



MESSAGE  
FROM THE  
EDITOR

As we go about our daily lives, we tend to push many facts about Gaza to the backs of our minds. This issue will remind you of the hardships that continue to afflict Gazans as a result of a ten-year, ongoing siege: Gaza's economy is crippled, unemployment is rampant, reconstruction after

Israeli assaults is lagging behind schedule, and for a population of 1.9 million people, 95 percent of groundwater is undrinkable, electricity is available on average only 2 to 6 hours a day, medicines are among the many items banned from import, and the list goes on and on. But the Gazans who live under these dire circumstances are prevailing and show inspiring stories of perseverance and creativity. In this issue you will find articles attesting to both these aspects of life in Gaza, the ongoing suffering and a people's ingenuity and determination to make the best of life.

Our sincere Thank You goes to UNDP/PAPP for sponsoring this issue and contributing a wealth of information – some of which should inspire immediate action! Topics range from Gaza's economy to reconstruction, employment, education, and a beautiful vision of Gaza flourishing again in its historic splendor – if only the siege were lifted! You will find articles by Roberto Valent, Special Representative of the Administrator for UNDP/PAPP, Mufeed Al Hassayna, Minister of Public Works, Mahmoud Abu Shahla, Minister of Labor, Robert Piper, UN Coordinator for Humanitarian Aid and Development Activities, Bo Schack, Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza, Bashir Rayyes, General Coordinator of the National Team for Gaza Reconstruction, Nader Atta, Officer in Charge of the Governance and Social Development Unit, Mohammed Abu Mezyad, Mahmoud Abu Aisha, and UNDP's Productive Families Economic Empowerment Programme (DEEP).

Immerse yourself in the voices of Gazan youth and in stories of separation and reunion, playing soccer in Gaza, debate teams, and the Gazan women's technology and business community. Learn about alternative narratives of historical events, and discover a father's unusual way of dealing with and raising awareness about the many children killed in the 2014 war on Gaza. Our book of the month offers delicacies from Gaza's kitchens, and our record number of artists of the month in one issue testifies to the creativity of Gazans.

As we continue in solidarity with 1,500 prisoners who are on a hunger strike to demand basic rights and prepare for the commemoration of another anniversary of the *Nakba*, we present this issue as an opportunity to connect and show solidarity, if only by remaining informed.



Wishing you well from our entire team at TWIP,  
Sincerely, Tina Basem

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## Forthcoming Issues

June 2017: **50 Years of Occupation**

July 2017: **Celebrating Culture in the State of Palestine**

August 2017: **Exploring Beautiful Palestine**

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