

Prof. Annick Suzor-Weiner, University Paris-Saclay and Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie

Dear members of the Board and Committees of the WISHEPP series, dear distinguished Guests, dear colleagues and friends.

I am very glad to be with you virtually for this opening ceremony, although I would much prefer to be really present in Nablus and its beautiful university An Najah, as I have been so many times for almost 15 years. The second time I visited the university was with Professor Cohen-Tannoudji, Nobel Laureate in Physics, a visit organized by the French Consulate, which has been always so supportive of the collaboration with University Paris-Sud, now Paris-Saclay. It is a real pleasure and an honor to greet today the Consul de France, M. René Troccaz. The presence of the AUF regional Director, Jean-Noël Baleo, is also very much appreciated and promising for future actions.

I still vividly remember (and the same I am sure for Dr Roland Lombard, who is also with us today) when Ahmed and Hadil first arrived in Orsay, in 2008, to enter the Physics Masters program, in French! A double challenge. To make a long story short, after two Masters, two children and two PhD's, they came back at An Najah and progressively built the WISHEPP schools, with their colleagues and foreign collaborators, from France, Italy, CERN... All along these years, they have been supported and helped by the top managers of the University, President Prof. Maher Natsheh and Vice-President for International and External Affairs, Dr. Kherieh Rassas. Both of them have understood the potential of these young academics, as well as they understand how important it is to attract high school students to science, opening the University to entire classes during the WISHEPP schools. Congratulation to them, and to all of you, for this long-term vision for building a country.