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Ramallah Office

PRESS RELEASE

2019/7

Ramallah, 2 July 2019

Education partners in Palestine renew their commitment to the education sector by signing the Partnership Principles at the Education Sector Working Group



Ramallah, 2 July 2019 – Today the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) took place at the Ministry of Education in Ramallah. The ESWG is a national platform on education, chaired by the Ministry of Education, with Finland as deputy chair and UNESCO as the technical advisor. The Working Group gathers the main international and national education stakeholders in Palestine to discuss developments and challenges in the education sector in Palestine. Today was the first ESWG meeting since the appointment of Dr. Marwan Awartani as the Minister of Education and Dr. Mahmoud Abu Mous as the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

During the event, the Palestinian Authority and national and international development partners confirmed their commitment towards the Palestinian Education sector and Education 2030 Agenda through signing the Partnership principles on the coordination and harmonization of the support to the Education Sector. The Partnership Principles are developed in line with the Palestinian National Policy Agenda (NPA) 2017-2022 and the Education Sector Strategic Plan, and further outline the roles and responsibilities in view of reaching quality education for all Palestinians.

The Minister of Education Dr. Marwan Awartani stated that the *ESWG is an incredible example of national and international partnerships* and underlined his commitment within the framework of the National Policy Agenda and the Education Sector Strategy to focus on



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TVET and inclusive and quality education, especially in marginalized area's, but also on the school environment, governance and monitoring and evaluation. The Minister also underlined that partnerships will be one of the key strategic orientations of the Ministry, advocating for *increased involvement of student councils, parents, civil society, private sector and other governmental institutions.*

The Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Mahmoud Abu Mouis emphasized that now with the separation of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education *there will be increased focus on priorities of each sector while guaranteeing complete integration of both institutions.* He further stated that the Ministry will focus on core access to higher education and scientific research, technical education linked to the labour market needs, scientific research and academic exchange and innovative and entrepreneurial projects.

On behalf of UNESCO Ramallah Office, Dr. Tap Raj Pant, Education Programme Specialist and Head of Education Unit, mentioned that *despite all the barriers to education, we should be proud of all the achievements that the Palestinian Education system can put on record and that he was impressed to see Palestine's indicators prepared within the 2019 GEMR entitled "Migration, Displacement and Education: Building Bridges, Not Walls, that show progress towards SDG 4 in Palestine".* Dr. Pant further stated that *the Education Sector Partnership Principles that all key development partners are contributing to will further ensure our renewed commitment to strengthen the education sector and the right to education for all in Palestine.*

Ms. Anna-Kaisa Heikkinen, Ambassador at the Representative Office of Finland and speaking as the deputy-chair and on behalf of the Joint Financing Partners, emphasized the many achievements of the Education Sector in the past years, but also highlighted points of improvement such as the challenging financial situation which calls for additional resource mobilization and improved coordination among partners. She further stated that the signature of the Partnership Principles *are a milestone setting a clear framework for continued partnership.*

After the signing of the Partnership Principles, the Deputy Minister of Education, Dr. Basri Saleh, presented the priorities of the new scholastic year 2019-2020, followed by an UNRWA presentation on the opening of the school year.

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