

12 July 2017

A Letter to Maha on the occasion of the launch of
Palestinian Model Parliament: Towards Legislation Based on Palestinian Identity, Progressive Ideals, and Just Content
Ramallah, Palestine

Dearest Maha,

Today is the day! And one might say, “better late than never.” Except the timing of the much-awaited book launch of *Palestinian Model Parliament: Towards Legislation Based on Palestinian Identity, Progressive Ideals, and Just Content* is perfect. In every corner of the world, it seems, the powerful are trying with all their might to push back, as far as they can, women’s interests and women’s rights. The lessons described in the collection of essays in “PMP” remind readers that women’s rights and interests, our rights and interests, are never guaranteed, regardless of where we have stood in national liberation struggles, of what seats we occupy in national and local governments, of our places in labour unions, NGOs, universities, and corporations.

Over 20 years ago, you and your feminist comrades understood the critical importance of feminists, along with your supporters, identifying opportunities for fundamental societal change then strategically advancing the intertwined goals of liberation of Palestine and of Palestinian women. You all were visionaries, risk-takers, doers, who on numerous occasions faced the wrath of segments of Palestinian society not ready or prepared to face the changes being called for. In 2017 we, here again, need vision, risk-taking, and doing. “We struggled during the years of Model Parliament and we must and will continue the struggle” is one core message of the book. We shall—in Palestine and in all the places where women are violated and denied—continue the struggle. Courageously and with integrity, as you specifically implored the readers.

We didn’t complete the book in time for you to see the final forms in Arabic and in English. But, rest assured that your enduring commitment to ensuring that some of the central organizers—Randa, Reema, Sama, Soraida, Taghreed, Zahira—tell the story has made it possible for readers, now and for years to come, to see the Palestinian Model Parliament through your eyes. What a gift!

Listening to your stories of being a leader of the PMP movement changed fundamentally how I think about organizing for women’s liberation. Helping to bring to life *Palestinian Model Parliament: Towards Legislation Based on Palestinian Identity, Progressive Ideals, and Just Content* is one of the most fulfilling experiences of my life.

Thank you, Maha, for having given me the chance, for having entrusted this work to

me!

Your sister-friend and comrade in the struggle,
With gratitude, respect, and love,

Margo