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SHAMS Center
Airdrop of Relief Packages to the Gaza Strip
A Political Show to Deceive the International Public Opinion

Human Rights and Democracy Media Center- SHAMS, asserts that the act of some European countries and the United States to airdrop relief aid to the Gaza Strip (food, costumes, and blankets), is nothing but a kind of political show. It is a form of propaganda to deceive the international public opinion. The Center added that those interested in providing relief aid, should utilize their political and diplomatic power and press on the occupation's state to open the borders and allow the entry of relief aid to the besieged civilians inside the Gaza Strip within the widespread of starvation. Palestinians currently die of hunger due to the lack of basic food supplies to remain alive with the continuation of the genocide war that Israel is executing against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

SHAMS Center emphasizes that the escalating humanitarian crises in the Gaza Strip, compounded by the spread of pandemics and the loss of many lives due to insufficient medical supplies and the destruction of hospitals and health facilities, necessitate concerted efforts by Arab nations, the international community, and the United Nations to exert pressure on the occupying state to facilitate the entry of humanitarian aid through open borders. There is a need to obligate the occupation state to allow the entry of food, medicine, and medical supplies as well as allow the wounded and patients to travel outside to receive medication taking into consideration that those are in critical health conditions and there is no possibility to be treated in the Gaza Strip.

The Center deplores the regional and international silence in front of the restricted siege imposed on the Gaza Strip and the spread of pandemics and applying starvation as a weapon against civilian Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, especially in the cold weather currently. These countries are not exerting any pressure on the occupation state to open the main borders to enter relief and medical packages to the besieged people. All these countries should press to allow the entry of the trucks that have been stuck on the Egyptian side of the Rafah Crossing Border for months and to ensure that the Rafah Cross Border remains open to deliver relief aid.

SHAMS Center asserts that the best response to the emerging humanitarian circumstances in the Gaza Strip should be through opening additional wild crossing borders to allow regular entry of the relief packages. Additionally, there is a need to allow the United Nations and its agencies to supervise the process of distributing aid among Palestinians in the Gaza Strip in a systematic manner. The Center affirms that airdropping of the aid by these countries reflects their failure and the fact that they align with the occupation's policy to siege the Gaza Strip and impose collective sanctions on Palestinians.

SHAMS Center states that the noble principles of the United Nations (stated in its charter), are to cooperate in solving the humanitarian, social, and economic global issues and coordinate providing humanitarian aid in the crises circumstances. Additionally, the United Nations has some institutions associated with providing and distributing relief aid such as the United Nations Development Program, UNRWA, UNICEF, and World Food Program. Delivering relief aid to the Gaza Strip should be per the noble objectives of the United Nations Charter. Therefore, the aid should come through the crossing border and the United Nations Agencies are to be responsible for the distribution process. Aids packages should not



be dropped through planes as, in such cases, big parts of the packages might be damaged while some might be dropped in the sea and people will not manage to pick them up as in the case of airdropping of relief packages to some countries where these packages landed in the Mediterranean but not to the areas where people are sieged.

SHAMS Center asserts that siege, closure, and denying the entry of humanitarian aid, is a form of collective punishment. The international community should interfere immediately and end the siege and open the wild cross border, to enter relief aid to people inside the Gaza Strip in a systematic manner. There should be adequate relief packages to fulfill the needs of people as the airdropped aids do not meet more than 1% of the needs in the Gaza Strip. Closure and siege stand as a profound violation of the international law and the international human rights law. In particular, these practices violate Article 16 of the Geneva Fourth Convention (dated 12/8/1948), which states: "The wounded and sick, as well as the infirm, and expectant mothers, shall be the object of particular protection and respect. As far as military considerations allow, each Party to the conflict shall facilitate the steps taken to search for the killed and wounded, to assist the shipwrecked and other persons exposed to grave danger, and to protect them against pillage and ill-treatment". Additionally it violates the Second Optional Protocol annexed to the Geneva Conventions, especially Article 14, which states: "Starvation of civilians as a method of combat is prohibited. It is therefore prohibited to attack, destroy, remove, or render useless, for that purpose, objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, such as foodstuffs, agricultural areas for the production of foodstuffs, crops, livestock, drinking water installations, and supplies and irrigation works". The Israeli practices violate international human rights law, mainly the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (dated 9/12/1948) as Article 2 identifies genocide crime as: "Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part".

SHAMS Center urges the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Special UN Rapporteur on Right to Nutrition, the Special UN Rapporteur on Right to Health, the Special UN Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the World Health Organization, Governmental/Non-Governmental Organizations, and the Governments of the states permanent members in the UN Security Council, to initiate immediately in steps to open the wild crossing borders in the Gaza Strip to facilitate the regular entry of relief aids. Opening the borders and allowing regular relief aid will protect Palestinians against starvation and the spread of pandemics and infectious diseases among Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.