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**PRESS RELEASE: The Federal Republic of Germany through KfW in Partnership with the Palestinian Water Authority Supports the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility in Improving Wastewater Treatment in the Central Area of Gaza with a budget of 86.6 million Euros**

**Gaza, 2 March 2023**

After years of planning and construction, the Gaza Central Treatment Plant was officially inaugurated on 2 March 2023. Wastewater from eleven communities with one million inhabitants will be treated in a regulated manner and afterwards disposed to Wadi Gaza which starts to be a recreational area. The plant thus significantly improves resource protection and reduces health risks of the local population as well as pollution on land and sea.

The inauguration was done under the Patronage of H.E. President Mahmoud Abbas in the presence of H.E. Minister Mazen Ghunaim, Head of Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) and H.E. Mr. Jochen Flasbarth, State Secretary in the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany, and Mr. David Kunze, Director KfW Office Ramallah/Gaza, and H.E. Dr. Maged A. Abu Ramadan, Chairman of the Coastal Water Utility.

The Bureij Central Wastewater Treatment Plant (with a capacity of 60,000 cubic meters) is part of a complete wastewater treatment system that is financed by Germany through KfW Development Bank. The project includes the construction of Wadi Gaza central pumping station, pressure pipelines, gravity collectors and 4 Mega Watt solar photovoltaic cells. In addition, parts of the project funds were used to rehabilitate the existing Sheikh Ejeen Wastewater Treatment Plant in Gaza city. The two treatment plants are capable of treating 120,000 cubic meters of wastewater in the first stage of the project; thus, benefitting about one million inhabitants in the central area of Gaza strip.

In addition to water, electricity is scarce in Gaza. Against that background, the Gaza Central Treatment Plant is energy self-sufficient. This is made possible by a biogas and a solar plant



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which were built on the site. These plants can produce more electricity than the whole complex consumes itself, and thus also provide electricity for some households in Gaza.

Minister Mazen Ghunaim, Head of Palestinian Water Authority, stressed the importance of the project during the inauguration:

"This vital project, funded by Germany through KfW and the other two completed projects Northern Gaza Emergency Sewage Treatment and Khan Younis Wastewater Treatment Plant, are considered priority interventions within PWA Water Sector Strategic Plan to save the fragile Coastal Aquifer from irreversible damages and improving the sanitation services for more than 2.2 million inhabitants. The project is a gateway for treating wastewater, improving environmental and health aspects, cleaning the sea, reviving Wadi Gaza, providing additional water resources, and developing the agricultural sector. The Palestinian Water Authority will continue its support for the provision of water and sanitation services to meet the needs of the Palestinian population according to priority needs in cooperation and with the support of all partners."

State Secretary Jochen Flasbarth announced during the opening:

"I am very pleased to formally inaugurate the Gaza Central Treatment Plant with our Palestinian partners. Today we celebrate the fruits of years of planning, constructing and testing. Untreated wastewater affects everyone living in Gaza and along the coast. Already in its trial phase, the new plant has considerably improved the water quality in the Wadi Gaza and the sea. Germany will continue its efforts as a reliable developmental partner to help improve the living conditions of all Palestinians."

Dr. Abu Ramadan thanked the Government of Germany during the inauguration:

"We thank the Government of Germany for their generous support in the water and wastewater sector through KfW which has enhanced the services; and we are hoping that we will get further support by international donors to implement the second and third phase of expansion to this plant in order to accommodate the treatment capacity of 120,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day."