Award Lecture entitled "Obstetric Brachial Plexus Palsy" which was delivered by the Award Laureate of 2007; Dr Mohammad Al-Qattan, who is an outstanding plastic surgeon from Saudi Arabia and of course the lecture pertained to his main field of research.

The second day of the conference included a special session on nanotechnology in which presentations were made by speakers from Russia, including Prof. Salambek Khadzhiev, Fellow of the Islamic World Academy of Sciences and former Minister of Petroleum Industries in the former Soviet Union; as well as speakers from Iran and Tatarstan.

The IAS has long realized that the relationship between scientists and journalists remains difficult, sometimes even hostile. There are complaints on both sides - scientists doubt the ability of journalists to report accurately and responsibly regarding their work, while journalists complain that scientists are bad communicators, hiding behind argot. It was principally for this reason that a special session was arranged on the second day of the conference in which a number of science journalists, including representatives of the World Federation of Sciences Journalists (WFSJ), presented short communications on how they thought science and the scientific endeavor were perceived by the media. The main conclusion drawn from the session was that the scientists who used the media effectively saw advantages in having a media presence for themselves, their projects, and their research organizations. The media, it was reiterated, was an effective means to popularize science, reach research funders, bureaucrats, and other scientists around the world.

The "Role and Functions of Academies of Sciences" was the theme chosen by the conference organizing committee for an exciting session which was organized in the afternoon of the second day where representatives of no less than ten academies of sciences from around the world including the French, American, Malaysian, Pakistani, Palestinian, Tatarstan, and Romanian presented short overviews of their academies and their respective outlooks for the future.

The main objective of this session was to compare the different models of academies of sciences that exist worldwide; the Soviet style academy of sciences, the Anglo-

Saxon model as well as the international or the global model as classified by the InterAcademy Panel; which includes the Islamic World Academy of Sciences and TWAS.

A major objective of the specialized symposium which was organized by the IAS in collaboration with UNESCO and the Kazan State University on the third day of the conference, aimed to address the issue of why the Islamic civilization – which enjoyed almost five centuries of scientific superiority – did not undergo a European type of renaissance. This issue was addressed at this special symposium by a number of world-class speakers who represented a number of schools of thought and included; George Saliba, Mehdi Golshani, Charles Falco and Mazhar Qurashi. The symposium was chaired by a good friend of the IAS; Academician Dato Ir Lee Yee Cheong, who has been the force behind this series of ISSTI (International Islamic STI) Symposia, with IAS Fellow Prof. Shamsheer Ali.

At the conclusion of the three-day conference, which also included a number of side-meetings and site visits, the IAS adopted the IAS 2008 Kazan Declaration on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development in the Islamic World: Policies and Politics Rapprochement. The declaration stressed that Islam promotes a balance between all living creatures and their life-sustaining environment and that realizing prosperity and socioeconomic advancement is at the core of the Islamic governance philosophy. It further emphasized that some Organizations of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and developing countries have developed a vision that links their future to their STI development, while others have not given due priority to this issue.

The declaration emphasized that science and technology are not exogenous factors that determine a society's evolution independently from its historical, social, political, cultural, or religious backgrounds. They are the tool within the reach of humanity for the fulfillment of human needs while maintaining the quality of the natural environment indefinitely, i.e. the means to master that socioecological process that has been defined as "Sustainable Development".

The significant obstacles to science and technology in OIC-Countries were again highlighted in the declaration, including; lack or inadequacy of up-to-date STI policies,

lack or inadequacy of resources, infrastructure and institutions; and gender imbalance in science and technology. Steps to facilitate the transfer of resources to enhance domestic capacity building in developing economies were called for.

The declaration urged the international community to support opportunities for developing countries to grow in a way that reinforces environmental protection and social development by increasing their market access, especially in sectors where sustainable development is likely to benefit from economic liberalization.

The IAS Kazan Declaration moreover called on the international community to again address climate change describing it as an urgent challenge that requires international cooperation to achieve the mitigation levels envisaged under the Kyoto protocol.

The declaration acknowledged that the media has a significant role to play in promoting science and technology. Scientists need to communicate with the general public, policy-makers, and the media while scientific institutes need to open communication lines with the outside world. It called upon universities in the OIC countries to examine the possibility of teaching science communication as a specialized discipline while science conferences and seminars need to engage more with journalists and the media.

On the topic of the "History of Islamic Science," the declaration recognized that historians of science have propagated a number of theories related to the rise and possible decline of Islamic science.

A need to revisit this issue has risen not only to highlight the contribution that the Islamic civilization has made to world civilizations, but also to learn about the deep rooted underlying reasons for this decline in order to learn from the lessons of the past, as well as promote harmony between cultures and peoples in today's tension-ridden world, the declaration reiterated.

The IAS 2008 Kazan Declaration pronounced that it was imperative that interest of the OIC science community, and ultimately the public, is rejuvenated in what has become

known as the accepted narrative of the “Rise and Decline of Islamic Science,” and perhaps to question what has been described as the classical narrative including some theories related to the subject.

Furthermore, the IAS, in the declaration, expressed its deep concern for the safety and well-being of all Iraqi scientists, academics and educationalists both inside and outside Iraq. As part of the follow-up action to the conference, the Academy will circulate the IAS 2008 Kazan Declaration to concerned individuals and relevant agencies throughout the OIC and developing countries, so that measures are taken

to put into action the ideas proposed at the conference.

