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SHAMS Center
Targeting Tulkarem and Nourshams Refugee Camps
And Destroying their Infrastructure, Manifesting the Policy of Collective Punishment

Human Rights and Democracy Media Center- SHAMS, asserts that targeting Tulkarem and Nourshams Refugee Camps, by the Israeli Occupation, and demolishing the infrastructure continuously, manifests the policy of collective punishment applied by the Occupation against Palestinians. These punishments are designed to target Palestinian civilians and refugee camps to displace Palestinians. Additionally, the occupation seeks to demolish civic life in the camps and their symbolism as a witness of uprooting Palestinians from their land during the 1948 Nakba. By doing so, the occupation is proceeding in the acts of the Nakba and causing pain and suffering among Palestinians over the previous decades. These practices go parallelly with the ongoing genocide war in the Gaza Strip.

SHAMS Center affirms that the ongoing invasions of the refugee camps in the West Bank, mainly Jenin Refugee Camp, and Tulkarem Refugee Camp, and the imposing curfew during the invasions while destroying the infrastructure and destroying people's properties and arbitrary shootings, indicate the insistence of the occupation to apply a collective punishment policy. These policies are applied based on a clear plan from the occupation right-wing government, to displace Palestinians and uproot them from their land. The Israeli government tends to intensify settlements and consequently, eliminate the applicability of the two-state solution with rejection of the international community's affirmation of establishing an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 territory borders. Such a behavior of the Israeli government reflects the hate rooted deep in the Zionist ideology with the denial of Palestinians' rights.

SHAMS Center deplores the stance of some countries, which align with the occupation and support its crimes of destroying the establishments and infrastructure, which were developed by the UN agencies themselves and some European donor countries. These establishments are destroyed publicly, by the Israeli forces with no intervention from the mentioned states to ban the occupation from destroying the infrastructure projects. The position of these states reveals alignment with the occupation's policies in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The Center asserts that the continuation of the Israeli occupation's attacks and crimes against Palestinians is the crowning of the policy of impunity and escaping punishment, provided to the political leaders and military officers of the occupying power. The Israeli military and political leaders feel that they are far from being persuaded by the international criminal authorities and courts where the political coverage given to the occupation, is the main stimulator that pushes the occupation leaders to proceed with their crimes against Palestinians. The Occupation's leaders are sure that they will never be subject to accountability or litigation regardless of the level of the crimes they are committing against Palestinians.

SHAMS Center affirms that attacking the Palestinian refugee camps, destroying the infrastructure (water, electricity, and sewage networks), bulldozing the streets, and demolishing schools, hospitals, and medical centers, represent a profound violation of international law and international human rights law. In particular, the occupation is violating Article 15 of the Geneva Fourth Convention, which states:



"Protect civilian persons who take no part in hostilities, and who, while they reside in the zones, perform no work of a military character". Additionally, it violates Article 18 of the same Convention, which stipulates: "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". On a related level, the crimes of the Israeli occupation violates also the 1907 Hague Convention Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land and its annex: Regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land, mainly Article 15, which states: "In sieges and bombardments all necessary steps must be taken to spare, as far as possible, buildings dedicated to religion, art, science, or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals, and places where the sick and wounded are collected, provided they are not being used at the time for military purposes". On a related level Israel violates Article 8 of the Rome Statute/ 1998, which states: "It is a war crime to 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".

SHAMS Center calls on the General Assembly and Security Council of the United Nations, state members of the Rome Statute, high parties signatories of Geneva Conventions, UNESCO, International Committee of the Red Cross, Amnesty International, and governmental/ nongovernmental organizations, to take immediate measures and exert pressure on the occupation's state to stop its crimes against Palestinians and ensure neutralizing civilians from hostile attacks.