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Statement issued by "SHAMS" Center for Democracy and Human Rights

On the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

Stop torture..... Torture is an offense against human dignity

"SHAMS" Center recalls that prohibition of torture is binding, and so states are demanded to prohibit it and punish torturers. Prevention of torture is the basic approach to ban it on the ground that it is binding in accordance with the international laws taking into consideration non-applicability of statutory limitations to war crimes and crimes against humanity. This principle is another factor of not allowing violators of human rights to escape punishment. The value of the binding rule or principle constitutes the pillar of another procedural rule -international jurisdiction rule- which renders national and international judiciary integrated.

"SHAMS" Center condemns systematic killing and torture patterns and the immoral measures inflicted by the Israeli occupation forces and interrogators on the Palestinian prisoners. It also condemns racist, ethical and religious discrimination practiced by the occupying state against the people of Palestine. Israel is the only state in the world that codifies torture openly under the pretext of "security" and practices racial discrimination. This kind of discrimination is violence in its nature because it motivates torture cruel, degrading and inhuman treatment. In light of all that, we demand the international community to stand firm against such systematic acts that run counter to human values and principles and to bring torturers to justice.

"SHAMS" Center also demands the parties concerned to ensure the rights of the victims of torture and ill-treatment and fairly redress and rehabilitate them. Also, it is imperative to provide them with information on redress procedures and orders issued by courts in this respect. Such information should consist of the number of applications submitted thereof and the amounts of money granted in compensation. In addition to that, they should be informed of any compensation or redress programs including those of rehabilitation and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorders.



"SHAMS" Center calls for including the crime of torture into the national laws, review of the laws in force, organize training courses for the law enforcement bodies including security servicemen, judges, public prosecutors, forensic doctors and prisons medical service staff to raise their awareness on the terms of the convention against torture and know how to document the physical and mental impacts of torture, cruel, degrading and ill-treatment. More effort should be exerted to develop and strengthen the training and educational courses to make sure that security and courts decisions enforcers are aware of the provisions of this convention and other international relevant conventions.

"SHAMS" views that it is important to reconsider the articles of Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions, particularly article 13 of the Third Geneva Convention on treatment of war prisoners to render torture an act that constitutes a violation of this convention. Article 1 of the convention against torture and other patterns of cruel, degrading, inhuman and ill-treatment should be broadened.

"SHAMS" Center stresses that states should cooperate on the bilateral and multilateral levels to stop war crimes and crimes against humanity and take the necessary national and international measures to achieve this objective. They should also cooperate in searching for the suspected torturers and arrest them to enable justice to take its course. Suspects of torture and war crimes and crimes against humanity should be arrested, tried and punished if they are proven guilty, and this should become a public rule. States should also cooperate and work together on the issue of extradition of perpetrators.

"SHAMS" Center greets all those who work around the world to alleviate the suffering of the victims of torture and their families, and it also greets those who work to ensure medical care, psychological, legal and social assistance and financial support for the victims of torture.

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