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A statement issued by

Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "SHAMS"

On the occasion of the Eighth of March, International Women's Day

We should unite to stop killing women ...

"SHAMS" center **emphasizes** that killing women or what is called "honor killing" represents a form of discrimination, a flagrant violation against her rights and a reaction to social, economic, psychological, educational and cultural factors. It is known that the Palestinian community is a part of the Arabic community and the situation of woman within its framework is similar to the situation of the Arabic woman in general, while the Palestinian community as other traditional communities adopts customs and traditions so as to preserve its existence and legitimacy using manners of social oppression to enroot the inferiority of woman. Hence, we could find duplication in standards in the concept of "honor" in which the supreme values of honor are absent and limited to woman's body and virginity.

"SHAMS" center seriously **perceives** how clergy men issue different Fatwas in this regard as well as the obvious dissimilarity, and it is no more acceptable especially at the beginning of the Third Millennium to be involved within an old thought away from humanity and democratic communities in terms of wondering : is allowed for woman to be engaged within political work ? Or can women manage the public affairs?

And within communities that women have occupied advanced positions in managing the public affairs, we are still wondering and debating about her right to drive a car or to travel alone, or whether it is allowed for her to work in the stores of women's underclothing, or if requesting her rights is acceptable or a western novelty. Therefore, the question is: what is the cause of the political failure in resolving the issues of the nation? And is man the only decision-maker in this area?

"SHAMS" center **condemns** inhuman unethical measures practiced by the Israeli soldiers against the Palestinian women; while such measures or violations undoubtedly assure that Israeli military army isn't noble and Israeli weapons aren't innocent since it is an occupying army.

Israeli practices against the Palestinian woman don't only represent flagrant violations against human rights, but also represent the absence of ethics and prevalence of immoral values within Israeli soldiers because they reflect their violent education and military system.

In these measures, the state of the occupation infringes upon International Humanitarian Law as well as Human Rights Law and in particular Geneva Conventions in 1949 and its additional protocol in 1977, Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1951 and its additional protocol in 1967, Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Woman in 1977 and its optional protocol in 1999 and the decision no. 1325 issued by the Security Council.

"SHAMS" center significantly **requests** to empower the woman politically and to enhance her efficient participation within political work since her participation is still considered limited and there is no sufficient attention paid to it within the agendas of the Palestinian National Authority and political parties due to the social prevailing conditions and the inferior stereotypical image towards her. And it is known that woman's participation within political life represents an indicator for the advancement of the community, and in order to guarantee and promote her involvement within political life we should develop her participation within social political parties and movements as well as civil society organizations which are interested in societal issues and seek to give more space for woman's political participation in addition to put highlight on her role. And we should work to enact modern laws that adopt basic legitimate rights for woman and guarantee freedom and equality for her.

"SHAMS" center **reminds** that in spite of the technical advancement in mass media, it presents woman in a traditional stereotypical image or in a covered way for the concept of "model" to be a way of sexual attraction since the modern image of woman is "insignificant" and this negative image is enhanced through mass media consequently, women themselves have adopted this negative image keeping the appurtenance of modern woman in a formal way which doesn't reflect the real image of them and their problems or actual ambitions. Therefore, we couldn't find the balanced image of woman who is capable to be a real mother and ambitious community member whose role doesn't contradict with her motherhood since the social role of woman isn't less important than her role as a mother.

"END"