

# PRESS RELEASE

**United Nations Development Programme  
Damascus, Syria**

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**Tel: (963-11) 6129811**



## **Memorandum of Understanding Signed for the Establishment of a "Cancer Research Center with the Support of MTN"**

**Damascus, October 29, 2009** – Within the framework of the project "Enhancing Civic Engagement in CSR through inclusive growth based civic private sector partnership," a memorandum of understanding (working paper) for implementation of the project "Establishment of a University Cancer Research Center" was signed. The project is implemented in cooperation between the State Planning Commission and the United Nations Development Programme, the Ministry of Higher Education, the State Planning Commission and the UNDP. The initiative has also received a significant financial support from MTN as part of its contribution towards community development. The value of MTN's contribution is 500 thousand U.S. dollars, payable over a period of five years. The program will work in partnership with MTN to mobilize more financial resources that can reach up to 2 million US Dollars in support to this unit.

This project aims to establish a Center for Advanced Cancer Research in Syria in order to diagnose the causes of cancer through appropriate technology, and to raise awareness among men, women and children for early intervention. The Center will help research the causes of cancer, infection rates and geographical distribution through the use of innovative and sophisticated laboratories. Moreover, the center will prepare for a major national effort to control the disease, including epidemiology, clinical research, development of prevention capabilities and interventions to reduce the spread of the disease.

The project aims are:

- 1) contribute to raising the efficiency of early diagnosis of cancer and provide treatment and follow-up to cancer patients;
- 2) contribute to supporting and improving the dissemination of awareness about the causes of cancer;
- 3) create a map for the distribution of this disease in the country;
- 4) create a database of patients;
- 5) enhance the institutional capacity of the government bodies concerned;
- 6) provide the Center with the advanced technological equipment necessary for diagnosis and analysis (and by mobilizing more financial resources).

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For more information and media attendance, please contact:  
Media and Communications Team [syriamct@undp.org](mailto:syriamct@undp.org),  
United Nations Development Programme, Damascus, Syria  
Tel. +963 11 6129811 ext. 226 Fax: +963 11 6114541  
<http://www.undp.org.sy/>

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