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SHAMS Center Urges for a Security Plan Against Armed Robbery of Some Banks

Human Rights and Democracy Media Center- SHAMS, demands the Palestinian Police develop a national security plan to protect the Palestinian banking system, especially in the Palestinian towns and villages that have branches for these banks. Armed robbery of the banks became a phenomenon in Palestine during the previous few years. The Center affirmed that it trusts the Palestinian police and security forces and is sure that they can arrest thieves immediately and present them to the appropriate courts. The Center strongly condemns armed robbery crimes against the branches of some Palestinian banks where the latest crime of this kind was against a bank in Nileen Town, to the west of Ramallah, on Thursday 8/5/2024. Several bank branches in the town were subject to armed robbery attacks in the past. The Center added that armed robbery crimes started to be a phenomenon in Palestine recently and they are not exceptional acts anymore. SHAMS Center asserted that these crimes will return with destructive impacts on the Palestinian national economy. Additionally, these crimes will affect people's confidence in the banks, especially within the current difficult economic circumstances that Palestinians are facing. Within the risks that the national Palestinian question is facing, then it is a must to unify efforts to face such a phenomenon.

SHAMS Center stresses that the mentioned phenomenon started affecting the Palestinian overall situation and returns with negative impacts on people. People are not feeling secure and they feel that their savings in the banks are not in a safe situation. Additionally, people feel that their salaries, which represent their main source of living, are not safe and could be lost at any point leading to the spread of a case of anxiety among people. The spread of armed robbery, which increased recently, caused more tension among people and the case of instability increased as well. SHAMS Center affirms that attacking the banking system in Palestine is an attack on Palestinians' resources and a sharp blow to the Palestinian economy and the active economic institutions. Therefore, there is a need to unify efforts to face such a phenomenon and eliminate it from the Palestinian context.

The Center urges conducting a community consultative meeting for the Palestinian Police, Security Forces, Private Sector, and Civil Society, to develop a national plan to resist the armed robbery phenomenon against Palestinian banks. SHAMS Center calls upon all parties, including law enforcement bodies, networks/ coalitions involved in protecting civil institutions, civil society organizations, municipalities, and other actors, to meet their responsibilities (each in its field of specialization) to take measures to account criminals and ensure no tolerance with the armed robbery phenomenon, which harms Palestinians and their resources.