The Academy will also publish the complete proceedings of the conference in a quality volume that will be internationally distributed.

Through IAS Fellows, personal contact and correspondence, the IAS will promote the concepts promulgated at the conference among the decision making circles of the Islamic world, and will provide whatever help it can to get the various recommendations implemented.

4th MED – IST project meeting Tunis 13-14 Oct. 2008



In its capacity as a member in the Euro-Mediterranean project Mediterranean Information Society (MED-IST) funded through the European FP6, PALAST took part in the 1st Review Meeting of the EU funded project held in Ramada Plaza Hotel, Tunisia during 13-14 October 2008. Along with PALAST, representing Palestine, partners from Jordan, Tunisia, Lebanon, Syria, Morocco, Algeria, and Egypt also took part in the meeting.

The opening session of the meeting was chaired by the Director General of the National Informatics Centre (CNI), Mr. Taher HFAIEDH and included a presentation by the Project Officer, Mr Vlassios Venner on the MPC participation in FP7 ICT priority, in addition to a presentation by Mr. Massimo Mina from the EU



Delegation in Tunis, on the Research and Innovation Programme for Tunisia and the overall Med Region. This session concluded with the speech of the Minister of Communication Technologies of Tunisia, emphasizing the support the Ministry was now giving to the MED-IST project activities.

The project manager, Raphael Koumeri from PLANET, and Thies Wittig from IT Consult Company in Germany gave a briefing regarding the Review procedure and then mentioned that the two objectives of the meeting were the Review preparation and the finalization of the Action plan for the last phase of MED-IST. Schedules for the Mentoring workshops in partner countries were set and agreed upon.

Kick off meeting of Mediterranean Information Society Technologies Project (JOIN-MED)

The Academy, being the main Palestinian partner of the project, has participated in the kick-off meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership project, which took place in Tunis, Tunisia, on the 11th and 12th of February 2009 with overwhelming participation of the project partners from Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Cyprus, Greece and Germany. The meeting was opened by H.E. Mrs. Lamia Chaffai

Sghaier, the Secretary of State for the Information Technology, internet and Open Source, who endorsed the project and gives the support to its work-packages that is considered very important on national level. Dr. Imad Khatib, PALAST Secretary General, presented a short profile and relevant country information on ICT in Palestine



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In addition to the study and evaluation of the constitution, the distribution of powers, the strengthening of the existing state institutions and the ensuring of transparency and accountability within these institutions, this academic program can be extremely productive and fruitful for other purposes and research areas. One of these challenging areas is that of political parties and public opinion. Public policy can sharpen our understanding, as elites and masses, of the benefit of political parties in

the Palestinian context which are more or less political factions and groups. As part of this program, some courses must be taught especially regarding topics and matters related to political parties in terms of their internal build up, internal democracy and member discipline. In the age of the prevailing chaos in terms of security in Palestine, a feature of the second Intifada, party leaders must realize that military conducts are fruitless and senseless without clear political objectives. Finally, this area of specialization, as

one can claim, is emerging strongly within the Palestinian society because of the large number of unemployed graduates in the market, especially those who had graduated from schools of education, arts, languages and even business administration. Public policy graduates have more potential of being employed in public service institutions, research centers, civil society organizations and even in international and regional organizations.

ACADEMY REPRESENTATIVES AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

SECOND GLOBAL MEETING OF THE IAMP



The InterAcademy Medical Panels 2nd Global Meeting took place between 3-6 April 2006 in Beijing, China. The Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) generously hosted the conference, which was attended by more than 320 policymakers, international health experts, journalists and scientists from 49 countries. The meeting was held in conjunction with the official launch of the publications of the Disease Control Priorities Project (DCPP). Dr. Abdul-Aziz Al Labadi Professor at the school of medicine at Al-Quds University attended the conference on behalf of the Palestine Academy and represented the Academy at the

DCPP Launch. The program was set to illuminate to a global audience the importance of setting well-defined health priorities and implementing cost-effective, evidence-based interventions.

Seven Programs were endorsed by the General Assembly on 6th April in Beijing, China, including.

- Reducing Maternal and Prenatal Mortality.
- Workshops on Scientific Writing for Young Scientists and Clinicians.
- The Control of Emerging Infections.
- Rheumatic Fever & Rheumatic Heart Disease in Developing Countries.
- The Mother-Child Health International Research Network.
- Health Care Quality in a Global Perspective.

- Disease Control Priorities Project-dissemination of recommendations.

In addition to the official launch of the DCPP publications featuring cost-effective strategies for improving public health in the developing world, conference attendees also examined related topics such as the public health threat posed by avian influenza and the alarming state of road safety in poor countries that are experiencing enormous increases in traffic.

Full details are available on the IAMP website:
(www.iamp-online.org).

