

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Italian Government and UN Women sign an agreement to support women's economic empowerment in Palestine

Jerusalem, 21 November 2017 – The Italian Government and UN Women signed an agreement today at the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem for a new programme to promote women's equal access to economic opportunities and decent work in Palestine.

The one-year programme aims to enhance women's economic empowerment in Palestine through promoting women's equal access to decent work opportunities. Funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), the programme will be implemented in close partnership between UN Women and ILO starting from January 2018.

The Consul General of Italy, Fabio Sokolowicz, while restating the importance of the agreement, described the new joint programme as a further step in the continuous effort put in place by Italy on enhancing the role of women in the Palestinian society. Gender policies are in fact among the top priorities of the Italian cooperation in Palestine.

"The action is part of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation strategy aiming at supporting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Palestine, in line with the Palestinian Cross-Sectoral Gender Strategy 2017-2022," affirmed Ms. Cristina Natoli, Representative of AICS Jerusalem.

Currently, the majority of the female labour force in Palestine is concentrated in low-skilled, low-income generating economic activities characterized by disadvantageous features for women including lack of training, skills, access, and opportunities.

"Empowering women in the economy and closing gender gaps at work are central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," said Ms. Ulziisuren Jamsran, UN Women Special Representative of the UN Women Palestine, congratulating the newly established partnership to address the gender disparities of labour force participation in Palestine.

The programme adopted a tripartism principle, which involves the government, labor union, and the employers, the three main stakeholders in women's economic empowerment.

"This approach will bring voices of all three stakeholders together opening a social dialogue to reform legislation and create a better system for women to find decent work," said Mr. Mounir Kleibo, ILO Representative in Jerusalem.

The joint programme will help Palestinian women to have easier access to decent work through market-oriented skills trainings, while promoting an environment that enables women's labour market



participation on the basis of equal opportunity and non-discrimination stipulated in national laws and legislations. The programme will also enhance the role of women in empowering themselves in the job market, while also bringing in boys and men as key stakeholders and drivers for efforts towards achieving women's economic empowerment.

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