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In Recognition of World Press Freedom Day

SHAMS Center:

Martyr Shireen Abu Akleh Left, but, with her blood, she documented the Conviction File against her Murderer

Human Rights and Democracy Media Center- SHAMS, in the OPT, salutes the spirit of Martyr Shireen Abu Akleh who spent her life searching for the truth. Martyr Shireen was always the spokesperson of oppressed people and pursued the path of justice and triumph for human beings as the first priority. Abu Akleh introduced the world the story of the wounded nation who is still suffering the impacts of the Nakba imposed on Palestinians in the year 1948. Through over twenty-five years, she kept wondering through over Palestine, entering the houses of martyrs, injured, and prisoners to report their stories. Shireen was seen moving between the checkpoints, as well as seen in the confrontations, demonstrations, and marches. Martyr Abu Akleh reported the narration of oppressed nation, which is under colonial racist occupation, professionally and in a distinguished way. In her voice, the whine of the wound was well heard and in her face we saw the tears of a man who is harmed by loss and the tears of a woman who is wondering between the occupation's jails visiting a son or a beloved prisoner. More than that, in her face, the story of a nation that was subject to conspiracy from all (relatives and non- relatives) was well interpreted.

SHAMS Center emphasizes that martyr Shireen Abu Akleh left but, with her blood, she documented the conviction file of her murderer. She fell down as a martyr and a witness against those who silenced her. The murderer of Shireen is the occupation that kills all the features of life, happiness, and beauty. Targeting Shireen and her colleagues (Ali Sammoudi and Shatha Hanaisha who escaped death through a miracle) is nothing but part of the systematic policy to hide the truth. Tens of journalists (males/ females) had been targeted by the occupation in the past, prior to targeting martyr Shireen and her colleagues. In addition to that, the occupation keeps arresting journalists as well as deporting them and targeting them systematically. All these practices and crimes indicate clearly that targeting martyr Shireen is part of the predetermined systematic Israeli policy that was designed to hide the truth and cover the crimes of the occupation and ensure that nothing is reported to the world about these crimes. The given Israeli policy is the applied tool to silence Palestinian voice and assassinate the Palestinian narration. In recognition of the World Press Freedom Day and within the approaching of the first anniversary of assassinating martyr Shireen Abu Akleh, SHAMS Center emphasizes that the crime of murdering Shireen Abu Akleh, would not be a statute of limitation. SHAMS Center calls upon pursuing the criminals and present them to the appropriate criminal courts with no tolerance with the crimes. SHAMS Center calls also for providing protection for journalists in the OPT in accordance with UNSCR 2222, which was released in 2015 and stressed the protection of journalists.

SHAMS Center condemns the daily crimes committed by the occupation against journalists where the last crime in this regard was targeting the female journalist Ghufran Warasna, who was killed by the Israeli forces in Al- Arroub Refugee Camp- Hebron). In recognition of World Press



Freedom Day (adopted by the UN General Assembly to be on May 3rd each year) in order to affirm the right to freedom of journalists and ensure protecting journalists in all the circumstances, SHAMS Center stresses the right of journalists in Palestine to be protected. The United Nations demanded all the governments through over the globe to respect the rights of journalists and emphasized the principles of free media that reports the truth with no bias to any political, military, or economic national or international power. Media should be enabled to work freely as it represents the fourth authority within the democratic states and regimes.

SHAMS Center condemns the decision issued by the minister of the national security in Israel, the settler Itamar Ben- Gvir to ban Palestine TV from working in Jerusalem and inside 1948 territory for a duration of six months. The Center condemns summoning several Jerusalemite Palestinian journalists for investigation at Shin Bet. The decision of the given minister is another crime within the criminal record of the occupation against journalism work in the OPT. it is a manifestation of the policies of the radical right government in Israel that overrides all the international human rights law instruments that organize and affirm media freedom. The policies of the Israeli government are accompanied with the practices of some international media firms that restrict and omit the Palestinian digital content, in addition to removing Palestinian social media platforms and posts. Additionally, SHAMS Center condemns interrogating and detaining Palestinian journalists and pursue Palestinian journalists on the background of their work as journalists and their role in uncovering the crimes and violations of the occupation. In this regard, there are currently 15 Palestinian journalists held custody in the Israeli prisons.

SHAMS Center emphasizes the necessity to apply the International Human Rights Law that protects journalists working within the armed conflicts contexts. Those journalists are entitled to the right of protection against any attack or harm. Journalists are entitled to enjoy the rights of civilians under armed conflicts in accordance of article 79 of the First Protocol annexed to 1949 Geneva Conventions. According to the given Protocol, Journalists have the right to be protected and war criminals should be trialed appropriately and ensure that such criminals enjoy no impunity. SHAMS Center calls upon the regional and international human rights organizations and those enrolled in advocating right to freedom of media, to fulfill their legal and moral responsibility to publicize the crimes of the occupation against journalists in the OPT and expose the globe to these crimes. Additionally, SHAMS Center emphasizes the necessity to pursue the Israeli war criminals, who committed crimes against journalists, and present them to be trialed by international courts and the national courts whose judicial system allows addressing crimes that occur in other parts of the world. SHAMS Center emphasizes that as long as the war criminals are not accounted for, then the crimes would continue and increase.

SHAMS Center calls upon all the international and rights organizations, working with media, especially the International Federation of Journalists and the Special UN Rapporteur about right to freedom of opinion and expression, to visit the OPT to see on their own the profound violations of the Israeli army and Israeli radical government, against journalists and report these violations to the world.



SHAMS Center calls upon the necessity to respect journalists' rights and freedom in accordance with the Palestinian Basic Law. SHAMS Center emphasizes the necessity to harmonize the Palestinian legal set that rules over media work in Palestine, with the international conventions and treaties in this regard, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Covenant of Civil and Political Rights. Localizing the International Conventions and Treaties within the Palestinian Legal Set would make the latest a modern legal set that is similar to the laws applied in the democratic states. Such laws would enable media to work freely within the Palestinian community. Among the laws that should be amended is the decree- law (9/ 1995) about Press and Publications as well as the decree law (10/ 2018) about Electronic Crimes, assuming that these amendments would enhance the right to expression and the right to free media and freedom of journalists.

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