

**A statement for immediate release**

**Issued by Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "SHAMS"**

**About inflicting death penalty upon a citizen by the Court of First Instance of Khan  
Younis**

"SHAMS" center strongly **Condemns** on inflicting death by hanging by the Court of First Instance of Khan Younis on 28/12/2017 upon the citizen Mahmoud Mohammed Khalifa 55 years old from Rafah city. Death penalty is a criminal violation and a civil damage which doesn't solve any security or criminal problems. It represents the state of government moving forwards to escape from impediments. Therefore, the duty of each government is to protect fundamental rights and freedoms headed by the right to life and the right to fair trial. Death penalty also represents the top of cruel inhuman and degrading punishments and it is a gross violation against the right to life. It hasn't approved the success in deterring crimes more than other punishments ratified in the Penal Law. Moreover, the capital punishment is the only irreversible punishment once implemented. It is worth noting that the citizen Mahmoud Mohammed Khalifa is accused of murdering his brothers Rafat Mohammed Khalifa and Jihad Mohammed Khalifa on May of 2015 by leaving different stabs on their bodies which caused their death.

"SHAMS" center **convicts** the nature of (gifts) being presented by the courts in Gaza Strip to the citizens for celebrating the New Year 2018. While people around the world celebrate the New Year in different ways, citizens of Gaza Strip live with more sorrow, deprivation and killing.

"SHAMS" center **assures** its support and solidarity with families and parents of victims. It clarifies that calling for abolition of the death sentence against perpetrators in serious crimes doesn't indicate tolerating them, but replacing the death sentence with other punishment to respect individuals' humanity and dignity. The capital punishment represents the cruelest form of intentional murder. It is irreversible, the risk of executing an innocent person can never be eliminated. While people who were sent to death row have later been exonerated sometimes.

"SHAMS" center **puts emphasis** on respecting the efforts and approaches of the Palestinian leaders aiming to accede human rights conventions which guarantee the right to life. The center appeals to the Palestinian National Authority PNA to sign the Second Optional Protocol of 1989, annexed to the International Covenant on political and Civil Rights, on the abolition of death penalty. Moreover, the center appeals to the Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas so as not to ratify death sentences, and to use his constitutional powers to abolish death penalty from the Palestinian legislations.

**"END"**

