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Association of Palestinian Local Authorities

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APLA and ICMA Launch a Strategic Affiliation Agreement

The Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) has become the first Arabic association to sign an affiliation agreement with International City/County Management Association (ICMA). Opening the doors before Palestinian city managers to exchange experiences and learn from their peers around the world, and to join ICMA.

The agreement signage took place at the annual ICMA conference convened in Baltimore, United States. APLA's Executive Director Eng. Abdallah Anati signed with ICMA's Executive Director Marc Ott over a video conference.

Eng. Anati stated that the agreement allows APLA to access ICMA library, which is considered to be one of the biggest libraries worldwide with its rich content related to Local Governance and City Management. Clarifying that this will contribute to achieving APLA's goal in activating City Manager position in all the Palestinian Local Government Units, as well as building their capacities by participating in the International Management Exchange Program (IMEP), this consists of exchanging visits to expand their horizons by collaborating with their colleagues from around the world. Eng. Anati also added that the agreement coincides with a new

phase APLA is witnessing which is establishing the Palestinian City Managers Network (PCMN) driven by APLA, and aims to present and unite them, collaborate with them to form policies, and enhance their capacities.

On his part, ICMA Executive Director Mr. Marc Ott renewed his commitment to providing all available resources to serve APLA and to provide the needed technical help in establishing the PCMN according to APLA's plan to enhance City Managers capabilities.



APLA and iSKi Sign a Memorandum of Understanding in Istanbul

The Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) and Istanbul Water and Sewerage Administration (iSKi) has signed a three-years Memorandum of Understanding in Istanbul that intensifies a closer relationship and cooperation among them. The MoU was signed by the two institutions, at the 'Waterist Istanbul Water Congress and Fair' which was conducted for the first time at Istanbul City of Turkey.



APLA Executive Director Eng. Abdallah Anati who signed the contract on behalf of the Association stated that APLA's efforts to sign the MoU came after a successful training program held last May in Istanbul, and specialized in the sector of water and sanitation. Confirming that the MoU will guarantee a bigger municipal participation in such trainings, which aims to expand knowledge among the highest possible number of the Palestinian LGUs.

On his behalf iSKi General Director Mr. Faith Turan who signed on behalf of iSKi, renewed his commitment to providing all available capabilities for APLA, as well as, providing the needed technical help related to water and sanitation fields, thus, leading to improved capacities and efficiencies for those working at the Palestinian Municipalities.

Administrative Committee Discusses APLA's draft Strategic Plan for Years 2019-2022



The Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) conducted a workshop in partnership with the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) and funded by the European Union (EU), to discuss APLA's initial strategic plan draft set for the years 2019 till 2022. In the presence of APLA's President Eng. Mousa Hadid, Executive Director Eng. Abdallah Anati and members of its Administrative Committee accompanied with VNG's Director in Palestine Nasser Al-Sheikh Ali. The workshop came in light of implementing APLA's methodology in the preparation of the plan by expanding the consultation efforts to launch a completed strategic plan.

APLA's President Eng. Mousa Hadid identified the importance of future planning, taking into account studying the reality of Local Government Units in Palestine in developing a comprehensive strategic plan that is consistent with the needs of the Government Sector in Palestine. Also stressing on the importance of institutional work under clear regulations and an accurate work map, saying that this phase will act as a solid foundation to start implementing APLA's work plan and achieving the desired objectives through the participation of all stakeholders.

The strategic planning expert Dr. Khaled Rajab presented a detailed display of the initial drafted strategic plan, starting with APLA's historical background, how to link the national policies agenda with the SDGs, the methodology followed in preparing the plan, stakeholders contextual analysis, and ending it with forming the vision, mission, setting the general and specific goals. In addition to, proposing the strategic priorities and the new proposed structure of the Executive Office.

On the other hand, APLA's Administrative Committee members expressed their pride of APLA's accomplishments lately, stressing the importance of the strategic plan in identifying APLA's agenda which will enhance the contribution of LGUs and development processes, through empowering APLA as an advocates for the LGUs' rights, and represents them at national, regional and international levels. Other aspects of the plan were discussed thoroughly by the attendees, introducing their notes and interventions in which they highlighted the importance of declaring APLA's independence and identity, as this will be the first strategic plan issued by APLA since its inception.

It is worth mentioning that this workshop is among a series of other workshops intended to discuss APLA's strategic plan, based on the EU project "The Area C Resilience Development Initiative" in Palestine, executed by APLA in cooperation with VNG and largely funded by EU.



APLA and World Bank Convene a Meeting with Local Authorities mayors

Within the Local Government Reform and Development project in Palestine, the World Bank in cooperation with the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) have arranged a meeting to Local Authorities Mayors aiming to explore their opinions, positions and points of view regarding the matters of Reforming the Local Government Sector.

The World Bank Representatives displayed the main outcomes they've reached through an analytical study for the core aspects needing reforming and improvement in the Local Governance Sector in Palestine.