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY

Dr. Jad Isaac, director of the Applied Research Institute-Jerusalem (ARIJ), attended the International Symposium on Groundwater Sustainability as the Palestinian Keynote Speaker on behalf of the Palestine Academy that took place in Alicante, Spain, 24-27 Jan 2006. Dr. Isaac had participated in the session theme: Information, Education, and Conflict Prevention, by presenting a paper entitled: "The Role of Groundwater in the Water Conflict and Resolution between Israelis and Palestinians". The symposium focused on the importance of achieving a long-term sustainable use of groundwater and what it depends on, in addition to new development plans. Many experts from different disciplines and world regions got together to discuss



these issues and suggest solutions. The ISGWAS symposium is part of the InterAcademy Panel (IAP) Water Program for the triennium 2004-2006. The symposium produced the "Alicante Declaration", which is the action agenda that resulted from the

debates held during the celebration of the International Symposium on Groundwater Sustainability (ISGWAS). For full details including the Alicante Declaration, please visit the ISGWAS website at (<http://aguas.igme.es/igme/ISGWAS/ing/>)

MEETING OF THE WHEP IN PARIS

Dr. Madeline Sabbooba represented the Palestine Academy at the Meeting of the Scientific Committee for Women Health Education Program (WHEP) that was held in Paris, on October 26th and 27th, 2006. The WHEP is an international program implemented during 2004-2006 by the Inter Academy Panel and is dedicated to the health education of women in developing countries. "It aims at bringing health sciences-hygiene, nutrition-to women and the communities where they live, thus modifying their knowledge and behavior according to integrated processes involving committed

authorities" –directly quoted from WHEP meeting minutes. The French Academy of Sciences has been identified as the leading academy for this program; accordingly the workshop place was set. The objectives of the meeting included the following:

- * Evaluation and stage restitution of the EPLS Pilot Project on Health Education in a rural school environment, as part of the Senegal River Basin development project: "Health along

the River",

- * Strategic orientations for 2007

- * Evaluation of the Women's Health Educational Programmes.

Full details are available on the WHEP website (<http://www.whep.info>)



IAP Water Program

The regional workshop “Integrated Water Resources Management” was held in Amman, Jordan from the period of 7 -9 March 2007. It was organized by the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) of Jordan and the InterAcademy Panel (IAP), and mainly focused on the water sector in general in addition to many international issues pertaining to water. The workshop aimed at bringing water researchers and high level water managers to regionally discuss major water problems and the contributions science can make to overcome these problems. The workshop included topics such as the challenges in water resources management, drainage and water bodies’ management, groundwater

management, wastewater reuse and treatment management, the bridging of the gap between water research and management, in addition to innovative applications to address water resources management issue. The participants from 30 countries presented different major water issues with added focus on the networking, training and future cooperative projects. Dr. Marwan Ghanem from Birzeit University attended the conference on behalf of the Palestine Academy and presented a paper entitled “the Hydro Chemical Variability of the Jordan Rift valley N-S Section and its Impacts on the Integrated Water Resources Management in Palestine.

The Regional Training Course “Water Resources Research and Management”

The Royal Scientific Society (RSS) of Jordan and the InterAcademy Panel on International Issues (IAP) arranged a regional training course entitled “Water Resources Research and Management”, that was held in Amman during the period November 18-20, 2007 that took place on the premises of the Royal Scientific Society in Amman, Jordan.

This course aimed to provide knowledge and develop a better understanding of water research and water management on the national, regional and international levels. It provided the skills to assess, plan, execute and implement the actions in the research and management of water resources.

Palestine Academy for Science and Technology nominated Eng. Hazem Kitanah, General Director of Technical Affairs at the Palestinian Water Authority, to

attend the important training courses.

The outcomes of this workshop included the following:

- Understand the importance of water resources from the environmental, social and economic perspectives.
- Know the extent of water stress impacts and associated costs on human health, environment and the economy.
- Establish knowledge on practical issues of water conservation, treatment and reuse.
- Know and appreciate the overall picture of integrated water management and approaches for current and future scenarios.

The potential participants include engineers and researchers from the governmental sector, universities and research institutes from Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Iran, Israel, Nepal, Malaysia, Pakistan, Palestine, Sri Lanka, and Jordan.

IAP Young Scientists – Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum

The Palestine Academy for Science and Technology (PALAST), as a member in IAP (InterAcademy Panel on International Issues), participated in the Young Scientists Conference in conjunction with the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting (WEF) which is known as (Summer Davos) between the 26th and the 28th of September 2008, in Tianjin-China.

Dr. Mukhles Sowwan, from Al-Quds University was

nominated to participate in this conference representing Palestine as one of the 43 young scientists invited from all over the world.

All 43 scientists from 32 different countries ended the conference by making the following statement “Passion for Science- Passion for a Better World”, which is summarized in an article that you can find on the IAP website <http://www.interacademies.net/CMS/8165.aspx>

Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) workshops for MED-IST project

Three researchers are going to participate in the three thematic SRA workshops for the MED-IST project. The first workshop under the title “Pervasive and Trusted Network and Service Infrastructures” will be held in Morocco on the 9th of April 2009. The second one under the title “Digital Libraries and Content” will be held in Jordan on the 30th of March 2009 and the third workshop under the title “Towards sustainable and

personalized healthcare” will be held in Lebanon on the 26th of March 2009. Three researchers from Palestine will hopefully participate in these workshops. Mr. Kamal Darwish (Palestine telecommunication Group, Paltel), Mr. Mahmoud Hawamdeh (Alquds Open University) Mr. Fuad Al Hanash (Palestine Red Crescent Society) will respectively participate in the three workshops.

