

**EISENHOWER FELLOWSHIPS – 2009 Multi-Nation Program**  
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**Muamar Orabi Nakhla**  
**General Director**  
**Wattan TV**  
**Ramallah, WEST BANK, PALESTINE**

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Muamar Orabi Nakhla is the General Director of Wattan TV, a secular station based in Ramallah. Founded on democratic values, Wattan TV has seen its staff and popularity increase to the point where it now enjoys the highest viewership in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. He is currently responsible for all areas of programming, public relations, and overseeing a staff of 42. Wattan TV is set to expand even more over the coming years, with plans to build a national news agency and introduce a satellite service. To support his goal of ensuring Wattan TV's longevity in the face of a tumultuous media environment and stiff competition from media outlets supported by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, Mr. Nakhla focused his fellowship on learning about best practices in media development, adaptation, and sustainability. He also met with experts on conflict resolution and Israeli – Palestinian relations.

Through the seven weeks of his fellowship program, Mr. Orabi Nakhla had the opportunity to discuss current trends in the media and how these have impacted the field of broadcast journalism. Meetings at universities, television networks and newspapers provided insights to the changing landscape of the media and the effect of the internet and other technologies on the way news is disseminated. Highlights of his fellowship included an afternoon spent at WNET Thirteen, a New York public media provider. Mr. Orabi Nakhla commented that he will now produce daily reports from Palestine to be broadcasted through Thirteen's prestigious and widely viewed program "World Focus". He also greatly enjoyed his visit with Stanford University's Journalism program and discussed possibilities for future academic exchanges between the university and Wattan TV.

Mr. Orabi Nakhla also spent a great deal of his fellowship meeting with individuals and organizations that focus on issues of conflict resolution and more specifically address the issue of Israeli – Palestinian relations. In many of these meetings, Mr. Orabi Nakhla discussed the importance of an unbiased, secular source of journalism as means for promoting democracy and peace in the region. Some of the organizations he visited included the National Endowment for Democracy, Center for International Media Ethics, Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, and the Palestine Center at The Jerusalem Fund.

Mr. Orabi Nakhla commented that, as a whole, his fellowship "was very important and fruitful for me and beyond my expectations. Two weeks before the start of the program, I hesitated to come, because...to be away from my work is very difficult...It was a critical time in my work because Wattan TV is going to go from local to satellite in August, and this involves a lot of preparation. But now, in the last days of the fellowship, I realize how great an opportunity it was and how time passed quickly."