



Newsletter 01/2015

30/06/15

Dear friends of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung,

Almost one year ago, a terrible war on Gaza started, in which over 2.251 Palestinians were killed, among them 1.462 civilians and 551 children. These depressing figures are from the freshly published [report of the Commission of Inquiry on the Gaza Conflict](#). Unfortunately, the situation in Gaza still looks very grim. No political solution has been found, the blockade continues, and the economical situation is worse than ever with record youth unemployment as the World Bank [recently reported](#). An [earlier report](#) by AIDA co-published by hbs described the shortcomings in the reconstruction process. I hope civil society in Gaza, including our partners and friends from [Al-Mizan](#), [Filistiniyat/Nawa](#), [Maan](#), [AYCM](#), [CWLRC](#), [Palthink](#) and many others will soon witness a “new course” in order to bring much needed change, justice, and new opportunities.

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)

Visits and Delegations

Bauke Baumann, from the Middle East Desk at Heinrich Böll Foundation, visited hbs Ramallah on **May 14th**. After a briefing with our partner [Addameer](#) he visited the military court at Ofer Military Prison. He then spent the afternoon in Silwan with the [Wadi Hilweh Centre](#) and in the Old City with the [African Community](#).

Barbara Unmüßig, co-President of Heinrich Böll Foundation, visited Palestine and the hbs Ramallah office from **May 18th to 22nd**. Her programme included several field trips, official meetings, and discussions with local activists and partners of hbs Ramallah. In Gaza,

Ms. Unmüßig had the chance to meet hbs partners from the Gaza strip and hear firsthand about their traumatic experiences from the war on Gaza as well as about attempts to work towards more accountability and justice for the victims. Experts from hbs' partner Al-Mizan gave an extensive field tour and briefing. In the West Bank, she visited Ofer prison with Addameer as well as several locations of our [EU Program](#) „Advancing the Rights of Palestinian Women and Children in East Jerusalem“.

Past Events and Activities

Dr. Suha Al-Madbouh gave a presentation on the methodology and findings of her [doctoral thesis](#) concerning “**Farmers' Perceptions of Agricultural Wastewater Reuse**” on **February 24th**. Her research focused on factors shaping farmers' perceptions of wastewater reuse projects as well as the Palestinian consumers' perceptions towards the purchase of produce irrigated with reused wastewater.

A “Böll Debate” was held on **April 15th** and jointly organized by hbs Ramallah and [Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network](#). The guest speakers MK Aida Touma (Joint List), Nadim Nashif (Baladna, Director), and Nour Odeh (Journalist and political analyst) discussed the topic “**The Joint List and the Israeli Elections - What does it mean for Palestinian Politics?**”. The debate was opened by Dr. René Wildangel (hbs) and moderated by Tariq Dana (Al-Shabaka).



hbs Ramallah supported [Youth Against Settlements](#) (YAS) to conduct their [Speaking Tour of Germany](#) during the week of the “[Open Shuhada Street](#)” campaign (**March**). Since 1994, the formerly flourishing Shuhada Street in Hebron’s historic centre has turned increasingly into a [ghost street](#) and has become a symbol for Israel’s policy of Human Rights violations and segregation. YAS activists Abed Salayma and Mufid Sharabati, a resident of Shuhada Street, advocated for Human Rights and equality in Hebron.

In cooperation with our partner [Al Kasaba](#) Theatre and Cinematheque hbs Ramallah organized the [film week](#) “[انا لاجيء - I am a refugee](#)” in **May 2015** that focused on the conflict in Syria and particularly highlighted the situation of the refugees and the humanitarian crisis. The collection of the films screened at the event reflected the personal experiences of filmmakers as well as the Syrian and the Palestinian refugees in Syria, especially at Al Yarmouk refugee camp. Canadian-Lebanese director Carol Mansour attended the festival.

