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The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

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## **Silencing the Press**

### **Report on Israeli Attacks Against Media Workers**



**01 November 2010 through 31 July 2011**



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# The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

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## ***The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights***

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights is an independent non-profit legal agency based in Gaza city. The Centre was established in April 1995 by a group of Palestinian lawyers and human rights activists in order to protect human rights and promote the rule of law in accordance with international standards, create and develop democratic institutions and an active civil society in Palestine in accordance with internationally accepted standards and practices and support all efforts aimed at enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights according to international law.

The Centre enjoys Consultative Status with the ECOSOC of the United Nations. It was granted three international prominent awards for its efforts in the field of human rights:

1. The 1996 French Republic Award on Human Rights; and
2. The 2002 Bruno Kreisky Award for Outstanding Achievements in the Area of Human Rights; and
3. The 2003 International Service Human Rights Award (UNAIS).

The Centre has wide relationships with human rights and civil society organizations throughout the world. It is an affiliate of five international and Arab human rights organizations, which are active in the international arena:

### ***International Commission of Jurists***

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), headquartered in Geneva, is a non-governmental organisation in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe and the OAU. Founded in 1952, its task is to defend the rule of law throughout the world and to work towards the full observance of the provisions in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. its membership is composed of sixty eminent jurists who are representatives of the different legal systems of the world.

### ***Federation Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme***

The Federation Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (FIDH) is an international non-governmental organisation dedicated to the world-wide defence of human rights as defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. Founded in 1922, FIDH has eighty-nine national affiliates in all regions.

### ***Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network***

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (Euro-Med Network) is a network of human rights organisations and individuals from the Middle East, North Africa and the European Union, established in 1997. The overall objective of the Network is to contribute to the protection of the human rights principles embodied in the Barcelona Declaration of 1995.

### ***International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC)***

The International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) is one of the most important international legal bodies. It is specialized in legal and judicial training. It includes more than 30 members of distinguished legal organizations throughout the world, including American Bar Association; Arab Lawyers Union; and Bar Council of England and Wales.

### ***The Arab Organization for Human Rights***

It is an NGO founded in 1983. It calls for respect and promotion of human and people rights and fundamental freedoms in the Arab World for all individuals on its land in accordance with international human rights instruments. The Organization signed an agreement with Egypt in May 2000, according to which its headquarter was moved from Limassol in Cyprus to Cairo.



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# The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

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The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights is an independent non-profit non-governmental organisation dedicated to the protection and promotion of human rights, the rule of law, and democratic principles in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

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## Report on Israeli Attacks Against Media Workers

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**“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”**

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

- 1. “Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.”**
- 2. “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.”**

Article 19, Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966).

- 1. “Journalists engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered as civilians ...”**
- 2. “They shall be protected as such under the Conventions and this protocol, provided that they take no action adversely affecting their status as civilians...”**

Article 79, Paragraphs 1 and 2, of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1949

### Introduction

Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) have continued to attack local and international workers<sup>1</sup> despite the protection extended to them under international law. Media workers have been subjected to various kinds of attacks in apparent attempts to prevent media coverage of human rights violations perpetrated by IOF against Palestinian civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT).<sup>2</sup>

This report is the 13<sup>th</sup> in an ongoing series of “Silencing the Press” reports issued by PCHR. It covers the period from 1 November 2010 to 31 July 2011, and includes a significant escalation of IOF attacks and violations against media workers.

This report aims to document the attacks by IOF and Israeli settlers against media workers. It includes detailed accounts of all IOF attacks on media workers and media institutions, as documented by PCHR. This documentation is supported by testimonies from victims and eyewitnesses and by field investigations. PCHR’s investigations refute many IOF claims regarding certain crimes, including opening fire on media workers.<sup>3</sup> PCHR believes that these crimes were committed willfully using excessive lethal force, without taking into consideration the principles of distinction and proportionality, and that these crimes were not justified by military necessity.

