Dear, Partners, Stakeholders and Friends of Palestine

It is such a pleasure for me to present to you the achievements of the Higher Council of Innovation & Excellence (HCIE) from January to June 2020. First of all, allow me here to elaborate about the Higher Council for Innovation and Excellence (HCIE): it was established by a presidential decree, aiming to promote innovation and excellence in the State of Palestine and to facilitate achievements with real impact on all aspects of life, especially in investing and supporting innovative projects, opening international and regional horizons for innovators, and taking up membership of international and regional institutions working in innovation.

HCIE has a board of directors that is composed of forty-seven members. These members represent Presidency Office, Prime Minister Office & Ministries, Universities, Private Sector, NGOs and Associations. HCIE organizes “The National Innovation Forum” on an annual basis;

It’s worth mentioning that HCIE is aware of the vital role of the Palestinian Diaspora and its technical and financial capabilities. It has opened channels of communication with Palestinian communities, Palestinian scientists, and experts abroad to provide the nation with their expertise and potential. HCIE is currently working on the establishment of a branch for the Diaspora, in order to achieve its aspirations in this regard. It also did not overlook the capabilities of the Palestinian community within the Green Line, opening fruitful cooperative relations with leading institutions there, sharing experiences and working together.

HCIE has also made great efforts to establish the national innovation and leadership system. Its main objective is to facilitate tasks for innovators in various fields, and to identify the major players, in order to develop a mechanism that creates synergy between all relevant entities. The Council was able to cooperate with various universities, institutions of higher education, and institutions sponsoring innovation within the private sector. It has also launched the network of institutions working in the field of innovation in cooperation with the Union of Engineers and Leadership. Last but not least, HCIE has created the “Bank of Information” for innovators. It has also developed a network of innovators “InnoPreneur”; where more than 2000 innovators are registered. Thus far, the Council has supplied seed fund for 60 innovative ideas.
In order to raise the awareness of the innovators, HCIE has provided the country with international expertise in this field and has given the opportunity for these innovators and entrepreneurs to participate in exhibitions and entrepreneurial events. The Council has relations with most international and regional institutions, and has signed many cooperation agreements and memorandums of understanding with Arab and international institutions. It has as well joined international initiatives on innovation and leadership. In 2020, the Council sent ten innovators who won gold and silver awards respectively to international exhibitions. Palestine has taken its place as an active member among international and Arab institutions; where it has signed 23 cooperation agreements and memorandums of understanding, for instance with the following:
The International Federation of Inventors’ Associations (IFIA), Nam S&T CENTER, The International Society of Scientific Parks and Innovative Areas (IASP), The World Organization for Science and Technology (MLS) The Turkish Science and Technology Center TUBITAK, The French Investment Network ANIMA for Economic Cooperation of the Mediterranean, and The Egyptian Academy of Science and Technology.
His Excellency-Mr. Mahmoud Abbas-The President of Palestine-has recommended establishing a support fund that belongs to HCIE; therefore, the Innovation and Excellence Support Fund (IESF) was established to support and invest in startups. So far, the IESF has invested in 12 startups in the fields of: renewable energy, agricultural tools, health, services, building materials, and modern technology.
HCIE is also active in supporting the innovation infrastructure in Palestine from accelerators to venture capital institutions, facilitating the establishment of business incubators. The Council, in cooperation with the Jerusalem Governorate Electricity Company, has established the Palestinian
Energy and Alternative Energy Incubator (PIE) and we are in the process of establishing incubators in the fields of water and agriculture.

Regarding building capacity of our labor forces, HCIE works with the relevant authorities to provide appropriate education and introduce skills that increase the capabilities of young graduates, thereby increasing the quality of innovations. HCIE has also sponsored various initiatives to introduce leadership learning in some universities.

Through all its efforts, HCIE looks forward to reshaping the innovation system to foster an innovative environment in Palestine, by enacting laws governing this area, establishing tax policies that encourage entrepreneurs and enabling procedures that reduce registration fees for innovators. This is the reason behind forming a special committee that drafted a law for start-ups; which was sent to the Prime Minister's Office and to the Ministry of National Economy, hoping that this law will be issued before the end of 2020.

