



CEMOFPSC ROUND TABLE 2011:
An education of quality in the conflict area, as a way of improving peace and integration



Introductory words

28 of April 2010

MACARENA COTELO

Director of the projects department FPSC and President of READI

First of all, I want to welcome each of you in the name of the Foundation Social Promotion of Culture. Our partnership with the institutions so well represented here –the Palestinian National Authority, the UN ECOSOC and Bethlehem University- is very important for us. So, we are very happy to have you here to share your knowledge and reflections about the Education in Palestine.

When FPSC started working in West Bank in 1995, it was just by funding a vocational training program in Bir Zeit Latin School, granted by the Spanish Cooperation. It was the first chapter of an exciting story that is still alive, as Barbara Drake, our Head of Mission in Jerusalem, will tell you later.

Today, we work in several sectors, both in West Bank and Gaza, including water management, agricultural development, food security or post conflict humanitarian aid. But Education is with no doubt our main field of activity, from the very beginning, and, in fact, FPSC is the only Spanish NGO involved in this sector.

And at this point I would like to highlight some ideas:

- 1) Education in Palestine means HOPE. Because it is a key factor for the country of the future, whenever this one is a reality. I have heard many times the Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University saying that the University's mission is to train young people so that when the Palestinian state will be proclaimed, its young people will be ready to take it forward.



**CEMOFPSC ROUND TABLE 2011:
An education of quality in the conflict area, as a
way of improving peace and integration**

- 2) Education in Palestine brings PEACE. Schools are a safe and secure environment in which children grow up together, boys and girls, Muslims and Christians and where they learn to respect each other.
- 3) There are very good professionals in the educational sector in Palestine –and here, some of them are here around that table - but there is still a long way to go, as we will be seeing this morning.

With the big project –“convenio”- we have just started with the Ministry of Education of the Palestinian Territories, the Bethlehem University and the Spanish Cooperation, we want to support good professionals and institutions and so contribute to keep the hope for a peaceful future.