Continued from page 1

cooperation between both institutions for promoting STI in Palestine. In addition, PALAST has prepared the Scientific Research Agenda of the Information Communication Technology (ICT) which was prepared in the framework of the MED-IST European FP6 funded project and through direct cooperation with the national institutions, including the Ministry of Telecommunication and Information Technology (MTIT) and the Palestinian IT companies Association (PITA). PALAST worked directly with the Ministry of National Economy (MNE) to assess the innovation in the Palestinian industrial sector applying the European Community Innovation Survey (CIS) towards preparing the country study pertaining to the improvement of the innovation processes in national industry. The work is underway in cooperation with MNE, the Palestinian Federation of Industries (FPI) and other Industrial associations. PALAST is also organizing, in cooperation with the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA), the 2nd International Conference on Water: Values and Rights, where more than 20 countries are expected to participate in the upcoming event which is endorsed by the Ministerial Cabinet, academic institutions and relevant NGOs. PALAST has also cooperated with the consortium of

Palestinian Universities in the framework of the Palestinian European Academic Cooperation in Education (PEACE) program in promoting the Science Fund (SF) that was initiated and established back in 2002 by PALAST in order to promote research networking. Both events took place in Paris (UNESCO building) and Nablus (An-Najah National University) supported by UNESCO.

PALAST has also shown its support to the Palestinian Conference on Modern Trends in Mathematics and Physics which was organized by the UNESCO Chair in Mathematics and Theoretical Physics at Birzeit University and the publishing of the proceedings is underway. More information regarding activities on the national level is included in this issue of the PALAST newsletter.

On the international track, PALAST was commissioned to conduct several activities funded through the European framework programs (FP5 and FP6) in cooperation with other Arab Mediterranean and European Countries. PALAST finalized its cooperation with German research institutions in the framework of GLOWA – Jordan River project which had been funded over the last six years by the German Ministry of Education and Research. The outcomes of the research are now available for the

Palestinian Environmental Quality Authority and for the United Nations Development Program. In addition, the outcomes (climatic data) were uploaded on the Environmental Field Center web site. Moreover, PALAST took an active role, in its capacity as a member, in several International consortiums.

In 2007, PALAST produced its second term strategy and actions for the period 2008 – 2012 with a vision of “Science, Technology and Innovation serving the sustainable development in Palestine”, and with a mission “to actively participate in developing the bases of directive research and innovation and to support and encourage scientific cooperation, partnerships and networking on the national and international levels.” In the coming five years (2008-2012), PALAST is keen to start funding research and innovation by activating the Science Fund, which found the support of the Palestinian Cabinet and in particular H.E. Dr. Salam Fayyad and the MoEHE. In addition, PALAST will actively seek to enhance research networking in the national and international arenas and to strengthen its fellowship with distinguished Palestinian scientists and foreign honorary members in addition to enhancing its role in cooperation with governmental institutions in fields related to STI.

NEWS FROM PALESTINIAN UNIVERSITIES

An-Najah National University

The Deanship of Scientific Research at An-Najah University announced Winners of An-Najah Research Prize for the year 2007, which consists of an award of \$5000, that aimed to encourage Arab scientists to undertake purposeful research.

The winners, Dr. Sami Jaber, the Dean of Scientific Research and Dr. Muhammad Abu Safat from the Department of Geography at the University were awarded the prize at a ceremony which was attended by the University President, Dr. Hamdallah who emphasized the importance of scientific research in the development of human societies and thanked the Deanship of Scientific Research for their contribution in this field.

Dr. Jaber won the prize for his research in theoretical physics entitled, "Planc's Law of Radiation Distribution in a Multi-dimensional Space", while Dr. Muhammad Abu Safat's research dealt with the Geochemical Classification of Soils in the North of the West Bank.

As a continuation to this program, An-Najah University announced the same prize to be awarded also in the year 2008/2009, and an invitation to different Arab scientists in various countries to participate was extended.

In other news, Dr. Ansam Sawalha, the director of the Poison Control and Drug Information Center (PCDIC), participated in the events of a scientific conference that was held at Jerash University in Jordan during March 25th and 26th 2008. Dr. Sawalha gave the keynote lecture entitled "food toxicology". The conference also included other lectures on global warming, biodiversity, biotechnological ways in preserving the gene pool, pesticides and their effect on the ecosystem among many others.

On the international front, Dr Suleiman Khalil, Coordinator of the Scientific Research Center, and Dr Imad Ibrik, Head of the Energy Research Center, visited the Royal Institute of Technology (KHT) in Stockholm in Sweden to discuss future cooperation between the Swedish institute and An-Najah National University. Ideas ranging from joint research projects to student exchanges were raised. The delegation also visited the faculties of the institute where discussions focused on

energy research, water, and other environmental topics, technology, genetics and architecture.

A memorandum of understanding between the Medicine Institute of KHT and An-Najah's own Faculty of Medicine is soon to be signed. This agreement will further the cooperation between the two institutions. Drs Khalil and Ibrik also visited Sweden's development cooperation agency, SIDA, which funds several projects implemented by the Palestinian Energy Authority.

In other news, the Physics Department of the Science Faculty organized a two-day conference on the 7th and 8th May 2007, which was attended by Physics professors from the University and from other local universities, Physics school-teachers as well as Physics professors from some international universities.

