

Looking Back, Looking Forward

Review of an Eight-Year Presidency

By Itamar Rabinovich



*Office of the President // Tel Aviv University
May 2007*



***Looking Back,
Looking Forward***

Review of an Eight-Year Presidency

By Itamar Rabinovich

*Office of the President
Tel Aviv University
May 2007*

Looking Back, Looking Forward

Table of Contents

I. The Starting Point	3
II. The 2000/2001 Turning Point	10
III. Coping with the Crisis	13
a. The efficiency, downsizing and recovery stage	14
b. The strategic plan and structural reform stage	16
IV. A Change in Government Policy	26
V. Eight Years of Projects	28
VI. Construction and Physical Development	30
VII. A View to the Future	32
VIII. Thanks and Acknowledgements	34

I. The Starting Point

The agenda formulated and presented on the eve of my election as Tel Aviv University President was predicated on a concept of the University's character, quality and status and on a set of goals:

- 1) Over a period of some forty years, the University's founders, leaders and faculty had registered remarkable accomplishments and had constructed a most impressive edifice. Within a relatively brief span, TAU became Israel's largest and most influential university, and in many areas an excellent university in Israeli and international terms. TAU's reputation has derived from three principal sources:
 - (a) Excellence in a number of scientific and academic areas.
 - (b) Professional schools in such areas as management, business, law, medicine and engineering.
 - (c) Research institutes and academic think tanks with status and impact in Israel and in the Jewish world and other international arenas.
- 2) The campus had been built up (with a number of well-defined exceptions) and, at the same time, the government capped student enrollment. It was clear that preference had to be assigned to academic over physical development.
- 3) In financial and budgetary terms, the University was thinly spread. In the 1990s, the annual budgets were balanced or nearly balanced (in the summer of 1999 in preparing for the budget year beginning on October 1, 1999, a deficit of NIS 40 million was apparent). The University had a relatively small endowment, a large actuarial debt, no income from intellectual property and its fundraising lagged behind that of its three "older sisters." The tasks were clear: improve fundraising, generate income from intellectual property, adapt the University's operational patterns to the government's funding policies and bring in more research money, primarily from competitive sources.
- 4) This last point was closely related to the issue of TAU's scientific/academic standards. TAU's standing and positioning were determined by a group of first-rate departments, but these were, to some extent, compromised by weaker

departments and mediocre averages in a number of important variables (doctoral candidates and scholarships, competitive research money, much too generous policy on tenure).

- 5) Governance and administration. It was clear that the University's administration was in need of renewal and change and that a constitutional governance reform was called for. The latter issue was closely related to the debate that was soon to develop in the national arena ("the Maltz Commission") and to a number of fundamental questions of university life, such as the faculty's role in managing the institution. Yet it was clear that, short of causing turmoil over familiar issues (the relationship between the President and the Rector, size and role of the Senate), several structural changes were called for (role and size of the Israeli Executive Council, the composition and role of the International Board of Governors, the role of the faculty deans).

These issues were not unique to Tel Aviv University. Since the "big strike" at Israel's universities and the new wage agreement with faculty in 1994, the leaders of the Finance Ministry's powerful budget department had been pressing for far-reaching changes in the universities' governance. They argued that the familiar pattern based on full fledged or partial duality – the existence of paralleled, academic and administrative hierarchies, academic "sovereignty" of the Senate, election of officers by the faculty – was an insurmountable obstacle to proper and efficient management of the universities. Their pressure led to the formation of the Maltz Commission (to be discussed in detail below) and was, so it transpired later, one of the important forces that led in the late 1990s and early in the next decade to profound changes in Israel's higher education system.

- 6) TAU's branding – an issue closely connected to fundraising. It was commonly known that TAU was seen as an excellent, influential and "prestigious" (not to say elitist) university in Israel, but was not sufficiently well known (and regarded) in the Jewish communities in North America and Western Europe – the principal sources of donations for the Israeli universities' academic and physical development. This was an important reason – though not the only one – for the discrepancy between the funds raised by TAU and those raised by older (and better branded) institutions.

- 7) In Israel, by contrast, TAU was perceived as both excellent and "elitist," with admission (particularly in lucrative and popular fields) being beyond the reach of most. Among students and candidates, the University was seen as haughty, tough and not "user friendly." The University's location in the heart of Israel's main metropolitan area and the small number of dormitory rooms worked against the development of campus life and "a campus experience." The size of the faculty (around 1,400 senior faculty) and its work habits were an obstacle to the emergence of the University's wider sense of belonging and loyalty.
- 8) TAU was not only Israel's largest university but its most diverse one – with nine faculties ranging from the hard sciences to the performing arts. This could have led to shapelessness and inefficient use of resources or, managed properly, to the further evolution of a diverse campus boasting inter- and multidisciplinary teaching and research programs in the full sense of these terms.
- 9) A significant weakness of the University concerned its international exposure. The University's academic offerings were enriched by two very successful international programs, the New York State/American Program in Medicine and the Kellogg-Recanati International MBA, and a somewhat less successful School for Overseas Students. The University also had a number of effective cooperation agreements with foreign universities but the overall number of foreign professors, post-doctoral fellows and students in a campus of 30,000 students was by far too small.

From this foundation an initial plan of action was put together:

- 1) Setting goals and priorities for academic development to reinforce existing centers of excellence, to develop new and novel areas of teaching and research, and to build interdisciplinary programs that take advantage of the campus's richness and diversity. Fundraising for new buildings was given low priority, except for such research structures as SPF and FMRI. High priority was given to mobilizing resources for building and operating a mechanism for external academic review (such reviews had occurred previously on a sporadic basis). For this purpose, a donation was raised and put at the disposal of the Rector for creating and running an external review system for the academic units.

- 2) Reorganizing Ramot, TAU's technology transfer corporation. Ramot had been in existence for three decades and had some sources of revenue (publication of high school textbooks, industrial services and, for a few years, a "privatized" law school), but in sharp contrast to the Weizmann Institute and the Hebrew University's comparable corporations, Ramot had almost no revenues from intellectual property. It is difficult to overstate the importance of income from this source, which reduces the University's dependence on government allocations and places at the administration's disposal unrestricted funds for academic development. Needless to say, while seeking to create a steady stream of revenues from intellectual property, the University's leadership must preserve the centrality of basic research and to prevent too sharp a tilt by the faculty to applied research.

