



10/10/2014

A statement for immediate release
Issued by Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "SHAMS"
On the occasion of World Day against Death Penalty
"Life is a gift from God"

"SHAMS" center **emphasizes** that death penalty represents the extreme cruelty, inhumanity and humiliation and it can't be undone when executed. Death penalty infringes upon the right to life and it is similar to revenge, and it is illegal unfair tool for suppression executed in the name of the state and justice in cold blood and it is like a revenge penalty issued by the court within a decent covering.

"SHAMS" center **calls** the states which have abolished death penalty to organize diplomatic campaigns toward countries which execute death penalty until present so as to persuade it to importantly vote in General Assembly of the United Nations in December 2014, in addition to abolish death penalty. In the same context, the center also calls civil society organizations headed by human rights organizations to put pressure on its governments in order to vote and to abolish death penalty in the General Assembly of the United Nations as an introduction to abolish death penalty from its national legislations.

"SHAMS" center **reminds** that a country like Palestine biased to human values, dignity and essence of life is hard to keep death penalty within its legal and positive system not only because human life is holy but also because science hasn't approved a link between the development of the crime and the absence of death penalty. In addition, it reduces the authority of the judge to assign the suitable punishment to circumstances in each case, and it prevents the reduced causes according to -penalties law- so, obligating the legislative power to amend or alternate death to the following penalty which is forced labor.

"SHAMS" center **perceives** that we are in need of a strong movement for supporting human rights and combating death penalty by human rights activists, writers, clergymen politicians, artists, lawyers, judges and bar association, media figures, human rights organizations and members of legislative councils, political parties and government's representatives. We are in need to politicians, parliamentarians and specialized people who can answer this question: is death penalty feasible and does it prevent crimes in the



community? On the other hand, do you remember the Iranian woman who forgave the murderer of her son when he was hanged on the gibbet? And how much this scene was touching for the whole world in obvious call for tolerance away from revenge.

"SHAMS" center **stresses** that death penalty influences categories with less luck especially the poor and minorities who are the most exposed to death penalty, and it has become clearer that such cruel penalty is a problem in itself as it is used inappropriately against people who are less capable to defend themselves and who suffer from discrimination on a large scale. It should be mentioned that death penalty is considered a violent action despite the fact that one of the largest justifications for death penalty is that it represents an obstacle against committing more dangerous crimes however, this proof isn't based on the truth as there are no persuasive evidences that death penalty restrains the crime compared to other punishments.

"SHAMS" center **emphasizes** that if death penalty still exists, it is hard to get rid of the danger of killing innocent people. Since 1973, tens of prisoners who were judged by death penalty were released after the appearance of evidences which prove their innocence, while some prisoners were near from death penalty after spending long years in light of the death sentence against them. And it includes other repeated aspects in their cases like actions of the prosecution, police or using certifications of unreliable witnesses or proofs and insufficient representation for defense, in addition to executing many prisoners when not having serious doubts about their guilt.

"SHAMS" center **salutes** the organization of "Together against Death Penalty" as well as the "Tunisian Coalition for Abolishment of Death Penalty" for their special efforts and efficient movements in order to abolish death penalty from the national legislations through breaking silence about death penalty.

"SHAMS" center also **recommends** the importance to build on the findings and recommendations of the regional conference against death penalty which was conducted in Tunisia entitled "toward the abolishment of death penalty between 26 and 27 of September 2014 which establishes for building partnerships between Arabic human rights organizations and its counterparts within international level, on the way to abolish death penalty and remove it from the national legislations for countries which still execute death penalty.

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