Prof. Rami Hamdallah, President of the University opened the conference by emphasizing the importance of scientific research in general and commended the organization of such a conference. The participants included Prof. Claude Cohen –Tannoudji (NOBLE Prize Winner in 1997, Laboratoire Kastler Brossel), Prof. Michael Berry from the University of Bristol, Prof. Roland Lombard from the University of Paris, Prof. Annick Suzor-Weiner from the University of Paris, Prof. Sami M. Al-Jaber from the Department of physics, Dr. Yacoub Anini from Birzeit University, Prof. Ghassan Safarini from the Physics Department, Dr. A. J. Sous, Dr. Aziz Al-Assa from Al-Quds Open University, Dr. Rezek Mohammad from Khadory Technical Colleges, Prof. M. Abu-Taha, Prof. A. M. Saleh, Dr. M. Abu- Samreh, Dr. Shehdeh Jodeh from Al-Quds University. Dr. Abdel-Rahman Abu-Labdeh, Prof. Hikmat Hilal, Prof. Imad Barghouthi, Mr. Naim Malak, Ms. Haneen Shalash, Mr. Montaser Abu Amer, Mr. Maher Arafat and Mr. Abdel-Rahman Qamhigeh from An- Najah National University.

In other news, in February 2007, Palestinian universities including Al-Quds Open University, Hebron University and the Islamic University in Gaza, in addition to Birzeit University, participated via video conference, in a workshop organized by the British Council in Jerusalem, which hosted guest lecturer, Professor Stephen Hawking. Professor Hawking presented his perspectives on "the Origins of the Universe," subsequently answering questions from all of the participating universities. Stephen Hawking has long studied and written on the basic laws governing the universe. His many publications

include: "The Large Scale Structure of Space Time," "General Relativity: An Einstein Centenary Survey," and "300 Years of Gravity," co-edited by Werner Israel. Professor Hawking's three most popular books published are: his best-seller "A Brief History of Time," "Black Holes and Baby Universes and Other Essays," and most recently in 2001, "The Universe in a Nutshell".

Professor Hawking has twelve honorary degrees, in addition to having been awarded the title of Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in 1982, and being made a Companion of Honour in 1989. He is the recipient of many awards, medals and prizes and is a Fellow of the Royal Society, in addition to being a member of the US National Academy of Sciences.

The following titles are for conferences announced by the university to be held in 2009 for more information please go to:

www.najah.edu/index.php?page=2257&lang=en

06/10/2009

The First Artistic Conference: Arts and Folklore in Palestine: Challenges and Current Situation

29/04/2009

The 1st Conference on Palestinian Athletics

20/04/2009

The Second Conference on Vocational Training and Technological Education in Palestine: Development, Organization and Excellence

14/03/2009

Conference on Development and Reconstruction

Palestine Polytechnic University

Deanship of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research-
Upcoming Events:

- The second International Conference on Energy and Environmental Protection in sustainable development (ICEEP) will be held in November 2009.
- The third Palestinian International Conference on Computer and Information Technology (PICCT) will be on September 2009.

For more information please visit the following page:

<http://research.ppu.edu/conferences.php>

Islamic University of Gaza- IUG

Prof. Rifaat Rustom, Vice President of IT and External Relations, and Ali Yehya, an Engineer at UNRWA, have been awarded Literati Network Awards for Excellence in 2008. The title is believed to be one of the three Highly Commended Papers from the previous 12 months. The research entitled "Estimating Productivity Using Simulation: A Case Study of Gaza Beach Embankment Protection Project" was published in Construction Innovation: Information Process Management which has been chosen as a Highly Commended Award Winner at the Literati Network Awards for Excellence in 2008.

The award winning papers were chosen following consultation amongst the Editorial Team of the journal, many of whom happen to be eminent academics or managers.

Rustom's paper has been selected as it was one of the most impressive pieces of work the team has seen throughout 2007.

In other news, Ahmed Hasan Al-Hasani, an IUG student at the faculty of Engineering, has been awarded Google Summer of Code, which is regarded as impressive since Mr. Al Hasani's project constitutes the first Palestinian participation in the program.

Google Summer of Code 2008 has brought together over 1500 students and 2000 mentors from 90 countries worldwide, all for the love of code. This year, 1125 student contributors and 175 Free and Open Source projects were presented to the program. Al-Hasani reported that 150 companies, 200 American universities and a group of American and Europe scientific research institutions took part in the Google project.

Dr. Ayman Abu Samra, director of scientific development at the Engineering Faculty, said that Ahmed's winning represents a genuine triumph as it was accomplished despite the total siege imposed on the Gaza Strip.

In other news, Dr. Ziad Abu Hin, Chief of the Environment and Earth Sciences Department at the Science Faculty, at IUG, has been awarded Prince Sultan Bin Abdul-Aziz distinctive research award to the twelfth international conference for water technology, which was held in Egypt in March, 2008. A number of European and Arabic countries participated in this conference.

Dr. Ziad Abu Hin in participation with Prof. Khalil Tabil- College of Agriculture at Al-Azhar University, and Professor Medhat Abu Al-Naem- Geology Department at Al-Azhar University, won the first prize for Hydrology and Water Resources in a research entitled: "The problems of excessive groundwater pumping from the northern Gaza Strip during the period 1994-2004"

It is worth mentioning here that the Islamic University of Gaza had received many rewards, including : Galileo International Prize for optics, a patent by the U.S. Office for the registration of patents, Karim Rida Said Foundation Prize, the Islamic Development Bank in Science and Technology Prize, An-Najah National University Prize for Scientific Research, Yusuf Bin Ahmed Kanoo Institution Prize, Hisham Adeeb Hijjawi Institution Prize, which was awarded more than once, Zuhair Al Hijjawi Award, Emerald Award Foundation International Award, Abdel Hamid Shoman Award, Kirchoff Award, in addition to the Islamic University Award for Scientific Research.