In any event, and for reasons that cannot be elaborated here, the impressive volume of applied research on campus had not been translated into revenues for TAU. Suffice it to say that, on the eve of my assumption of office, an Israeli company that grew out of the Faculty of Engineering at TAU was bought by a major US corporation for hundreds of millions of dollars, without TAU receiving a penny (though eventually a \$ 1 million donation was made as a good-will gesture). In order to improve this state of affairs, a leading Israeli expert in this field, who was willing to resign his post at NYC, came to TAU to rebuild Ramot. A few years later, new by-laws were adopted by TAU to regulate and clarify the issues of patents and intellectual property.

- 3) For obvious reasons, I decided to invest my major effort in building an infrastructure and in fundraising in the US: The following table offers an overview of TAU's fundraising, worldwide and in the US in earlier years:

Year	U.S. (\$ M)	Total (\$ M)
1980/81	1.9	9.4
1985/86	6.4	17.6
1988/89	10.2	20.7
1994/95	8.5	35.5

The table points to a clear weakness in the US – the main source of donations for other Israeli universities. The US is a unique arena combining a singular accumulation of wealth with laws and regulations conducive to philanthropy. Beside taking advantage of my network of acquaintances in the US, several measures were called for and taken – personnel changes in the lay leadership and professional staff; changing the traditional-sounding name, American Friends of Tel Aviv University (AFTAU), to the Tel Aviv University: American Council (TAUAC) to appeal to a new, younger generation of donors and activists; the establishment of Boards of Trustees for professional schools and research institutes; and introducing some of the Jewish community's most prominent lay and business leaders to TAU. The impact of these changes over time is illustrated on the table on page 30.

- 4) Early on, three major contributions were raised in order to develop three new schools. Two of them were conceived as "virtual" in that they were not meant to be created through the recruitment of additional faculty but rather be based on existing faculty members and other resources clustered together in new configurations.
- (a) The Porter School of Environmental Studies (PSES), established through a new \$10 million gift (augmented in 2007 to facilitate the construction of a building for the school).
 - (b) The Harold Hartog School of Government and Policy, based on a similar gift.
 - (c) The Georges Leven High-Tech Management School (HTMS), established at the Faculty of Management to help train senior managers for Israel's high-tech sector. The gift for initiating operations came from the Sacta-Rashi Foundation and the school was named after Georges Leven, father of the current head of the family, whose unusual generosity underlies the activities of this foundation. Unfortunately the school failed, primarily due to the crisis of Israeli high-tech as well as other reasons. In any event, the school was closed. The vacuum has been filled to some extent by a new institute, the BRM Institute for the Study of Technology and Society, which is also supported by the Sacta-Rashi Foundation.

- 5) A special effort was invested in developing programs for community outreach and social involvement and in opening the campus to students from underprivileged areas and sectors. TAU's elitist image and its location in Ramat Aviv called for a new approach and for changes in substance and image that would bring to the campus students from Israel's periphery. A large donation from the Price-Brodie Foundation in San Diego enabled us to launch a large-scale program in Jaffa. The Landa Center for Equality through Education and the Sivan Center for Community Initiative were founded later. A dynamic unit for science cadets in the School of Education became the focal point of numerous programs which coalesced in 2007 into a "Youth University." A "Presidential Scholars" program was launched that offered scholarships and mentoring to students admitted through TAU's affirmative action policy. More recently, an innovative program was launched at the Law School (a particularly competitive school), under which a number of students were admitted not on the basis of their matriculation grades and "psychometric test" scores, but rather on their ranking in their high school class. Once it had sailed successfully through the experimental phase, the program was expanded in Law and adopted by other faculties as well. Generous grants by the Legacy Foundation and other donors provide the students with scholarships.
- 6) With regard to a constitutional-governance reform, I decided to wait until the latter part of my second term (on the assumption that there would be one). My decision derived from the recognition that any such reform would:
- (a) entail a significant empowerment of the office of the president; and
 - (b) encounter strong opposition by a large part of the faculty.
- It would thus be much easier to effect the reform toward the end of my term when it would be more likely to be perceived as a measure designed for the next administration rather than as an exercise in self empowerment.
- 7) The university's leadership decided to postpone action with regard to another important issue – new faculty members' transition from budgetary pensions to an external pension plan. This was and remains one of the most difficult problems facing Israel's higher education system. It developed over decades during which the faculty in Israel's older universities (and in some cases –

though not at Tel Aviv – administrative staff as well) were employed on the basis of a budgetary pension. This misguided policy was encouraged for a while by the government, which relished the short-term advantage of saving the resources that would otherwise have to be allocated to building pension plans. The faculty was enamored of the comparatively generous terms of the budgetary pension plan. Only in the mid-1990s did the Ministry of Finance, the universities' leadership and part of the faculty realize that this was a ticking time bomb that had already created large actuarial debts and threatened to undermine the universities' current budgets. TAU's faculty union agreed to enter into negotiations on the matter, but insisted that the negotiation not be completed prior to the conclusion of a more advanced negotiation between the Hebrew University and its faculty. Unfortunately, we agreed and realized only later that this was a serious error (see below).

- 8) Another important development occurred in 2000 at the initiative of a home-based business entrepreneur and philanthropist, one of TAU's most significant donors. Dan David decided to create a \$100 million foundation to finance a new international prize offering three \$1 million prizes annually in three "time dimensions" – past, present and future. David proposed that TAU and I personally build and manage the prize. I gladly accepted with two provisos:
- a) that 10% of each prize be allocated to advanced students and young scholars in the fields in which the prizes were given that year (most but not all the recipients have been from TAU)
 - b) that the foundation allocate additional money to cover most of its current expenses.

Within a short span of time the prize, with an international board and headquartered at TAU, was established and activated. The first prizes were given in 2001.

The Dan David Prize is an impressive, valuable enterprise in its own right. For TAU it offers several important advantages: prestige and greater international exposure, new relationships with scientists, academics, artists and institutions across the globe, visits on campus by winners and judges, and scholarships.

In 2006, the French government, through its Ministry of Culture and Communication, became our partner in this project. It was agreed that the prize would remain headquartered at TAU and that French representatives would join the board and the selection panels. The award ceremony will alternate between Paris and Tel Aviv. The first Paris award ceremony was held in the Opera Garnier in March 2007, while several other activities are scheduled for the mid-May annual session of the International Board of Governors in Tel Aviv.

