



Public Prosecution and Palestinian Civil Police sign MoU

EUPOL COPPS facilitated the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between the PCP and the Public Prosecution in a ceremony presided over by the Minister of Interior, Mr. Saed ABU ALI, on 5th August. This MoU represents indeed a major step along the road to the reform of the Palestinian Criminal Justice Sector within the framework of the Prime Minister's statehood plan for August 2011.



Training Public Prosecutors on Fighting Economic Crimes

EUPOL COPPS' Prosecution expert, Mika AALTO, delivered the first session of a six-months training programme on *Building a Solid Foundation to prosecute Economic Crimes* to seven Palestinian public prosecutors on 10th August. The purpose of this training is to support the capacity of the Economic Crimes Unit within the Office of the Attorney General.



EUPOL COPPS participates in MoJ's Retreat

EUPOL COPPS' Ministerial Administration Expert, Nasreen KHAN, participated in a three-day Ministry of Justice self-evaluation on the institutional performance of the ministry and its branches delivering a speech on the cooperation of EUPOL COPPS with the MoJ. Participants discussed current challenges and future plans for the MoJ in Bethlehem from 7th to 9th August.



EUPOL COPPS' Human Rights Basic Training

EUPOL COPPS Human Rights Expert, Diane HALLEY coordinated a meeting that took place on 25th August, to prepare Human Rights basic training sessions for new Police recruits involving representatives from the PCP and local external expertise from the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights, the Treatment and Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture, and the Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counselling.



Germany donates 290 car radios to the Palestinian Police

The new Representative of Germany to the PA, Mr. Goetz LINGENTHAL, conducted the hand-over ceremony of 290 radios to the PCP with the goal of improving its horizontal communications system within its car fleet. The ceremony took place at PCP's HQ on 30 August and was co-chaired by the Chief of Police, Mj. Gen. Hazem ATTALLAH, and EUPOL COPPS' HoM, Commissioner Henrik MALMQUIST.

USSC visits EUPOL COPPS

The United States Security Coordinator (USSC), Lt. Gen. Keith DAYTON, and his team paid a courtesy visit to the Mission's HQ on 31st August. They met with EUPOL COPPS's HoM, Commissioner Henrik MALMQUIST, the head of the RoL section, Mr. Nicholas ROBSON, and the Political Adviser, Ms. Victoria SJOLANDER. Lt. Gen. DAYTON will be finishing his mandate at the end of September and will be replaced by the newly appointed USSC Mj. Gen. Michael R. MOELLER.



The Palestinian Penitentiary System – a vision on its way to success

Background

Although, like elsewhere, society is not always aware of the role played by it, despite not being a very attractive topic on people's minds and politician's agenda, having to confront prejudices while expected to deliver miracles with little outside support, **the Palestinian Penitentiary System is delivering.**

Optimism is the word of the day, after hard years and lots of efforts concentrated on managing the situation within an inherited disastrous infrastructure. One can sense this when listening to Brigadier General Mahmoud Rahhal, the Director General of GARCC – the General Administration of Rehabilitation and Correction Centers, in statements such as *"the Palestinian penitentiaries can be considered as according to international standards when it comes to respect of the human rights of the detainees"* or *"our final objective is to be a regional model within the Arab countries in terms of managing a modern penitentiary system"*, as it

It is a fact that the GARCC penitentiaries are hugely overcrowded and understaffed, while the existing infrastructure was never meant to serve for detention purposes, consisting of buildings rented by the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian Civil Police. The lack of space has a significant negative impact on the capacity of the penitentiary staff to effectively operate rehabilitation or vocational training oriented programs. Space is just not allowing it.

Totals (Mar 2010)	
Total formal capacity	610
Total no. inmates	1081
Balance	471

Totals (Mar 2010)		
Pre-trial	701	65%
Convicted/Civil Court	332	31%
Convicted/Military Court	48	4%

Totals/Center (Mar 2010)	
Jenin	146
Jericho	55
Nablus	232
Bethlehem	92
Dahiryia	206
Ramallah	264
Tulkarem	86

It is a fact that the Palestinian Police and judiciary have significantly improved the effectiveness of their activities over the recent time, and one has to focus on achieving the necessary synergy between the developments in the Police and the Judiciary and the ones related to the detention matters. Nowadays in Palestine, the Police is becoming evermore effective, the courts have streamlined their case file management and while it currently doesn't take years anymore to have a person convicted, it still does take years to build prisons. The current gap in the developments is about to grow bigger, while serious challenges still lie ahead.

Strategic thinking

The recently issued **GARCC 2011 – 2013 Strategy** encloses the strategic vision over the development of the penitentiary system and was introduced not just to the international community but also to the local partners. The existing plans are well on the way for the setting of a Penitentiary Coordination Committee, reuniting both the international and national actors, aiming at improving coordination of efforts and achieving a self-sustainable development, while looking to identify ways for ensuring additional funding of the GARCC development.

The international actors are playing a key role on supporting the progress of GARCC, and significant steps have already been undertaken. Like pretty much elsewhere in Palestine, there still is much to be done and everybody is aware of that, but GARCC holds and has been innovative on some strong points that currently few other institutions have proved same wise.



Jack Twiss Quarles van Ufford, Head of Mission of NRO, explained:

"Through its Rule of Law programme, the Netherlands supports the entire criminal justice chain: from arrest to rehabilitation. Therefore we decided to support the prison system, to complement our efforts in the field of policing, prosecution, courts, Ministry of Justice, judicial police and support to civil society."

