



The Last Word

A Functional Nation

Almost always, the process of producing issues of *This Week in Palestine* evokes emotions. The most common is pride, but other sentiments include good old passion, awe, respect, anticipation, happiness, sadness, and most definitely anger. It goes without saying that stress goes into every single issue!

As we were working on the August 2021 issue themed “West Jerusalem,” I remember (this is rather embarrassing!) that I literally cried when I read one of the articles that told the story of a Palestinian family who lost their home after the *Nakba* in 1948. The emotion stemmed from sympathy with the family as well as from *qahr* (an Arabic word that has no English translation but that can best be described as the feeling you get when grave injustice takes place and you feel helpless to do anything about it). I am getting similar feelings as we’re working on the May 2022 issue themed “Life in Pre-1948 Jerusalem.” For now, however, it’s the brilliant emotion of pride that I feel as we finalize the April 2022 issue themed “Inspirational Youth.”

We are proud of our young men and women who shine in more ways than you can imagine, despite economic hardship, lack of opportunities, racism, treatment as second- and third-class citizens, and restrictions on movement, not to mention situations of physical disability for some. Whether in IT or through coming up with innovative ideas and implementing them professionally using modern technology, or even succeeding in starting a project to raise major aid money for people in need, Palestinian youth have proven not only that they’re resilient but also that they can compete internationally. I often say that our youth excel despite the major obstacles that hardly anyone else faces. Imagine what they could do if they had the benefit of equal opportunity and serious public support?

I salute the local Palestinian and international institutions, projects, and initiatives that encourage and incubate innovative youth projects. The articles in this issue provide evidence that they are on the right track and that more of these projects are needed. My concern, though, is always about how to reach rural regions and marginalized societies, but I am confident that those who run and encourage youth projects will take this point into consideration. Youth, after all, are our hope to ensure that we have a place on the regional map of functional nations.

Long live Palestine!

Sani Meo
Publisher

