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**Statement for immediate release****Published by the Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "SHAMS"****(43) People were killed since the beginning of the year: Toward an immediate comprehensive national plan to confront the collapse of civil peace in Palestine**

"SHAMS", Human Rights and Democracy Media Center expresses its great anxiety and anger due to the increase in violence and killing in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, as hardly a day passes without hearing about a new killing incident, in light of an unfortunate official failure to contain the crumbling civil peace and the spread of the crime phenomenon. The most recent of which was the killing of two citizens: (A.H), aged (48), and citizen (M.H), aged (24), from the town of Qabatiya, southwest of Jenin and the accompanying burning of a number of homes and properties. Citizen (A. B), in his fifties, was killed by a stray bullet and at least 14 civilians were wounded by live ammunition as a result of intense gunfire that interfered with a dispute between two families in al-Zaim town, East Jerusalem. The 53-year-old money-teller (A.B) was killed by shooting him in the head inside a house in Khan Yunis camp, with the aim of robbery, after he went with \$150,000 to the house of a person to conduct a financial transaction. This brings the number of victims of violence to (43) since the beginning of the year in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"SHAMS" Center confirms that the continuation and rise of crime is an expected result of the absence of an integrated national strategy to deal with the problem, ignoring repeated warnings and recommendations from civil institutions, and a bitter



harvest for the spread of a culture of violence fueled by political, economic and social crises. It stresses the necessity of moving out of the state of description, diagnosis, and analysis to offering solutions and visions and their implementation. Accordingly, "**SHAMS**" Center stresses the need for all parties to play their roles in preserving civil peace and community cohesion, resulting in a Palestinian society capable of withstanding in the face of challenges. And the elaboration of a comprehensive national strategy based on several pillars:

- 1– Reforming the legislative system by developing and completing it by issuing a modern Palestinian penal code and approving the Law on the Protection of the Family from Violence in order to achieve both private and public deterrents, and the concept of criminal justice.
- 2– Law enforcement agencies from the security agencies and the justice sector, especially the judiciary, play a decisive role in pursuing crime and illegal weapons, and not be complacent by taking advantage of the harsher penalties for crimes related to the possession, use, trafficking, manufacture, and smuggling of firearms contained in the Amendment of Firearms and Ammunition Law 2/1998. Developing a security policy based on the role of the security institution is to protect citizens from any external aggression, to protect human rights, respect freedoms, preserve democratic practices, rise above political disputes, enforce the law in accordance with best international agreements and standards, protect basic law and constitutional institutions,



and preserve civil peace Taking into account transparency, integrity requirements, governance and accountability in the work of the security components.

- 3- Stopping tribal solutions that are negligent with crime and that reinforce a culture of impunity, and restrict the jurisdiction of examining the crime to the regular judiciary, which must be reformed in a way that makes it transparent, fair, efficient.
- 4- Social education institutions, especially universities, colleges, and institutes, play an active role in spreading and strengthening the values of civil peace, community cohesion, citizenship, dialogue, tolerance, and the rejection of violence. Urgent call to Criminologist, psychologist, and sociology specialists to analyze the causes of crime and contribute to providing solutions to it.
- 5- Reconstructing the Palestinian media discourse so that it is responsive to combating hatred and countering incitement to and promoting violence, establishing mechanisms for training media professionals on civil peace, and adopting a media code of honor on civil peace.
- 6- Activating the role of civil peace coalitions in all regions and governorates, and strengthening security partnership with them, in a way that allows overcoming the obstacle of political divisions of Palestinian regions and gatherings and enhances resorting to alternative means of resolving disputes such as mediation, arbitration, negotiation, and dialogue.



- 7– Involving the private sector in preserving civil peace within its societal responsibility, by playing a greater role in addressing economic decline and unemployment, with an understanding of their direct relationship to the level of crime.
- 8– Establishing a coordination committee that includes civil society organizations that work to implement interventions in terms of preserving and maintaining civil peace, through education, raising awareness, lobbying and advocacy, reaching hot spots, enhancing citizens' resort to alternative means of conflict resolution, providing psychological and legal counseling and counseling, and forming a civil crime and hatred observatory.

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