

"Statement issued by Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "SHAMS"

On the occasion of International Day against Torture and Other Cruel and inhuman or degrading treatment

"No to impunity for torturers from punishment"

SHAMS center reminds that the International Day in Support for Victims of Torture is an occasion to confirm the explicit and absolute ban on torture and all forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. It is also an opportunity to express solidarity with sufferings of torture victims and their families, and to assert the need of a new global commitment to rehabilitate all victims of ill-treatment in all its forms. Fighting against this crime is a primary issue in the protection of human rights, especially basic ones; the fight against torture must remain always of interest to all parties, whether at the local, regional or global level.

SHAMS center calls upon the international community, mainly and foremost, the United Nations, to urge Member States in the organization, to implement a code of conduct that would achieve protection of human rights, through imposition of certain limits in dealing with individuals in addition to development and circulation of relevant international conventions, that should be binding to all States, which should also contain legislative, administrative and judicial measures that sustain implementation of such conventions.

SHAMS center stresses the need for rehabilitation of torture victims in addition to the need for fair compensation and reparation, and punish torturers and officials in perpetrating states, mainly the occupation, for violations and crimes committed against humanity in Palestine and to peruse trial of perpetrators through public hearing trials in accordance with international standards, and repeal all legislation that may be sheltering them to avoid such punishment. We stress also need for the application of international standards in preventing the use of torture and prevention of extracting confessions or testimony against others by force, and to guarantee access to prisoners and banning detention in secret places, and necessity to reveal information immediately regarding arrested persons, in addition to guarantee access of their lawyers and relatives.

SHAMS center also confirms the need to develop a new plan involving the Bar Association, Ministry of Justice, Palestinian human rights organizations and other relevant parties, to develop cultural and legal awareness among prisoners, based on international legal principles and rules (i.e. rules and principles set by United Nations for the year (1985) in preparation for rehabilitating them and integrating them with the community. It is also highly recommended to develop a rehabilitation program for prisoners within the detention authorities that should

include several things in the light of international standards and trends, and according to the rules of the minimum treatment of offenders for the year (1955), which includes, for example, the need to provide educational services, cultural and internal employment, vocational rehabilitation and health care , in addition to launching awareness among detainees to increase their knowledge and skills in preparation for integrating them with their own societies in the future.

SHAMS highly condemns all deliberate homicides and torture actions against detainees in Palestine, Iraq and Guantanamo and in many countries around the world, in addition to condemning all forms of racial discrimination and sense ethnic purity practiced by the occupying Power against the Palestinian people. The racial discrimination by its nature will entail violence when applied as a system, and will instigate hatred and committing inhuman or degrading treatment. Hence we call upon the international community to stand firm against these barbaric acts, which are contrary to the humanitarian values and principles, and to bring those responsible to justice.

SHAMS center stresses that the international law of human rights was not the only law that bans torture, but has received the same degree of interest in light of the provisions of international humanitarian law. the international human rights law states the prohibition of torture “absolutely "without any exceptional cases, in all cases, whether international or internal armed conflicts, where the said law remains present through the provisions of international humanitarian law, which consider torture, as serious crimes, that result personal criminal responsibility of perpetrators, under different forms and descriptions.

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