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A statement for immediate release

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

On the occasion of the anniversary of Universal Declaration on Human Rights & World Day for Human Rights Defenders

"SHAMS" Center **underlines** that political stalemate, the continuation of Israeli colonial settlements, the high incidence of terrorist violations by settlers in the West Bank, which include assaulting citizens and their property, run over children, the elderly, and Palestinian women, cutting and burning trees under the protection of the occupation army, reinforcing the embargo on the Gaza Strip since 13 years, and declaring Jerusalem a unified capital of Israel contrary to the International Legitimacy, international law and United Nations resolutions, the imposition of Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Arab territories in the Golan, the intention to impose it on the Jordan Valley, and the announcement by the US Secretary of State indicating the settlements are not in violation of International law, as if the international system designed by the United States and could they make changes whenever and however they wish. These actions require taking an international position by the international community, headed by the United Nations, besides breaking the silence which suggests to the occupation-based authorities that their crimes are acceptable.

"SHAMS" Center **stresses** that the use of excessive force against civilians, whether in return marches and breaking the siege in the Gaza Strip, or against peaceful demonstrations in the West Bank, causing the deaths of dozens of Palestinian civilians, and extrajudicial field executions of Palestinian children (girls and boys), shooting cases and threats to physical safety of farmers in the West Bank & Gaza Strip and of fishermen in the Gaza Strip, incursions and arrests, including the arrest of fathers and mothers to put pressure on children under investigation. Also, the demolition of homes and other forms of collective punishment, the use of physical violence in the interrogation of detainees as what happened in the case of the detainee Samer Al-Arbeed, and the death of a number of detainees as a result of the deliberate medical negligence in Israeli jails, as happened with the detainee Sami Abu Dyak recently, and the hunger strike of other



detainees in protest against the illegal administrative detention, the imposition of severe restrictions on the right to movement and access of goods & Palestinian individuals, through the siege on Gaza, the West Bank barriers, the dismemberment of cities and the crises of fabricated crossings, and the occupation violations against journalists that totaled about 300 violations & 115 internal Palestinian violations only during the first half of the year 2019, including targeting the eye of the journalist Moaz Amaraneh , and other discriminatory and racist abuse should call for the world to recognize the independent Palestinian state, and to provide protection to the Palestinian people urgently and effectively.

At the internal level, “SHAMS” Center **reawakens** that the right to peaceful assembly is subject to violations both in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It also recalls that capital punishment remains in force at the level of legislation in the West Bank whereas it remains in force at the level of legislation & practice in the Gaza Strip unconstitutionally, and is supported in the culture of local communities. Furthermore, several women are murdered in crimes related to the repressive patriarchal culture, without the enactment of the Family Protection against Violence Act to date, women are not empowered at the political level and in decision-making positions, and many children are vulnerable to domestic violence. The center also recalls that Palestinian legislation needs to be harmonized to ensure their conformity with international obligations of Palestine in all sectors, particularly the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto, aimed at abolishing the death penalty.

“SHAMS” Center highly **appreciates** the efforts that human rights defenders have been making, and applauds the efforts of local & international defenders in the documentation of violations and crimes against human rights. The center expresses its full solidarity with Omar Shaker, the *Israel and Palestine Director of Human Rights Watch* who was expelled by the Israeli occupying powers, due to his human rights work in November of this year. Israeli violations against human rights activists escalate, to include denial of entry, defamation, imposing financial burdens, raids on offices, and detention, which has occurred with a number of Palestinian civil society organizations recently.

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