

## Welcome to new counterparts

Before the beginning of the Holy Month of Ramadan some significant changes took place within the Palestinian political landscape. Following the appointment of a new Prime Minister, President Mahmoud Abbas resolved to rotate the ministers of the Interior and Justice. Both ministries are crucial counterparts to the Mission in exertion of its Mandate and there is a frequent and solid relationship at the strategic level between the Mission's Senior Management and the executive level of both ministries.

I am very pleased to congratulate the new Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, H.E. Mohammad Shtayyeh and the new Minister of Justice, H.E. Mohammad Shalaldeh on taking office. The Mission looks forward to continuing the excellent working relationship with both ministries as part of the European Union's unrelenting support to the Palestinian Authority's endeavor to build the institutions of the future state.

Additionally, the Palestinian Attorney General and the Head of the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission have been rotated. The offices of these important counterparts have been taken by Attorney General Akram Al-Khatib and Commissioner Ahmad Barrak, who I also congratulate warmly.

This month, Ramadan is being celebrated across Palestine and the Muslim world. I take this occasion to wish our counterparts and all Palestinians the blessings of the Holy Month – Ramadan Mubarak.

The Palestinian justice sector join forces

## Moving to strategically based communication



Reem Awadallah works with communications in the Ministry of Justice. Together with colleagues from other justice institutions, she joined the four month long 'Communication Strategy' training and coaching programme organized by EUPOL COPPS.

**For the past months, the Mission's Press and Public Information Office has been in lead of a training and coaching programme aiming to capacitate communication practitioners from the three major Palestinian judicial institutions in order to develop and draft communication strategies.**

"So far we never had a communication strategy. The strategy I am presenting today, is the first of its kind in the Ministry of Justice", explained Reem Awadallah in one of the final workshops before completion of the programme in June.

Ms Awadallah is part of a six member strong media and communications team from the Palestinian Ministry of Justice.

In addition, teams from the Attorney General's Office and the High Judicial Council have followed the programme to prepare communication strategies for their institutions.

During the drafting process, the teams have been working closely with their senior managers to ensure buy-in at the highest level as the new strategies were refined and finalized. ➔

### Supporting the overarching institutional strategies

“It has been crucial for us to ensure that the three communication strategies directly support the institutions and contribute to the accomplishment of their overarching strategies. We have therefore walked the participants through a logic and structured process leading them to a state where they are able to deliver a communication strategy ready to plug in, launch and implement”, says Press Officer Mohammad Al-Saadi, who has been managing the project on behalf of the Mission.

### Professionalism and genuine commitment

“We have conducted joint sessions, where all 10 participants have worked together. To address individual needs, we also organized specific sessions for each institution, where issues and challenges relating to their particular situation were resolved. In both instances, the professionalism and genuine commitment of our Palestinian counterparts has been highly rewarding. Not only for the Mission as organizer, but for the process”, explains Press and Public Information Officer Hasse Resenbro.

### A tool to increase public trust in the judicial sector

For the first time ever, the three judicial institutions have developed and finalized their own communications strategies. In this respect the programme has already proved successful. In addition, the entire judicial sector will benefit from the uniform method-



“CITIZENS FIRST is a priority across the Palestinian justice sector. Once our communication strategy is finalized, it will play an indispensable role in the efforts of the Attorney General's Offices' to communicate our services and how they are delivered to the broader Palestinian public”, explained Rasha Nabhan during one of the workshops.

ology and principles used in the programme. This will enhance understanding and future joint communication efforts between the institutions.

The completion of the strategies is a milestone in the sector's efforts to advance its communication with the Palestinian public. When the strategies are successfully implemented, citizens will better understand the role, activities and service delivery of the institutions, and ultimately this will result in increased public trust and a more positive image.



Coach and trainer Anu Virtanen (top left) with the Mission's Press Officer Mohammad Al-Saadi behind Ministerial Legal and Administration Expert Lennart Gune and Ministerial Strategic and Policy Expert Anders Cedhagen from the Mission's Rule of Law Section during one of the final workshops in May 2019.

### PROGRAMME FACTS

- **Name:** Strengthening the Strategic Communication skills of media and communication professionals within the Palestinian Justice Institutions
- **No. of participants:** 10 (6 from the Ministry of Justice, 2 from the Attorney General's Office and 2 from the High Judicial Council)
- **Gender split:** ♀: 4, ♂: 6
- **Duration:** March to June 2019
- **No. of workshops:** 10
- **Homework:** Yes.





*During most of his tenure, Kristjan Paemurru has been embedded into the Information and Communications Technology Unit of the Palestinian Civil Police where he had his office and daily work.*

After 10 years in Palestine

## Estonian IT expert leaves behind an effective communications network

**When Kristjan Paemurru joined EUPOL COPPS in late 2007, he had a steadfast undertaking: To help establish a specialized Information and Communications Technology Unit for the Palestinian Civil Police.**

As the now 45-year-old Estonian IT expert assumed his responsibilities, he took office in the IT Administration of the Palestinian Civil Police (PCP) and rolled up his sleeves to modernize the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Unit, together with his Palestinian counterpart, Colonel Suleiman Abu Al-Rub.