There were 112 attacks by IOF against media workers and media institutions during the reporting period including: violations of media workers' right to life and right to safety and security of person; beating media workers and subjecting them to other means of violence as well as humiliating and degrading treatment; arresting and holding media workers; denying media workers access to certain areas and preventing them from covering certain incidents; confiscation of media equipment and devices; preventing media workers from travelling abroad; raiding the homes of media workers; and destroying equipment and cars of media workers whilst on duty.

During the reporting period, there were also approximately 35 attacks against media workers on duty covering peaceful demonstrations organized by dozens of Palestinian civilians and international solidarity activists protesting the confiscation of Palestinian land in the West Bank for the construction of the annexation wall or expansion of Israeli settlements. In many of the documented incidents, media workers sustained serious wounds despite the protection extended to them under international law.

Violation of the right to life and the right to safety and security of person are the most significant violations committed by IOF against media workers. PCHR has documented that IOF killed 11 media workers while on duty in the OPT between 28 September 2000 and 31 July 2011.<sup>4</sup>

During the reporting period, IOF fired at media workers in 30 cases, wounding all of them. Also during this period there were 10 cases in which IOF beat media workers and subjected them to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment; 18 cases in which media workers were arrested and held; 32 cases in which media workers were denied their right to carry out their job; 8 cases in which press cards and media equipment and material was confiscated; 3 cases in which media workers were prevented from travelling abroad; another 3 cases in which the homes of media workers were raided and searched; and 3 more cases in which IOF destroyed tools, equipment and cars belonging to media workers.

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<sup>1</sup> Media workers include journalists, reporters, cameramen and workers at press offices.

<sup>2</sup> IOF have also restricted access of international media workers to the OPT, especially the Gaza Strip, in an attempt to isolate the OPT from the outside world and hide facts about violations of human rights perpetrated against Palestinian civilians.

<sup>3</sup> For more details about killing crimes committed by IOF against media workers, see the series of “Silencing the Press” reports.

<sup>4</sup> The statistics of media workers do not include the deaths mentioned in this report. A number of media workers were killed in conditions unrelated to their work between September 2000 and 31 July 2011. Review **appendix I** titled "Media Workers Killed by IOF while on Duty".

## Report on Israeli Attacks Against Media Workers

According to PCHR's documentation, between 28 September 2000 and 31 July 2011, IOF violated and carried out 1,363 attacks against media workers. It should be noted that there are dozens of attacks that were not documented; in addition to shooting crimes which resulted in killing media workers as illustrated below. From the beginning of the al-Aqsa Intifada until 31 July 2011, IOF fired at media workers in 11 cases, resulting in death (a violation of the right to life and personal safety). They also fired at media workers in 396 cases, wounding 300 of them. During the same period there were 263 cases in which IOF beat media workers and subjected them to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment; 316 cases in which media workers were arrested and held; 152 cases in which media workers were denied their right to carry out their job; 89 cases in which press cards, media equipment and material was confiscated; 94 cases in which media institutions were bombarded or raided and searched; 15 cases in which media workers were prevented from travelling abroad; 21 cases in which the homes of media workers were raided and searched; and 3 cases in which IOF destroyed tools, equipment and cars belonging to media workers.

**Table (1): Israeli Attacks on Media Workers  
28 September 2000 – 31 July 2011**

Type of attack	28 Sept. 31 Dec. 2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	31 July 2011	Total
Shooting resulting in death	Nil	2	3	2	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	1	2	Nil	Nil	11
Shooting resulting in injuries	22	33	34	8	18	7	26	28	29	23	46	26	300
Shooting without causing casualties	4	17	17	6	11	Nil	3	7	10	10	11	Nil	96
Beating and humiliation	9	30	24	9	13	25	40	30	16	20	40	7	263
Arrest, detention or interrogation	1	16	62	21	24	23	22	27	37	18	54	11	316
Denial of access to certain areas	2	3	2	5	3	3	4	15	17	23	46	29	152
Confiscation of media equipment	4	5	32	7	2	Nil	2	1	6	11	18	7	95
Attacks on media institutions	4	10	33	4	6	3	8	7	13	6	Nil	Nil	94
Denial of travel	Nil	Nil	Nil	5	1	2	Nil	2	1	Nil	1	3	15
House raids	Nil	Nil	4	3	1	Nil	2	1	3	1	3	3	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>1363</b>

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## **Report on Israeli Attacks Against Media Workers**

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It is obvious that there is a continued escalation of attacks executed by IOF against media workers working in the OPT. In particular there is a significant escalation in the violation of the right to life and right to safety and security of person.