II. The 2000/2001 Turning Point

In the years 2000/2001, a number of developments converged and threw Tel Aviv University and the whole of Israel's university system into a crisis. The acute crisis of the years 2002-2004 has been essentially resolved, but its marks are still apparent in a system which emerged from the crisis wounded, its budget reduced by 20%. Only at the end of 2006 did the Olmert government appoint the Shochat Commission to deal with the structural damage and to seek ways for restoring higher education to the level of 2000, as well as to provide for future growth. The commission is presently at work but faces opposition from student unions (who object to raising the tuition) and faculty unions (who fear changes in the current mode of employment).

The following six developments converged in 2000/2001:

- 1) The national security crisis in Israel precipitated by the outbreak of the second intifada in September 2000. Among other by-products, it exacerbated the economic and budgetary crisis of the time. As part of a drive to reduce government expenditure, the treasury's budget department imposed a harsh cut on the higher education budget. The size and effects of this cut were magnified by a loss of confidence by the budget department in the leadership of the PBC (Planning and Budgeting Committee) of the Council of Higher Education and by the lack of support, not to say hostility, of Minister of Education Limor Livnat. Rather than fight for the higher education budget, she transferred NIS 50 million from the higher education budget to that of the Ministry of Education.

- 2) The collapse of the delicate balance and pattern of work between the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education, the Council for Higher Education and the PBC. This system was put in place in 1977 and its effectiveness was largely responsible for the achievements of Israeli science and higher education for more than two decades. The collapse of the delicate balance had a devastating effect. The discontinuation of the long-term agreements between the PBC and the Ministry of Finance in 2002 was one of the overt signs of this collapse.
- 3) The decision by the Winograd Commission in 2000, under the pressure of Ehud Barak's government (notwithstanding protests by Minister of Finance Shochat) to reduce university tuition by 50% over several years. It was promised to the universities and colleges that the government would compensate them for the loss of revenue, but the Ministry of Finance made it quite clear that it couldn't and wouldn't allocate money for both compensation and growth.
- 4) The manner in which the public college system was built and budgeted in the latter half of the 1990s and early 2000s. I stress the term "manner" because I do see the expansion of access to higher education and the creation of a second echelon in Israeli higher education as major positive developments. However, while in theory the system of public colleges was built on the assumption that their students would be budgeted at 75% in comparison to students at the research universities (and this was expected to decrease to 60%), the actual allocation was much higher. This, in addition to the fact that growth in undergraduate students was channeled by the PBC to the colleges, dealt yet another blow to the universities' budgets as illustrated in the following table:

Undergraduate Students	1994/1995	1999/2000	2004/2005
Universities – Total	62,888	66,951	69,910
Colleges – Total	3,201	15,334	43,055
Universities' Share	95%	81%	62%

- 5) The appearance on the scene of new players: private colleges and local extensions of foreign universities. I wish to emphasize that I view the emergence of a "private sector" in Israeli higher education as a positive development (as

long as "private" is really private). But be that as it may, one could not ignore the repercussions of this development for the university system. To cite one example: The availability of thousands of places for undergraduate students in new law and business schools (albeit at higher tuition) has had a negative impact on faculties of humanities in research universities.

- 6) Meddling by the political system in the management of Israel's university system in spite of Article 15 in the law regulating higher education. Article 15 is intended to protect the universities' academic freedom. In this context, I would note several attempts to dictate admission policies to the universities and the (temporary) politicization of the position of director-general of the PBC.

The harshest outcome of these developments was a total annual loss of more than NIS 1.1 billion in the universities' budget. The budgetary axe was brandished again and again, landing each year on the universities and making coping with the deficit akin to climbing a steep, slippery slope.

The extent and pace of the budget cuts are shown in the following table:

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total for 2001-2007
Nominal Cuts (NIS Millions)	160	220	215	253	60	167	43	1,118

The budget cuts were curbed slightly due to an increase in the number of budgeted students, which benefited only the colleges, and through recovery plans (which began in 2003/2004 and reached NIS 307 million by 2006/2007) that were intended to support early retirement and the ongoing increase in the costs of budgeted pensions at all of the universities. The regular budget (including the increase in college student enrollment and excluding recovery plans) was cut by 16% in current costs (from NIS 5.9 billion in 2000/2001 to NIS 5.0 billion in 2006/2007). Taking into account the real costs of higher education calls for a further adjustment of 10%; in other words, in real terms, the cut was greater than 24%.

TAU suffered a difficult double blow:

- a. Direct cuts in and loss of revenue.
- b. Termination of incremental growth and additional budgeting which came to be taken for granted in the 1990s.

As mentioned above, the operational deficit in the 1999/2000 budget was covered by an NIS 20 million special allocation by the PBC and by a "light" cut of NIS 20 million. The 2000/2001 budget was, it emerged later, already in the red, and in the 2001/2002 budget, the operational deficit leaped to NIS 170 million. The deficit was balanced by a series of *ad hoc* measures but it was clear that in the absence of a series of drastic measures, it could easily grow to more than NIS 250 million.

III. Coping with the Crisis

The need to cope with the budgetary crisis and with the other crises it produced became the primary thrust and challenge of leading and managing the University.

Before describing the fashion in which the University dealt with the crisis, it is important to address its sources. The principal source has already been described above, namely the combined impact of the capping of growth and budget cuts and its exacerbation by other aspects of the national security and economic crises (such as the loss of income from overseas students and the low yields of endowments, etc.). But there were additional factors having to do with TAU's own functioning at the time and in earlier years. I do not wish to dwell on these issues or to elaborate on other people's mistakes, but I would like to emphasize that I took and take responsibility for my own mistakes. I chose to deal with the crisis by seeking a fundamental solution, as well as by taking advantage of the fact that once a crisis breaks out, changes and reforms become feasible on a scale that is untenable in times of calm and prosperity. The process of coping went through two main stages:

- a. The efficiency, downsizing and recovery stage
- b. The strategic plan and structural reform stage

a. The efficiency, downsizing and recovery stage

During this phase, we sought to minimize the operational deficit by increasing revenues and efficiency, downsizing and saving. (I use the term "operational deficit" because the annual budget was balanced and, contrary to rumors, the University did not accrue even one penny of debt.)

The efficiency plan was put together and implemented with the help of teams composed of faculty members, administrative staff (headed by the Director-General, Niv Ahituv) and members of the Executive Council, headed by its chairman, Dov Lautman, who played a crucial and indispensable role during these years. We received very valuable professional advice from Ernst and Young.