### **Ending an era, beginning a new**

Funded by several EU Member States and Canada, Kristjan began developing information and communications systems to build a computerized network which eventually would boost the operational and administrative capabilities of the PCP. Since the be-

ginning, Kristjan's expert assistance has been provided as part of EUPOL COPPS' mandate to support the Palestinian Civil Police reform and development.

During the past 10 years, the Estonian IT expert achieved to construct a digital telephone network, a microwave network for exchange of data and a radio network. This massive infrastructure means that today all Palestinian police stations across the West Bank are connected, ending an era of communicating by telephone.

### **"Saved us millions of euros"**

"We did not have an ICT infrastructure. We had to start from scratch," says Colonel Abu Al-Rub. ➔

“Kristjan played a tremendous role in building it”, he adds.

During his work with the PCP, the Estonian expert designed about two dozen software applications to help the Palestinian police manage their criminal records, human resources, incidents and operations, traffic accidents and court summons. The network and software applications have been valued to the extent that five other Palestinian security services are today benefitting from them.

“With the help of Kristjan, the PCP has saved ‘millions of euros’ over the past 10 years and has been able to build a team of 35 well-trained ICT practitioners”, explains Abu Al-Rub.

#### **‘He is one of us’**

Spending most of his time in the Police Headquarters, Palestine”.

the father of four easily mingled with the 35-member strong ICT team for an average of seven hours per day.

“He coaches the team. He eats with the team, even if he does not like the food. He is one of us. He knows every member of the team,” smiles Abu Al-Rub. “This is a great way to work”.

“I worked with Kristjan for many years and I could write a book about this unique relationship”, concludes Abu Al-Rub. “We spent 10 years together. His absence will be felt wholeheartedly. We will miss him as a friend and as a colleague, who is dedicated, professional and committed to his work”.

On the last day of his tenure, in early February, Kristjan wrapped up his 10 years in the occupied Palestinian territory: “I am leaving with a heavy heart. But in this IT world, I will maintain contacts with all my friends here in Palestine”.

## EU’s Civilian Operations Commander visits Palestine

**In April, the EU Civilian Operations Commander Vincenzo Coppola visited the two EU Missions in the occupied Palestinian territory for the first time, since his appointment last September.**

The four-day visit comprised meetings with the Senior Managements of EUPOL COPPS and EUBAM Rafah and served to introduce Mr Coppola (right) to some of the Missions’ strategic Palestinian counterparts. In addition, the visit included consultations with the Missions’ key international security sector counterparts.

During his visit, Mr Coppola attended EUPOL COPPS’ annual medal award ceremony as special Guest of Honour. Here he awarded 26 Mission Members the Common Security and Defence Policy Service Medal, thanking them for their service and commitment.



## Marking Europe Day in Palestine and Brussels

**Europe Day (9 May) celebrates peace and unity in Europe. In early May, Mission Members contributed to marking Europe Day at events in Nablus, Palestine and Brussels, Belgium.**

On 4 May 2019, Mission Members from EUPOL COPPS and EUBAM Rafah were present at the EU Institutions’ Open Day in Brussels. Here, Federica Mogherini, Vice-President of the European Commission, President of the Foreign Affairs Council and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy took time to visit the representatives from Palestine.

From left: Jihan Ashhab, EUPOL COPPS; Peter Heepen and Abeer Assouli, EUBAM Rafah; Madame Mogherini and Hasse Resenbro, EUPOL COPPS.





## ‘Women and men – partners in the service of the Homeland’

The ‘Equal Opportunities’ campaign aims to promote a better understanding of the benefits of a gender balanced police and to stimulate the acceptance of equal opportunities for male and female police officers.



The three Palestinian police officers responsible for the planning and execution of the campaign paid a visit to the Mission's Headquarters to thank the Head of EUPOL COPPS for the Mission's advice and assistance. From left: Campaign Coordinator, Captain Aline Al-Taweel; Lieutenant Colonel Wafaa Sharqawi from the Planning and Development Section of the Office of the Chief of Police; Head of Mission Kauko Aaltomaa; Lieutenant Colonel Wafaa Al Hussain, Director of the Gender Unit of the Palestinian Civil Police; the Mission's Gender Adviser Irina D'Almeida and Press and Public Information Officer Hasse Resenbro.

**Women account for just over 4%** of the 8,000 officers in the Palestinian Civil Police. A number of different initiatives have been taken to raise the intake of female police cadets, resulting in a gradual increase of women in the police.

**Despite this development** and the existence of a ‘Police Gender Strategy’, there are still challenges related to career opportunities, conditions of service and benefits for female police officers, e.g.:

- Women are mostly assigned to administrative, rather than operational posts;
- Women cannot include their children and parents in their health insurance coverage;
- Women are not allowed by law to pass their retirement benefits on to their successors;
- Women are not sent on training courses at police academies abroad.