Since HCIE is the official body in charge of innovation and excellence according to the presidential decree, it has initiated the formation of a national team comprising representatives from 22 national institutions from all sectors (public, private, civil and academic), to develop the “National Strategy for Innovation”.

HCIE has obtained a four-dunam land upon a presidential decree, and has prepared an ambitious project to establish a headquarters that will include laboratories, workshops & lectures halls, and an incubator office space for innovators and start-ups. His Excellency-The President, Mahmoud Abbas has given his guidance to put the project on the priority list of donor countries' projects. This project will contribute to building an environment that stimulates innovation and excellence.
The Council's ambitions and aspirations go beyond our borders and its belief in the ability of our people is greater than ever. We have absolute confidence that we have innovative pioneers who are capable of building a modern Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

**Palestine has turned the challenge (Corona pandemic) into an opportunity: More than 60 innovative projects and initiatives**

The Higher Council for Innovation and Excellence (HCIE) and Academic Institutions working on enhancing and improving the role of science and technology in combating the epidemic of COVID-19, and to take part in the support and development of scientific and technological innovations in Palestinian communities. The collaboration with the international community is very essential, so, from the beginning of these critical times of COVID Health Crisis, HCIE has launched calls for supporting initiatives, research-driven and technology-based interventions.
initiated to fight out the outburst of the COVID pandemic. HCIE has received more than 60 initiatives from several institutions and individuals.

**HCIE signs the agreement of Sponsorship & Cooperation with DOROOB Company**

Ramallah-9/1/2020-H.E. Eng. Adnan Samara-President of HCIE, and Mr. Mohammad Waheed-CEO of DOROOB Company have signed an agreement of partnership and sponsorship. DOROOB Company is a local Palestinian company that was established in 2019. The company developed DOROOB application. This application is a navigation system that works via Android and IOS. This system allows the user to get to his/her location safely and correctly. Overcoming all of the problems in different land navigation systems like Google, Waze, etc. The maps were designed correctly in addition to the landmarks.
A meeting regarding the joint research program between HCIE and TUBITAK

Ramallah-HCIE conducted a meeting that included the pioneers of scientific research and the researchers from different universities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This is to introduce the joint research program that was launched by HCIE in cooperation with the TUBITAK. This program allows innovative researchers from Palestine and Turkey to cooperate in order to improve the quality of their applied research in different sectors such as water, waste-water, vital technology, nano technology, energy, and information technology. This program will provide an environment to enable researchers to apply and complete their research work to benefit the society and the national economy through focusing on the problems that the national sectors come across in the previous mentioned fields.
The Presentations of Khadori Technical University Students at HCIE

Ramallah-28/1/2020. The Staff of HCIE welcomed the students and showed interest in their projects. Khadouri students presented their projects so that they can get feedback to improve them in order to be economic beneficial projects. HCIE is ready to prepare a training workshop to improve the students’ skills needed for innovative projects.
Launching the training camp of Technology Transfer

Ramallah-16/2/2020. HCIE has launched the training camp Tech-Transfer Bootcamp-Palestine 2020 in cooperation with Excellence and Accelerator of Business “Flo”. This camp is organized with ANIMA-The French Organization. HCIE stated that this program is the first of its kind in Palestine. This program targets researchers of universities and Palestinian research centres. The program improves the skills of researchers in order for them to work in teams and collaboration and discovering the market needs and building business models and marketing and financial plans for their researches and innovations in order for them to get funds and investments to transfer their projects into start-ups.
Palestine wins the first place in the Foreign Inventor-Tunisia

Ramallah-23/2/2020. Under the patronage of HCIE and ALNAYZAK Organization, Mr. Atef Shokukani-The Palestinian Inventor-who is the coordinator of innovation and leadership projects at Birzeit University-has received the first place in the Foreign Inventor Award for his Cvision invention. This was during the First session of the Mediterranean Salon for inventors, which was organized in Tunisia, 18, 19, 20 of February 2020. The invention is a system to increase safety for drivers through reducing accidents by informing the driver not to use the cell phone while driving and to inform the family of the driver to warn them of the use of cell phone while driving so that they can warn him/her.
HCIE and the Arab Youth Union have signed an MOU

