



## Message from the Editor

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has released a report on the conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories titled “A Threshold Crossed,” which highlights Israeli violations of Palestinian rights through measures that include “the most odious crimes in international law.” This report officially confirms, from a legal perspective, what has been alleged numerous times: “Israeli officials are committing the crimes of apartheid and persecution – crimes against humanity.” In a comment that outlines his journey in reaching this verdict, the editor of the report, Eric Goldstein, states that he never thought that this accusation would be plausible when he took up his post as HRW’s acting Middle East director in 1989. Such an awareness shift indeed requires questioning the prevailing stereotypes, which can be difficult for many but is an essential prerequisite for more widespread efforts to bring justice and peace to the region. Goldstein asserts: “We must raise the political price for Israel to maintain the status quo.”

The report also highlights that the Palestinian Authority violates civil, political, and other rights through measures that include systematic, arbitrary arrests and torture of critics and opponents. The recent cancellation of long-overdue elections on shallow pretenses falls in line with this verdict.

Given these conditions, we asked the authors of this issue to suggest ways to improve the situation, fully acknowledging that the role of a leader is much more difficult than that of a critic. We thank those who took on this challenge: Former Palestinian Minister of Foreign Affairs and international diplomat Dr. Nasser Al-Kidwa; Mohammad Al-Masri, a co-founder and current director general of The Palestinian Center for Policy Research and Strategic Studies – MASARAT; economist Samir Huleileh, a main participant in the negotiations team during bilateral and multilateral talks with Israel from 1992 until 2014; Abed Khooli, a senior data-science, data-journalism, and open-data specialist and advocate; writer and activist Khaled Barakat, general coordinator of the preparatory committee for the *Masar Badil* (Alternative Palestinian Path) Conference; Aseel AlBajeh, a legal researcher and advocacy officer at the Palestinian human rights organization Al-Haq; researcher Ubai Al-Aboudi, executive director of Bisan Center for Research and Development; Marwan Tarazi, director of the Center for Continuing Education at Birzeit University; Dr. Khaldun Bshara, an adviser at Riwaq Centre for Architectural Conservation; and communication and advocacy professional George Sahhar.

Interspersed among the articles are profiles of Palestinians whose lives and work have contributed to the steadfast foundation upon which the struggle for Palestinian liberation persists. Titled “Ancestors of Palestinian Liberation,” this initiative includes profiles that have been collected and beautifully illustrated by Sarah Gold and Zelda Edmunds of the Anemoia Project.

Our Book of the Month is *Home Away from Home*. You will find two Exhibitions of the Month and a Film of the Month. Ahlan Palestine invites you to a pottery workshop. Enjoy the listed events, most of which are virtual.

Last but not least, we would like to thank **PHARMACARE PLC**, whose generous support made this issue possible!

From the entire team at TWiP, we wish a Happy Eid al-Fitr to all who are celebrating this occasion.

Sincerely,

**Tina Basem**