**To raise awareness of these challenges**, to revitalize the ‘2016 Police Gender Strategy’ and to push forward in gender mainstreaming, the Gender Unit of the Palestinian Civil Police has developed and

launched the first national campaign addressing gender issues within the police.

**The campaign centres on equal opportunities** for women and men in the police service. It was inspired by EUPOL COPPS and has been supported by UN Women in Palestine. Whereas the Mission's Press and Public Information Officer and Gender Advisor have been advising and assisting the development of the campaign, the bulk of the planning work as well as the execution has been carried out under committed, efficient female Palestinian ownership.

**The ‘Equal Opportunities’ campaign** was launched in February and rolled out across the West Bank on a roadshow with workshops in all police districts. It ends in July 2019.



The campaign logo displays a Palestinian flag, the campaign motto ‘Women and men – partners in the service of the Homeland’, a symbolic male and female officer, and the police crest.

# Human rights are indispensable to the Palestinian state building process

Most people one would ask in Palestine, know that EUPOL COPPS delivers advice and assistance to the Palestinian Civil Police and the Palestinian Criminal Justice Institutions. Less are aware of the Mission's human rights activities. EUPOL COPPS, through a rights based approach, places the Palestinian people at the heart of its involvement.



Human Rights Expert Jeff Hoppenbrouwers is from the Netherlands. He arrived in the Mission in May 2012, after having served in the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia for 3.5 years, and before 1.5 years in the EU Monitoring Mission in Indonesia. In both Missions, he was coordinating the Mission's Human Rights intervention. Previously he worked for the UN in Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Jamaica, Cuba, Former Yugoslavia, the Philippines, and Lebanon, and for the OSCE in Poland, North Macedonia, and Kosovo. In all these countries he worked on the protection of human rights.

The Mission employs two International Human Rights Experts, whose task is to advise the Mission's Senior Management, mainstream the subject amongst colleagues, and liaise within the "EU Family" and the international stakeholder community.

Next to these, they are also directly engaged with Palestinian counterparts and with national and international Human Rights Organisations.

## Developing a credible Police accountability system

It is essential for a state in development to respect, protect and fulfil human rights from its earliest stages in order to build-in resilience and have sustainable progress.

EUPOL COPPS's counterparts, in the police and criminal justice sector, have a significant role in human rights. They are the long arm of the State, responsible for upholding justice and law and or-

der. They are also the key guarantors for the protection of human rights. Their integrity is essential to keep the public's trust. With this in mind, EUPOL COPPS' Human Rights Experts have supported the Palestinian Civil Police with the development of a credible accountability system, including a 'Code on the Use of Force and Firearms', a 'Code of Conduct', a system for Citizen's Complaints and a police Disciplinary mechanism.





### Moving towards international fair trial standards

In the Justice Sector, EUPOL COPPS' Human Rights Experts have directly supported the relevant Institutions to make the justice system more independent, impartial and accessible, including with procedures that guarantee the right to a fair trial for all. Through the Mission's coordination, the four key justice sector institutions have worked jointly for four years to review, analyse and compare the Palestinian justice system against international fair trial standards. As a result, 72 recommendations were developed and are now ready for implementation.

### Mainstreaming human rights across the security sector

Furthermore, the Mission's Experts work in several ways with their colleagues in support of harmonising legislation with international human rights treaties, on raising the standards of arrest and detention, on the eradication of torture, on introducing minimum standards in riot policing, on introducing minimum standards in criminal jus-

tice procedures, on widening the scope of community policing, and on the delivery of training. They further support the Ministry of Interior to strengthen human rights mainstreaming across the security sector. Additionally, they work with counterparts on better implementing the Juvenile Protection Law; and with strengthening of the oversight and complaints handling mechanisms. They also collaborate with and support the Mission's Gender Adviser and counterparts in bringing women's rights to the table.

### Bringing a human dimension into state building

The EUPOL COPPS Human Rights Experts through their work contribute to bringing a human dimension into the state building process. The Mission's involvement should ultimately benefit all Palestinians and does not belong exclusively to its direct counterparts. The bottom-line is that the state building process starts with the people and should end with the people.



In addition to Human Rights Expert Jeff Hoppenbrouwers (center), the Mission's Human Rights and Gender Unit encompasses Human Rights Expert Emma Hickey (left) and Gender Adviser Irina D'Almeida (right).

## Working hand-in-hand with the grass-root movements

EUPOL COPPS Human Rights Experts maintain regular contact with grass-root level NGOs, from which they receive detailed reports and valuable information in regards to flaws and gaps within the institution building process, on individual cases, and about the percep-

tion of the Palestinian public. This, they perceive as a crucial part of their work, which both informs and underscores the involvement of EUPOL COPPS in Palestine, from the vision and ambition to the implementation.