



Press Release

Ramallah
27 February 2012

Prime Minister Fayyad announces the launch of a new EU-funded program to maximize Palestinian exports

The Ministry of National Economy in partnership with the Palestine Trade Center (PalTrade) and the Palestinian Shippers' Council celebrated today the launching of the €3 million Trade Diversification, Competitiveness Enhancement Program funded by the European Union.

The official launching ceremony was held at the Mövenpick Hotel in Ramallah and was attended by H.E. Prime Minister Dr. Salam Fayyad, Dr. Abdel Hafiz Nofal, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of National Economy, Mr. John Gatt Rutter, Representative of the European Union, Mr. Araft Asfour, Chairman of PalTrade, and Mrs. Maha Abu Shoshah, Chairwoman of the Palestinian Shippers' Council, in addition to representatives from the public and private sectors, international organizations, the media, civil society, and academia.

"The private-sector development is one of the focal sectors that the EU has set for 2012 in an effort to promote a sustainable, job-creating economic environment" said John Gatt-Rutter, the EU Representative. "A comprehensive package will be implemented to support private sector in reaching new markets and developing their marketing strategies. Businesses in the services sector in Palestine will be targeted mainly through advice and technical support in an effort to assist them realise their export potential. For this project to fully deliver its results, specifically under the National Export Strategy and the Trade Facilitation components, Israel has a major responsibility for ensuring access and movement and facilitating Palestinian Trade", Mr. John Gatt-Rutter added.

The Trade Diversification, Competitiveness Enhancement Program aims to maximize exports' direct contribution to economic growth and social development. This will happen through enhancing the competitiveness and increasing the volume of exports for Palestinian goods and services.

The program consists of three major components: the Trade Corridors Facilitation promotes the use of alternative trade corridors for Palestinian trade through neighbouring Arab countries; improving market access via alternative routes will act as a substitute to the high costs of the Israeli routes. Moreover, a National Export Strategy will be developed to respond to the need of improving international competitiveness and enhancing a trade enabling environment in Palestine. Finally the Trade in Services component will support and develop the services sector within the Palestinian economy.

At the closing of the ceremony, Mrs. Hanan Taha, CEO of PalTrade, presented the goals, objectives, strategy, and main activities which will be implemented under each component of the newly established program.

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