No serious investigations have been conducted on attacks by IOF against media workers, in keeping with the overall trend of impunity concerning crimes committed by IOF against civilians in the OPT.

PCHR is deeply concerned about such attacks by IOF against media workers, and stresses that they are an expression of the excessive and indiscriminate use of force by IOF against Palestinian civilians.

This report includes the documentation of the crimes and violations committed by IOF against media workers working in the OPT. The investigations conducted by PCHR refute Israel's claims regarding certain crimes including firing at and killing media workers. They undoubtedly reveal that those crimes were committed deliberately and that excessive and indiscriminate force was used by IOF in a manner not justified by any security argument. The crimes and violations committed by IOF were concentrated in the West Bank, particularly in Jerusalem and border areas on which the annexation wall is being constructed, or in areas neighbouring the settlements in the West Bank, which are constantly threatened by settlement expansion. On the other hand, the number of violations committed by IOF in the Gaza Strip retreated because of its condition after Israel's unilateral disengagement plan. However, a number of violations were documented. The violations were committed during peaceful demonstrations near the borders, or when preventing media workers from travelling across borders controlled by IOF. PCHR has worked on unveiling the crimes and violations committed by IOF against media workers according to a specific categorization depending on the type of attack.

### **Violation of the Right to Life and Security of Person**

#### **1. Shooting at media workers resulting in injuries**

PCHR has documented 30 cases of shooting wounding 30 media workers. These cases include injuries resulting from live bullets, rubber-coated metal bullets, sound bombs, and tear gas canisters. Most of the attacks were committed in the West Bank, particularly Jerusalem, border areas, or areas close to settlements. They were as follows:

- On 20 November 2010, IOF fired a tear gas canister directly at Fidaa Naser, Palestine TV reporter, and Hussam Abu Allan, cameraman of the Palestinian News Agency (Wafa). Naser and Abu Allan who were covering IOF attacks on Palestinians and international solidarity activists participating in a peaceful demonstration in Beit Ummar village in Hebron in protest against the confiscation of Palestinian land for the expansion of Karmeit settlement, south of Beit Ummar. Although they were standing a distance from IOF and the demonstrators, they suffered severe suffocation due to gas inhalation.
- On 24 December 2010, Haitham Mohammed al-Khatib, cameraman of the Popular Committee against the Wall, sustained wounds from a rubber-coated metal bullet, and another Israeli journalist sustained wounds from a tear gas canister landing on his foot. They were covering a peaceful demonstration organized by dozens of Palestinian civilians and international solidarity activists protesting the confiscation of Palestinian land in Bill'in village, west of Ramallah, for the construction of the annexation wall.



