



2023/3/8

**In Recognition of Women International Day
Human Rights and Democracy Media Center- SHAMS
Demands Immediate Protection of Palestinian Women**

"SHAMS" Center strongly condemns the immoral inhuman crimes and violations committed by the Israeli soldiers and settlers against Palestinian women. Palestinian women in Occupied Palestine had lived most, or all, their life under the Israeli military occupation. Women faced profound challenges in embodying their rights as people, living under military occupation that dominated all their life aspects. Women, like the rest of Palestinians, had never been safe from the occupation's violent inhuman practices. The crimes of the occupation caused noticeable deterioration and recession within the status of human rights in occupied Palestine. Palestinian women had the lion share of suffering due to the practices and policies of the occupation, and were the most vulnerable group of the victims of violations committed by the occupation, which resulted in increasing the burden imposed on women's shoulders. In this regard, and during the prolonged years of occupation, Palestinian women were subject to a wide range of violations. Over the years of national resistance, thousands of women were arrested by the occupation forces, during which they were subject to degrading and inhuman cruel treatment. The Occupying State did not respect its commitments according to the International Human Rights Law and Humanitarian Law in dealing with the detained Palestinian women. Palestinian prisoner women were subject to torture in violation of the The Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment as well as in violation of the United Nations Covenant on civic and political Rights as well as violating Geneva Fourth Convention.

"SHAMS" Center is concerned about the risk caused by the discourse of the conservative powers that tend to push back the wheel of history, where such powers legalize slavery and captivity of women as well as selling them in the Slave Market. Such discourse humiliates women and denies their right to exist as human beings and their capability of enrollment in public life. Additionally, public opinion is recruited against women through utilizing interpretation of some religious quotes, which are interpreted through the perception of the ruling powers in a manner that serves their thought, which denies women's participation in public life.

Currently, women organizations and Women Human Rights Defenders (males/ females) as well as women in general, are subject to a systematic deforming campaign through promoting incitement and hate speech. The aim of such discourse is to limit women's role to the classical roles associated with her by the patriarchal community, and ban women from performing their individual role within the community. Conservative powers are utilizing all the available tools, even in a misleading way, to achieve their objective of excluding women from public life.



"SHAMS" Center emphasizes that building a democratic Palestinian community requires strengthening and enhancing women's political participation in the decision-making process. To achieve that, there is a need to work on ending the status of exclusivity, encroachment, and exclusion of women that dominates the community. The Palestinian Basic Law affirms equality between men and women, in addition to affirming the presence of women in public life through other laws, like the electoral law which affirms women's participation through a quota system. Yet, practice often shows the lack of such equality and the will to enhance women's participation, which can be seen in the quota percentage, which is very low and needs to be increased. Increasing women's quota should accord with the level of women's participation in the national struggle and should be in accordance with the resolution of the Palestinian Central Council (2015) to raise women's quota in the public and local elections as well as in the various institutions of PLO and PNA to be 30% at least. Although there are several constitutional articles that affirm equality and ban discrimination, gender discrimination is still the main determinant that hinders women's participation in decision-making and participation in designing and implementing the public policies of the government. Moreover, women are excluded from the negotiations to achieve reconciliation and they are absent from the committees that emerge from the reconciliation agreements.

"SHAMS" Center affirms that activating women's participation in the decision-making process on all levels is recognition of the real role that women have in public life and that they are equal. To achieve that, there is a need to address all the obstacles that hinder women's participation in the decision-making process. It requires creating an environment to end the case of exclusivity that dominates the Palestinian community and the attempts to exclude women from public life. The role of women should not be separated from her status within the community where the development of women status indicates the level of development of the social, cultural, economic, and political structures. There is a clear connection between all these components. It is not possible for women to develop and be equal partners in the community, unless the social and political structures open the road for women to achieve that. At the same time, the social and political structures are also affected, in turn, with the level of women development and the level of women's interaction within the community.

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