



## PRESS RELEASE

### A Celebration of Artistic Expressions from Gaza UNDP/PAPP Hosts its Eighth Annual Art Auction and Exhibit

**Jerusalem, December 10, 2009** —*Colours of Hope*, is the United Nations Development Programme's eighth annual art auction featuring a diverse group of young male and female artists from across the Gaza Strip in addition to the works of Palestinian renowned artist; Asad Azzi. The art auction was held on Thursday, December 10, 2009, at 7:30pm at Al Hambra Palace; Jerusalem. Over US\$22,000 were raised during the night for the benefit of the artists themselves.

Since UNDP/PAPP's art auctions were initiated in 2002, over 197 works of Palestinian art have been sold with the total proceeds of approximately US\$135,000 going directly to the artists themselves. UNDP/PAPP has focused this year on Gazan art because of the hardships the Palestinians face in the Strip, whether it is the 3 years of blockade or dealing with the last incursion and its aftermath. The art presented during this event is a tangible symbol of hope for a better and more peaceful future, inspite of current difficulties.

"One of the overarching concerns of UNDP is support for human development; the development of economic and social potential." said Mr. Jens Toyberg-Frandzen, UNDP Special Representative. "This evening we are here to support the artists of Gaza, to encourage them to continue to keep working, keep passing on their skills and to keep giving hope to the community at large."

For 31 years, UNDP/PAPP has been a leading partner in the development of the Palestinian people. A central pillar of this partnership has been UNDP's support to Palestinian culture. UNDP/PAPP has invested over US\$25 million in the restoration and preservation of Palestinian cultural heritage. It has also supported several musical events, exhibitions, workshops and art auctions. UNDP/PAPP supports art and culture because it recognizes the relationship between culture and human development.

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*UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.*