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## "SHAMS" Center: Israel's Refusal to Grant Entry Visas to the Employees of International Organizations is a Prelude to Committing More Crimes

The Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "SHAMS" strongly **condemns** the refusal of the Israeli government to grant entry visas to UN staff working in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in the occupied Palestinian territory. Prior to that, Mr. James Henin, Head of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and a number of other UNHCR employees, were not granted entry visas to the occupied Palestinian territories. Lehi, one of the bloodiest Zionist gangs headed by Yitzhak Shamir and other organizations, assassinated the United Nations envoy and the international mediator and the Swedish diplomat Count Folke Bernadotte on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, 1948 by bombarding the King David Hotel in occupied Jerusalem.

**"SHAMS" Center stresses** that the Israel aims behind this to restrict the United Nations institutions, especially specialized organizations and institutions such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. and OCHA in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and other international organizations, which play an important role in documenting Israeli violations. These organizations are relied upon by the United Nations General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and the Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories in their reports, and in discussions within International Organization.

To hide the facts from the world as well as neglecting the documentation of the violations carried out against our people, Israel is fully aware of the seriousness of the reports against it, which monitor grave violations such as demolitions, forced displacement, summary executions, and other violations.

It is known to the Israelis that these violations constitute a legal responsibility for it before the international community. This prompted the occupying state, several times in the past, to refuse entry to investigation committees into the Palestinian territories to closely examine the crimes committed against the Palestinians in the various occupied Palestinian territories. One of the cases of this instance was the aggressive wars it waged on the Gaza Strip, which led these committees to meet with the families of the victims in Jordan.

**"SHAMS" Center confirms** that the occupation state's prevention of international personnel from entering the occupied Palestinian territories coincides with a dangerous escalation by the occupying state against the Palestinian citizens and with grave violations committed by the occupying state. Until the present days, there are (217) a martyr, and more than (700) facilities targeted by the occupation forces, including a house, a mosque, a school, a commercial store, and an economic facility, between



demolition, eviction, confiscation, and notifications.

**"SHAMS" Center states** that this arbitrary measure portends more measures taken by the occupation government such as confiscating lands or building settlements and expanding existing ones, daily arrests, destruction of property. Its violations also included escalation of daily attacks on Palestinian citizens by the army and settlers, demolishing homes, executing citizens and killing them in cold blood.

**"SHAMS" Center demands** the United Nations, and countries that believe in the right to self-determination of peoples, and in international law, to stand firmly against Israeli arrogance, and take practical steps to enable the Palestinian people to establish their independent state on their national soil. Also, they should believe in the need to leave the box of denunciation, denunciation and condemnation, which has become a green light for the occupation forces to commit more of the crimes and violations against the Palestinian citizens away from the follow-up and documentation of these organizations for the crimes of the occupation.

**"SHAMS" Center states** that today we fear that this ban and restrictions on international organizations, which was preceded by an arbitrary decision to close (6) Palestinian human rights organizations was a prelude to the assault on the entire civil society.

The targeting of journalists yesterday was evident in the occupation forces' assassination of the journalist Sherine Abu Aqleh, the attempt to assassinate the journalist Ali Al-Samoudi, and the journalist Shatha Hanaysha was a clear assault on journalists by killing, arresting, and beating them. **This assault** can prevent them from conveying the truth to the world from the spot that international organizations are targeted today to prevent documentation of crimes, and tomorrow we do not know if the occupation government will issue a decision to restrict the freedom of movement of ambassadors and diplomats accredited to Palestine.

Israel wants to carry out its crimes away from the eyes of the world. It is fully aware that the reports issued by the United Nations are official legal documents that can be used as evidence before the International Criminal Court and other international courts.