



Press Release
Under the Auspices of President Mahmoud Abbas
Palestinian Authority, Chinese Government, and UNDP sign Ministry of Foreign Affairs
New Office Building Agreement

Ramallah, October 4th, 2008- Under the auspices of H.E. President Mahmoud Abbas, H.E. Dr. Riyad Al Malki, Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Yang Weiguo, Chinese Representative to the oPt, and Mr. Jens Toyberg-Frandzen, UNDP/PAPP Special Representative of the Administrator signed an agreement on October 4th, 2008 at the Presidents Office in Ramallah to construct the new office building of the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The ceremony was followed by laying the corner stone of the building west of Ramallah's Cultural Palace.

In his speech, H.E. President Mahmoud Abbas emphasized that this project "is a symbol of the persistence and dedication we promised two years ago to the development of the Palestinian people". "I would like to thank the People's Republic of China for their support for more than forty years and UNDP/PAPP for its work and implementation of many projects in the oPt with efficiency and transparency", he added.

The Project is funded by the People's Republic of China, at a total grant of US\$4,160,000, and implemented by UNDP/PAPP, in cooperation with the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs who is allocating the land and carrying out site removing works. The new office building is to be a six story building over a total area of 6000sqm in the city of Ramallah.

The purpose of the project is to provide office facilities for the Ministry, which will adequately support its needs in terms of accommodating approximately 400 Officials for daily office functions, meeting and conference facilities, waiting areas for diplomats and other visitors, and obviating the cost to the Palestinian Authority arising from office rental, as is the case now.

H.E. Dr. Riyad Al Malki, Minister of Foreign Affairs, expressed his sincere appreciation to the People's Republic of China for their support to the development of the occupied Palestinian territory towards statehood and independence. He continued by thanking the municipality and residents of Ramallah for donating the land on which the project will be constructed.

"This grant is part of the People's Republic of China's programme to support developing countries and is the first of its kind with UNDP/PAPP in the occupied Palestinian territory" said H.E. Yang Weiguo, Chinese Representative to the oPt. "This reflects the commitment of all parties concerned in implementing this pioneering project, encouraging further funding and cooperation between UNDP and the People's Republic of China in support of the Palestinian people", he added.

"I take this opportunity to extend a note of gratitude to the People's Republic of China for their financial and technical contribution – and trust in UNDP" Said Mr. Toyberg-Frandzen. "We hope that this new building will respond well to the needs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and offer an appropriate environment to provide services beneficial to foreign delegates and guests as well as bring together the expertise of different national players to facilitate the formulation of coherent policies." he added.

The project will begin upon signing of the Agreement and is scheduled for completion in 2010.

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