



PRESS RELEASE

The German Development Bank (KfW) and the UNDP/PAPP help the Old City of Hebron regain its pride

Jerusalem, 8th February 2005 – As part of their rigorous effort to combat the rising levels of poverty and unemployment, and preserve cultural heritage in the oPt, the German Government through the German Development Bank (KfW) has supported the Hebron House Restoration Project through a grant of over **US\$1.6 million**.

An inauguration of the completed housing financed by the KfW took place in the Old City on 8 February. It was attended by the head of the German Representative Office, Mr. Miguel Berger, representatives of the KfW, a number of German Parliamentarians and senior representatives of the Palestinian Authority, the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee and the Hebron Municipality participated in the inauguration ceremony.

The United Nations Development Programme/ Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP) Carried out in partnership with the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee, the rehabilitation and restoration of historical building and homes in the old city of Hebron. German funding provided to the HRC enabled an extensive labor intensive programme which was a success on three levels: protecting cultural and architectural heritage, providing employment in a poverty stricken area, and addressing the urgent housing needs of the most marginalized in Hebron. Within this generous donation, 15 individual buildings or group of buildings were restored. Other Old City buildings have also been restored with financing from other sources.

“Our key concern is to preserve Hebron as a historic centre, a living city,” explains HRC chair Mr. Khaled Qawasme. “We want to convince people to live in these buildings once again and to take pleasure from the common living that traditional housing designs encourage”.

During the project, the needs of each building are addressed, sometimes rebuilding rooms if another room is needed, at other times, preserve a ruined element as it is. The buildings are now secured structurally, repainted, plastered, rebuilt in parts, and fitted with the necessary infrastructure. The project also included works on some internal roads, placing infrastructure and retiling. Even though the fear of settler attacks still exists, 96 of the families who own these buildings have moved back in, and 143 local families have already rented some of the apartments.

“GERMAN QUOTE.....”



"We are very grateful to KfW for their generous support and the selection of the UNDP/PAPP as a partner in the implementation of this important programme", said Mr. Timothy Rothermel, the Special Representative of the UNDP/PAPP. "The project will help reinstall a sense of pride in people's ancestry and city history".

The project made an impact on the unemployment situation, creating over 25,740 working days for laborers. There is still more work to be done in the Old City, but the German grant has helped the Old City in regaining its pride, and addressing inadequate housing at the same time.

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