Anyone who has been through a comparable experience knows that a downsizing of 5-7% can be accomplished with relative ease, but a downsizing of 15% within a short time span is an awesome, painful task. Our problem was exacerbated by the fact that more than 70% of the University's budget was spent on wages and that most academic and administrative employees were tenured. Another major consideration was our determination to avoid a protracted major crisis or traumatic measures (there were those who advocated such steps as closing down a whole faculty).

The focus was on downsizing and efficiency because our two main sources of income were blocked:

- (i) Government funding was being increasingly cut.
- (ii) Tuition fees were in the process of being reduced in accordance to the Winograd Commission recommendation. The compensation allotted by the Finance Ministry was cancelled out by the ongoing cuts.

A third source was fundraising. Indeed, it proceeded apace and a larger portion was raised for current expenditure, but these were years of low yields in the global markets.

A fourth source of income came from intellectual property. The revitalized Ramot produced one major deal for the University but, as we saw earlier, it was in the early phases of an inherently slow process of growth. Indeed in 2007, for the first time, Ramot showed a net revenue of \$5 million from intellectual property.

In this context, the PBC's functioning during these years should be addressed. I have to say that, regrettably, the PBC of that time, operating under the guidance of the Minister of Education, was not particularly helpful. It did permit TAU and the other universities to cover their annual operational deficits by withdrawing funds from a joint savings account built up during the bountiful 1990s. It should be mentioned here that when the late Amnon Pazi ended his term as chairman of the PBC, that agency had a cash reserve of NIS one billion. This reserve was consumed in the late 1990s and in the early years of the next decade, and the PBC itself created a deficit that was subsequently imposed on the universities. A future historian of Israel's higher education system would possibly be able to tell us how that reserve was spent, but we do know now that the Hebrew University, the public college system and a few chosen projects were beneficiaries.

In any event, TAU's recovery plan was based on the following principles:

- 1) Reducing academic and administrative staff through firings, closing down units, downsizing non-tenured staff (external teachers, non-senior faculty), encouraging early retirement, etc.
- 2) Taking administrative and academic economy and efficiency measures (such as postponing maintenance works and non-urgent purchases, enlarging class size, cutting classes with low enrollment, limiting elective courses).
- 3) Giving up new construction (which had been originally assigned a low priority).
- 4) Imposing a total freeze on the hiring of new administrative personnel (this had actually been decided earlier on the assumption that an administrative staff of 1,900 was too large).
- 5) Drastically reducing, on a temporary basis, the recruitment of new faculty.
- 6) Introducing an "austerity regime."

The difficulties inherent in the implementation of each measure were augmented by the by-product of the crisis: the need to cope with internal public opinion, i.e., faculty, administrative employees and students, affected and incensed, seeking explanations from the management, the University's donors and the media. For reasons that will not be elaborated upon here, TAU is more accessible to the media and the media tend to subject it to particular scrutiny.

b. The strategic plan and structural reform stage

The recovery plan was successful in consolidating the University's position, but it was clear that it did not provide a satisfactory, long-term solution to the underlying problems faced by TAU:

- An entirely different approach by the state to the issue of funding higher education and scientific research was an urgent necessity. Without restoring university budgets to the 2000 level, the whole system, TAU included, would be condemned to mediocrity. Nor was this a unique Israeli problem – Australia, Great Britain and Germany were all seeking ways of dealing with similar problems in order to do well in a new global arena.
- More specifically, the government would have to address the problem of budgetary pensions at Israel's major universities. The universities and the faculty should have participated in finding the solution, but it was beyond their ability.
- As for TAU, once the first phase of consolidation had been completed, it was time to lay out a comprehensive plan that would guarantee the University's future development as a leading research university in Israeli and international terms. Action was taken on two tracks:

- i) The strategic process
- ii) The constitutional-structural reform

i. The strategic process

The strategic process was headed by the Rector who led a team of some 30 senior faculty members and relied on the professional advice of a strategic consultant who also serves as a faculty member at the Faculty of Management.

The strategic process was designed to achieve three goals:

1. To analyze the University's academic level and performance.
2. To formulate a general and academic vision for the University and devise a plan for its implementation over a five-to-ten year period.
3. To map TAU's academic units according to three criteria: academic quality, the fields' "attractiveness" or importance, and the budgetary dimension.

The process was completed at the end of 2004 and the findings were presented to the University's bodies and management. On that basis, a "strategic plan" was drafted and adopted by the University's Senate and Executive Council in March 2005.

The first conclusion to emerge from the strategic process was the need for tighter control over academic standards at the University. As was mentioned above, TAU's campus was rich with centers of excellence, but the University's general academic profile did not necessarily match its self-image. It thus emerged from the strategic team's analysis that too many faculty members were not submitting grant proposals, the number of doctoral students and fellowships had to be raised, and the pace of study in most faculties had to be expedited. The plan of action drawn on this basis consisted of the following elements:

1. To raise the number (and percentage) of doctoral students.
2. To reduce the number of students studying for a "research M.A.," and redirect some of them to the "direct Ph.D. track" and others toward a "professional M.A." (without a thesis, but with an option to complete a thesis later in order to become a research student).
3. To gradually reduce the number of budgeted students on campus to the number allocated to TAU by the PBC (25,250) and to gradually expand the extra-budgetary M.A. programs (at present several hundred students are registered in these programs).
4. To continue, where appropriate, in the closure, merger and downsizing of academic, semi-academic and administrative units (the technological high school, the unit for the teaching of Hebrew, etc.).

5. To base TAU's academic profile on academic and scientific excellence and on its professional schools.
6. To rejuvenate the faculty by encouraging early retirement, where appropriate, and by increasing, regardless of budget considerations, the number of new faculty recruited with a self-evident emphasis on young age and excellence.
7. To fix the size of the faculty at around 1,000 and determine the quota of tenured positions for every faculty and department; and to fix the number of administrative personnel at approximately 1,400.
8. To set measurable annual objectives for the faculty deans, such as raising more research money, raising the number of doctoral students and expediting the pace of graduation.

The essence of the strategic plan – its principles and the steps these necessitated – was described in a report entitled, “Tel Aviv University 2010 – Strategic Plan: Reassessment on the Path toward Renewal and Growth,” which was distributed to all university faculty in March 2005.