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- On 21 January 2011, Hamza Ne'aji, cameraman of Pal Media Company, sustained wounds from a rubber-coated metal bullet in the/his? back fired by IOF in the Salwan neighbourhood in occupied Jerusalem. Ne'aji was covering confrontations between Palestinian civilians and IOF that erupted following Friday prayers.
- On 24 January 2011, an IOF soldier fired a tear gas canister directly at Diala Jweihan, reporter of Quds Net News Agency. Jweihan was wounded in her back and she fainted. She sustained burns and bruises in the back. Jweihan was covering confrontations between IOF and Palestinian civilians in Batn al-Hawa area in occupied Jerusalem. She received necessary first aid in the field and then transferred to her house. She was unable to finish her work.
- On 28 January 2011, Diala Jweihan, reporter of Quds Net News Agency, and Ahmed Jalajel, cameraman of Palestine Media and Communication Company (PMCC), suffered severe suffocation due to tear gas inhalation when an IOF soldier fired a tear gas canister directly at them while covering confrontations between IOF and Palestinian civilians in Batn al-Hawa in occupied Jerusalem. Members of the medical personnel in the field transferred Jweihan and Jalajel to a nearby house where they were provided with necessary first aid.
- On 04 February 2011, Haitham Mohammed al-Khatib, cameraman of the Popular Committee against the Wall, was wounded by a tear gas canister fired at him by an IOF soldier while covering a peaceful demonstration organized by dozens of Palestinian civilians and international solidarity activists protesting the confiscation of Palestinian land in Bil'in village, west of Ramallah.
- On 04 February 2001, IOF fired tear gas canisters and sound bombs directly at six media workers while covering confrontations that took place in Bab al-Amoud in Jerusalem between Palestinian civilians and IOF following Friday Prayers. One of the tear gas canisters hit the hand of Muamar Awad, cameraman of the Japanese news agency. Awad sustained burns. The other members of the targeted media workers sustained severe suffocation:
  1. Diala Jweihan, reporter of Quds Net News Agency;
  2. Mahmoud Aleyan, cameraman of the Palestinian al-Quds newspaper;
  3. Mohammed Abu Sneina, cameraman of salwan.net;
  4. Ahmed Jaber, an MNB cameraman; and
  5. Mahfouz Abu Turk, an AFP cameraman.
- On 25 February 2011, IOF fired tear gas canisters directly at: 1. Sari Mahmoud al-Owewi, cameraman of Palestine Satellite TV; 2. Abdul Ghani al-Natsha, reporter of al-Quds Satellite Channel; and 3. Fahmi Hamdi Shahin, PCHR fieldworker, while covering IOF attacks against Palestinian civilians who were participating in a demonstration in Hebron, south of the West Bank. They suffered from tear gas inhalation. The demonstration was organized by the Youth Against Settlement Activities Group protesting settlement activities. Approximately 2000 civilians participated in the demonstration that began in the centre of Hebron. As a result of IOF attacks, 3 demonstrators sustained wounds from rubber-coated metal bullets and another 7 demonstrators suffered from tear gas inhalation. IOF also arrested 3 demonstrators<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> For more information about IOF attacks on this demonstration, please see PCHR weekly report, Ref. no. 9 covering the duration between 24 February and 02 March 2001, available at: [www.pchrgaza.org](http://www.pchrgaza.org).

