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**A statement for Immediate Release Issued by
Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "SHAMS"
On the occasion of "International Day for Tolerance"**

"Tolerance is the other Face of Transitional Justice"

"SHAMS" center **emphasizes** that countries attributed to having ethnic, religious, national and political diversity within history, are usually the most exposed to endless crises and problems which have negative impact and confusion on the internal relationships. While these countries have realized its circumstances and citizens have united in order to get rid of these crises and problems through turning to the voice of mind which calls for adopting values and principles headed by tolerance which encourage joint existence with having little difference or contradiction. This historical fact can be applied to a large extent in the Palestinian situation which suffers from political and societal dangerous defects that indicate signs of a real crisis which affects the Palestinian political and social harmony since the culture of death, the language of belligerency, the logic of violence, the ideology of revolution and the spirit of elimination will be widely-spread.

"SHAMS" center **calls** for importantly standing against the continuous violations and attacks against individual or collective human rights as well as the policy of discrimination against women, children and minorities. In this regard, the center calls for educating and disseminating a set of values headed by tolerance as a civilizational method which implies offering others the freedom of expression of their opposite opinions and ideas, calls for accepting different beliefs or principles and calls for dialogue among individuals and groups as well as societal and political powers according to the deep belief that dialogue is considered as the best way for resolving conflicts, spreading respect and exchanging profits so as to enroot principles and concepts of equality among human beings. It should be noted that practicing tolerance and respecting human rights don't represent accepting injustice or waiving others' beliefs but recognizing the other and enhancing the fact that opinions can't be forced.

"SHAMS" center **stresses** that respecting and accepting diversity or difference within cultures isn't only a moral duty but also a legal and political significance and a virtue that spreads peace universally accordingly, turning the culture of war into the culture of peace. Tolerance embodies a situation based on recognizing universal rights for human beings as well as other's freedoms so; tolerance should be applied between both individuals and groups. Tolerance is the key for human rights and democratic diversity, while applying tolerance signifies essentially recognizing individual's rights in the freedom of choosing beliefs and enjoying rights which means accordingly that no one is allowed to force his/her opinions on others. In addition to that, tolerance and disseminating democracy's values and human rights' culture is considered as an urgent demand to fight against values of extremism, hatred, violence and terrorism.

"SHAMS" center **calls for** working significantly on the educational level to encourage tolerance and its needs, while it should be understood by everyone that tolerance represents an essence for human existence and development and it is very important currently since the world has become more expanded, diverse and wealthier than before. And from one hand, there are many real challenges against the spread of tolerance resulted from increasing social and political stresses while on the other hand, communication's development has made the difference between the universal and local as a click as what has been mentioned within the letter of the Secretary General, which is for the interest of tolerance.

"SHAMS" center **reminds** that this day should be an opportunity for peoples, nations, governments, civil society and national civil organizational to include tolerance within its programs and activities for a better world in which the concepts of peace, cooperation, dialogue and accepting others are enhanced, while spaces of conflict, elimination, belligerency and extremism are reduced. It is necessary to deepen the idea that tolerance is the value which has been included within all beliefs, religions or cultures, and it isn't only a tool for preventing conflicts but also a motivation for creativity, innovation and discovery.

"End"