Not surprisingly, when the plan was published, attention on campus and in the media was mostly given to the issues involved in closing down academic units. This issue requires clarification that will be offered through the following instances:

- i) To consolidate and merge academic units, we had to go through the formal process of closing down some existing units. Thus, it was necessary to close down the Department of Musicology in order to merge it with the Academy of Music and form the new School of Music as a more compact and, in my and many others' view, better unit. Opposition to such a move derived from two main sources:
 - (a) Suspicion that this was merely a first step toward the firing of tenured faculty (I formally announced that this was not our intention and, indeed, not a single tenured faculty member was fired).
 - (b) Faculty attachment to their "academic home" and fear of change and of the unfamiliar – a perfectly understandable phenomenon, but an obstacle to any change and reform.

- ii) To reduce the number of departments in the Faculty of Medicine, a number of them had to be closed.
- iii) In other departments, a significant downsizing was called for. The Department of Theater Arts had at the outset of the process 28 positions. It offered theoretical instruction as well as a number of applied programs. Our decision was to close down the applied programs and to redefine the department on the assumption that in the Tel Aviv area, acting or stage design should be studied at professional schools elsewhere, while the TAU department should be the focus of advanced teaching and research.
- iv) In some cases, it was an opportunity to change a status quo preserved by conservatism or personal considerations rather than by academic rationale. The merging of the Departments of Hebrew Literature and Comparative Literature was a particularly successful example of such a change. The new Department of Literature is a distinctive success story.
- v) In other cases, units had to undergo a transformation in order to survive. The most salient example is that of the Dental School. For historic reasons, the school was built and developed inside the Faculty of Medicine, but along patterns different from those of the Medical School (where the bulk of the teaching is done by the clinical faculty). In 1991 the Klalit HMO ended its partnership in the school, causing the school to operate with a growing deficit, which reached NIS 22 million in 2002. A series of efficiency measures reduced the annual deficit to about NIS 15 million, but this was not enough. We believed that the University should not carry this burden and in the absence of government subsidy or a radical change in tuition, the school would have to be built on a different foundation if it wanted to survive. The school's faculty or at least their representatives disagreed with us. A vociferous dispute ensued for several years until an agreement was finally reached in 2007.
- vi) The Administration's position with regard to the Dental School relied on the criteria established through the strategic process. In this case, unpleasant confrontations with faculty, students and donors were unavoidable. At the other end of the spectrum was the transition from the Academy of Music to the School of Music. A combination of leadership (at the school level), a new strategic partnership with the IPO and a generous donation provided an almost smooth transition from a large unit somewhat out of focus to a more compact and focused school, operating at a new level

of excellence and making a distinct contribution to Israel's cultural life.

The result of the efforts described above, including the outcomes of the efficiency plan and strategic process, was that the University succeeded in stabilizing the annual operational deficit at the level of NIS40-60 million (and according to the recovery plan, this will be zero by 2008/2009), as shown in the following table:

Year	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
			Efficiency plan starts ↓				Actual	Updated budget	According to the recovery plan	
Operational nominal deficit (NIS millions)	54	115	162	121	46	37	66	42	20	0

The operational deficit was reduced despite ongoing cuts in government allocations and despite the increase in budgetary pension expenses, shown here adjusted to the real costs of higher education in 2007/2007:

Year	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
Figures in adjusted NIS millions							
PBC allocations	927	854	836	798	778	763	750
Budgetary pension expenses	51	56	62	68	87	90	102

It should be taken into consideration that the cuts by the government could have been even more severe had the University not received additional funds due its improved teaching and research outcomes according to the budgeting formula (for example, NIS 12 million in 2005/2006 and NIS 17 million in 2006/2007).

In order to substantially reduce its operational deficit, the University had to make deep cuts in expenses. These reductions (in NIS millions adjusted to the real costs of higher education in 2006/2007) are presented in the following table:

Year	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
Figures in adjusted NIS millions					
Wages (incl. related expenses)	1126	1101	1028	975	944
Current expenses (acquisitions, maintenance, other)	496	444	409	454	462
Total Wages and Current Expenditure	1622	1545	1437	1429	1406
Annual accumulated difference compared to 2001/2002	0	-77	-185	-193	-216

The improvement in the University's financial situation reflects three complementary and interwoven actions derived from the strategic plan: increasing the University's research output, changing the size and make-up of the student population, and reducing the amount of academic and administrative staff.

Tel Aviv University designated research output as its highest priority and, as a result, research grants grew by 33% between 1999/2000 and 2005/2006 (competitive grants grew by 38% and non-competitive grants matched by the PBC grew by 25%) and the number of doctoral candidates grew by 40%.

	1999/00	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
Ph.D. Students	1,450	1,490	1,646	1,737	1,853	1,915	2,032
Research Grants (\$ Millions)	PBC Figures					TAU Figures	
Competitive funds	18.7	19.4	19.2	21.4	21.6	20.7	25.9
Non-competitive matched funds	12.8	11.7	13.6	14.8	16.6	15.4	16.1
Total External Research Funds	31.5	31.1	32.8	36.2	38.2	36.1	42.0

In another measure of research output – scientific publications – Tel Aviv University was first out of all the research universities in Israel. In the *Times Higher Education* ranking for 2006, Tel Aviv University came in 25th place out of 200 leading universities around the world according to the amount of scientific publications per researcher.

The improvement in research output is even more noteworthy against a backdrop of the reduction of faculty members. The growth in research output per faculty member expresses the vast improvement that has been achieved in the most important academic objective of Tel Aviv University as a leading research institution.

A substantial change has taken place among the student population:

	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
						Estimation
Undergraduate Students	15,604	15,728	16,213	16,444	15,995	15,000
Master with thesis	5,519	5,736	5,625	5,255	4,483	4,000
Master, non-thesis track	3,786	3,789	4,161	4,427	4,398	4,100
Special extra-budgetary master programs	110	110	237	429	622	774
Non-budgeted master students (complementary & credits)	966	1,198	1,266	1,364	1,685	1,900
Teaching certificates (around 1/3 of them are budgeted)	331	364	406	356	334	330
Graduate Students (incl. Teaching Certificates)	10,712	11,197	11,695	11,831	11,522	11,104
Of them, budgeted students	9,636	9,889	10,192	10,038	9,215	8,430
Total Undergraduate & Graduate Students	26,316	26,925	27,908	28,275	27,517	26,104
Of them, budgeted students	25,240	25,617	26,405	26,482	25,210	23,430
Ph.D. Students	1,646	1,737	1,853	1,915	2,032	2,150
Total Students (incl. non-budgeted)	27,962	28,662	29,761	30,190	29,549	28,254