The purpose of the meeting was to review and improve the Local Government Reform and Development Program plan and promoting the role of Local Authorities, the Ministry of Local Government and various institutions associated with forming policies that will enhance the sector position.

The participants also discussed many issues especially those related to outstanding financial issues such as transport fees transfers, property and income tax, and some issues related to the Local Authorities functional duties.

APLA's Administrative and Executive Committees Meetings



The Association of Palestinian Local Authorities continued convening extensive meetings for both the Executive and Administrative Committees, as well as meeting with the Local Government Units, in which they have discussed the main issues related to LGUs and the Local Government Sector, along with APLA's programs, plans, and activities.

APLA has decided to form specialized committees derived from the Administrative Committee members to follow up on the issues on its agenda. Therefore, it has formed a Financial Committee that follows up with all financial issues related to APLA, as well as, forming the Policy Committee that handles reviewing laws and regulations, and the observations and comments received from the LGUs on the preparation of a consolidated position paper to be followed up with the relevant parties, in addition to forming, a Local Relations Committee which is assigned to conduct field visits to LGUs within a structured program involving as many LGUs as possible.

Both the Executive and Administrative Committees have allocated an important part of their agenda to discuss the laws and regulations pertaining to the Local Government Sector in Palestine,

which included LGUs Staff Bylaw, the new law related to "LGUs' courts", the local tax bylaw, the "Slaughterhouses Bylaw in LGUs areas", the Social Security Law, Financial System Bylaw, and the proposed Bylaw which regulates the admission of LGUs staff to the Social Security Law, along with other rules related to LGUs work. APLA, through its meetings, stressed on rejecting the Ministry of Finance procedures in general, and the Income Tax Department in particular, for the obstacles these procedures cause to LGUs, Requesting to completely exempt LGUs from the income tax due to the specialty and nature of their work, which is solely based on providing services to citizens on behalf of the Central Government. In addition to, the Ministry of Finance commitment to transfer LGUs receivables on time without any delay.

APLA also focused on ensuring the participants of all Palestinian LGUs in its decisions, therefore, the Executive Committee Members have arranged several meetings for LGUs in all Governorates to inform them of all updates related to APLA's work, especially with the current preparations occurring in each Governorate amid the arrangements of conducting APLA's General Assembly meeting.

Both the Executive and Administrative Committees have discussed the highlights of APLA's strategic plan draft set for the years 2019-2022. Stressing the importance of focusing on supporting LGUs to develop their performance and efficiency, and promote APLA's role as an advocate on behalf of LGUs, and its role in the policy reform in partnership and cooperation with various parties.

Regarding APLA's external relations, it has approved the executive work plan outline for the signed agreement with the International City Managers Association (ICMA), in addition to, the Memorandum of Agreement (MoU) signed with Istanbul Water and Sewerage Administration (ISKI). APLA decided to initiate discussion with its Turkish counterpart to sign the (MOU) based on the results of APLA's Executive Director visit to the Turkish Municipalities.

Against the Backdrop of the Attack on the Mayor of Bethlehem:

APLA Holds an Urgent Meeting with the Police General Directorate

The Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) President Eng. Mousa Hadid and Major General Hazem Attallah held an emergency meeting at the Police General Directorate headquarters in Ramallah, against the physical assault on the Mayor of Bethlehem Adv. Anton Salman by a citizen while performing his municipal duties.

President Hadid requested the Security Services to take legal measures and deterrent the aggressor and those who infringe the law and the municipal work system, and their role in building institutions that serve citizens and protect their rights.

Major General Hazem Attallah expressed the police readiness to provide all forms of support to the municipalities in carrying out their work within the law's framework, especially those relating to organizing the roads, facilitating citizens movement, and confronting any attacks that may affect these LGUs, as well as, referring violators to the judiciary.

APLA Looking to Expand The Horizons by Cooperating with ICMA



The Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) Welcomed a delegation from International City/ County Manager Association (ICMA), The delegation included David Johnstone (ICMA President), Marc Ott (ICMA Executive Director), Frans Mencke (ICMA Vice President in Europe), and Harleen Kovala (ICMA Business Development Manager), to better understand the Palestinian local government scene on the ground and explore opportunities for future collaboration with APLA.

During the first conducted meeting between APLA and ICMA, APLA's President Eng. Mousa Hadid touched on the various challenges and obstacles facing Palestinian Local Authorities, and the challenges that limit its work, on the other hand, APLA's Executive Director Eng. Abdallah Anati has presented the joint cooperation prospects which APLA seeks to achieve through partnering and cooperating with ICMA, and its plan to build a Palestinian City Managers Network (PCMN). ICMA President David Johnstone on his side has welcomed joining Palestine in establishing the network, offering his willingness to provide the needed help in fields related to city management.

During their two-day visit, the delegation has attended a series of meetings, including a meeting with his Excellency Dr. Hussain Al-Araj, Minister of Local Government of the Palestinian Authority, APLA also convened a meeting for the visiting delegation with a group of Palestinian City Managers who showed their readiness and eagerness in joining ICMA.

In this context, APLA's Executive Director Eng. Anati stated that the main goal of this visit came as a result of APLA's plan to develop a Palestinian City Managers Network, in order to represent and unify them, involve them in forming policies. On his part, ICMA Executive Director Marc Ott affirmed ICMA commitment in providing the needed technical help to build PMCN according to APLA's plan.

APLA also arranged field visits for the delegation, which included visiting Ramallah Municipality and exploring its departments and divisions. ICMA delegation also had the chance to visit Nablus Municipality and meet its Mayor Eng. Adily Yaesh who, on his part, demonstrated a number of ideas and suggestions summing the municipality efforts to improve the level of services provided to citizens. Their visit to Nablus also included visiting the western wastewater treatment plant to have a better understanding of the station functionality and the projects assigned to it.



APLA Hosts a Spanish Municipal Delegation



The Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) welcomed a number of the Spanish Municipal representatives to participate in promoting the Spanish institutional solidarity with the Palestinian people which was organized by the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement (BDS).

APLA's President Eng. Mousa Hadid expressed his gratitude for the Spanish delegation visit and highlighted the importance of supporting the Palestinian international community at this stage, stressing on the need to strengthen and activate solidarity with the Palestinian people and providing all possible support.

Technical Hubs



The Engineering Hub: "Traffic Crisis" Workshop



The Planning Hub: "Strategic development communications: fundraising mechanisms and formation of new collaborations" Workshop



Organized by PMDP and in partnership with APLA, World Bank, and the Ministries of Economics, Health, and the Local Government. A series of training courses were concluded in various Palestinian Governorates, on "Economic Activities Licensing" according to the Crafts and Industries law



During a workshop held in Jericho, within the Palestinian-German municipal partnership project and in cooperation with APLA and GIZ's Local Governance Reform Program, in the presence of members responsible of "Partnership Projects for Sustainable Local Development (NAKOPA)" from the Service Agency Communities in One World 'SKEW' at the Engagement Global.

APLA and the Belgium Development Agency Discuss Mutual Cooperation



The Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) President Eng. Mousa Hadid sought the joint cooperation with the Belgium Development Agency (Enabel), occurred at the conducted meeting with the Belgium delegation at APLA headquarters. The meeting included the Expert in institutional Development and Governance in Palestine Olivier Donnet, ARD Initiative Coordinator Oday Al Ja'bari, and Development of Local Government Sector Program Consultant Bashir Al Bargouthy, in the presence of APLA's Executive Director Eng. Abdallah Anati.

Eng. Hadid called for strengthening the cooperation between the two associations, to provide international programs that align with the Palestinian national goals and priorities.

Program Director Olivier Donnet demonstrated the focal partnerships and chances of available cooperation between the two parties, which aims to serve the Local Government Sector and improve LGUs capability to provide better services for citizens.

APLA's President Welcomes Bani Na'im Mayor

The Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) President Eng. Mousa Hadid and Executive Director Eng. Abdallah Anati, hosted Bani Na'im Mayor Ali Manasra and Director of Public Relations Imad Amro at APLA's headquarters in Ramallah, to discuss the possibilities of empowering APLA's role and the services provided for its members.

Eng. Hadid presented APLA's continuous efforts to regulate the relationship among the Local Government Units and the police nationwide. Also, He viewed APLA's vision regarding their ties with various local and international parties and its future plans to strengthen the relationship of LGUs and its peers worldwide. On his part, Bani Na'im Mayor expressed his appreciation of APLA's constructive role in promoting the Palestinian LGUs, throughout

advocating their rights, representing them on a national, regional and international level and creating new collaboration opportunities with its regional and international peers.



Meetings & Participations



APLA's Financial Committee Meeting



During the Policy Committee meeting, in which many laws and regulations related to the Local Government in Palestine were discussed



Meeting of APLA's Executive Director Eng. Abdallah Anati with his counterpart from VNG International Mr. Peter Knip and VNGI Director in Palestine Mr. Nasser Al-Shaikh Ali, and Miriam Collaris and Jarik Stollenga from VNGI



During the Meeting with the European Union (EU) and VNG representatives



During APLA's meeting with the United Cities and Local Government Middle East and West Asia (UCLG-MEWA) in Istanbul



In order to activate partnerships and seek prospects for a joint cooperation, APLA's Executive Director met with the Turkish Union of Municipalities in Ankara



Meeting with Ankara Municipality to enhance collaboration between the Palestinian LGUs and its Turkish counterpart



During the participation of APLA's President Eng. Mousa Hadid in the meeting of the United Cities and Local Government (UCLG) and the II World Forum Against Violence in Madrid, as the Co-President of (UCLG-MEWA), presenting its strategic priorities and key activities