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During Launch
Remarks by Amman Mayor, Ministers of Information and Culture

Launch of "E'raf" Project to Enhance Transparency, Right to Know

- Partnership with ministries and public institutions to develop information saving and retrieval systems and to improve procedures for public information presentation

On Monday 10th October 2016, the Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists (CDFJ) launched the "E'raf" project for enhancing transparency and the right to know. It marks the completion of efforts exerted over the several past years to support the right of access to information.

In partnership with the USAID-funded Rule of Law project, CDFJ will work closely with ministries and public institutions to develop the procedures and mechanisms related to the right of access to information. CDFJ will cooperate with the King Abdullah II Center for Excellence to integrate this right within the criteria of the King Abdullah II Award for Excellence in Government Performance and Transparency.

CDFJ plans to rally the capacities of civil society organizations to use the Right of Access to Information Law and emphasize their right to know as well as to support them obtain answers when questions arise for the purpose of finding solutions and developing their performance.

Through the "E'raf" project, CDFJ will support the skills of media practitioners specialized in the use of information to enhance transparency and accountability.

A large number of officials, public figures, diplomats, media practitioners and representatives of local and international civil society organizations were invited to the launch ceremony. Mr. Aqel Biltaji, the Mayor of Amman, will participate in the ceremony. He will speak about the importance of knowledge and how the Greater Amman Municipality worked towards ensuring that information and knowledge is transferred to its public in the capital city of Amman. Dr. Mohammad Al-Momani, the Minister of State for Information Affairs, will also deliver remarks about the importance of the right of access to information of media practitioners. Mr. Nabih Shuqum, the Minister of Culture and the Chairman of the Information Council, will speak about the importance of proliferating and promoting the right of access to information. Mr. Sean Osner, USAID/Jordan's Director of Democracy, Rights and Governance Office, and Mr. Nidal Mansour, CDFJ's CEO, will also deliver remarks during the launch ceremony.

The "E'raf" project, which will continue for three years, aims at achieving the following objectives:

- Assist to establish mechanisms and best practices to provide the public and the public institutions with information



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RULE OF LAW PROGRAM

- Assist to develop and institutionalize information classification mechanisms at ministries and public institutions according to international best practices.
- Develop a system to save and retrieve information in a manner that ensures efficiency of enforcing the Right to Access Information Law and guarantees the society's right to access knowledge.
- Develop the use of websites and smart phones into platforms for voluntary disclosure of information, in addition to service-provision.
- Work with the parliament and the government to endorse amendments to the Right to Access Information Law to render it more compatible with international standards and practices.
- Encourage civil society organizations and media practitioners to use the Right to Access Information Law to improve transparency and to develop accountability mechanisms.

CDFJ's Executive President Nidal Mansour said that "the 'E'raf' project will work in partnership with the ministries and public institutions to provide technical and technological assistance and the necessary expertise to develop their efficiency in the area of the right of access to information."

Mr. Mansour stressed that any reservations and comments about the Right of Access to Information Law does not prevent the process of improving the government performance towards enforcing this right. This strengthens the values of transparency and accountability and underscores Jordan's commitment to international obligations by promoting and spreading the right of access to information among the people.