

## Newsletter 01/2014 (July/August)



**Dear friends of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung,**

Usually we send out this newsletter on July 1<sup>st</sup> to inform you about our activities. But this summer was overshadowed by the destructive war on Gaza, in which over 2.100 Palestinians were killed and thousands injured, in addition to widespread, massive destruction of civilian infrastructure. Hbs has been supporting the work of partner organisations in the Gaza strip for many years and it was very depressing to see all our friends in Gaza suffering. While we were glad that finally a ceasefire holds, the real work just begins: To lift the blockade and create real chances and development for the wonderful, talented young people of Gaza. We will continue to work towards these goals together with our partners in Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. This newsletter as always informs you about some of our past and upcoming activities.

Dr. René Wildangel, Director hbs Ramallah (Palestine/Jordan Office)

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Our Middle East Blog (in German) <http://heinrichvonarabien.boellblog.org/>

### News from hbs-Ramallah office (Palestine-Jordan)

#### 15 years hbs in Ramallah

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, hbs opened its doors to colleagues, friends, and visitors to celebrate the 15<sup>th</sup>



anniversary of the foundation's office in Ramallah. After a welcome by Dr. René Wildangel and Mrs. Nadeen Karkar on behalf of hbs Ramallah, as well as Mrs. Renate Eisape (hbs Berlin) and Dr. George Giacaman from our longstanding partner Muwatin, Dr. Salim Tamari of the Institute for Palestine Studies gave an inspiring

presentation about “Images from Palestine Before 1948”. Throughout the day, publications, films, and information brochures by hbs and our partner organisations were on display at our office. You can find a selection of pictures from the Open Day [here](#).

### Visits and delegations

In September 2014 **Ralf Fücks**, [co-president of the hbs](#), visited Palestine and held talks with officials and partners of the foundation. He visited Ofer Military Prison together with our partner organisation [Addameer](#) and learned about their human rights work for Palestinian prisoners. Talks with Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh and other officials focussed on the political situation after the Gaza war and the future of the unity government.

In July 2014 **Omid Nouripour** (the new [foreign policy speaker](#) of the Green Party group in the German Parliament) visited the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel. During the hbs-organized tour Mr. Nouripour met with representatives of the newly formed Palestinian unity government and participated in briefings by Palestinian human rights activists. In addition to this, he visited the military prison in Ofer to witness a military court hearing, and took part in a tour through the Jordan Valley.

On June 15<sup>th</sup> a group of 12 members from the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung's state office of North Rhine-Westphalia visited Palestine and met with several of our partner organizations in order to learn about the current political, social, and environmental situation in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Hbs organized a meeting with the [Wadi Hilweh Information Center](#) in Silwan about the daily challenges faced by Palestinians living in the East Jerusalem neighborhood, as well as with [Al-Kamandjati Music School](#) in Ramallah.

### Past Events and Activities

On 6<sup>th</sup> of March, Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh, former negotiator and senior advisor to president Mahmoud Abbas, political analyst, legal advisor, and former PLO spokesperson Diana Buttu, as well as the director of the human rights organization Al Haq, Shawan Jabarin discussed the state of “**The Kerry Framework – (Any)where to go from here?**”. A summary of the debate can be found [on our website](#).



Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh at a discussion on John Kerry's framework proposal for Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations

On **15<sup>th</sup> of April**, the second Boell Debate in 2014 focused on “**The Red Sea-Dead Sea Canal – Implications for Palestine**”. Dr. Shaddad Attili, head of the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA); Dr. Abdelrahman Tamimi, the Director General of the Palestinian Hydrology Group



(PHG) and lecturer at Al-Quds University; Dr. Azmi Shuaibi, Commissioner for Combating Corruption at AMAN (Transparency Palestine) and commissioner at the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights; as well as Dr. Maher Abu-Madi, associate professor for Water and Environmental Studies at the Institute of Environmental and Water Studies

(IEWS), Birzeit University. The main focus points of the discussion were the importance of transparency and information transmission between the

Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian public, the practical environmental effects of the announced Red Sea-Dead Sea Canal project, and Palestinian water rights. Read more [here](#).

The latest Boell Debate featured a presentation by Dr. Yousef Daoud and Sameera Museibeh of Birzeit University about their ongoing research “**A Socio-Economic Analysis of Renewable Energy in Palestine**” on **May 20<sup>th</sup>**. Representatives and experts from the Palestinian energy sector, related public institutions, as well as civil society were invited to discuss the research, which is supported by the Palestinian-American Research Center in cooperation with hbs. Some of the main advantages of increased renewable energy usage in the occupied Palestinian territory could potentially include a limited Palestinian dependence on energy import from Israel, reduced electricity costs in the long run, and opportunities in the Palestinian labor market.



