



**SPEECH**  
**For UNDP/PAPP Special Representative**  
**Mr. Jens Toyberg-Frandzen**

<b>Speaking event:</b>	Local Governance Conference
<b>Date and time:</b>	Tuesday, 19.02.2008; 09:00 – 16:00
<b>Venue:</b>	Arab American University, Jenin
<b>Participants/audience:</b>	
<b>Length of speech:</b>	10 minutes
<b>Context of speech:</b>	opening remarks
<b>Draft prepared by:</b>	Communications Unit

**Excellencies,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen:**

It is with great pleasure that I address this conference composed of, among others, distinguished policy makers, academia, expert practitioners, government, civil society and private sector representatives. Your deliberations and analysis today will contribute to designing Local Governance and Local Development policy options and strategies.

Local development is at the heart of national development. There is no national development without local development. Local Development is the engine of national economic growth and national well being. Strong Palestinian local authorities, in both urban and rural settings, are essential to the definition and implementation of effective strategies contributing to the development of the Palestinian society.

Local governance that is people centered, inclusive, responsive, and adherent to the rule of law is a **national asset** because it caters to the fundamental needs of the people it is there to serve.



By default, local governance that meets the mentioned criteria, will automatically also address the **Millennium Development Goals** and tackle a range of **priority issues**, including access to water, energy, education, health, agriculture, and so on.

In support of the Palestinian Authority strive towards a more democratic and decentralized governance system, UNDP has since 1994 supported local governance and local development. We started by pioneering the Local Rural Development Programme, benefiting over 200 villages across the West Bank and Gaza. Through the Local Governance Support Programme, UNDP continues to support the local development and decentralization processes.

Allow me to **emphasize challenges** that UNDP believes are important to further advance Local Governance and Local Development :

1. The need to define, adopt and implement **a national policy and strategy on local governance and decentralization**.
2. The need to improve the **legal framework for decentralized local governance** to support the implementation of the national policy and strategy.
3. Based on the strategy, it is essential to **develop the necessary national and local capacities** to enhance performance and improve quality of services delivery.
4. Likewise, **strengthening and streamlining the necessary tools and systems** is essential to enable mandated responsibilities be carried out systematically and in a uniform manner.
5. Furthermore, it is important to deepen and strengthen good governance by building **partnerships and networks** among stakeholders (private sector, civil society, public sector, etc.) to foster results, sharing of best practices, innovation and competitiveness to the benefit of the urban and rural populations.
6. It is vital to ensure **strong leadership, capable of strategic planning and mastering and nurturing the principles of good governance**.



Finally,

7. All of the above can only **systematically** happen **by design and decisive and deliberate application.**

I hope that our discussions will prescribe what is necessary to strengthen and operationalise effective and responsive local governance.

In concluding, on behalf of UNDP, allow me to extend my most sincere thanks to the Arab American University for organizing this conference, to the distinguished guests as well as to all those present here.

I wish you success in your deliberations.

Thank you