The University systematically changed the size and make-up of its student population:

- a) In general, the University is working toward a ceiling of 25,250 students allocated to it by the Planning and Budgeting Committee. Indeed, deviations from the number of budgeted students caused a financial loss to the University.
- b) The number of undergraduate students is in the process of being reduced, mostly in the social sciences, management and law. These fields are the main focus of the colleges.
- c) The overall number of budgeted master's students was reduced, principally by speeding up the degree completion rate of students who dragged out their studies well over the standard time period (two years) and by directing new students who cannot study on a full-time basis to a semi-external credit accumulation track.
- d) An additional reduction was achieved by directing master's students on a research track (with thesis) toward a straight Ph.D. track or to a non-thesis master's track.
- e) At the same time, the University opened a new, non-thesis master's study track that is structured "executive style." Within this framework over the past four years, 15 new, non-budgeted programs have been opened, whereby the tuition fees cover the entire teaching costs and even leave a surplus that is channeled toward reinforcing the finances of the University, supporting research students in regular programs, and

providing discretionary money for faculties and departments. An academic committee appointed by the Senate, determined to monitor academic standards in this framework, recently published a positive report on the matter.

In addition, in the most challenging area – the University's human resources – several major actions have been taken:

- a) The University chose to reduce the number of senior academic faculty from 1,350 in 2001/2002 to 1,050 in 2006/2007 (the Hebrew University's senior faculty is presently under 1,000). The reduction was achieved through regular retirement, early retirement and decreasing the number of new faculty recruited to the University. Decelerating this recruitment was recognized as an emergency, temporary step, and it was clear to all that the continued development and prosperity of the University depended on returning to a normal rate of young faculty recruitment. In order to help in the orderly planning of the academic units, the Rector assigned each of them a quota for the number of senior faculty members. This quota discourages any hasty awarding of tenure to temporary faculty who are not outstanding, and encourages departments to be highly selective in choosing the best candidates to fill their ranks.
- b) The number of junior teaching staff is constantly monitored in accordance with actual teaching activities (among them, the number of courses offered and their enrollment) and with the reduction targets stipulated by the recovery plan.
- c) The number of administrative and technical staff was reduced from 1,930 in 2001/2002 to 1,480 in 2006/2007. Beyond the regular decrease in the number of administrative and technical staff, a large early retirement program was activated in 2006/2007, which led to the retirement of 90 administrative and technical staff.

There is no doubt that the financial crisis, and the painful actions it necessitated, had ramifications both on the morale of the staff and on the additional burden borne by the University community. At the same time, the improvement in research output, the ongoing service provided to students, and the willingness to take on various missions reflected the underlying resilience and quality of the University's staff.

ii. The constitutional-governance reform

During the same period, Tel Aviv University underwent a significant constitutional-governance reform. The reform was in part the product of external pressure. The evolution of the Israeli system of higher education, particularly the faculty strike of 1994, led the budgeting division in the Treasury, together with some of the Planning and Budgeting Committee heads, to the conclusion that the governance system of Israel's universities was obstructing their proper administration, financial management and academic development. They were alluding to the dual system (the existence of two parallel administrative and academic hierarchies, headed by the President and the Rector respectively; the power of the Senate; the way of electing officers; the distribution of authority between the international Board of Governors and the Israeli Executive Council; and the size and composition of the Executive Council). At the initiative of these concerned parties, the Maltz Commission was established in 1997. The Maltz Commission published its report in January 2000. Not surprisingly, it called essentially for the adoption of a system of governance along the lines of the U.S. model – a fully empowered President, the end of the dual system, a Rector or Provost reporting to the President, and a small Israeli Executive Council empowered at the expense of the International Board of Governors and the Senate.

There ensued a tug of war between the Ministry of Finance and the universities' faculty members and senates over the implementation of the Maltz Report. The Ministry's Budget Department brought this conflict to a head in 2003 when, as part of that year's budget law, it tried to impose a draconian version of the report. With utter cynicism, after having cut some 20% off the higher education budget, the leadership of the Budget Department argued that the system of governance was largely responsible for the budgetary crisis in Israel's university. After some give and take with the PBC, the Budget Department settled on a milder version known as "The Grossman Document" (Prof. Shlomo Grossman is the PBC's Chairman).

Our position at TAU was the following:

- We supported the notion of reforming the system not because our current system (a rather extreme version of the dual model) was responsible for the budgetary crisis, but due to our belief that a constitutional-governance reform was required to further develop and better manage the University.
- At the same time, it was obvious that the binding nature of the Grossman Document (taken as a whole) could not be ignored.

We therefore decided to form in October 2000 a TAU committee that would recommend a reform plan which would take into account both the extraneous constraints and TAU's specific circumstances. Prof. Joshua Jortner, one of TAU's most senior scientists and a former President of the Israel Academy of Sciences, was appointed chairman of a committee composed of an excellent group of public representatives and faculty members. The Jortner committee's report was presented in January 2004. It was discussed extensively by the Senate and its Steering Committee. After some additional give and take with the Steering Committee of the Senate, the changes were incorporated into the constitution that was approved by the International Board of Governors in May 2004.

The new system of governance does indeed place the President at the center. The President is the head of the administration as well as the highest academic authority. Yet a senior position was kept for the Rector, who substitutes for the President in his/her absence. Several checks and balances were built into the new system. The President, the Rector and the Deans as well as other officers are no longer "elected" but "selected" by a search committee. The faculty no longer "elects," but has a formal say. Thus, while the President is elected by the Executive Council, the Senate is asked "to express its opinion" about the candidates, and the International Board of Governors has to ratify the choice. Implied in these procedures is the assumption that senior officers cannot function effectively on a university campus without the support (albeit passive or implicit) of the faculty. The Senate lost some of its power to an 11 member Executive Council (composed of 6 public representatives, the President, the Rector and three

representatives of the Senate). The International Board of Governors retained its power of legislation – it alone can modify the constitution. A special emphasis was laid on the role and authority of the faculty deans, perceived as a crucial role in the management of the University. Deans can now serve up to seven years. They have been subordinated to the President and the Rector, but empowered vis-à-vis their faculties. The Senate was reconstituted into a "compact senate" of some 100 members and a "plenary."

It is important to note that the constitution is congruent with the essence of the Grossman Document, but not with all its stipulations, and that it is marked by the authentic stamp of TAU. The experience of the past two years points to the new system's initial success as well as to the need to refine it over time.

