



2015/2/27

**A statement for immediate release issued by
Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "SHAMS"
On burning Aljaba'a Mosque and Jabal Sahyoun Church**

"SHAMS" Center **condemns** the continuous aggressions by settlers on holy places, the recent was burning Aljaba'a Mosque and Jabal Sahyoun Church besides writing Anti-Christianity phrases. Under the observation of the Israeli army, such aggressions constitute an infringement upon Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, and upon the right to pray and practice religious rights. As well, it breaches the obligation of the occupation's state in the Palestinian territories. The center mentions that breaches against places of worship not surprising because discrimination is enrooted in the Israeli occupation, in addition to killing, destruction and displacement. Such measures are practiced only in Palestine by the Israeli occupation.

"SHAMS" Center **stresses** that what have been made by settlers is a crime and a war crime based on the fact that settlement is a war crime according to International Humanitarian Law, and the Basic Statute of the International Criminal Court of 1998 which considers infringement upon buildings devoted for religious, educational, artistic, archeological and charitable purposes, as well as hospitals or places where sick and injured people exist in, except military goals.

"SHAMS" Center **calls** the Palestinian National Authority PNA for immediately submitting documents of settlement before International Criminal Court considering it a war crime. And calls for the need for the international community to burden responsibility of forcing the Israeli occupation to stop its gross violations against the rights of the Palestinians which contradict the simplest human rights. It also calls the PNA for searching and adopting mechanisms and ways to protect Palestinian citizens from the Israeli violations and empowering Palestinians everywhere to defend themselves.



"SHAMS" Center **reminds** that places of worship are protected within International Humanitarian Law as well as international treaties headed by Hague Convention of 1907 on respecting laws and customs of land was particularly articles (27) and (56) while article (53) of the Second Optional Protocol annexed to Geneva Conventions on 12/7/1949 in regard to protecting the victims of armed international disputes and protecting places of worship of 1977. Article (16) of the Second Optional Protocol annexed to Geneva Conventions on protecting victims of domestic armed disputes stipulates on protecting places of worship.

In light of the regular effort aiming to assign international legal rules for protecting places of worship, the General Assembly of the United Nations issued on 25/10/1981 the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and types of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. Article (6) of this declaration stipulates that (based on article 1 of the declaration and rules of paragraph 3 of the same article, the right to freedom of thought, religion and belief the following freedoms (right to practice rites, holding meetings related to any religion or belief as well as building and mainlining places for these purposes).

"End"