Dr. Yousef Daoud and Sameera Museibeh presenting the results of “**A Computable General Equilibrium Model of Renewable Energy in Palestine**” at hbs

A conference on “**Unveiling Gender-Based Violence Against Syrian Women Refugees in Jordan**” was held on **28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> April** in Amman. The Heinrich Böll Foundation was among the supporters of the conference, which was organized by Salma Network and Aisha Network and implemented by Heinrich-Böll Foundation’s partner Arab Women Organisation (AWO) of Jordan. Present at the conference were members of 16 different Arab women networks and organizations from 12 Arab states. The conference not only emphasized the urgency of the precarious situation of Syrian refugees in general, but also the particular difficulties faced by Syrian women refugees in Jordan.

On **May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014**, the hbs office Ramallah participated in the [German Weeks 2014](#) in Amman and contributed by inviting for a talk by environmental activist **Bashar Hummeid** at 7iberCafé in Amman. Bashar presented on the “[Freedom Machine](#)”, a system developed by his organization Meezan which combines renewable solar energy production with urban farming on rooftops and presented a film on the project in [Hebron 2013](#).

## Upcoming Events

On **September 1<sup>st</sup>** Hbs has started a **EU project** on “Advancing the Rights of Vulnerable Palestinian Women and Children in East Jerusalem”. This project is implemented in partnership with the Arab Center for Agriculture Development (ACAD), Sawa, Stichting War Child, Art Lab and Right to Play- Netherlands. The 3 year project will include various activities and services in order to strengthen the communities, especially women in East Jerusalem such as providing psychosocial support, economic empowerment, renovation and rehabilitation of child friendly facilities, cultural and artistic training. Please check our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) soon for more information.

On **September 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> 2014**, hbs partner organisation **Muwatin** will hold its **annual conference** on the Palestinian political economy under occupation. Check our website for more information.

In October hbs Palestine will receive a **group of activists and partners** from our [office](#) in Capetown, South Africa in order to discuss the current situation in Palestine. Check our website for updates.

In October and November hbs will support various activities in the Qalandiya International Festival a biannual cultural event exploring public space and political art, check out the Program for [details](#).

On the **18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> of November**, the **Institute of Jerusalem Studies** will be holding its **annual conference** in cooperation with the Ibrahim Abu-Lughod Institute (Birzeit) at Birzeit University. The focus of this conference will be on the “Geo-Strategic and Political Situation of the Gaza Strip.”

From **23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014**, the hbs offices in Beirut, Tunis, Rabat, and Ramallah in cooperation with IUCN Regional Office West Asia, will organize a **Regional “Autumn School” in Amman** focusing on Natural Resource Rights. This workshop is a continuation of hbs’ Regional Summer Schools in the last years, and as always will invite young professionals from the Arab Middle East and North Africa to participate, exchange expertise, and network. The [call for applications](#) is open until [10 September 2014](#).

Palthink for Strategic Studies, in cooperation with Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Palestine & Jordan, is organizing a visiting fellowship program with the aim of “Building Research Capacity in the Gaza Strip” and looking at urgent post-war policy challenges.

The Uranium Film Festival will come to Amman, Jordan, for the first time in December 2014 in a cooperation between hbs, Al-Balad Theater, and Jordanian environmental organizations. More information will be available soon on our website and facebook.

### Resources/ Miscellaneous

Since our last newsletter, our partner organisation **MA'AN Development Center** has issued six editions of its environmental magazine online in Arabic. You can find the current issue (July/ August 2014) and all other editions on the MA'AN [website](#). MA'AN also recently published its first podcast discussing “Consumerism between the Economy of Resistance and Environmentalism.” The podcast can be found in Arabic on the magazine's website!

You can find the excellent **Jerusalem Quarterly** which is edited by our partners from the Institute for Jerusalem Studies with many full text articles [here](#).

As always, the **Wadi Hilweh Information Centre** provides excellent news and footage about the situation in Silwan and East Jerusalem in general on its [website](#).

You can find recent articles released by our partner organization **Masarat – Palestinian Center for Policy Research and Strategic Thinking** [here](#).

Read a [recent article](#) by Christine Chemnitz (hbs) and Shefali Sharma on “the high cost of cheap meat”.

*hbs Ramallah* offers **internships** to students and graduates from Germany and elsewhere, for those with a strong interest in political and social development in the region and whose interests align with the hbs program. Our next call is for the period from **April through June 2015**. For further information please check our [website](#).

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