



Press release
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The European Union provides EUR 18 million to build a new Waste Water Treatment Plant in Tubas

In the presence of Prime Minister Dr. Rami AlHamallah, the European Union and the Palestinian Water Authority signed in Ramallah today an €18 million agreement to construct a wastewater treatment plant and install an irrigation scheme in Tubas Governorate. This large-scale project will serve around 34,000 people living in Tubas, Tayasir, and Aqqaba. It will also provide treated water for agricultural use for farmers in the Governorate that relies significantly on agriculture.

This project includes the construction of a wastewater treatment plant with a capacity of 4300 m³ per day and a wastewater collection network covering 53 km (with 13 km of house connections). It also includes the installation of an irrigation infrastructure with a pumping station, two steel reservoirs of 1,000 cubic meters, and 4.3 km of distribution pipes.

Currently, there is no any sewage network in the area and the wastewater from Tubas area flows untreated into the environment reaching agricultural areas and surrounding villages either through the cesspits and/or vacuum trucks. By helping to build the new collection and plant, this project will significantly reduce health risks for the population of Tubas and contamination of the environment. It will also allow the re-use of treated wastewater in agriculture hence conserving limited groundwater resources in Palestine.

In his speech at the signing ceremony, the Head of the Palestinian Water Authority **Minister Mazen Ghunaim** said: "*Untreated wastewater remains a major challenge in Palestine and has serious implications on health, environment, and agriculture. This project will significantly reduce health risks for the population of North Tubas Governorate and the contamination of the environment. It will also allow the re-use of treated wastewater in agriculture hence conserving the limited groundwater resources in Palestine*". The Minister thanked the European Union for the technical and financial support for this project, and acknowledged the work done by the Palestinian Water Authority team and to all who has contributed to the success of this project.

"Access to water is a basic human right. And yet Palestinians cope with one of the lowest levels per capita water resource availability in the region. In rural areas, the impact of water shortages and poor sanitation services are particularly severe. For its part the EU considers water and sanitation as priority sectors within its overall financial assistance to the Palestinian people", said the **Deputy EU Representative, David Geer** at the signing ceremony. "*Failure to develop adequate wastewater treatment infrastructure has in turn led to pollution of fresh water resources in the*

West Bank. Treatment facilities such as the one in Tubas will help improve the health and living conditions of ordinary Palestinians, and support farmers working to develop their land. "

Background:

The EU is a major actor in water and environmental protection in Palestine. Since 2008 it has invested nearly €95 million in the water and sanitation and solid waste management sectors. In the West Bank, apart from Tubas, the EU is supporting the development of wastewater treatment plants in particular areas where water supply is scarce, such as Hebron and Nablus. In Gaza, the EU is investing both in large-scale solid waste management programmes and also in medium-scale projects with high impact, such as the construction of a desalination facility that will provide safe water to thousands of Gazans.

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