



Speech by UNDP/PAPP Special Representative Mr. Jens Toyberg-Frandzen

Your Excellency,

Ministers

Ladies and gentlemen

I am delighted to be here to congratulate you and celebrate the success of our first batch of graduates from the Civil Service Leadership Development Programme.

This is a personal success for all of you but it marks a great step forward for the Palestinian civil service. This is probably the most important part of the reform process. Automation and new equipment are very useful but by far the most important asset of a service or business is the quality of its staff.

One of the main tasks of UNDP in the Palestinian territory and all over the world is state building. The Civil Service Leadership Programme is just one part of that strategy which also includes support to the Government Media Centre, the Ministry of Planning and the Prime Minister's Office.

The Prime Minister outlined his ambitious plans for the Palestinian Authority last year in the document, "Ending the Occupation, Building the State", it includes this aspiration:

"The basic aim is to meet the demand of our people for transparent, accountable institutions that deliver services, social development, economic growth, and career opportunities free from favouritism and wastefulness."

The Civil Service Leadership Programme is an important tool in meeting that aim, to ensure that senior civil servants are provided with the necessary skills to carry out their roles effectively to support the goals of the Palestinian Authority. The leadership of senior civil servants is vital in nurturing a new civil service culture and establishing the civil service as a professional and impartial and loyal servant to the government and the people.

The building and reform of institutions is too important to be left to politicians alone. The civil service should be dedicated to the service of the people, of the nation, not party interests. The civil service needs to be a de-politicised body that provides calm and services regardless of elections or political storms that may surround it. A weak civil service can easily become politicized and then it becomes prey to "favouritism and wastefulness."

Ministers need a strong civil service to help them carry out their policies. But ministers need to respect the impartiality and ethics of the civil service which will ensure that it retains its strength and ability to serve the people. Ministers come and go but the civil service remains.

There is no state in the world that functions well and delivers services to its people without a strong civil service. A strong civil service is a pre-condition for efficiency and stability.



There are countries in the world that change governments, sometimes change governments several times a year. But the countries continue to function because in spite of the political turmoil, they have a strong civil service which provides continuity and stability.

We at UNDP, in conjunction with Italian Co-operation, the University of Birzeit and the General Personnel Council have worked hard to make sure that the training responded to needs of civil servants as much as possible. We attempted to balance face to face teaching with online tuition to ensure that it could be flexible enough to meet your professional and personal demands.

You represent the first graduates, but there will of course be many more. By the time this pilot programme ends, some 1,200 senior civil servants will have undergone the same training.

But the demands of the modern workplace insist that training and education are not one-off events but an integral part of a professional person's working life. Regular training for senior and junior staff will help build a civil service that meets the needs of the Palestinian people.

For you this phase of training has finished, but your next task is to demonstrate your leadership skills to your colleagues and pass them on by example, in order to nurture the spirit of excellence in Palestinian public service.

I'd like to thank you all those who worked so hard in carrying out the training and congratulate all those who passed.

Thank you for your attention.