

15/7/2017

A statement for immediate release
Issued by Human Rights and Democracy Media Center 'SHAMS'
On ratifying death penalty upon four citizens within two days by the Military
Court and the Court of Appeal.

“SHAMS” strongly **condemns** the sentence issued by the Court of Appeal in Gaza Strip on 12/7/2017 to approve death sentence issued against four citizens. The Court of Appeal approved the decision issued by the Court of First Instance on inflicting death penalty upon (A/M) accused of murdering the citizen Ilham Mohammed Sehwal (33) years old on December 9th 2015. Also, the Court of Appeal issued a sentence to support the judgment of the Court of First Instance to inflict death penalty upon the citizen Nahla Abu Anza, accused of murdering her husband Riyadh Abu Anza on January 28th of 2016.

Moreover, High Military Court affiliated with Military Judiciary Entity in Gaza Strip issued two death sentences upon citizens accused of espionage with the Israeli occupation. Military Court approved death by hanging upon the citizen (M/D) who was born in 1985 married and living in Nuseirat in the middle of Gaza Strip because of betrayal. High Military Court approved a sentence of death by hanging issued against the citizen (A/Q). Who was born in 1964, married and living in Rafah to the north of Gaza Strip accused of betrayal.

“SHAMS” center **assures** its support and solidarity with families and parents of victims. It clarifies that calling for abolition of the death sentence against perpetrators in serious crimes doesn't indicate tolerating them, but replacing the death sentence with other punishment to respect individuals' humanity and dignity. The capital punishment represents the cruelest form of intentional murder. It is irreversible, the risk of executing an innocent person can never be eliminated. While people who were sent to death row have later been exonerated sometimes.

“SHAMS” center **puts emphasis** on respecting the efforts and approaches of the Palestinian leaders aiming to accede human rights conventions which guarantee the right to life. The center appeals to the Palestinian National Authority PNA to sign the Second Optional Protocol of 1989, annexed to the International Covenant on political and Civil Rights, on the abolition of death penalty. Moreover, the center appeals to the Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas so as not to ratify death sentences, and to use his constitutional powers to abolish death penalty from the Palestinian legislations.

"END"