

## **Message from the DG of MAS on current developments**

The staff of MAS began, since the announcement of the emergency measures to combat the coronavirus pandemic, to prepare to shift to remote work as much as possible and began video-conferencing research exercises at an early moment.

The Institute has successfully moved to remote working arrangements this working week and we have been able to retain our full administrative, financial and research functions with so far only limited disruption. MAS is also carefully assessing the possible impact of this crisis on its own financial situation, as a non-profit and independent research institution.

However aware of its mission and purpose, the Institute has since last week redirected its full research capacities to an intensive collective research effort identifying the possible macro, sectoral and social impacts of recent developments, examining options for policy and other national responses needed to weather the shock and, hopefully recover sooner rather than later. We will be using remote meeting facilities to conduct a number of focus group discussions over the coming days with private sector, academic and government experts to better inform our own research.

MAS is also analyzing the implications of global economic developments and policy shifts in what is truly a historic turning point for the economies of the world, no less than the social transformations this experience will surely entail. Clearly the special situation of Palestine as a non-sovereign State without resort to the usual fiscal or monetary instruments is high in our analytical framework of what is and what may not be feasible when it comes to policy responses.

MAS expects through this effort to issue in April 2020 a Special Issue of the "Economic Monitor" (which is published in partnership with PCBS, PMA and PCMA) focusing on this first assessment of how this crisis will impact the Palestinian economy this year and beyond. We are also today launching a special public information service to alert local readers to important global economic developments and documents, and allow them to access selected significant news, opinion and research material that is now beginning to appear on the economic dimensions of this unexpected, and unprecedented global crisis.

Keep safe

Raja Khalidi

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