



About half of our Palestinian brothers and sisters live outside of historical Palestine – and many of them not by their own choice. The plight of refugees is gaining in poignancy and we must remember that for them, we can make a difference through much-needed aid, support, and activism!

This issue, however, focuses on the diaspora outside of refugee camps. Many of its members left to escape hardship or against their free will as well. Most have adapted to their new surroundings in ways refugees never could, established successful businesses, built careers in a variety of fields, and reached high levels of education, wealth, and prestige. We in Palestine look to them for support under increasingly difficult economic and political conditions (although some are “fed up with requests for aid,” as one of our authors was told of a successful business empire). But to be fair, many members of the Palestinian diaspora are deeply committed and, or eager to help. Much gratitude goes to these businesswomen and –men, to the volunteers and activists for their support and engagement!

I have space here to highlight only a few of the insightful suggestions and creative ideas mentioned in this issue. Authors point to the economic potential the diaspora holds that can and should, as Dr. Yahya Al-Salqan points out, be used for mutual benefit. Engagement can take the form of establishing offshore businesses – for example in IT – direct investment into startup enterprises, or joint venture funds. Sam Bahour stresses that we need to know more about the diaspora (we have no concrete data available for most of the diaspora communities in the Western hemisphere). Aisha Mansour suggests the application of a community philanthropy model, engaging grassroots communities to ensure that mutual needs and interests are met. Many point out that we must consider the needs and interests of diaspora Palestinians and their descendants as much as our own and find ways of engagement beyond economic enterprises – although there is room for expansion here as well.

Enjoy the personal accounts of diaspora experiences and visions for a future that cherishes all our beautiful particularities, wherever we call home. Consider yourself invited to the many events offered this month and explore some of Palestine’s beautiful sights. There is so much more I should mention, but there is simply not enough space...!

Thank You’s go to all our authors (...really, I should mention them all) and to our sponsors, your support is much welcomed! From the entire team at TWiP, we wish you a good month ahead.

Warmly,  
**Tina Basem**  
Editor



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November 2016: **High Tech in Palestine**

December 2016: **Religious Celebrations in Palestine**

January 2017: **Palestine and the Common Good**

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