IV. A Change in Government Policy

In 2004, an important change finally occurred in government policy. The Ministry of Finance was persuaded to stop cutting the higher education budget and to start rebuilding it through a Five-Year Plan, which had been discontinued in 2002. One must not be misled by the grand terminology. The Five-Year Plan was to restore but a part of what had been cut, and while some money was added to the higher education budget, across the board cuts continued. Most of the additional resources were allocated for recovery plans and budgeted pension costs. Furthermore, as a *quid pro quo* for the plan, the Ministry of Finance extracted from the universities concessions which gave the Ministry further access into the universities' inner workings.

The Five-Year Plan was supposed to reinstate about NIS 500 million to the higher education system's budget by 2007/2008. Of this sum, Tel Aviv University is expected to receive NIS 75 million in 2007/2008 (it received NIS 34 million in 2003/2004, NIS 42 million in 2004/2005, NIS 48 million in 2005/2006 and NIS 52 million in 2006/2007.)

The implementation of the Five-Year Plan was contingent upon the approval of the Treasury to the recovery plans and the achievement of a balanced budget at each institution. The primary points of the recovery plan of Tel Aviv University are as follows:

- a) Stabilizing the number of senior academic faculty at approximately 1,000
- b) Reducing administrative and technical staff to 1,400
- c) Decreasing non-senior teaching staff by 18% (junior faculty, external lecturers and teaching assistants)
- d) Reducing the number of students enrolled beyond the quota determined by the Planning and Budgeting Committee
- e) Increasing income through donations
- f) Increasing income through non-budgeted study programs
- g) Fully balancing the budget by 2007/2008

Needless to say, the Five-Year Plan does not provide a fundamental solution to the budgetary problem created by the capping of growth and the budget cuts of the years 2001 through 2006 and does not address such other fundamental issues as the collapse of the system of regulation, budgeting and planning that had been put together in the late 1970s, the problem of budgetary pensions and the challenges posed by the globalization of scientific research and higher education.

Only at the end of 2006 did Ehud Olmert's government decide, through the Ministers of Education and Finance, to cope seriously with these issues by forming the Shochat Commission for Examining the Israeli Higher Education System, headed by former Minister of Finance Avraham (Beiga) Shochat. It soon transpired that the commission is conducting its work on the assumption that in order to restore the higher education budgets to the level of 2000, two interrelated measures will have to be undertaken: raising the government's allocation and raising (and/or restructuring) tuition. This set the student unions against the commission. They were joined (but not fully) by the faculty unions who opposed the apparent intention to introduce changes in the current patterns of employment.

It is presently difficult to know whether the Olmert government will have the stamina to support measures and decisions that will lead to a confrontation with more than 200,000 students (a conflict with the faculty unions is not inevitable). In any event, it is important to point out that it would be a tragedy (at least from the universities' point of view) if the window of opportunity opened by the formation of the Shochat Commission were to be closed without any change having taken place. Without a significant increase in the higher education and research budget, and without rectification of the systemic disruptions of the recent decade, the Israeli university system has no prospect of competing in the global arena and ensuring Israel's position in today's knowledge economy.

Specifically for TAU, the balancing of the budget waiting around the corner is a necessary but insufficient condition. The NIS 200 million envisaged as an addition to its budget should the Shochat Commission complete its work and should the government implement its recommendations, would almost reinstate TAU's resources to the 2000 level. The addition would enable TAU to rejuvenate the faculty and increase its size to over 1,000, and to invest in libraries and new equipment, but would still fall short of the resources and standards of the University of Michigan or the E.T.H. in Zurich. Without additional resources, any major progress would be difficult to achieve.

V. Eight Years of Projects

The following pages describe the projects established during my eight years in office. The list of projects reflects the four flags hoisted by TAU:

- 1) Research and Teaching.** The highest priority in resource mobilization was assigned to academic development. In this context, I would like to emphasize the nanoscience and nanotechnology drive which became a \$40 million project, together with a long list of more modest projects across the campus. This list reflects the recognition of the primacy of biomedicine both as a cutting-edge field and as a field in which TAU enjoys a comparative advantage. A balance

was sought between the reinforcement of areas of excellence and the need to develop new and innovative areas.

- 2) **Promoting advanced studies.** Funds for doctoral fellowships (also in the "softer" disciplines) and special chairs for young faculty recruitment were another priority. Large funds were mobilized for the development of new interdisciplinary graduate schools (Environment, Government and Communication), the development of which involved leveraging existing activities, followed by gradual academic and physical development.
- 3) **Social involvement and community building and outreach.** The major projects in this area were the Price-Brodie Initiative in Jaffa, Sivan Center for Community Initiative, Landa Center for Equal Opportunity through Education, admission from the periphery program supported by the Legacy Foundation and, most recently, the Youth University. These five major programs and a number of smaller projects brought in large funds for opening TAU to Israel's underprivileged sectors. The funds have been leveraged by the enthusiasm and creativity of the teams running these projects.
- 4) **Shaping the Israeli public arena and public boards.** TAU has built its position and reputation through academic excellence as well as through its research and policy institutes that have enriched the public discourse since 1960 in such areas as national security, Middle Eastern studies, law, economics, business and education. Many of the projects established were designed to preserve and develop the University's position and capacities in these areas.

Regarding the methodology of building a network of friends and supporters for TAU, I would like to underline one innovation: building up International Boards of Trustees for relevant faculties, schools and institutes. With the right leadership in appropriate units, this system brought in considerable additional resources and, more significantly, tied to TAU a large number of new lay leaders and supporters who otherwise may not have joined the traditional friends associations.

Fundraising 1999-2007

The following table presents the sums (in millions of dollars) that were raised annually from the United States and other countries over the past eight years of my term. These are sums that were received in cash, and do not include pledges, income from endowments, or income derived from other sources, such as investments.

<u>Year</u>	<u>\$USM</u>	<u>Total \$USM</u>
1999/2000	26.5	53.4
2000/2001	16.6	44.5
2001/2002	21.5	49.0
2002/2003	14.2	46.0
2003/2004	16.1	38.6
2004/2005	18.0	38.2
2005/2006	24.5	49.8
2006/2007*	11.7	34.9
Total	149.2	354.4
Yearly average	19.9	47.3

* 2006/2007 figures refer to the 6-month period from October 2006 to the end of March 2007

VI. Construction and Physical Development

As mentioned above, I began my term in office determined to shift emphasis from physical to academic development. Shortly thereafter, the construction of the impressive Smolarz Auditorium was concluded on the basis of a gift and planning concluded by the previous administration. The auditorium's complex was completed by a new decision to build the first underground parking facility. It was done with almost no cost to the University as a B.O.T. project (B.O.T. stands for Build, Operate, Transfer, whereby an entrepreneur makes the investment, builds and operates the project and eventually transfers it to the institution).

