

*Speech by Daniel Kropf, Executive Vice Chair of UEF at the
Signing Cooperation Agreement with the Palestinian Ministry of Education & Higher
Education and United Nations Relief and Works Agency*

Thursday, November 1, 2007

Your Excellency Ms. Alami, Minister of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE)
Dear Fillippo Grandi, Deputy Commissioner General of United Nations Relief and
Works Agency (UNRWA)
Mr. Basri Saleh, International and Public Relation Director General at MOEHE
Dr. Muhannad Beidas, Chief Field Education Programme at UNRWA-West Bank

Friends and colleagues,

I feel honored and deeply moved to be here celebrating the signature of our cooperation agreement. We have decided together to find the best way to mainstream exemplary and inspirational models that will allow children to feel listened to, believed in, and trusted. Through the learning environment that we will all cooperate to provide, children will be able to fully develop their physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual potential, and experience their well-being. Palestine is preparing itself to be an example for the rest of the world of how a society can focus on the well-being of their children.

We, UEF, are playing a role of catalyst and we celebrate the decision to establish our secretariat here in Palestine. The experience of co-creating, with Professor Awartani, the conceptual framework which we are operating upon has been extremely rewarding both personally and professionally. By now, he is internationally recognized as an expert on how learning environments can become more conducive to the well-being of children.

Reconnecting with Dr. Muhannad Beidas from UNRWA, with whom I had previous experience in education, has been a pleasure. Also, working with Mr. Basri Saleh in Madrid was invigorating, where we presented to the European Foundation Center Annual Meeting the first results of the Voice of Children survey which resulted in some thirty foundations becoming interested in joining the Movement of Education by All for the Well-being of Children in Europe. Basri has been a force in bringing people together in an inclusive and consultative way.

Now, I have the additional privilege to sign this cooperation agreement with the Minister, and with my compatriot the Deputy Commissioner, both of whom clearly share our vision with all their heart. This will strengthen our position when we meet with Jane Hutt, Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills in December 2007, where we are launching the Voice of Children Program.