

For immediate release –

Launching of the first Palestinian Policewomen Network (PCPWN) with support from Sawasya Programme & EUPOL COPPS

Female police officers are instrumental to the Palestinian police institution to strengthen the effectiveness of its daily activities in Palestine, and to ensure women's access to justice. Currently, Palestinian female officers represent 5.54 per cent of the Police force, according to PCP data - 2021. As the representation is still low, a gender strategy for the Palestinian Civil Police-PCP was developed in 2016 to support and increase the presence of women in policing including in decision-making positions and as frontliners.

Ramallah, 24 January 2023 | The Palestinian Civil Police has launched today the first Palestinian Policewomen's Network (PCPWN) to further empower Palestinian women within the policing services.

The Palestinian Policewomen Network (PCPWN) was officially launched by the Police Major General Yousef Al Helou with support from the Sawasya II Programme, through UN Women in Palestine and EUPOL COPPS in the presence of the Palestinian Minister of Women's Affairs Dr. Amal Hamad, and UN Women Special Representative Ms. Maryse Guimond, as well as the Head of Mission of the EUPOL COPPS **Ms. Nataliya Apostolova**.

The network concept was developed at the two-day Women police officers' conference that took place in May 2022. Since then, Sawasya and EUPOL COPPS jointly invested efforts with the PCP to establish the network including developing network bylaws that regulate the membership and government of the network formation and plan activities.

The network will serve as a platform to support gender equality and support the empowerment of women within the Palestinian Police. It will provide policewomen with the opportunity to enhance cooperation, coordination an enabling working environment and capacities, and reflect on and share their experiences.

On this occasion and during the opening ceremony, the Minister of Women's Affairs, Dr. Amal Hamad expressed her enthusiasm at launching the Palestinian Policewomen Network

as an addition, a platform, and a great opportunity through which policewomen exercise their pioneering and distinguished roles, stating ***"the Palestinian police represents the security and safety. It is the pulse of the Palestinian street. It also represents the rule of law, and justice that we all aspire to."***

While Minister Hamad thanked the police efforts, led by Major General Youssef Al-Helou, adding ***"We appreciate the distinguished role played by the General Directorate of the Family Protection Police under the directives of the Major General and the police, as we seek together to build a state of justice and dignity in which all of us, especially women, feel their full rights and in a way that contributes to increasing the percentage of women working in the security institution, including the police, to more than 7.4% in the coming year. We look forward that the Policewomen will be in decision-making positions."***

On his behalf, Major General Al Helou commended the great investments by all parties that resulted in key strategic achievements for the police stating, "the network will be a catalyst for an active engagement of Palestinian policewomen in similar international and regional networks, thereby, positively impacting the policing services to the Palestinian public, and enhancing women's access to justice, as well as communities' safety and security."

On her behalf, the UN Women Special Representative Ms. Maryse Guimond said ***"We congratulate the police on their achievements and initiatives that aim at enhancing gender equality, The representation of female police officers is critical to ensure fully responsive services to the communities "***.

Ms. Guimond outlined the advantages of the establishment of the police network by saying: ***"The network is a dynamic and vibrant body that will play an active role inside the Palestinian Civil Police and in similar networks. Working together is key to reaching common goals and interests. We look forward to witness more increase in female's enrollment in the policing services, better work environment for women in this sector and more women in decision- making positions"***.

The Women network will work towards a new chapter in the PCP to align with the goals of the gender strategy developed to increase the presence of women in policing, empower women in the Palestinian community, and strengthen the public's trust in the police services.

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[For more information, please contact](#)

***Sawasya II* Joint Programme - Communications Coordinator:**

Fida Maaytah Mobile: +972 59 3020717 Email: fida.maaytah@undp.org

About the *Sawasya II* Joint Programme:

Sawasya II is the UN's primary vehicle for promoting rule of law, gender-based justice and human rights in the State of Palestine from the year 2018 to 2023.

The Programme brings together the main United Nations bodies working in this field -- **UNDP, UN Women** and **UNICEF** -- as part of an integrated Programme in which support is provided to the Palestinian Government to arrive at a system of rule of law that is progressively applied, increasingly inclusive which protects, respects, and promotes human rights, gender equality, peace, and security.

Sawasya II aims to work on the challenges that arise from the provision of justice and security services. Justice and security institutions are supported to enhance the quality and efficiency of the services they provide to the Palestinian people. *Sawasya II* supports all relevant Palestinian governmental institutions and civil society organizations in their endeavors to provide legal assistance to the Palestinian people. This support is being developed and allocated to meet the specific needs of each area of the State of Palestine (West Bank, including Area C, Hebron 2, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip).