

Palestinian Commitment

Commitment Overview

In January 2008, Cisco announced a three-year, US\$10 million investment to help establish a sustainable model of job creation and economic development in the Palestinian territories, in cooperation with President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority.

Key aspects of the program include venture capital investments in high-potential small businesses throughout the region and training programs that support the development of information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Cisco will also engage in public-private collaborations to encourage additional investments in the region.

Why Cisco?

Cisco aims to build stronger and more productive communities by increasing access to opportunities for education and economic participation. The Palestinian Commitment provides an opportunity to leverage Cisco® networking and collaborative technologies and our strategic partnership model to support the sustainable development of career skills and job opportunities, particularly in the ICT sector, and provide lasting benefits to individuals within the Palestinian territories.

Updates and Impact

As of December 2009, progress has been made in the following areas:

- **Advisory Board:** A Commitment Advisory Board was established with various stakeholders in Palestine including representatives from the Office of the President, government, and private sector organizations and Cisco representatives from Corporate Affairs, Business Development, and Cisco Israel R&D.
- **Outsourcing:** Cisco outsourced five R&D projects to three Palestinian companies: Asal Technologies, GSSI, and Exalt. These projects employ 36 Palestinian engineers, including 18 recent college graduates. The Cisco R&D teams in Israel are very happy with the quality of work and synergies formed between the Palestinian and the Israeli engineers, and have begun to transition this project from a social responsibility program to a sustainable business investment. Exalt started with 10 engineers and has grown to 17 as a result of this engagement. Other international businesses are now exploring opportunities to outsource their work to Palestinian companies.
- **MYTecC:** Cisco collaborated with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to launch the Mediterranean Youth Technology Club (MYTecC) in the Palestinian territories. The MYTecC initiative aims to develop responsible leadership, technology, and life skills, while encouraging cross-cultural dialogue in a Web 2.0 environment. In 2009, MYTecC grew from 100 participating youth in Palestine to 200 with the support of USAID.
- **Technical Training:** Sixteen engineers from ICT companies in Palestine were selected to complete the Global Technology Acceleration Program (GTAP) in Jordan.
- **Expotech 2009:** Cisco helped sponsor Expotech Technology Week in November 2009. The event was organized by the Palestinian Information Technology Association (PITA), the Palestine ICT Incubator (PICTI), and Palestine Trade Center and included guests from the Palestine ICT sector, Cisco, Google, and Microsoft.

Planned updates include the following:

- **Business Incubator and Venture Capital Fund:** Cisco plans to invest in a venture capital seed fund program to support the development of ICT startups within the Palestinian territories and enhance the PICTI incubator.
- **Engagement Model:** The Commitment team is developing engagement guidelines for other companies and organizations that are interested in supporting business development within the Palestinian ICT sector.

For More Information

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