In other news, IUG announced the names of the recipients of the 2008 IUG Distinguished Scientific Research Awards. The senior award winners included Prof. Maher Al-Huli, Dr. Nabil Abu Ali, Dr. Nabil Howhi, and Dr. Bassam Abu Thaher.

Dr. Nabil Abu Ali, a lecturer at the Arabic Department in the college of Arts, is being honored for his contributions to the field of Human Sciences. He was at the receiving end of An-Najah University Award for Scientific Research in 2005, the Fulbright Scholarship, the Royal Society Univ. of Birmingham UK scholarship in 2001 and the ICIP scholarship in 1998.

Dr. Bassam Abu Thaher has 22 published researches and has been awarded the scientific research award in Jordan in 1990. Dr. Abu Thaher had also received the IUG scientific research award in 2002, 2003 and 2004 and the Alexander scholarship in Germany in 2006./

As for the Faculty of Medicine at the Islamic University of Gaza, it organized the first Medical Conference, entitled "Medical Education and Public Health in Palestine", to discuss the status of medical education and public health, and to come-up with proper recommendations to keep up with international standards. More than 70 researchers participated in this important conference, which took place in the IUG Conference Hall. The conference lasted for two days and was overcrowded by the participation of doctors,

researchers and interested people from all over the area. In the Conference, Doctors and researchers took the opportunity to discuss some highly important medical issues relevant to the Palestinian community in order to enhance the medical education within the society as a whole.

Last but not least, IUG celebrated the Awarding of its Scientific Research Prize for 100 university Graduates for their outstanding M.A or B.A. level research.

Mr. Jamal Alkhodary, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and Dr. Kamalain Shaath, IUG President, in addition to a huge number of Academic and Administrative staff of the IUG, and the IUG graduates and their relatives had attended the celebration. Mr. Alkhodary expressed his pleasure and declared a new Award for students at Palestinian universities for the best graduation projects as a means of supporting Palestinian Academic Institutions in the region. He regarded the award as important as it aims to support creativity noting that his university is very keen to offer support to distinguished and hard working people, who through their scientific research work towards the enhancement of the nation..

Al Quds Open University

- The Scientific Research and Graduate Studies Program in QOU has published the 11th and 12th editions of the University Magazine for Researches and Studies that include research in Arabic and English in various fields of knowledge.
- The Research and Graduate Studies Program in QOU has published the 2nd edition of the University Journal for Open Education that included two pieces of research that have been translated.
- The Research and Graduate Studies Program is preparing for the 2nd conference "Palestinian Folk Heritage - Identity and Belonging".
- QOU researchers and supervisors published 46 pieces of research in the last year in the fields of Education, Islamic Shari'a, Business Administration, Arabic Literature, Political Science, Law and Economics.
- The QOU Scientific Research and Graduate Studies Program sponsors five research projects conducted by a number of OQU researchers and supervisors.
- The number of participations of QOU supervisors and researchers in local and international conferences, seminars, workshops and study sessions for the year 2006/2007 is 83.

Birzeit University

The UNESCO Chair in Mathematics and Theoretical Physics at Birzeit University organized the Palestinian Conference on Modern Trends in Mathematics and Physics. The conference took place on the campus of Birzeit University, Birzeit, Palestine on July 28th, 2008. The conference aimed at exploring some of the recent trends in research in Mathematics and Physics and provided a venue for Palestinian scientists to present the

latest results of the research. It also served as an opportunity for them to interact with each other and with a prominent international group of invited speakers. Another major aim of the Conference was to discuss the idea of establishing a Center of Excellence in Mathematics and Physics in Palestine and to discuss the scientific direction of its research program.

The organizers, with financial support from the Palestine Academy for Science and Technology, intend to publish the proceedings of this conference in a special volume containing the invited lectures as well as the contributed papers. All papers to be published will be refereed.

NEWS FROM ACADEMIES AROUND THE WORLD

- The European Federation of National Academies of Sciences and Humanities (ALLEA) and the European Science Foundation (ESF) invite the next generation of leading scholars (early career researchers) to participate in a three-day new horizons workshop in Vienna, Austria, that is to take place between the 8th and 10th of June, 2009.

For more information regarding this topic please visit the website: <http://www.allea.org>

- The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) institutionalized the KUWAIT Prize to recognize distinguished accomplishments in arts, humanities and sciences. The Prizes are awarded annually for the following categories :
 1. Basic Sciences
 2. Applied Sciences
 3. Economics and Social Sciences
 4. Arts and Literature
 5. Arabic and Islamic Scientific Heritage

For the year 2009 the prizes will be awarded in the following fields:

- **Basic Sciences:** Physics
- **Applied Sciences:** Cancer Diseases
- **Economics and Social Sciences:** Privatization Programs and their Effects on Development in the Arab World
- **Arts and Literature:** Studies in Children Literature
- **Arabic and Islamic Scientific Heritage:** City Planning and Topography.

