

November, 2013 – Working on supporting children affected by conflict, poverty and deprivation, **Rabeea Najm Al-Din Al-Naser**, the founder and manager of **House of Tales and Music** (HTM) in Jordan, was elected by the members of the Anna Lindh National Networks to be the winner of this year's EuroMed Dialogue Award 2013. The theme of the Award this year, which was bestowed at the closing of the Heads of Networks meeting that took place in Vilnius, Lithuania, was "Migrants as Ambassadors for Mutual Understanding".

The HTM, founded three years ago, uses storytelling, music, singing, painting and handcrafts to support vulnerable kids and youth. It has organised and delivered workshops for more than 3,000 children from local refugee camps, and have trained over 50 librarians working in 3 refugee camps in Irbid and Amman, Jordan.

"I learnt that storytelling is one special way to communicate, especially with children. I discovered that arts and literature are real easy ways to educate and to transmit your message. A story opens the doors for children's minds for more imagination and creativity and can free him/her from their hard times," said Al-Naser, who was a teacher and a librarian before being a children's storyteller.

"One day I just discovered that I'm a storyteller and it became my dream to have a place in which I can tell stories to children that can open their minds and open them the space to get their voices out. Telling one story can substitute lectures and it sticks in minds; it can also clarify big ideas like acceptance, tolerance, respect," she said passionately.

The Jordanian storyteller started her activities by herself, with only a talent and a passion for storytelling for children but then with time a troop of musicians, theatre artists and painters joined Al-Naser, sharing a passion for communicating with children through arts and literature, which she describes saying: "Arts reach children faster and it touches their souls freely and leave them happier and enable them to have their own voices."

As part of this year's award, organised by the Anna Lindh Foundation and the Fondazione Mediterraneo, a tour will be organised for the winner among the ALF networks, in addition to publishing a book with stories from different Euro-Med countries adapted to the Arab culture by Al-Naser.

This year's EuroMed award ceremony also opened the floor for a number of organisations from all over the Euro-Med region, working with themes related to that of the award, to come together and present their activities. The list of runner ups included a couple of organisations from across the region with most impressive initiatives.

The list of four runner ups is: **Foundation Orient Occident** (Morocco), which is a non-profit Organisation with the objective of creating socio-economic centres and vocational trainings to different target groups including migrants; **Community Arts North West** (UK), an organisation led by artists to create access to cultural production for people that are excluded from or fringes of the mainstream cultural resources; **Sport Against Racism Ireland** (Ireland), a social enterprise that uses sport to combat racism and discrimination in society; and the **Plate-Forme Migrants et Citoyenneté Européenne** (France), an international association that fight discrimination, valuing the contribution of the migrants to the local development.