"The Netherlands' support to build a new prison in Jericho was a direct response to an urgent appeal from Prime Minister Fayyad, since the old facility was destroyed."

"With the prison refurbishment project, our immediate aim was to address the most pressing needs in the facilities, to ensure living conditions of the prisoners and working conditions of the staff were lifted to an acceptable level. Through this project the overall human rights situation in the facilities has certainly improved."

Coordination of efforts

Avoiding the traps and gaps in the supporting activities implies the setting up of a coordination mechanism among the internationals and the key local stakeholders, focused on achieving local buy-in while addressing major issues such as overlapping activities. EUPOLCOPPS, along with the entire international actors and in partnership with GARCC, has developed the necessary framework and support documents for the Penitentiary Steering Committee, which is about to get started in September 2010 under GARCC and EUPOLCOPPS co-chairmanship, following the example of the informal meetings of the Prison Coordination Group. None of this would have been achieved unless a common drive existed among the internationals and the local partners.



Operational support

Hope is here, success is already present. It is in the form of the ongoing construction works at the new Jericho penitentiary funded by the Netherlands, the new Nablus penitentiary funded through the EU Representative Office, the vocational training workshops funded by Canada and set up by UNODC, the recent refurbishments of the existing penitentiaries supported by the Netherlands, the training workshops and study tours organized by UNODC and INL, the strategic technical advice and support provided by EUPOLCOPPS, the small projects that addressed urgent daily operational needs – such as delivery of 1st aid medical kits by EUPOLCOPPS, the drafting of Operational Procedures and Standards, the existing 2011 – 2013 Strategy and the incoming Action Plan.



Imprisonment in Palestine – punishment or rehabilitation opportunity?

Overview

Palestinian prisons house males, females and juveniles. Typical Palestinian inmates can be described as over 18, unemployed, uneducated, poor, social misfits, and in some cases drug abusers. In terms of criminal charges, inmates can be divided into two main categories: once-and-again offenders who have committed petty crimes and are recidivists, and once-and-never-again offenders who have committed relatively serious crimes but are not recidivists. About 70 percent of the inmate population is on remand and 30 percent convicted.

Articles 30-36 of the Correction and Rehabilitation Centres Law No. 6 of 1998 stipulate the rights of inmates to education and vocational training. Similarly, GARCC's Strategic Plan (2011-2013) outlines "increased services / programs related to reform, rehabilitation and reintegration" of inmates upon their release.

Only recently the rehabilitation of inmates has become a key feature in the Palestinian criminal justice system, and serious efforts are being made by GARCC to rehabilitate inmates. However, the rehabilitation of inmates in Palestinian prisons is proceeding at a very slow pace and in varying degrees from one prison to another. The focus of rehabilitation is to prevent reoffending or recidivism.



Gender

Within this Strategic Plan it is crucial to mainstream gender, to integrate gender into all relevant policies, programs, projects and activities. This should be done in order to ensure and cover the special needs and requirements of the different sexes within the population of the prison houses.

Period of detention (Feb 2010)				
period	pre-trial	convicted	total	
< 6 months	318	219	537	50%
6-12 months	90	42	132	12%
1-2 years	154	55	209	19%
2-3 years	97	30	127	12%
3-5 years	45	29	74	7%
> 5 years	9	5	14	1%
	713	380	1093	101%

Formal education

Literacy prevents crime. Good prison education is a major contributor to crime prevention in that more prisoners will continue their education and find jobs following their release.

Educating inmates can take place either inside the prison premises or outside. Inmates who constitute a security risk will have to attend literacy courses inside the prison, but inmates who have a very weak tendency for crime commission may be allowed to attend a regular school after necessary legal arrangements have been put in order.

In order for GARCC to organize a solid and comprehensive educational program for inmates, there is need to involve the Ministry of Education which will undertake the whole process of educating inmates from A to Z, including the provision of certified and trained teachers, and the provision of textbooks and stationery. The Ministry of Education shall also conduct a study on the educational needs of inmates and the needs of the labour market and organize a literacy program accordingly.

Possible solutions:

- Offering obligatory remedial literacy programs for inmates, especially juveniles and females.
- Engaging inmates in comprehensive education equivalent to at least formal school.
- Independent study or tutoring to meet individuals needs.

Vocational training

Various vocational training workshops need to be established in Palestinian prisons where inmates can work according to their interest and future career plans. Trained inmates may also be given the opportunity to find work in workshops outside the prison premises where they can acquire more advanced professional skills.



Sewing workshop in Jenin, 2010

A comprehensive capacity building programme is the clue for the future socio-economic reintegration of the inmates back into their society.

Envisaged solutions:

- Collaborating with the employment services in order to offer training that will prepare inmates for the labour market
- Encouraging cooperation between vocational schools and prison workshops.

Computer literacy

The introduction of new technology will provide inmates with the opportunity to access a broad range of information. Internet-based education can be very useful to inmates.

Libraries

A major prison component when addressing the educational needs of inmates is the library. Reading books and learning will enhance in

Psychological counselling

The mental and psychological health of inmates is as important as their physical or intellectual health. Whereas rehabilitation prepares inmates for life outside prison, psychological counselling prepares them for life inside the prison.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs, GARCC is to develop a counselling program for inmates the goal of which would be to assist inmates in coping with the length of their incarceration, dealing with separation from loved ones and friends, and surviving in and adapting to the prison environment. Psychological counselling is most effective in relieving inmates from depression, maintaining their self-esteem, motivating them for a better future life.

