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SHAMS Center:**Occupying Dar Al-Shifa Hospital and Raising the Israeli Flag on it
Has No Military Significance, but a war crime and Violation of International Law**

Ramallah: Human Rights and Democracy Media Center- SHAMS, affirmed that the ongoing targeting of the hospitals, in the Gaza Strip, by the Israeli occupation as well as sieging the hospitals and disconnecting water, electricity, and fuel, is a war crime and profound violation of the International Law. The Israeli forces are also demolishing the wells that supply the hospitals with the water needed to operate and save patients. The Israeli crimes are hostile attacks against groups protected in accordance with the Geneva Fourth Convention (patients, wounded, medical crews, chronologically diseased persons including children/ aged persons/ women, and other civilians). The practices of the Israeli occupation crown the collective punishments crimes that the Israeli occupation has been committing against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip since October 7, 2023.

The Center affirmed that the intentional targeting of the hospitals is a violation of Article 18 of the Geneva Convention. The given Article states: "Civilian hospitals organized to give care to the wounded and sick, the infirm and maternity cases, may in no circumstances be the object of attack, but shall at all times be respected and protected by the Parties to the conflict". Article 16 of the Convention states: "The wounded and sick, as well as the infirm, and expectant mothers, shall be the object of particular protection and respect". Article 19 of the Geneva First Convention states: "The protection to which civilian hospitals are entitled shall not cease unless they are used to commit, outside their humanitarian duties, acts harmful to the enemy. Protection may, however, cease only after due warning has been given, naming, in all appropriate cases, a reasonable time limit, and after such warning has remained unheeded". Article 24 of the Convention (Geneva I) states: "Medical personnel exclusively engaged in the search for, or the collection, transport or treatment of the wounded or sick, or in the prevention of disease, staff exclusively engaged in the administration of medical units and establishments, as well as chaplains attached to the armed forces, shall be respected and protected in



all circumstances". The Israeli attacks violate Article 8 of the Rome Statute- 1998 of the International Criminal Court, which states: "Intentionally directing attacks against buildings dedicated to religion, education, art, science or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are collected, provided they are not military objectives". The General Assembly, through Resolution (2675/ 1970), affirmed the necessity to neutralize hospitals and protect them against hostile attacks during armed conflicts. The resolution states "The area of a hospital or any other similar shelter, should in no case, be targeted during armed attacks. It should not be allowed to conduct any arbitrary attacks against hospitals or medical teams working in the human aid field".

SHAMS Center deplors the revenge criminal attacks against the hospitals in the Gaza Strip where the hospitals are sieged and the water, medicine, and fuel are cut off and denied entry to these hospitals. On a related level, the Israeli ongoing aggression against the Gaza Strip resulted, up to date, in more than 11 thousand martyrs, including 4506 children, 3027 women, and 700 aged persons. Additionally, the aggression resulted in 27500 wounded and more than 2000 missed persons. More than a million and a half persons have been displaced and the Israeli forces attacked the 34 hospitals in the Gaza Strip where 16 hospitals stopped working completely. The other hospitals are still under attack and are still sieged, which indicates the criminal policy applied by the Israeli government and the Israeli army against civilians and civil properties.

Shams" Center condemned the Arab, regional, and international silence and complicity with the crimes committed against hospitals in the Gaza Strip by the Israeli occupation forces. It questions whether destroying hospitals in Gaza and executing patients and babies would be considered self-defense for the Israeli occupation, according to the understanding of those countries that boast about human rights values and international law. This inevitable result is happening now. Raising the Israeli flag over Al-Shifa Hospital is considered by the Israeli War Council as a military triumph. It is not a military base, not an airbase; it is a facility treating wounded children, elderly people, and women. If this is considered a victory, so be it. This reflects the extent of brutality, inhumanity, and crimes committed by the Israeli occupation against innocent civilians with the intention of killing, destroying,



and executing patients, including those suffering from chronic diseases, especially cancer, kidney, heart, respiratory diseases, and premature babies, without regard for any humanitarian or ethical considerations.

Shams" Center called on the United Nations, human rights organizations, governmental and non-governmental institutions, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Médecins Sans Frontières, and Amnesty International to fulfill their humanitarian, ethical, and legal duties. It urged them to take urgent action and exert pressure on the Israeli occupation government to neutralize hospitals from military operations, cease attacks, and ensure the delivery of medical, food, and water supplies. This is essential to enable hospitals to fulfill their humanitarian duty in treating patients and the wounded, providing medical and healthcare, in accordance with international conventions and considering the humanitarian considerations they enjoy. All institutions are mandated to protect and ensure special treatment for the wounded and patients in armed conflicts