The successful parking project encouraged us to develop the "Student City" project, a new complex of dormitories and apartment buildings on the southern edge of the campus. Relying on the B.O.T. method, we envisioned a project that would dramatically

increase the number of dormitory rooms and enable the University to offer apartments to married graduate students and young faculty, expand its international programs and inject more liveliness into an urban campus. Moreover, the entrepreneurs bidding for this project would also be asked to include renovation of the existing dormitories – badly in need of massive refurbishment. The process of planning, preparation for tender and the tender itself took almost three years and was completed in the spring of 2007 at the very end of my term. At the same time, we began to offer projects in Student City to donors, with impressive early results (\$9 million were committed within a few months).

Another project I inherited was the former headquarters of the "Israeli Building Center" that was purchased from the Tel Aviv municipality. The building cost NIS 30 million and required additional investment. The original purpose was to put the building at the disposal of the Technological High School affiliated with the University. I persuaded TAU's management team to allocate the building to another purpose. There seemed to be no point to make this and additional investments in a school that had passed its prime and in which the relevant university departments (Faculty of Engineering and School of Education) had no real interest. For a variety of reasons, neither the Ministry of Education nor Tel Aviv's City Hall were willing to make any investment in the school either. Eventually, as a downsizing measure and in line with the University's strategic plan, we decided to close down the school and to transfer its two components to Shenkar College and the city of Herzliya. This was done with the consent of the Meyerhoff family, the school's donors. The University was left with 10,000 square meters of built space and 22 dunams for future development.

The building was first put at the disposal of the High-Tech Management School. After its closure, it was assigned to the new INSS (Institute for National Security Studies) as part of the large financial donation and transaction involved in its establishment.

Two other buildings decided upon during these years were the Porter Building for the Porter School of Environmental Studies (PSES) and the Executive Education Wing at the Faculty of Management. In both cases, a donation was secured and planning begun, but the PBC's approval has yet to be secured and construction has yet to begin. In this

context, it is important to mention that matching by the PBC was an essential dimension in the development of Israel's campuses during the previous 30 years but this aid has come to an end.

One project that was conceived and budgeted but never got off the ground was a building for TAU's National Natural History Collections. Donations were secured to construct such a building contiguous to the PSES building, but due to problems in the Zoology Department, the project had to be delayed.

Several more compact projects were completed or begun: two scientific facilities – S.P.F. and M.R.I; the conversion of the De Botton Building from a Student Services Center to a School of Architecture; and the renovation of the Wiener Library Building into a Library of Special Collections.

VII. A View to the Future

On June 1, 2007, Professor Zvi Galil will assume the position of President of Tel Aviv University, bringing with him his own vision for the University. Several of the senior officers will be completing their terms, and within a short time a new administration will be formed. The new administration will inherit the University in its current condition, operating within the framework of the strategic plan. I have no doubt that the new President and administration will make changes in this plan according to their own approach, and face additional changes in the conditions under which the University will operate in the coming years.

Taking these considerations into account, I would like to point out several goals and objectives that the University should aspire to in the coming years:

- 1) Rejuvenating faculty mainly by accelerating the recruitment of outstanding young researchers. Once the budgetary situation improves (perhaps upon completion of the work of the Shochat committee and the implementation of its recommendations), it may be possible to increase the number of academic

positions to around 1,100. When the University had 1,350 senior faculty members, it may have been too large. Currently the faculty are spread too thinly. With 1,100 senior faculty members, the University will be able to function optimally – focused on the one hand, and robust on the other. This number can also be utilized more effectively by continuing the process of merging units and, in time, transferring various fields of study to the colleges while developing emerging fields on campus.

- 2) Continuing structural changes in the Faculty of Humanities to enable it to maintain its centrality and quality under changing conditions. A special effort should be invested in Jewish studies, which are currently in crisis in all of Israel's universities.
- 3) In the fields of economics and management, the University will have to cope with a number of unique challenges, especially brain drain in the competitive local and global employment markets.
- 4) At the Faculty of Social Sciences, it is important to further develop the Department of Political Science, especially the field of international relations – a field vital to Tel Aviv University's continued leading status in regional and international studies.
- 5) In the sciences, I believe that the current emphases of the University (biomedicine, as well as interdisciplinary fields such as nanoscience and nanotechnology, and bioinformatics) are correct. Having said that, computer science and electronic communications should also be emphasized – two foci of academic excellence with considerable added value in terms of existing and potential ties with the business world.
- 6) In light of the special emphasis Tel Aviv University is placing on the field of biomedicine, it is vital that cooperation between the Faculties of Medicine and Life Sciences be maintained and reinforced. The ongoing efforts to strengthen our relationship with the major TAU-affiliated hospitals is another high priority area.
- 7) Tel Aviv University needs to continue developing its international programs. An agreement will shortly be signed with New York University, and could be followed by similar agreements with other leading universities. It will also be possible to develop the University's ties with academic institutions in emerging

countries. With regard to this, the construction of the new dormitories holds special importance since it will enable the University to host students and faculty from around the world at an unprecedented level.

- 8) Tel Aviv University needs to maintain and nurture its centrality as a pillar and shaper of Israel's civil society.

VIII. Thanks and Acknowledgements

I am grateful to a large number of public leaders, faculty members, and staff from Israel and abroad who have helped me throughout the past eight years. I thank them all and would like to mention especially the three chairmen of the international Board of Governors – Benno Gitter of blessed memory, Michael Steinhardt and Robert Goldberg; the two chairmen of the Executive Council – Moshe Porat and Dov Lautman; the three Rectors – Professors Nili Cohen, Shimon Yankielowicz and Dany Leviatan; the two Directors-General – Professors Niv Ahituv and Gideon Langholz; Vice President for Public Affairs Yehiel Ben-Zvi; Vice Presidents for Research and Development Professors Yair Aharonovitz, Ruth Shalgi and Hagit Messer-Yaron; and my personal team – Iris London-Zolty, Ronit Spiegel, Anat Ginsburg, Marlene Sacho and Chen Erez. Similarly, I would like to thank Rava Eleasari and her team for their help in preparing this document.