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**A statement for immediate release.****By "SHAMS" human rights and democracy media center.****On the international day against the death penalty: "courts of Gaza Accelerate the pace of human rights violations"**

"SHAMS" center strongly condemns the on-going issuing, and sentencing of the death penalty in the Gazan strip's courts', supported by the "HAMAS" government, The number of death sentences in Gaza since the beginning of this year has now reached (12), of which (8) were new sentences, and (4) were ruling in favor of death sentences in previous years. Thus, highlighting the danger of the continuation of death penalty application on a legislative level in Palestine. The number of cases in which could be charged with death penalty has reached (77), Based on the Revolutionary Penal Code 5/1979, the Jordanian Penal code 16/1960, the British mandate Penal code 74/1936 that is still applied in Gaza, which aligns with the violent local cultures and traditions, that support this kind of punishment based on retaliatory views, neglecting and declining to work towards building a crime-free society.

Today, Celebrating the international day against the death penalty, with the slogan "women. And death penalty, an invisible fact". It highlights women who had received death penalties, or that had been executed, or other women who had been acquitted or pardoned, considering that the stories of all those women remain unseen.

"SHAMS" Center hereby, expresses its sympathy and consolidation with the victim "NAHLA" 26, from Gaza-Strip, whom was sentenced to death in December 2016, after violating her right of fair guarantees, and secretly holding her trial, declining her basic right of hiring a lawyer, this case, of a woman being sentenced to death, is the first sentence after the establishment of the Palestinian authority, and to be followed by another death sentence targeting a women(55) in December 2018 based on a military court. Although all cases of death sentences are rejected, it holds a greater significance and danger when its practiced against women, in the context of all violations against women, especially rooted, and on-going domestic violence against them, which confirms in the human consciousness that the state does not only refuse to protect women from violence, but also legalizes it, and practices it in the patriarchal atmosphere, especially if women in such cases were being accused of the murder of their husbands, while, on the other hand, the same crime carried out by men against their wives, sees excuses, pardons, and more lenient sentences. "SHAMS" center would like to highlight another female suffering, which is the suffering and pain of mothers of these women, who were sentenced to death.

"SHAMS" center notes and warns that, these circumstances coincide with a state of declination of the civic peace, and with a qualitative and quantitative increase in crime, in addition to a rise in gun violence, and security failure, and a deteriorating security situation, this year was exceptional,



after the higher judiciary commission in Gaza issued number of decrees, organizing the work of regular courts, in which by, it was decided to resume the work on cases called “ Cases tagged with rep tape”, which schedules a table to put an end to these cases, the public persecution office hold a high interest in following the public record cases. While death penalty holds no guarantees of fair trial, since there is no reconsideration of jurisdiction in such cases, however, it is not possible for the accuracy of these ruling to be unquestioned, relating that to “Cases tagged with rep tape”, the availability of fair trial guarantees should be followed carefully, especially for cases igniting the public opinion.

“SHAMS” center stresses on its rooted positions against the death penalty, for the violations of human rights it holds, majorly, the right to live, and to the pain and suffering it causes to civilians who are sentenced with them, as well as being a form of mass punishment, targeting the family of the victim, and it is usually applied to poor, marginalized groups.

Hence, “SHAMS” center urges civil institutions and governmental officials, to implement the following recommendations:

1. The political Palestinian system and its institutions, must comply with the Palestinian international legal commitments of the international covenant of political and civil rights, and its optional protocols, that requires the abolishing of the death penalty for all the states signing the convention, that’s by publishing in official newspaper and aligning with national legislations.
2. The courts of Gaza must seize the violations of the right to live, through issuing death sentences against civilians, and to lobby against enhancing the fair trial guarantees in the judiciary environments, as well as promoting integrity, and transparency.
3. Civil institutions intensively working against the death sentence, by promoting surveillance on the judiciary system institutions, especially court sessions, and putting more efforts in the observative context, as well as coordination and partnership with civil, regional, local, institutions working against the death penalty sentence, thus achieving better networking and exchanging experience in this field.

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