

**MEDIA RELEASE – EDUCATION ABOVE ALL FOUNDATION
UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL FEB 28, 00:01**

**Education Above All (EAA) Foundation, UNDP and UNICEF open the
first ever ‘Child Friendly School’ in Gaza**

*The school has been designed with input from the children and can serve as an emergency shelter
for Internally Displaced People (IDPs) during times of conflict*

28 February 2018

Gaza, State of Palestine – Today, Education Above All (EAA) Foundation will open the first ever Child Friendly School in Gaza, Jamal Abdul Nasser School.

Jamal Abdul Nasser School was completely destroyed during the 2014 hostilities. Serving 800 students, this school has been re-built and specially designed with input from the children as well as the local community. This is a unique project, founded on the principle that all children should have a safe, engaging space to learn in.

The school buildings are all environmentally friendly, child-centred and fully accessible for all students. Renewable energy is provided by solar panels, the design incorporates a double wall system, double-glazed, shatter-proof windows, and thermal insulation in the ceiling and floor.

A particularly distinctive addition is the school’s multi-purpose halls. Features of the multipurpose buildings include: flexible learning spaces, an extensive library, IT facilities, breakout spaces, a multi-purpose sports facility and an on-site health facility, providing crucial psychosocial support and child protection services. The halls are also specially designed to serve as emergency shelters for Internally Displaced People (IDPs) during times of conflict, with gender-sensitive accommodations, emergency power and water networks, and improved Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities.

The school will be opened by Al Fakhoora, a programme of EAA Foundation. The project is funded by the Qatar Fund for Development, and implemented in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

Representatives from UNDP, UNICEF and EAA Foundation will be present at the school opening, as well as returning students from Al Fakhoora’s Dynamic Future’s scholarship programme.

The returning students, who have previously completed their education as a result of Al Fakhoora funding, are a testament to the long-term impact education has on young people in Gaza and the community at large.

“We are extremely proud to be part of building this innovative school in Gaza for a community who deserves the highest quality of education facilities. Education is a fundamental human

right, one that is crucial to the future of the Palestinian State. By investing in their future, we enable these young people to play a key role in rebuilding their communities, unlocking their full potential”

said Mr. Farooq Burney, Executive Director of EAA Foundation’s Al Fakhoora programme.

In addition to EAA Foundation’s support of school reconstruction, its programme, Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC), promotes and protects the right to education in areas affected by conflict, as well as advocating for an international legal framework that holds accountable those who attack schools.

Executive Director of PEIC, Maleiha Malik said,

"This school is a fantastic development for the children and young people of Gaza. The opening of this new school provides a safe place to learn, play and grow, and it also lays the foundation for building peace for the children of Gaza.

Schools are at the centre of any community; education is integral to creating a more peaceful future. The international community must work urgently to rebuild schools. We must do our utmost to ensure this school stands tall for many years to come.”

Mr. Roberto Valent, UNDP Special Representative of the Administrator, commented:

“An appropriate learning environment impacts the ability of children and adolescents to learn by thinking critically, exploring and experimenting within an inclusive and stimulating environment. This process of fostering their thinking skills are the domains that need our special respect and attention, especially in crisis and emergency contexts. UNDP welcomes the opening of the first child-friendly school in Gaza. We are confident that the school, with the support from Qatar Fund for Development, through Al Fakhoora, and in partnership with the Ministry of Education and UNICEF, will become a positive example of ensuring appropriate conditions for education. Most importantly, this model will ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all children and adolescents, with a focus on those left behind.”

Ms. Genevieve Boutin, UNICEF Special Representative, commented:

"The completion of work at the Jamal Abdul Nasser School is an opportunity to reflect on how this project has helped not only rebuild schools, but also catalyze additional investments in children and young people across Gaza, thanks to generous support from Al Fakhoora, a programme of the Education Above All Foundation, and the Qatar Fund for Development.

The students were actively involved: they were consulted and contributed ideas on how to make their learning environments more stimulating. UNICEF integrated their suggestions in the design of safer, more child-friendly schools. We also supported the training of 400 school counsellors and 10,000 teachers to provide students with crucial psychosocial support and child protection services, and help them develop life skills and peaceful conflict resolution



techniques. All these efforts have contributed to a more positive learning environment, giving us all hope in a better future”.

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Interviews available on request

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Notes to Editors:

About Education Above All (EAA) Foundation

The Education Above All (EAA) Foundation is a global education foundation established in 2012 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser. The Foundation envisions bringing hope and real opportunity to the lives of impoverished and marginalized children, youth and women, especially in the developing world and in difficult circumstances such as conflict situations and natural disasters. It believes that education is the single most effective means of reducing poverty, generating economic growth and creating peaceful and just societies, as well as a fundamental right for all children and an essential condition to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

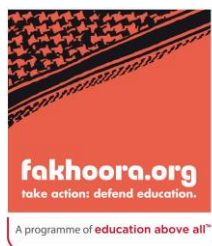
The EAA Foundation aims to enable human development through the provision of inclusive quality education. To date, it has committed to providing education opportunities to 7.2 million children worldwide, with a goal of reaching 10 million. The Foundation is a current member of the UNESCO SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, which – in keeping with EAA Foundation’s core and founding principle – makes recommendations on how to achieve quality education for all. For more information, visit educationaboveall.org, follow us on Twitter @EAA_Foundation, Facebook and Instagram @educationaboveall_eaa.

About Al Fakhoora

Al Fakhoora, a programme of EAA Foundation, works to promote the right to education in conflict and post-conflict states, by unlocking a new generation of marginalised youth to become educated, professionally skilled and inspirational leaders of the future who can guide their families and communities towards cohesion and prosperity.

About Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC)

PEIC, Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict, was created to promote and protect the right to education in areas affected by crisis, conflict and insecurity. PEIC focuses on strengthening the



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international legal framework that protects education and schools from attack during conflict as well as promoting the values of the rule of law, including the right to education. PEIC brings together practitioners and specialists in education, international law and child protection together to protect the right to education. An estimated 36% of out-of-school children are living in conflict-affected areas. 1 million young people are missing out on meaningful opportunities for learning and skills development in these contexts.

About UNDP

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in more than 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations. For more information on UNDP's work in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip, visit www.ps.undp.org. Follow @UNDPPalestinian on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

About UNICEF

UNICEF promotes the rights and wellbeing of every child, in everything we do. Together with our partners, we work in 190 countries and territories to translate that commitment into practical action, focusing special effort on reaching the most vulnerable and excluded children, to the benefit of all children, everywhere. For more information about UNICEF and its work for children visit www.unicef.org Follow UNICEF on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and YouTube