

Testimonies ...

When asked “What gives you the feeling of security or insecurity these days?” Here is a sample of replies that we received.

One of the first times I had a panic attack in Palestine, a young woman – a dynamic entrepreneur whom I had just met – looked at me heaving and muttering and simply said, “Are you having a panic attack? I have them all the time. Welcome back.”

I think this sums up my feeling of insecurity in Palestine. Beyond the constant fear of settlers and soldiers, the apparatus of the occupation has condemned us to live with a perpetual sense of dread. Everyone talks about the security of Israel, so much so that they’ve forgotten that we are the ones who have to be protected.

Karim Kattan

In my mind, the word security embodies a combination of hope and other feelings on the personal, professional, and broader levels.

On a personal level, what really matters is to move on in a life full of hope for better times for all, along with my beloved family and friends. On a professional level, I feel secure when I see my staff motivated to accomplish common goals, to work as a team, and most importantly to act positively, although we encounter many challenges and hardships. On the broader level, I feel secure when I see that my people have still not lost the blessing of caring for one another – asking about, caring for, and supporting each other – and where the pain and happiness of one is the pain and happiness of all. This is the essence of our steadfastness in the face of all the challenges and inequality caused by the longest and ugliest occupation in the world.

Last but not least, being a Palestinian who lives in Palestine and not even thinking about leaving is what gives me an utter sense of comfort.

Ola Awad-Shakhshir

My advice is: Stop watching the local and international news, which is full of nothing but death, misery, and fear. It holds our attention 24/7 and is hard to shake off. It poisons our feeling of security.

Suheir T. Khoury, 61

The feeling of insecurity comes from the weak education system that diminishes individuality and emphasizes standardization. My sense of security comes from witnessing the younger generations as they strive to realize their dreams at home rather than abroad.

Lina Haramy, 40

Insecurity: the feeling of being targeted, which is renewed and intensified every morning!

Rawan Sharaf

A great subject for discussion and conversation. I’d like to hear some noises from prospective college students on this topic.

Isa Danho

I do not feel secure because we lack food security. Reaching a point where I cannot buy vegetables because they are too expensive for my budget, or not being able to buy high quality products and instead having to choose less expensive ones makes me wonder how I will ever be able to raise my children in such a negative environment.

Malak Hasan, 26

Security = independence + social coherence, national security, citizenship, morals, unity + the rule of law. Insecurity is enduring oppression under occupation + lack of social coherence + chaotic leadership with no real vision and no rule of law.

Hani Boullata, 42

My basic feeling of insecurity comes from the fact that I live under a cruel occupation that might do anything at any time: commit murder, imprison people, confiscate land, destroy... My other insecurities, such as the education system, the health system, and all our problems, come in second on the list.

Reem Masrugi

I feel secure in Switzerland because there is a well-defined law that protects me, my privacy, and my rights, and an excellent social security system that offers me broad protection against risks, an outstanding health insurance plan, and a unique education system which prepares my son for the future. We feel secure when we have the feeling that our needs will be provided for. (Even though the hierarchy of needs differs from one individual to another, access to food and water is essential to all.)

Amjad Al-Nashashibi, 56

The image of my two daughters returning home after spending the day at Birzeit University and passing through Qalandia Checkpoint unhurt gives me the greatest feeling of security, five days a week! Feelings of insecurity pop up every time I remember when my daughter confronted me with the statement: “Homeland is dignity, and dignity is homeland.” I pray that both would secure “the right to life” for her and her sister.

Terry Boullata