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## PRESS RELEASE

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# Palestine Trade Center Launches EU-Funded Market Intelligence Hub to Strengthen Palestinian Export Competitiveness

The Palestine Trade Center (PalTrade), through the European Union-funded EU4Trade project and under the umbrella of the Ministry of National Economy, today officially launched the Market Intelligence Hub (MIH), a new pillar of Palestine's export support infrastructure that combines a digital market intelligence platform with a physical hub at PalTrade's headquarters. Designed to strengthen the competitiveness of Palestinian exporters, the MIH provides businesses with access to market data, trade compliance tools, international buyer intelligence, and an interactive space for knowledge exchange, engagement, and export promotion.

The opening ceremony was held at PalTrade's headquarters in Ramallah, with opening remarks delivered by His Excellency the Minister of National Economy, **Eng. Mohammad Alamour**; the Head of Cooperation of the European Union Representative Office, **Mr. Mario Giuseppe Varrenti**; and the Chairman of PalTrade's Board of Directors, **Mr. Ibrahim Barham**. The event brought together key partners from across Palestine's export ecosystem, including chambers of commerce, government ministries and institutions, sectoral unions, donor partners, and private sector organizations, reflecting a shared institutional partnership in advancing Palestinian exports and strengthening the national support infrastructure required to access regional and international markets.

## A New Resource for Palestinian Exporters

The Market Intelligence Hub is the flagship output of the EU4Trade project (*EU4Trade: Unleashing Palestine Export Potential to the EU and International Markets*), a EUR 3 million initiative funded by the European Union and implemented by PalTrade over 36 months as part of the Team Europe Initiative supporting Palestinian private sector development.

The MIH provides Palestinian small and medium enterprises with:

- **Market data and analysis** — sector-level intelligence across target export markets, including the EU, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and emerging markets
- **Export compliance information** — including GCC import requirements such as G-Mark certification, Halal certification, and health certificate standards
- **HS6 commodity classification tools** — featuring an AI-powered HS Code Finder to simplify tariff identification for food, agricultural, and industrial products

- **Market entry requirements** — regulatory and certification guidance for priority export destinations

The platform was developed in-house by PalTrade following a comprehensive needs assessment of Palestinian exporter information gaps and benchmarking of international market intelligence models.

## Addressing Critical Export Challenges

The MIH launch comes at a pivotal time for the Palestinian economy. Palestinian territories experienced a 35% GDP contraction in Q1 2024 — the largest on record — with exports declining 16% and imports falling 31%. Operational constraints including extended border crossing delays at the Allenby Bridge (10 days for exports, 30–40 days for imports) continue to challenge Palestinian trade.

*“The Market Intelligence Hub addresses a fundamental gap in Palestinian trade infrastructure. Palestinian exporters have consistently identified the lack of accessible, reliable market intelligence as a barrier to entering new markets. The MIH puts actionable data directly in their hands.”*

— **Ruwa Jabr**, Palestine Trade Center CEO

## Part of a Comprehensive Export Development Programme

The MIH is one of four pillars under the EU4Trade project, which also includes:

- **Technical Assistance** to 20+ Palestinian SMEs across food and beverages, stone and marble, furniture, plastics, and handicraft sectors — with 15 companies already signed and receiving dedicated consultant support
- **Market Development** — including the establishment of a Rotterdam logistics hub for EU market access and participation in international trade exhibitions such as Anuga (Germany), SIAL Jakarta, GITEX Expand North Star, and the Qatar Web Summit, which collectively generated over 300 B2B meetings and a USD 2 million commercial pipeline
- **Capacity Building** — with 145+ first-time exporter certificates issued, quality management and risk management training delivered to 100+ participants, and a digitalization programme currently underway with 10 selected companies

## Next Steps

Following the launch, PalTrade will begin a series of MIH dissemination workshops to onboard Palestinian exporters and trade stakeholders across the West Bank. The platform will continue to expand its data coverage and analytical capabilities throughout the remaining project period.

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### About PalTrade

The Palestine Trade Center (PalTrade) is a non-profit membership organization with 132 member companies across nine Palestinian governorates. PalTrade serves as the national trade promotion organization, supporting Palestinian businesses in accessing international markets. PalTrade is chaired by Mr. Ibrahim Barham.

### About EU4Trade

EU4Trade: Unleashing Palestine Export Potential to the EU and International Markets (Contract NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2021/428-609) is a 36-month, EUR 3 million project funded by the European Union and implemented by PalTrade. The project runs from July 2024 to July 2027.

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#### **Notes to editors:**

- Photography from the launch ceremony is available upon request.
- The EU4Trade project is part of the Team Europe Initiative supporting Palestinian private sector development.
- All references to the MIH platform, data, and capabilities are as of the date of this press release.