For more information regarding this topic please visit the KFAS website: <http://www.kfas.org>

- In other news, KFAS is announcing that the Islamic Organization for Medical Sciences 2009 is inviting nominations for prizes to be awarded by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences. KFAS instituted two prizes to be awarded every alternate year to support and promote scientific research in the fields of Islamic Medical Science.

For more information regarding this topic please visit the KFAS website: <http://www.kfas.org>

- The Council of Canadian Academies, in collaboration with IAP, will organize a workshop on "Strengthening academies through best practices in fellowship appointment procedures and the expert panel assessment process", 12-13 February 2009. The workshop will provide an opportunity to exchange ideas and develop best practices on the assessments and processes used to elect fellows to national academies. For more information regarding this topic please visit the IAP website: <http://www.iap.org>

- Submission of abstracts for the 1st Euro Africa Cooperation Forum will be till the 31st of January, 2009. Euro Africa-ICT Cooperation Forum is to be held in March 2009 in Brussels, Belgium, on the 25th and 26th. African, Caribbean and European political stakeholders in the field of science and technology will meet with ICT experts, heads of key institutions and international organizations involved in R&D issues on ICT. TWAS is one of the project partners. For details, please see the relevant webpage: <http://euroafrica-ict.org/events/summit.php>

War on Gaza

Targeting the campuses of the Islamic University of Gaza Statements

**STATEMENT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
OF PALESTINE ACADEMY FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
29TH DECEMBER 2008**

Update on the Israeli military aggression: Targeting Islamic University campuses in the Gaza Strip-



Source: Islamic University website - Gaza

Source: Islamic University website - Gaza



The Israeli military aggression against the Gaza Strip in the last 48 hours has left more than 300 people killed and 1000 injured in addition to a devastated infrastructure in an enclosed area of 360 square kilometers with a population density exceeding 4000 inhabitants/square kilometer. The people in such an enclosed entity are left with very minimal fuel, food and medications and yet such aggression is committed in front of the international community eyes. The F-16 jet fighters together with Israel's other mighty war naval and ground machines have bombarded the Gaza Strip with tons of explosives that did not spare places of worship (mosques), hospital boundaries and other public buildings. Several hours ago, the campuses of the Islamic University were targeted by Israeli jet fighters and the reports mentioned the destruction of the student dormitories and other

university buildings.

The Human Rights Committee of the Palestine Academy for Science and Technology strongly condemn the Israeli aggression against the enclosed Gaza Strip and call on the international community and institutions to act swiftly to put an end to the Israeli

military aggression.

Human Rights Committee of the Palestine Academy for Science and Technology
Palestine Academy for Science and Technology,
HRC@Palestineacademy.org



Source: Islamic University website - Gaza

**Statement released From the Office
of the Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University-31 December 2008**

A Statement Regarding the Situation in Gaza

The Bethlehem University community is deeply saddened over the events of the past several days in Gaza – and we are especially concerned for the hundreds of our graduates and their families residing there. On December 28th, Pope Benedict XVI called for an end to the violence in the Holy Land and asked the international community to do everything possible to help the Israelis and Palestinians find a solution to the current conflict. The Pope stated that he is “profoundly saddened by the deaths, the wounded, the material damage, the suffering, and the tears of the peoples [who are] victim to this tragic recurrence of attacks and reprisals.”

The extraordinary and disproportionate amount of bombing carried out by Israel and the vast number of innocent Palestinians dead and injured, not to mention the physical destruction wrought upon the already-oppressed people of Gaza, makes us cry to

Heaven for an immediate ceasefire, that leads to a lasting peace built on justice.

Violence only begets violence, and no one wins. Such a cycle of conflict only brings deeper and more prolonged suffering to all those involved.

Our voices, and our prayers, join with Pope Benedict XVI and all people of good will who demand that this senseless violence end and that every effort be exhausted to resolve the underlying issues that led to this point.

The Bethlehem University community—Christians and Muslims—will gather together on 31 December 2008 to pray for the people of Gaza and for the wisdom and courage to bring forth justice that will lead to lasting peace.

Brother Robert Smith, FSC, PhD
Interim Vice Chancellor

**Statement of the Palestinian European Academic Cooperation
in Education (PEACE) program**

The situation in Gaza

The last days of 2008 and the beginning of 2009 - a time/of good tidings and joy for all and for/hopes/that/the New Year will bring peace, good health/prosperity and freedom to all - saw the sudden worsening of the situation in the Gaza strip. For 18 days now, heavy bombing has resulted in more than 900 dead and thousands of injured victims, almost 30% of them are children. The bombing did not spare the buildings of the Islamic University in Gaza - one of the member - universities/of PEACE.

We have received numerous messages from member universities and from academics, asking PEACE to react to the current situation. We are all deeply saddened by the dangerous course taken

by events and share the feeling of “consternation” expressed by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon regarding the intolerable attacks faced by the people in Gaza. Our thoughts are with all the people of Gaza and in particular with the students, teachers and researchers of the three universities in Gaza.

We join the appeals of the international community for the immediate cessation of violence that brings about so much suffering and can only breed more violence. It is precisely at such moments when we see so much destruction and loss of life that we should not be overwhelmed by frustration and despair, and continue to hope that just PEACE will ultimately prevail in the troubled region.

The PEACE Programme Executive Bureau

Director-General of UNESCO discusses the situation in the Gaza strip and the plans for recovery

On Monday, January 26th, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, the Director-General of UNESCO, gave a live TV interview to Al Jazeera TV Channel regarding the situation in the Gaza Strip.

