



Staff Success Story

Mobility programmes

Name: Dr Mahmoud Nayef Baroud

Mobility Project: Erasmus Mundus Programme- PEACE Project

Host University: University of Porto

Country: Portugal

Mobility Duration: One month



- **Description of the activity:**

First, I would like to express my thanks for the all those who are in charge of the program whether in Spain, Portugal or Palestine for their help and support. Actually I was supposed to teach diverse literature subjects, but could only teach some classes because the students were busy taking their final exams. In addition I could make use of the library and get access to the online sources in order to start writing some papers. I had also the privilege to meet some MA and PhD students doing degrees in Comparative literature where we exchanged views to matters pertaining to their research . I met some of the staff of the English department where we had a wonderful talk about the hurdles we face when leaving the Gaza strip because of the siege and also how to enhance the future cooperation between our departments.

- **Gained Expertise:**

Taking advantage of this programme has a big long-term impact on my academic and personal life. Being in touch with another academic institution throughout meeting its academic and admin staff and students is an amazing significant experience which will have a great influence on my academic career in a very positive way. That's in terms of the gained knowledge, skills and experience. In fact the program has



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enhanced my ability of how to be open and curious towards new challenges in life. Equally important, it has increased my own personal tolerance and acceptance of the other and how to consider their new values and behaviors when compared with mine. . Never to give up in life is Avery vital lesson I learnt throughout the program as well.

- **Advantages:**

This program provides a unique learning context in which diversity and non-discrimination are addressed, practiced and valued. It has been a great merit to meet students and ordinary citizens from different countries and socialize with them regardless of their faith culture or background. Accordingly and during my y stay over there in Porto I could so easily familiarize myself with so many cultures and nationalities. In particular, the Portuguese are very friendly and peaceful people. Living with them is a big a advantage. The mobility was not the end but the start of a future cooperation between our respected depts. as we will continue discussing the possibility of organizing online lectures and exchanging visits.

- **Challenges:**

The most difficult challenge is the question of how to leave the Big cage Gaza. In 2015 I got the visa but could not travel because of the unjust siege imposed on Gaza. I also encountered lots of difficulties in the Rafah Crossing. Simply speaking leaving Gaza is a big dream for Gazans. It is a journey full of suffering only for Gazans. You leave and immediately you start thinking of how to return back home. There is no guarantee.

- **Recommendations:**

I recommend the intervention of a third party authority to facilitate the travel of Gaza academics via the Israeli side or help us leave decently via Rafah Crossing.



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