

**December 7-9, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Hebron**

Schleswig Holstein's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education and Women, Ute Erdsiek-Rave, visited the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) in East Jerusalem in order to gain an impression of the situation in the education sector and the position of women in Palestinian society. During her visit, she held a number of talks with her Palestinian counterparts, as well as with representatives of the education sector, and discussed policy aspects regarding women and education.



*Minister Ute Erdsiek-Rave with Rami Nasrallah from the International Peace and Cooperation Centre (IPCC)*

In her talks with Palestinian institutions, the visiting politician from Germany, who has great experience in the educational field, was able to provide advice about the upcoming educational reform in the school area. In her lecture on "Participation and education as guides to social progress," which she gave at Birzeit University's Center for Continuing Education, the minister found her audience interested in current experience gained in the process of reforming the German educational system.

In order to get a hands-on picture of Palestinian educational facilities, the minister visited the Talitha Kumi School in Beit Jala. The school follows the Palestinian curriculum, but lays stress on teaching German. In talks with two of her female Palestinian counterparts – Dr. Khulud Daibes Abu Dayye, Minister for Women and Tourism in the Palestinian Authority (PA), and Lames Al-Alami, the PA's Minister of Education – Mrs. Erdsiek-Rave underscored the importance of women participating in areas of life that involve social policy.



*Ute Erdsiek-Rave talking to WATC-representatives*

Speaking as a trained teacher, she made the point that equal rights for both sexes must necessarily be based on the teaching of this principle at an early age and be treated as something that is utterly normal. In this connection, school curricula must be examined to see whether they contain aspects of gender-specific bias.

As part of a round table held in Ramallah, the minister discussed with female politicians and activists the possibility for women in Palestinian society, with its predominantly patriarchal character, becoming involved in social-policy areas. The participants made the point that the women's movement, which enjoyed a lengthy tradition in Palestine, focused

on a small group of women, but that there was no society-wide consensus about equal rights for men and women.