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**A Statement for Immediate Release by  
The Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "SHAMS"**

**The "SHAMS" Center welcomes the decision of the president to form a legal committee  
to study the Personal Status Law**

The "SHAMS" Center welcomes the decision of the president Mahmoud Abbas Abu Mazen to form a legal committee made up of the Legal Advisor Mr. Hasan Al-Ouri, the Minister of Justice Mr. Ali Muhanna to study the Personal Status law and modify it to protect women from oppression and discrimination, for women's rights cannot be divided at all from the concept of Human Rights, and through translating those rights into laws, and national policies that guarantee that a woman can get her rights. Therefore strengthening women's rights and basic freedoms and protecting them, as well as the equality between man and woman are goals that cannot be missed.

The "SHAMS" Center affirms the importance of civil legislations to deal with the financial disclosure for women, her inheritance, divorce, dealings with her finances, early marriage, child custody and other specific women cases, which should be included in the family law and not in the personal status law is a matter of great importance not to protect the woman and her rights, but to protect society from internal division and social conflict, and here the need for creating change is exposed aiming to improve the status of women in all walks of life.

The "SHAMS" Center stress on strengthening Human Rights in general and Women's Rights specifically, which will not occur until women and men are presented and participants equally in decision making, where having women participate in decision making is not simply a requirement of Democracy only, but a fundamental condition to take women's benefits from different aspects, in marginalizing women and prohibiting her participation in decision making the goals of equality and development are burdened, this required working on many



modifications on some laws and legislations, or create new legislations related to employment, health, and personal status in order to bridge the gap between man and women.

The **"SHAMS"**Center calls for the necessity of reviewing the discriminatory laws that discriminate between men and women so that they may be more appropriate with International Agreements and Conventions, and write legislations or modify the discriminatory laws to guarantee the equality between both sexes. And create laws that protect women from violence and protect them from all threats and obstacles they may face in a way that would contribute to ending all forms of discrimination against women in various fields, and strengthen her role in building society and its progress, bettering her place within it, which would include citizenship laws, personal status, retirement, social security, health insurance, employment, the penal code, unions, and guarantee that Honor crimes and violence within families are serious felonies. This requires taking a serious position to quickly proceed to cancel the article in the penal code that gives lighter punishment to a man who has killed a related female under the pretense of Honor , or modify these articles as well as others, having Human Rights Organizations participating by presenting suggestions to the law project. As well as the necessity of including agreements, protocols, and attachments in national legislations and distributing them on a local level.

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