

**A statement for immediate release On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day issued by Human Rights and Democracy Media center "SHAMS"**

**Press freedom indicates the democracy of political regime**

"SHAMS" Center calls upon international foundations and human rights organizations to immediately put an end to the Israeli violations against journalists. Israeli forces have been infringing upon the journalists in terms of killing, physical torments, injuries, arrests, preventing others from travelling or moving, confiscation or damaging tools, using journalists as human shields, closure of media institutions, disturbance and piracy. Such breaches upon the Palestinian journalists are considered the most dangerous and have negative impact on media outlets and journalists and their capacities to keep performing their duties. It reveals the Israeli intentions to keep journalists and mass media away from covering its crimes.

"SHAMS" center reminds that on World Press Freedom Day should be held to celebrate freedom, while the Palestinian context is deteriorating, based on the reports of human rights organizations and the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate. Infringements have been represented also in detentions, threats, violence and offences besides breaking tools and cameras. It is worth noting that occupation's spares no effort to stop any attempts aiming to reveal violations that citizens face within demonstrations and peaceful assembly. In addition to breaches that journalists also face in light of the absence of effective legislations to organize press work or protecting journalists, with developments in the few recent years. Due to the expansion of internet connections, social media networks and the increasing number of electronic press locations. So, it is important to provide a better environment of transparency, freedom of deliberation for information and supporting journalists when performing their job as legal protection is necessary besides the membership in the syndicate. Following 26 years since the Declaration of Windhoek has been issued in which May 3rd has been selected to celebrate World Press Freedom Day; Palestinian journalists have to struggle in a long-term path. So as to fulfill the achievement of this declaration headed by "Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic Press" as a condition for free press, securing journalist while doing their job, and assuring impartial interrogation in crimes related to infringement upon press freedom.

"SHAMS" center puts emphasis that media and human rights and interconnected. Addressing human rights by media indicates the development of the media and its understanding of these rights and principles by focusing on the individual regard when acquiring the knowledge, values and skills that relate to the application and dedication of human rights values. In general, information assumes a major role in improving the human rights situation. Despite the great benefit of the information initiative in monitoring, documenting, reporting and disseminating human rights violations, its role in the protection of human rights, especially in the context of the transition towards democracy in our country today, does not stop at this point, As with other educational institutions, the media should be mobilized in a framework of a sustainable national campaign that combines the immediate exposure of human rights violations with education to prevent the recurrence of such violations or otherwise. Secondly, media contributes to improving the human rights situation in Palestine. The role of the media in the protection of human rights is not an additional function, since there are no human rights without information, and there is no media without human rights.

"SHAMS" Center extends greeting and salutes to journalists, media representatives and bloggers who support their job and defend the concerns of their nations honestly. The center salutes Palestinian and foreign journalists in addition to Arabic and International news agencies who aim at delivering the truth and revealing Israeli violations against the Palestinian people.