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**Human Rights and Democracy Media Center" SHAMS"  
Condemns the Occupation's Restrictions of Freedom of Mobility  
Restricting Freedom of Mobility is a Violation of the International  
Humanitarian Law**

**Ramallah- Human Rights and Democracy Media Center- SHAMS, condemned** the new Israeli (the occupying power) restrictions imposed on the foreigners intended to visit the occupied Palestinian territory. According to the new restrictions, any foreigner who wants to visit the Occupied Palestinian Territory should apply for a visa within at least 45 days ahead, where SHAMS Center believes that such procedures are clear interpretation of the applied Israeli Apartheid Regime.

**"SHAMS" Center emphasized** that restricting the freedom of mobility is a clear violation of the International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Principles. The International Law and the International Humanitarian Law, stress the right of nations for freedom of mobility that is endorsed within the Civic and Political Rights of all nations. Article 27 of Geneva Fourth Convention about the rights of civilians during armed conflicts (as one of the International Law Instruments), emphasizes the necessity to respect the humanity of individuals and abstain from violating the basic rights. The given article states: "Protected persons are entitled, in all circumstances, to respect for their persons, their honour, their family rights, their religious convictions and practices, and their manners and customs. They shall at all times be humanely treated".

Right to freedom of mobility is highlighted in several instruments of the International Humanitarian Law where it was included in both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on the Civic and Political Rights. Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: 1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state; and 2. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country. The International Covenant on the Civic and Political Rights (legally obligatory to be implemented by all states parties and Israel ratified it during the year 1991), emphasized and detailed the rights that were included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 12 of the Covenant guarantees the right to freedom of mobility: "1. Everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence. 2. Everyone shall be free to leave



any country, including his own". The above stated rights should never be restricted in any case with the exception of those stated in the law for the sake of protecting the national security, public order, public health, national ethics, or the rights and freedoms of others where restrictions should not violate the other rights stated in the Covenant. None should be arbitrary deprived of the right to enter his homeland.

**"SHAMS" Center mentioned** that the Israeli tyrannical procedures would deprive Palestinians living abroad and have international foreign nationalities, from the right to enter their own country. The Israeli step will come back with other negative impacts such as affecting the social relations and cohesions that would be harmed. Thousands of families would be deprived of the possibility to visit their relatives inside Palestine during the Summer Vacations as well as depriving them from participating in the various social occasions such as weddings and funerals.

On the Academic Level, the Israeli procedures would deprive thousands of international students and academic cadres from participating in the educational activities that the Palestinian academic institutions arrange and would not be able to participate in producing the joint researches accomplished between Palestinian and international students/ academic cadres. Many of the foreign students, who study at the Palestinian universities, would miss attending the university on time. The international students who study the Arabic Language at the Palestinian universities would be the most affected by the occupation's new procedures. Additional, international academic cadre, either those contracted by the Palestinian universities directly or those nominated from their own universities to work in the Palestinian universities would be affected by the new regulation. Thus, Palestinian students would be deprived from benefiting from the international academic cadres.

On a related level, the Israeli decision would affect accessing the OPT by the foreigners working for human rights and Relief Agencies leading to deprive thousands of Palestinian poor and marginalized households from obtaining the basic needs that they get through the international humanitarian organizations. The health and medical sectors would be the most affected as the international medical cadres should leave Palestine for several months, may be for a year, before being allowed to re- enter in case they were given a visa. The Israeli authorities had been denying visa entry for the director and the staff of the High Commissioner of Human Rights Office in Palestine for over than three years.



**SHAMS Center states** that Israel is mistaken in case believe that such decision would lead to disconnect Palestinians from their homeland or that the friends of Palestinians from the friend foreign countries would abstain from visiting Palestine. Additionally, SHAMS Center believes that the new Israeli regulation would not give the occupation power the opportunity to commit new crimes against Palestinians either the field murdering, forcible eviction, or ethnic cleansing as there would be absence of foreign observers of such crimes.

"SHAMS "Center would like to remind the world with the military orders that the occupation power made to restrict Palestinians freedom to mobility and other rights. Palestinians right to freedom of mobility is one of the most restricted rights in Palestine as the Israeli authorities give Palestinians permits to move in specific hours or restrict their freedom through giving monthly permits and in the best cases a permit valid for nine months. In Some cases, Palestinians are obligated to leave their identity card on the cross borders points that are under the Israeli control while others are denied their right to leave the country. Some other Palestinians are under home- arrest. Palestinian released prisoners from the Israeli jails, during the first Intifada, were given a different Identity Card Cover color (for duration of 6 months) in order to restrict their mobility and make them subject to abuse on the Israeli checkpoints that spread all over the Occupied Palestinian Territory

**SHAMS Center calls** upon state parties of the Fourth Geneva Convention to take immediate measures to stop and abolish the mentioned Israeli racist arrogance decision. Additionally, SHAMS Center calls upon states parties to provide international protection of Palestinians and end the Israeli arbitrary procedures that stand as a risk on Palestinians right to life.

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