

PRESS RELEASE

A 3.6 million USD Agreement Signed Between the Saudi Committee for the Relief of Palestinian People and the United Nations Children's Fund –UNICEF and the Palestinian Authority

RIYADH/SAUDI ARABIA, October 18 2005- The Saudi Committee for the Relief of the Palestinian People signed an agreement today with UNICEF and the Palestinian Authority in support of Palestinian children's right to survival and education.

The signing ceremony was headed by senior officials from the Saudi Committee for the Relief of Palestinian People. His Excellency Dr. Saed Al-Harethy, Advisor to the Saudi Minister of Interior and His Excellency Dr. Waleed Al-Dali, Security General of the Saudi Committee for the Relief of Palestinian People represented the Committee. Mr. Mustafa Sheikh Deib, the Palestinian Authority Ambassador to Saudi Arabia represented the Palestinian Authority and Ms. June Kunugi, UNICEF Representative to the Gulf Area and Mr. Dan Rohrmann Special Representative for UNICEF in occupied Palestinian territory (oPt).

Mr. Sheikh Deib expressed his thanks to the Saudi Government and the Saudi Committee for the Relief of Palestinian People for their support to the Palestinian People. In his remarks, he highlighted the daily sufferings of Palestinian children in the midst of the current conflict. He also emphasized the importance of this agreement with the Saudi Committee which will secure children's rights to health and quality education that represent a critical foundation for Palestinian nation building.

In her speech, Ms. June Kunugi, Representative of UNICEF Gulf Area Office, expressed her gratitude and appreciation to His Royal Highness Prince Naif Bin Abed Al-Aziz, Head of the Saudi Committee for the Relief of Palestinian People for his support to Palestinian Children and Women. She also thanked His Excellency Dr. Saed Al-Harthy, Advisor to the Saudi Minister of Interior and the President of the Saudi Committee for the Relief of Palestinian People and thanked His Excellency Dr. Waleed Al-Dali Secretary General of the Committee for his contribution towards securing Palestinian children's rights to survival and quality education. Ms. Kunugi stated that the partnership between the Saudi Committee for Relief of Palestinian People and UNICEF represents a historic beginning of a solid cooperation. She added that UNICEF already had the privilege of being a partner with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia since 1961, which she hoped would flourish. She also thanked the Saudi Committee for the Relief of Palestinian people and the People of Saudi Arabia.

In his remarks, Mr. Dan Rohrmann, Special Representative of UNICEF, mentioned that "The support given by the Saudi Committee for the Relief of Palestinian People can only demonstrate the shared vision that UNICEF and the Committee have on the importance of Palestinian children getting the right start in life and receiving quality education in a child-friendly environment" said Rohrmann. He added: "this effort will go beyond changing children's lives positively, but it will also assist in reaching the Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015". This donation will secure the provision of the necessary vaccines to Ministry of Health facilities and will support the Ministry of Education Higher Education efforts in securing children's rights to education.

At the end of his speech, Mr. Rohrmann expressed his deep appreciation and gratitude to the Saudi Government and Saudi People, for which he valued. He also thanked the Saudi Committee for the Relief of Palestinian People and its commitment in supporting Palestinian Children in this critical period. He also expressed gratitude to the Palestinian Authority represented by its Ambassador Mr. Sheikh Deib and all of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education for their strong commitment and cooperation with UNICEF in protecting Palestinian children's rights in oPt.

It is noteworthy that this agreement will assist in securing the necessary vaccines for Palestinian children which will protect them from various infectious diseases such as meningitis, in addition to securing education supplies to 90,000 children. It is valued at 3.6 million US Dollars and is considered to be the first donation by the Saudi Committee for the Relief of Palestinian People to UNICEF.

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