Mr Matsuura reiterated his great distress at the civilian death toll witnessed during the crisis, and emphasized the need to secure a rapid access to basic goods and educational services for all children and youth in Gaza.

Mr Matsuura also strongly welcomed the proposal made by H.H. Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Missned, First Lady of Qatar and UNESCO Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education, to turn a certain number of schools and educational institutions into safety zones. "I have repeatedly pledged that schools should in no way be involved in military conflicts. This initiative gives us an opportunity to work on ways to protect students, educational personnel and places of learning in times of conflicts, now and in future. As requested by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, UNESCO will work with UNRWA to explore the operationalization of this important initiative".

The Director-General also emphasized UNESCO's full and active engagement in the recovery process led by the United Nations, saying that "UNESCO, through its Ramallah Office, is participating both in the Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) and the Early Recovery Rapid Assessment (ERRA) process. We are making very concrete proposals in order to make education, culture and communication an integral part of the UN response to the Gaza crisis. These are crucial areas for promoting sustainable development, alleviating poverty and building social cohesion and peace. In this regard, I am confident that donors will support the Special Flash Appeal to be launched in Geneva on 2nd February next, especially those projects aimed at the



Source: Islamic University website - Gaza

provision of emergency educational services. Indeed, children and youth represent more than half of the population of Gaza. Getting them back into school can help them recover and bring back a sense of normalcy", said Mr Matsuura.

The Director-General also announced that he would send a UNESCO high-level representative to the donors' Conference, now foreseen in Cairo, Egypt, on 28 February 2009. "This will be the opportunity for UNESCO to present projects within the Early Recovery Strategic Framework (ERSF), covering a diverse range of the Organization's fields of activity", he added.

On 28 January, it was confirmed that a UNESCO Education Specialist would travel to Gaza on Sunday, 1 February as part of the Early Recovery Rapid Assessment (ERRA), in order to collect further data on the situation of secondary and higher education institutions. A UNESCO Culture specialist is also expected to be able to assess very soon the state of conservation of the cultural heritage in the Gaza strip.

Muslim Scholars

YAQUB IBN ISHAQ AL-KINDI

(800-873 AD)

Abu Yousaf Yaqub Ibn Ishaq Al-Kindi was born in Kufa around 800 AD. His father was an official of Haroon Al-Kindi who was a contemporary of Al-Mamun, Al-Mu'tasim and Al-Mutawakkil and flourished mainly in Baghdad. He was formally employed by Al-Mutawakkil as a calligrapher. On account of his philosophical views, Al-Mutawakkil was annoyed with him and confiscated all his books. These, however, were returned later on. He died in 873 AD during the reign of Al-Mu'tamid.

Al-Kindi was a philosopher, mathematician, physicist, astronomer, physician, geographer and even a music expert. It is surprising that he made original contributions to all of these fields and because of his work he became known as the philosopher of the Arabs.

In the field of mathematics, he wrote four books on the numeral system and laid the foundation of a large part to modern Arithmetics. There is no doubt that the Arabic numeral system was mainly developed by Al-Khawarizmi, but Al-Kindi also made substantial contributions to it.

In chemistry, he opposed the idea that base metals could be converted to precious metals. In contrast to the prevailing alchemical views, he was emphatic that chemical reactions could bring about the transformation of elements. In physics, he made a substantial contribution to geometrical optics and wrote a book on that, which later on, provided guidance and inspiration to eminent scientists such as Roger Bacon.

In the field of medicine, his chief contribution comprises the fact that he was the first to systematically determine the administered doses of all the drugs known at his time. This resolved the conflicting views that had prevailed among physicians pertaining to dosages, which was the main reason behind the difficulties faced when writing recipes.

During his time, very little was known regarding the scientific aspects of music. He pointed out that the various notes that combine to produce harmony each have a specific pitch. Thus,

he deduced that notes with too low or too high a pitch were unpleasant and that the degree of harmony depended on the frequency of notes, etc. He also

pointed out the fact that when a sound is produced, it generates waves in the air which strike the ear-drum.

He was also a prolific writer: the total number of books written by him was 241, the prominent among which were divided as follows: Astronomy 16, Arithmetic 11, Geometry 32, Medicine 22, Physics 12, Philosophy 22, Logic 9, Psychology 5, and Music 7. In addition, various monographs were written by him concerning tides, astronomical instruments, rocks, precious stones, etc. He was also an early translator of Greek works into Arabic, but this has been largely over-shadowed by his numerous original writings. It is unfortunate that majority of his books are no longer in existence, but those that had survived speak very highly of his standard of scholarship and the extent of his contributions. He was known as Alkindus in Latin and a large number of his books were translated into Latin by Gherard of Cremona during the Middle Ages including *Risalat Dar Tanjim*, *Ikhtiyarat al-Ayyam*, *Ilahyate-e-Aristu*, *al-Mosiqqa*, *Mad-Wa-Jazr*, and *Adwiya Murakkaba*.

Al-Kindi's influence on the development of science and philosophy was significant in the revival of sciences during that period, which led him to be considered as one of the twelve greatest minds in the Middle Ages by Cardano. His works, in fact, had furthered the development of various subjects for centuries, notably in the fields of physics, mathematics, medicine and music.



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