Ramallah-25/2/2020. The MOU targets the importance of joint effort for spreading awareness regarding the importance of innovation and excellence, and to compete in the world of knowledge in coordination with the needs of the development needs of the Palestinian society. Both sides will work based on this MOU to coordinate the joint calls and idea-exchange for projects in order to resolve the problems facing the youth in the Palestinian Society.
Ramallah-3/6/2020. HCIE in cooperation with The Association of Blind Graduates in Gaza have signed an MOU to sponsor Maan Saweyan-Together-to prevent the spread of CORONA. The project will target blind women and men. The idea of the program started from the local and international events. The program will use spreading awareness among the blinds through flyers in Braille writing system and through the radio about the dangers of CORONA virus and the need to stop spreading it.
HCIE in cooperation with The Palestinian Incubator for Energy and the American Arab University support the COVENT artificial breathing device project

HCIE supported the idea of the Covent Ventilator device and appreciated the support of H. E. Dr. May Alkaileh-Minister of Health for her support to such important projects. This device is used for emergencies only to ensure the continuity of artificial breathing in a safe way without any complications. It is a mechanical electromechanical device. It includes electric and mechanical parts.
In addition, this device is a successful experiment to produce an artificial respiratory device with an open source for emergencies. It has been developed by a group of specialized engineers including Eng. Ibraheem Albool, Eng. Amer Hamayel, Eng. Mahmood Barham, Eng. Tareq Othman, Eng. Mohamamd Jaradat, Eng. Ala’ Alseefi, and Eng. Ahmad Abed Albaset. This device was sponsored and supported by HCIE and the Palestinian Incubator for Energy and the American Arab University.
HCIE signs an agreement with AlNajah National University

Ramallah-4/6/2020. The cooperation agreement targets enhancing cooperation in the fields of conducting scientific and research projects in the medical fields. The focus of those projects is to discover the needed proteins and genes connected to CORONA virus. The pursuit to find a cure for this virus that kills many people on a daily basis. HCIE confirms the importance of such projects for the benefit of the Palestinian society. HCIE has agreed on supporting these projects.
HCIE pays a visit to Sama Pharmaceuticals Company

Ramallah-8/6/2020. HCIE and Sama Pharmaceuticals Company discussed the future cooperation and the obstacles faced by the private sector especially in the fields of licensing and reliability. Both sides discussed the way they will enhance a suitable environment to support projects and creative initiative to real outputs to support the Economy of the Palestinian Knowledge. Both sides have discussed the different ways they support such projects for their great benefit to the Palestinian society.
Launching BUSALA Innovation Challenge

Ramallah-17/6/2020. HCIE in cooperation with PICA the BUSALA Innovation Challenge. This challenge targets connecting creative and pioneers Palestinians who have projects to solve problems and obstacles faced by the marginalized communities in different parts of the world to achieve the sustainable development goals. This project is organized by HCIE and PICA. HCIE stated that the idea behind this project stems from the many challenges faced by the world and that we must work as a team to support our societies by overcoming those challenges.
Mr. Imad Alzuheeri-The Director General of PICA-that this initiative falls under the strategic partnership framework that is formed by the agency in cooperation with the national organizations within different fields and specializations.

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HCIE signs an investment agreements with start-up companies and to support an innovative project

Ramallah-1/7/2020. HCIE signed investment agreements with three start-up companies along with an agreement to sponsor an innovative project. The innovative project-ABJAD-is owned by Mr. Ayham Bader. This project is the first application that translates the sign language from the deaf and dumb to Arabic (transcripts and voice). This program also translates Arabic language
(voice and transcript) to sign language. This project stems from the challenge in communication between the deaf & Dumb with others and vice versa.

A Call for Innovative Projects and Initiatives to combat Corona Virus

HCIE is willing to support any project that will fight CORONA virus. HCIE will cover the financial and technical expenses of the project. The projects may include producing needed substances to fight corona and to stop it from spreading. It could also include health and preventive machines and equipment.