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- On 05 March 2011, Thaer Yousef Faqqousa, cameraman of Palestine TV, sustained bruises on the legs and sides as well as wounds on his right leg. He also suffered from tear gas inhalation. Abdul Hafiz Shehab al-Hashlamon, a Reuters cameraman, suffered from tear gas inhalation when IOF attacked them in Beit Ummar village, north of Hebron in the south of the West Bank. Faqqousa reported to a PCHR fieldworker that he was with other cameramen and reporters covering a protest in Beit Ummar village on 05 March 2011. As he started to film Israeli settlers from Karmi Tzur settlement stoning Palestinian demonstrators, an Israeli soldier walked up to him and without warning he took his clothes and threw him to the ground nearly three meters from the fence of Karmi Tzur settlement. The camera battery was destroyed and he sustained bruises as a result. As he got up and walked a few meters, some of the Israeli soldiers chased him despite the fact that he was dressed in a manner that identified him as a media worker and that they already knew who he was. One of the soldiers pushed him to the ground and another two soldiers beat him severely using a wooden stick continuously for several minutes. As a result, he sustained severe bruises on the legs and sides. In addition, he sustained wounds in the right leg and suffered from tear gas inhalation. Faqqousa was transferred to Hebron Public Hospital for medical treatment. IOF and a group of settlers used force to disperse the peaceful demonstration which was organized by dozens of Palestinians, international solidarity activists and human rights defenders in protest against settlement activities and confiscation of Palestinian land. One Palestinian protester was wounded by a rubber-coated metal bullet and another four Palestinians, including the two reported media workers, sustained bruises and/or suffered from tear gas inhalation.
- On 25 March 2011, Mahfouz Abu Turk, an AFP cameraman, was wounded in the left side of his front by a tear gas canister fired by an IOF soldier. He was on duty with a group of media workers covering IOF attacks on Palestinian demonstrators in Silwan in occupied Jerusalem in the centre of the West Bank. Abu Turk sustained wounds and burns in the front. He was given first aid and transferred to al-Makassed Hospital in Jerusalem for treatment.
- On 15 May 2011, IOF used excessive force to disperse peaceful demonstrations that began in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank on the 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba. IOF attacked media personnel covering these demonstrations<sup>6</sup>. In the Gaza Strip, two media workers sustained wounds from metal bullets and another three members suffered from tear gas inhalation near Beit Hanoun "Erez" crossing in the north of the Gaza Strip while covering IOF attacks on Palestinians commemorating the 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba:
  1. Mohammed Ibrahim Mohammed Othman, 25, a freelance cameraman, from Sheikh Radwan in Gaza City was wounded by two bullets to the chest and the right hand;
  2. Hussein Abdul Jawad Karsou', 36, from al-Thalathini Street in Gaza City. He works as a freelance journalist and cameraman for al-Shoroq Media Institution and also manages the page of Gazan News Agency on Facebook. He was wounded by a bullet to the left leg;
  3. Isam Mohammed Shihadah, 25, a cameraman of the National Media Company;
  4. Mohammed Bakr al-Louh, reporter of al-Watan Radio; and
  5. Mahmoud al-Zanoun, cameraman for Doha Center for Media.

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<sup>6</sup> For more information, see PCHR weekly report Ref. 20, covering the period between 12 and 18 May 2011. Available at: [www.pchrgaza.org](http://www.pchrgaza.org).

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The wounded media workers were transferred to Kamal Odwan Hospital in Beit Lahia in the north of the Gaza Strip for treatments. Medical sources described the wounds of Othman to be serious. Othman was referred to al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City where he underwent surgery to remove the two bullets. IOF attacks on demonstrators in the Gaza Strip resulted in the injury of 103 civilians, including 31 children and 3 women. In addition, dozens of the demonstrators suffered from tear gas inhalation.

In the West Bank, Najeh Diab al-Hashlamon, a cameraman for Associated Press, was wounded by a bullet to the left foot when an IOF soldier fired at him from a short distance while covering IOF attacks on Palestinian demonstrators in Hebron in the south of the West Bank. Al-Hashlamon told a PCHR fieldworker that at approximately 15:00 on Sunday, 15 May, he was in "Talaat al-Zahed" Street, north of the old city of Hebron. He was close to the wall in the street and was filming a group of soldiers firing at Palestinian demonstrators to the east of "Talaat al-Zahed" Street. Al-Hashlamon said that he was clearly seen by Israeli soldiers who were just 8 meters from him. He was transferred to Hebron Public Hospital for treatment.

In addition, the glass of the Hyundai of Samih Salem Shahin, an AFP cameraman, was crushed after IOF fired at the car while Shahin was covering IOF attacks on demonstrators in Hebron.

In occupied Jerusalem, IOF beat Mahfouz Abu Turk, AFP cameraman, while filming the arrest of a Palestinian civilian by IOF in al-Eisaweya village in Jerusalem. Abu Turk sustained bruises and wounds in his left hand and he was transferred to al-Makassed Hospital for treatment.

IOF intentionally obstructed the work of media workers, directly attacked some media workers and prevented others from performing their duties and expelled them from the scene while covering ongoing incidents. IOF attacks on Palestinian demonstrators in the West Bank resulted in the injury of 39 civilians, including 16 children and 2 women during the reporting day.

