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## On the Occasion of the World Press Freedom Day

### **"SHAMS" Center calls for the implementation of the UN resolution concerning journalists' protection (No. 2222)**

Human Rights and Democracy Media Center 'SHAMS' urges the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the governmental and non-governmental international organisations of human rights to take action immediately to stop these violations and assaults of the Israeli forces against Palestinian journalists.

It is also imperative that the international community holds its responsibility toward Palestinian journalists, especially regarding the Israeli violations against them. It should protect them from practising their journalism, enable them to move freely, and report the news without any pressures or hindrances.

Furthermore, it is necessary to implement UN resolution No.2222, concerned with journalists' protection, to guarantee to hold the Israeli forces and Israeli settlers responsible for such violations. Last year, Israeli violations against Palestinian journalists ranged from arrest, arrest extension, detention, bullets shot, battering, preventing journalists from covering news, houses invasion, using tear gas, delivering notifications to go to the Israeli intelligence center, and confiscating journalists' equipment and blocking social media sites.

**"SHAMS" Center urges** the Palestinian government not to pass the law No. (--) 2022 concerning the system of licensing media institutions which is based on the rules of the amended basic law in 2003, the articles of law No.5 issued in 1995 about publications, the Palestinian law of telecommunication (3/1996), the ministers' council's decision (18/2018) concerning licensing, radio stations, the companies of satellite broadcasting, the offices of satellite channels and media production.

The ministers' council decision contradicts the Palestinian fundamental law, especially article (27), which states that audio-visual and written media and the freedom of publication, broadcasting, and the release of workers in media facilities are guaranteed according to this fundamental law-related laws.

Also, it contradicts law (9/1995) regarding publication, the commitments of the state of Palestine before the international community, agreements and related international agreements about Palestinian issues.



**"SHAMS" center assures** that freedom of speech and journalism is a protected constitutional right. Even though the international law allows having limited constraints, they should be explained and justified firmly in favor of freedom of speech by local and international courts which deal with such journalism issues.

This great responsibility lies on the judicial authority and the legal system, which protect rights and freedoms, so the most severe violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms are justified by governments as being a necessity to protect "national security or morals or the system".

**"SHAMS" Center stresses** that freedoms and media independence are fundamental political rights in a society looking for intellectual and political pluralism that is senseless without freedom. Freedom of speech comprises a prominent issue as one of the most critical human rights since the UN general assembly issued the international declaration of human rights in 1948. There is a particular focus on evaluating the legitimacy of the imposed constraints by comparing them with the importance of any democratic community.

The protected list of interests such as national security, general system, or morals is flexible and hard to determine since they differ according to the society and political system. Based on the previously mentioned, the democracy level in the community should be the calibre of the legitimacy of the imposed constraints.

**"SHAMS" Center demands** the necessity of amending the laws of publications and journalism according to the treaties and agreements Palestine joined. Also, it is imperative to support the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate (PJS) to upgrade its professional performance in defending the interests of its members. Finally, it is essential to protect journalists from assaults and build their capacities through training courses in the culture of human rights.

**End**