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**In Commemoration of the International Women's Day on the 8th of March.**

**"SHAMS" Center stresses the need for the immediate issuance of the Family Protection Law and the expansion of the women's political participation through the portal of elections.**

"SHAMS" Center condemns in the strongest terms the tragedies, violations, and inhumane practices directed by the occupation's soldiers and settlers against Palestinian women and particularly in the Jordan Valley and the areas designated (C). Such practices necessitate a stance by the international community and a commitment to both its responsibilities and the protection of human rights in general, and women's rights in particular in light of the massive deterioration of their rights in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which must be placed at the agenda of the International Criminal Court in this regard. As women suffer to the greatest degree from the rise of the rates of violence, poverty, unemployment, and marginalization in the record, unprecedented magnitudes and as their health and living conditions worsen due to the spread of the pandemic, their suffering is continuously ignored by international institutions and relevant bodies.

"SHAMS" Center stresses that "Israel" has multiplied the pressures it exerts on Palestinian women, in a dual nationalistic and gender-based persecution. "Israel," the occupying power, continues in its refusal to adhere to international law regarding human rights, including the international agreements it had previously joined like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. "Israel" has reneged on its commitments to the human rights agreements it has ratified in the West Bank and Gaza, resumed its challenge of the international community, and adamantly denied the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention despite the constant insistence by the relevant international



bodies on the applicability of all of these agreements and that "Israel," by virtue of being the occupying power, is legally obligated to apply the human rights agreements it has signed within the occupied territories.

"SHAMS" Center reminds the addressees that the 8th of March is a timely opportunity to measure the efforts expended by the official Palestinian institutions to promote respect of women's rights, empower them, protect them, and combat forms of violence against them. It also reminds of the importance of making the national legislations compatible with the international agreements and conventions which Palestine joined, the most prominent of which is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which Palestine joined 7 years ago without any reservations and signed the optional protocol attached to it, the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, and the Convention on Consent to Marriage and Minimum Age for Marriage in 2018.

"SHAMS" Center demands the quick issuance of the Family Protection Law in light of the catastrophic rate of crimes committed against women, a phenomenon that rings alarm bells that ought to be heard. It equally demands that the law clearly state the responsibilities and commitments of the government to curb violence, protect survivors, and prosecute the aggressors since the murder of women and violence directed against them are still two of the most essential fears that Palestinian women encounter and are challenged by structurally and culturally. Hence, such practices must be countered with the issuance of a modern law that entails deterrent punishments.

"SHAMS" Center stresses the importance of enabling women to access justice by reforming formal justice institutions and developing them positively. Such measures would make justice institutions embrace female victims of domestic violence rather than turn them away due to the culture of male solidarity, guarantee them justice and equality, and promote their sense of citizenship.



"SHAMS" Center stresses the importance of promoting women's political participation in a time when such participation is continuously decreasing. It also stresses that the upcoming elections present an opportunity that must be seized to promote women's presence and shrink the gap between representation and demography by enabling them to vote, be nominated, access political offices, and be effective after assuming them. This can be accomplished by fixing the general political atmosphere and adjusting the structural and cultural frameworks that impede their access to politics and forms an obstacle to their political participation. In addition, it is essential to enable women to access different decision-making positions by promoting their access to senior consequential positions in public ministry-affiliated and non-affiliated institutions, community institutions, private-sector institutions, and labor and professional unions.

"SHAMS" Center demands the important empowerment of women economically, and particularly women who reside in marginalized areas and are the main providers of their families. This can be a portal for them to attain more of their rights later on and be enabled in all aspects of life. The center also stresses the importance of reducing the gap between women's and men's respective participation in the job market as men's participation currently represents 4-fold that of women. Doing so would enable them to invest in their potential and vitalize the Palestinian economy.