



## **Through Children's Eyes: Mobile Theatre takes to Bethlehem, Ramallah, Hebron and Jericho**

The European Union's Partnership for Peace Programme made use of the innovative form of educational theatrics to target hundreds of Palestinian children in four Governorates of the West Bank. Aptly named 'Through the Children's Eyes', the activity is geared to students between the 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grades, taking place in cooperation with the Safar Theatre, local municipalities and village councils.

The events included a performance of the play "O Hearers of the Sound", which aims to educate children about the importance of dialogue and democracy, reconciliation and non-violence.

Cooperating organizations and institutions have expressed the vital role the European Union has played in terms of society development, environmental stability, civil peace, dialogue and democracy.

Principal of the Lutheran School, Michael Abu Ghazaleh, has stressed the importance of such activities for students. "It is vital to explore cultural norms for the development of any society- especially the Palestinian society- which suffers from oppression, repression, and siege," he said.

Wi'am Erekat, Director of Public Relations for Jericho Municipality, noted that EU support has been ongoing for the Palestinian government, society, and institutes. Erekat has also stated that "O Hearers of the Sound" fulfills the EU's efforts by reaching different and diverse groups in Palestinian society, while strongly encouraging the EU to sponsor such initiatives for youth support.

The Director of Happiness of Childhood Center in Hebron, Mahmud Sbeah, thanked the EU for its activities involving school students in Hebron. Moreover, the principal of Talita Kumi School praised the EU and their efforts in implementing this efficient and effective activity that focuses on values at a time that is unfortunately tainted by violence.

After each upcoming performance, students involved will provide interpretations of the play in their own words and drawings. The student's thoughts will be collected in a small booklet along with the play's script, photos of the activity, and a brief about the EU Partnership for Peace programme. This will then in turn be distributed to Palestinian schools.

This activity is the first of its kind, and it will reach many students in private and public schools. "Through Children's Eyes" aims to familiarize the public at large with the concepts of diversity,

understanding, negotiation, dialogue and democracy. It also aims to encourage youth and women to participate in society, economy and politics.

The EU "Partnership for Peace Programme" supports initiatives in areas which are likely to have a direct impact on people's everyday lives and welfare, including practical activities to promote confidence in a shared future. Projects include developing conflict management skills and educating communities about the mutual benefits of resolving disputes and promoting peace. The programme also seeks to strengthen and increase direct civil society relationships and cooperation, based on equality and reciprocity between Israelis, Palestinians and other Arabs.