



Press Release
**UNDP and Ministry of Health Seminar concludes to establish
a national body to manage medical waste**

Ramallah, June 10, 2009 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP/PAPP) and the Ministry of Health organized a seminar on medical waste management on 10 June, 2009. The aim of the seminar was to provide a forum for discussion among all stakeholders and evaluate the medical waste management project. The Seminar addressed weaknesses that have been identified, as well as potential opportunities and initiatives.

This pilot project, worth one million dollars, was funded by the Government of Japan and implemented in Ramallah hospital through UNDP, and in cooperation with Ramallah Municipality. The project included and assessment in Ramallah and the production of a manual for the management of medical waste. In addition, around 250 people have been trained and made aware of the dangers of medical waste and the need for its careful disposal. Equipment including a vehicle, washing facilities, an autoclave and protective equipment and clothing has also been provided.

Ms. Kayo Kasai from the Japan Representative Office stated “Since the beginning of Japan’s aid to the oPt, our main focus has been to meet the real needs of the Palestinian local communities. This project is one of our efforts to realize our commitment and I hope that it will be replicated in other municipalities in the West Bank and Gaza”.

At the end of the one-day seminar, the participants emphasized the importance of developing national regulations and guidelines for the management of medical waste in the occupied Palestinian territory.

“Clearly there is more work to be done in expanding this successful pilot project to all the hospitals in the West Bank and Gaza Strip” said Mr. Jens Toyberg-Frandzen, Special Representative of UNDP. “As part of this project, we have been able to put in place an institutional and physical framework for the treatment of medical waste, which has led to greater awareness of the risks among professionals and the general public”, he added.

It is worth noting that around 330 tones of medical waste are generated each year in the West Bank alone. This includes everything from used surgical gloves to needles to body organs to hazardous chemicals. Ramallah Hospital, where this pilot project is carried out, is responsible for only 44 tones of this.

The seminar was attended by H.E. Dr. Fathi Abu Moghli, Minister of Health, Mr. Jamil Mottour, Deputy Head of Environment Quality Authority, Ms. Janet Mikael, Mayor of Ramallah, Ms. Kayo Kasai, Japan Representative Office and Mr. Jens Toyberg-Frandzen, Special Representative of UNDP/PAPP.

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