- On 03 June 2011, an IOF soldier fired a tear gas canister directly at Khaled Sabarna, reporter for Iran Satellite Channel, who was covering IOF attacks on a peaceful demonstration in Bil'in village, west of Ramallah in the centre of the West Bank. As a result, Sabarna was wounded in the right leg. Dozens of Palestinian demonstrators and international solidarity activists organized the said demonstration on the 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the defeat of 1967 and in protest of the construction of the annexation wall on Palestinian land.
- On 18 June 2011, Wajdi Eshtaya, EPA cameraman, sustained wounds and burns on his right hand as he was hit by a tear gas canister directly fired at him by an IOF soldier in Iraq Borin village in Nablus, north of the West Bank. Eshtaya was covering IOF attacks on a peaceful demonstration organized by dozens of Palestinians and international solidarity activists in protest against settlement activities in Iraq Borin village.
- On 09 July 2011, Hazem Badr, AP cameraman, sustained wounds on his feet as a result of a tear gas canister being fired directly at him from a short distance by an IOF soldier. It exploded near him in al-Twana village, south of Hebron in the south of the West Bank. Badr was covering a solidarity sit-in in the village organized by dozens of Palestinians and international solidarity activists in protest against confiscation of Palestinian land for settlement activities.

### 2. Beating, Humiliation and Inhumane and Degrading Treatment

PCHR has documented 10 cases in which media workers were subjected to beating and other forms of violence and inhumane and degrading treatment by IOF and Israeli settlers.

- On 5 November 2010, Bilal Abdul Salam Tamimi, Btselem cameraman, sustained bruises when IOF soldiers severely beat him while covering IOF attacks on demonstrators in al-Nabi Saleh village in the west of Ramallah, in the centre of the West Bank. Dozens of Palestinians and international solidarity activists organized the said demonstration in protest against an attempt by Israeli settlers from Halmish settlement (established on Palestinian land in al-Nabi Saleh village) to confiscate more Palestinian land for settlement activities.
- On 28 December 2010, Mahmoud Elian, cameraman for the Palestinian al-Quds newspaper, was severely beaten by IOF soldiers near "Qalandia" military checkpoint, north of occupied Jerusalem in the centre of the West Bank. Elian headed at approximately 11:00 on the reporting day to "Qalandia" military checkpoint to cover a peaceful demonstration organized by dozens of Palestinians and international solidarity activists near the checkpoint. While Elian was covering the demonstration, an IOF soldier came close to him and severely hit him on his back. Another four soldiers arrived and started beating him severely all over his body. They then took him to a nearby place and held him for nearly 2 hours.
- On 5 February 2011, Hazem Badr, AFP cameraman was severely beaten by IOF soldiers in Beit Ummar village in the north of Hebron, located south of the West Bank while covering a peaceful demonstration organized by dozens of Palestinians and international solidarity activists. Badr was forced to leave the area.
- On 11 March 2011, Nader Bebars, Palestine TV cameraman, was severely beaten by IOF whilst trying to reach the Silwan neighbourhood in occupied Jerusalem in the centre of the West Bank, to cover confrontations that erupted between Palestinians and IOF following Friday prayers. IOF prevented all local and international media workers from reaching the neighbourhood.
- On 19 April 2011, three media workers were beaten, had stones thrown at them and maltreated by IOF soldiers and Israeli settlers while covering attacks on Palestinian civilians in Iraq Bourin village in the south of Nablus (located in northern West Bank) by IOF soldiers and Israeli settlers. An IOF soldier beat Majdi Eshtaya, AP cameraman, using a gun butt on his face. Majdi sustained bruises in the face and his nose bled as a result. Jaafar Eshtaya, AFP cameraman, was hit in the shoulder by a stone thrown at him by Israeli settlers. Naser Eshtaya, cameraman of AP, was subjected to maltreatment and an IOF soldier pushed him to the ground. It should be noted that IOF backed their presence in Iraq Bourin village and attacked Palestinian civilians after an Israeli settler from "Givat Arousa" (outpost which is an extension of "Bracha" settlement) fired at a Palestinian civilian, wounding him with two bullets to the right elbow and the pelvis<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> For more detail about IOF and Israeli settlers' attacks on Palestinian civilians in Iraq Bourin village in Nablus, please see PCHR weekly report, Ref. 16, covering the period between 14 and 20 April 2011. Available at: [www.pchrgaza.org](http://www.pchrgaza.org).

