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"SHAMS" Center Calls for Protecting the Schools the European Union Constructed and Funded from Demolition

Ramallah: The Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "SHAMS" calls for the protection of the schools the European Union and its countries funded from demolition. "SHAMS" Center strongly condemns the Israeli occupation state's demolition, for the second time, of "Challenge 5 Mixed Elementary School" in Jub Al-Dhib in the village of Beit Tamar located in the east of Bethlehem today, Sunday the 7th of May, 2023. In this school, more than (60) male and female students' study from the 1st to the 4th grades from the Bedouin communities in the region from each of Jub Al-Dhib, Al-Zawahra, Al-Wahsh, and Abu Muhaimid. The Israeli occupation army demolished that school for the first time in 2017.

The demolition of this school for the second time confirms the Israeli occupation's brutal and racist policy against Palestinian children. According to the Israelis, this school poses a threat to the Israeli occupation' national security or even against the occupation soldiers armed with the latest weapons and advanced military equipment. "SHAMS" Center states that this Israeli attack and the demolition of the school unequivocally expresses the racist policy pursued by the occupying state towards Palestinian citizens in general, and towards children in particular, which is represented in killing, chasing, arresting, and preventing them from education, assaulting their basic right, and depriving them of education in a healthy and safe educational environment. Hence, students in that school walk long distances daily in order to reach their school and receive their basic education while the Israeli



occupation state is building modern schools to Jewish settlers in the Palestinian lands.

"SHAMS" Center also stresses that this condemned act is only a new chapter of the Nakba committed by the Israeli occupation against the Palestinian land, people, homes and educational institutions from the Nakba until now. It is also a gross violation of international humanitarian law and the Fourth Geneva Convention that protects civilians in war situations and armed conflicts, emphasizes the neutralization of children, educational and cultural institutions, and relief institutions from hostilities and war operations. This is a flagrant violation of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights, and the principles of the United Nations and its organizations working in the protection of childhood and human rights.

"SHAMS" Center also calls the European Union countries to use their political, diplomatic and economic relations with the Israeli occupation to put pressure on the racist occupation government to stop the daily and continuous crimes of the occupation against the people and the Palestinians, the most important of which are the crimes against Palestinian children and the crimes of demolishing schools in the occupied Palestinian territories. In fact, the number of demolished schools by the Israeli occupation in the occupied Palestinian territories since 2016 reached (11) schools, noting that these schools are built with donations and support projects for the Palestinian educational sector from the countries and institutions of the European Union.