The new book "[Conscious Choices: A Guide to Ethical Consumerism in Palestine](#)" was introduced on **May 21st** with a [farmers' and artisans' market](#) at the municipality's Ottoman Court in Ramallah al-Tahta. The visitors had the chance to meet a few of the producers featured in the book, browse their products, and enjoy live music by the local Ramallah artists Shadi Zaqtan, Mohammad Karzoun, and Khaled Aramen. After a brief welcome by Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung's co-President Barbara Unmüßig, Lina Isma'il, one of the authors, presented the book.



Jerusalemite activists and partners of hbs Ramallah in the EU project "[Advancing the Rights of Palestinian Women and Children in East Jerusalem](#)" participated in the public discussion on "**East-Jerusalem under siege: Enhancing infringed rights of Palestinian Women and Children in the occupied territory**" in Berlin on **May 27th**. Sama Alweida (gender expert and director of the

Women's Study Center), Yasser Qous (Director of the African Community and youth activist), and Rana Ayed (Art Lab project manager) informed the German public about the current situation of women and children in Jerusalem, the restrictions of movement inflicted by the Israeli authorities, and gender based violence in the city.

On **June 17th** hbs Ramallah and [Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network](#) presented a forthcoming [report](#) by the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) on "**How to revive EU Policy on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.**" Dr. Mattia Toaldo (Policy Fellow, ECFR), Hugh Lovatt (Project Coordinator, ECFR), Dr. Mustafa Barghouti (Al-Mubadara, General Secretary), and Charles Shammass (Senior Partner, Mattin Group) discussed ideas and measures for a more effective EU policy. The ensuing discussion with the audience was moderated by Dr. Alaa Tartir (Al-Shabaka).

Resources / Publications / Miscellaneous

In **December 2014** Michelle Pace (Roskilde University, Denmark) and René Wildangel (hbs Ramallah) published the article "[How we are permanently destroying Gaza](#)" on opendemocracy.net. The authors argue that without a radical policy change new violence might erupt in 2015.

In **April 2015** the article "[After the election in Israel - Palestine's hope in Netanyahu](#)" by René Wildangel (hbs Ramallah) was published on Qantara.de. He points out that while many in Israel were hoping for Netanyahu's electoral defeat, Palestinians were more reserved and now expect the international community to exert more pressure on Israel.

Environmentalists **Muna Dajani** and **Lina Isma'il** conducted research during the summer of 2014 for the innovative **guidebook** "[Conscious Choices: A Guide to Ethical Consumerism in Palestine](#)" which was published in English and Arabic by hbs Ramallah in 2015. The authors visited farmers, artisans, and companies throughout Palestine, and wrote 100 profiles introducing their work. The result of their journey is a guidebook that invites its readers to get to know the people behind the products they buy, and to build and expand their own individual network of producers. You can download the book in PDF format through the link above, or visit our office to pick up your own copy.



Svenja Oberender (Environmental Justice Programme Coordinator, hbs Ramallah) conducted an [interview](#) with **Saad Dagher** on traditional farming in Palestine, which was published in the **May 2015** edition of "[This Week in Palestine](#)".

Our partner [Al-Mezan](#) published two haunting films and two brochures on the **impact of the 2014 war on children in the Gaza strip**. They tell, among others, the sad story of the killing of the Bakr family kids playing at the beach and the quest for justice. [Here](#) you can have a look at the booklet about children, [here](#) you can watch "The Beach" and [here](#) you can access "Remains of Photos" (both with English subtitles).

Find news from Palestine on the page of the [Women's News Agency Nawa](#) (Arabic).

Please find the latest and past version of our partner organisation **MA'AN Development Center's** environmental magazine online in Arabic on their [website](#).

You can find the **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 a wide range news and footage about the deteriorating 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](#).

hbs Ramallah offers **internships** to students and graduates from Germany and elsewhere, for those with a strong interest in political and social developments in the region and whose interests align with the hbs program. Our next call is for the period from **April through June 2016** (application deadline 15.08.). For further information please check our [website](#).

Imprint:

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