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**An Immediate Release Statement issued by the
Human Rights and Democracy Center "SHAMS"
on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day**

It is not only the career of troubles but also looking for the truth

“SHAMS” center emphasizes that the crime of killing journalists and violation of their right for protection is considered in accordance with the principles of international humanitarian law as a war crime, and attacking media headquarters and other civilian targets, is also perceived as a war crime, which entails to bring perpetrators whether civilian or military personnel, regardless of their ranks and positions, in front of international criminal courts without grating them any impunity. This requires the concerted efforts of the international organizations, concerned governments, institutions and trade unions where these journalists belong and particularly the International Federation of Journalists to uncover the perpetrators and those responsible for killings, torture and imprisonment of journalists and for the destruction of media headquarters.

“SHAMS” center expresses its deep concern regarding what journalism freedom witnesses in terms of blatant assaults as well as dangerous regression particularly in the last decade in spite of the prevalence of decision (1738) issued by the UN Security Council which condemns intended assaults on journalists, and asks the related official sides to stop these practices. It also points to the significance to consider journalists as civilians who should be protected and respected as they have this characteristic, besides their special equipment represent civil targets and shouldn't be a goal for any aggression or revenge procedures. It should be noted that reports reveal and truths stresses the continuation of targeting journalists and attacking them by killing, arresting, injuring or abducting.

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“SHAMS” center reminds that the importance of World Press Freedom Day is represented in being an alarm to remind governments to respect its commitments toward press freedom, career’s ethics, supporting mass media which are in many countries signify a target for restriction and ideological framing and suppressing freedom. It is also a day to remember those journalists who lost their souls within practicing their work, and it is an occasion to remind the international community about journalism, journalists’ and writers’ rights in free expression in addition to publishing information, events’ truths and issues freely.

“SHAMS” center requests to significantly train journalists and media representatives as a way to develop media and journalistic work so as to serve the issues of human rights as well as basic freedoms in addition to outline appropriate training and rehabilitation programs. “SHAMS” center also asks to significantly rehabilitating and training journalists who work within the field of electronic journalism to be able to utilize technology in producing their media materials, it also claims importantly to set legislation and law to organize this new type of journalism without precluding its freedoms. SHAMS center asks human rights organizations to issue an annual report that monitors the situation of journalistic and media freedoms, to highly enhance the awareness o media representatives regarding human rights’ concepts, legislating regulations in accordance with international standards as well as human rights’ conventions, including human rights’ subjects within the faculties and departments of media and journalism in its curricula, tackling human rights’ issues within mass media extensively, in addition to reinforcing investigative journalism, achieving the independence for media facilities and practicing democracy as well as transparency and securing the basic rights for media representatives.



“SHAMS” center reminds that celebrating the World Press Freedom Day aims at reminding people about the exceptional role of the “fourth authority” in enhancing democracy and good governance as well as encouraging development all over the world. It is an occasion to spot light on the journalists’ experiences and sacrifices and remember the great tasks they perform while carrying out their roles in facts finding and supplying the audience with news regardless of sacrifices and obstacles they face. It is also a reminder for governments to respect its commitments toward freedom of journalism and defending journalists, an occasion as well to identify the audience of the kinds of infringements upon citizens due to expressing their opinions, and to remind them of journalists’ suffering because of the violations they are exposed to since female and male journalists sacrifice their life and freedom for defending their neutrality and integrity so killing, jail, torture, abduction, hiding or vanishing are the prices they pay for truth while practicing their duties.

“SHAMS” center calls female and male journalists to importantly provide their suggestions about modifying the law of publishing and printings as well as paraphrasing all legislations which search in the field of freedom of opinion and press in a way to guarantee initiating all media rights and freedoms, attain harmony with the basic modified law and with human rights’ international standards and to allow to devote more aware media freedom and to involve university lecturers and experts to benefit from their abstract experiences.

Finally “SHAMS” center tributes all journalists, bloggers and other press workers who are defending truth and performing their duties objectively and transparently, and salutes all local and foreign reporters and journalists, at various news agencies for their keen work and for exposing abuses of the occupation forces against the Palestinian people.

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