



## RANIA ELIAS

Rania Elias has been the director of Yabous Cultural Centre in Occupied Jerusalem since 1998, responsible for local and international public relations, business management, events management, project coordination, and funding. She was a leading figure behind the renovation of Cinema Al-Quds, as it was transformed into the largest and most important cultural center in Jerusalem, Yabous Cultural Centre. This was accomplished despite the obstacles imposed by the Israeli occupation on Palestinian organizations that aim to function in Jerusalem. Yabous provides a venue to celebrate and share cultural traditions, interact with artists, and participate in a range of activities that stimulate and expand the creativity, diversity, and artistry of Jerusalem and Palestinian cultural expressions. Yabous is the name given by the Canaanite tribe of the Jebusites to the city they built where Jerusalem lies today.

Rania is on the board of trustees of several international and Palestinian organizations and networks, including BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights; Spafford Children's Centre, which provides health care to some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children in East Jerusalem and the West Bank; Rawdat El-Zuhur, a nongovernmental nonprofit women's organization in East Jerusalem that runs a preschool and elementary school that serve mainly children from low-income families; the European Forum of Worldwide Music Festivals; the Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem; among others. She has been a prominent speaker at various international and local conferences and meetings that dealt with cultural and human rights issues in Palestine. As a fieldwork researcher, she contributed to several studies, and she has been actively involved in voluntary social work that deals with various types of human-rights violations.

In 1995, Rania was the acting director of the Bethlehem International Festival, held by the Palestinian Ministry of Culture, and from 1995 to 1998, she served as the administrative director of RIWAQ Center for Architectural Conservation, Ramallah. Since 1998, she has been the director of Yabous Centre's annual Jerusalem Festival. In 2007, she was appointed as a member of the national and executive committee for Al Quds – Capital of Arab Culture 2009, where she also served as head of the events committee.