



Chess for Palestinian Women's Empowerment

On November 10, "CHESS FOR LEADERSHIP AND CREATIVITY", a structured program using chess to encourage Palestinian women's empowerment and develop their leadership skills, was launched in 5 Youth Centres in East Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Qatanna and Hebron.

"CHESS FOR LEADERSHIP AND CREATIVITY" is 3-year pilot program dedicated to young Arab women living in challenging and sometimes dangerous environments with the objective of empowering them to create a better future and to develop activities for their neighbourhoods.

The intrinsic values of chess (such as perseverance, discipline, creativity, accepting defeat, continual quest for progress and focus) will facilitate these vulnerable young women's personal development, improve their emotional stability and encourage their social integration.

The program, based on the structured and supervised practice of chess, will be offered in 5 Youth Centres:

- Qatanna Youth Centre, Dhiesha Youth Centre (Refugee camp of Bethlehem) and Al-Mahawer Charitable society (Hebron) – all run by the NGO Care Palestine;
- Dahiat El Sallam Youth Centre and Kfar Akeb Youth Centre – run by the NGO Jerusalem Suburbs Community Center located in East Jerusalem.

"Chess for Leadership and Creativity" is a project under the guidance and leadership of the Palestinian Chess Federation with support from the Monaco-based international organization Peace and Sport and the World Chess Federation (FIDE). It is designed as a pilot project, which will be duplicated and transformed into a national program at a later stage.

"Chess for Leadership and Creativity" is placed under the patronage of international chess Grandmaster and former World Champion **Alexandra Kosteniuk**. The 'Chess Queen' is also a Peace and Sport Champion for Peace and a true ambassador for chess worldwide, who has always worked to ensure that her favourite sport serves peace, human development and social progress.

Peace and Sport and FIDE signed a partnership in 2010 to pioneer activities that use chess as a vehicle for youth development, social cohesion and pacific coexistence. The "Chess for Leadership and Creativity" program is the third achievement of this partnership, after similar programs in Colombia and Haiti.

To support the program, please go to our webpage:

<http://www.peace-sport.org/one-champion-one-project/alexandra-kosteniuk.html>

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NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT FIDE

FIDE is the international sports federation for chess, recognized by the International Olympic Committee, with 174 national federation members throughout the world. FIDE organizes over 40 official championships for youngsters, men, women and seniors.

There is a strong emphasis on training and chess in schools in order to meet one of the core objectives of developing the grass roots framework, which seeks to achieve significant growth in levels of participation in the world.

Through chess, people can learn to exchange their views over the board in a friendly manner and with an open mind.

Already FIDE has a joint project in Columbia with "Peace and Sport" and we are proud to be associated with any initiative that uses the sport of chess to promote harmony and peace amongst the people of the world.'

ABOUT PEACE AND SPORT

"Peace and Sport, *L'Organisation pour la Paix par le Sport*" is a neutral and apolitical international initiative based in the Principality of Monaco and placed under the High Patronage of H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco.

Peace and Sport puts sport and its values at the heart of local development projects conducted within communities in crisis around the world. Exercising its missions in post-conflict zones, areas of extreme poverty or lacking social cohesion, Peace and Sport makes sport a vehicle for tolerance, respect, sharing and citizenship at the service of sustainable peace.

Supported by governments, world sport governing bodies, international organizations, major international private companies and international sports champions, Peace and Sport creates synergies between different stakeholders based on four different activities:

- The annual Peace and Sport International Forum (next edition in Sochi, Russia, 31 October – 2 November 2012)
- The "Champions for Peace" : a club of over 60 high-level international athletes supporting the organization,
- The Peace and Sport Awards, to reward individuals and initiatives contributing to peace,
- Locally-Based Projects; concrete actions in different regions of crisis in the world (in Cote d'Ivoire, Burundi, Republic Democratic of Congo Israel-Palestine, Timor Leste, Colombia and in Haiti).

Peace and Sport was founded by Joel Bouzou, current President of the organisation. Joel Bouzou is an Olympic medallist, world champion of Modern Pentathlon and current Secretary General for the International Union of Modern Pentathlon (UIPM). He is also Advisor to H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco.