



United Nations
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
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Ramallah Office

PRESS RELEASE

2019/10

Ramallah, 5 September 2019

Celebration of the establishment of a UNESCO Chair on sustainable water resources management in Palestine



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Nablus, 5 September 2019 – Today the launch ceremony took place to celebrate the establishment of a UNESCO Chair on sustainable water resources management between UNESCO and An-Najah University in Nablus within the framework of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme. This programme provides mechanisms for higher education institutions to participate in UNESCO's activities in the Chairs' areas of expertise, including UNESCO's work on hydrology and water resources, which is the key focus of this particular chair.

Mr. Junaid Sorosh-Wali, Officer-in-Charge, Head of Office, at UNESCO Ramallah Office congratulated the president of An-Najah University for now managing two UNESCO Chairs, along with the Chair on Human Rights and Democracy, and further emphasized that UNESCO chairs *can play pivotal roles in each of their diverse disciplines, such as enhancing scientific research and programme development in designated academic fields, build connections with the local and global academic community and foster links with the civil society organizations including universities around the world.* He further stated that the establishment of this chair *will further cement the role of academic institutions in supporting sustainable development in Palestine, and providing a national forum for academic engagement with policy and practice through coordination, training and capacity building, and scientific research aiming to address the many critical challenges facing the water sector in Palestine.*



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Dr. Maher Alnatsheah, President of An-Najah University mentioned in his opening remarks that *today's celebration is distinguished at the local and international levels, and An-Najah University has supported national activities in various fields and within the available resources.*

Dr. Ali Zidan Abu Zuhri, President of the Palestinian National Commission for UNESCO stated that *the launch of the UNESCO Water Chair comes in line with the Sustainable Development Goal 6, which ensures the availability of water and sanitation services to all.* He further mentioned that in light of the major challenges facing the world in terms of water resources *this requires hard work towards adopting the best regional, international and national practices in sustainable management.*

This was further reiterated by the President of the Water Authority, Minister Mazen Ghneim who, while thanking UNESCO, talked about the role of the Water Authority in obtaining the UNESCO Water Chair in Palestine, *which is part of the Water Authority's continuous endeavor to cooperate with all partners in order to promote the sector and to improve its services in a way that achieves sustainability and justice, the main pillars to achieve our goals in responding to the needs of the citizen.*

During the event, Dr. Anan, the UNESCO Chair holder gave a brief presentation on the new roles and responsibilities of the UNESCO Water Chair with a proposed action plan.

Since 1992 the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme involves over 700 institutions in 116 countries and promotes cooperation between universities worldwide and a specialized network that improves capacities through the sharing of knowledge and collaboration, especially in UNESCO's fields of competence such as education, natural and social sciences, culture and communication.

In Palestine, three UNESCO chairs have been already established already, namely at the Islamic University in association with Al-Aqsa and Al Azhar University on Astronomy, Astrophysics and Space Sciences; An Najah National University on Human Rights and Democracy and Birzeit University in Mathematics and Theoretical Physics.

For more information on UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme, please visit <https://en.unesco.org/unitwin-unesco-chairs-programme>

For more information on UNESCO's activities in Palestine, please visit www.unesco.org/ramallah and visit us on : [Unesco Ramallah Office](#)