### **3. Detention and Holding of Media Workers**

During the reporting period, dozens of media workers were detained or held by IOF troops. PCHR documented 18 cases of detaining or holding media workers.

- On 02 November 2010, while raiding Toulkarm city in the north of the West Bank, an IOF troop stopped Mohammed Issa al-Ashqar, reporter for Maan news channel and al-Salam local TV. They held him in a military vehicle. IOF soldiers questioned al-Ashqar in the vehicle on the ground of covering the raid. Shortly after releasing him, an IOF soldier called him and took his ID card and asked him to follow the troop to the Israeli District Coordination Office in the west of Toulkarm. Before withdrawing, IOF soldiers threw al-Ashqar's ID card to the ground. It should be noted that during the reporting period, IOF moved into Toulkarm city and drove their vehicles in the streets.
- On 21 November 2010, the Israeli police held Said Kheir Addin, cameraman for Pal Media company, while preparing a press report on the allocation of a new budget by the Israeli government to expand the Wailing Wall. Kheir Addin was at the Wailing Wall at approximately 09:00 on the reporting day and started to prepare his report. A member of the Israeli police arrived at the scene and took his ID card and left only to return with an arrest warrant for Addin. He was taken to the nearby police station where he waited for three hours before being questioned by Israeli interrogators about the nature of his work, the agency he was working for and the reason why he was filming in the area. He was released at approximately 15:00 on the same day.
- On 22 November 2010, IOF held Ibrahim Mesleh, director of "Manbar al-Asra" radio in Bethlehem, in the south of the West Bank, when he was walking through the "Container" military checkpoint on his way from Bethlehem to Ramallah. IOF soldiers positioned at the military checkpoint requested that Mesleh show his ID card. They checked the ID card and ordered him to step down from his car. Mesleh was questioned by IOF soldiers for around one and a half hours about the nature of his work and source of funding for his radio station. Mesleh was later released. It should be noted that "Manbar al-Asra" radio addresses issues of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails as well as Palestinian ex-prisoners.
- On 5 December 2010, IOF raided the house of Samer al-Rowaished, presenter of "Alam" local TV, in Hebron in the south of the West Bank. IOF summoned al-Rowaished to appear before the Israeli intelligence on 08 December 2010. Al-Rowaished appeared before the Israeli intelligence and was questioned by an intelligence officer about the nature of his work and the body for whom he works. Al-Rowaished was later released.
- On 5 December 2010, IOF held Mohib al-Barghouthi, cameraman of al-Hayat al-Jadida newspaper and Najib Sharawna, Palestine TV cameraman, in "Beit El" settlement established on Palestinian land near Ramallah in the centre of the West Bank, to prevent them from covering IOF attacks on a peaceful weekly demonstration in protest against the confiscation of land in al-Nabi Saleh village for settlement activities and construction of the annexation wall. At approximately 09:00 on the reporting period, al-Barghouthi and Sharawna began to cover the peaceful weekly demonstration organized by dozens of Palestinian civilians and international solidarity activists. However, IOF soldiers held them in "Beit El" settlement. IOF confiscated their equipment and ID cards. Al-Barghouthi and Sharawna were released at approximately 16:00 on the same day.

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- On 25 February 2011, IOF arrested Mahmoud al-Jaabari, reporter of al-Jazeera Talk website, while covering a peaceful demonstration organized in solidarity with the families of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails in Hebron in the south of the West Bank. Six IOF soldiers stopped al-Jaabari while covering the demonstration, beat him and insulted him. Then they took him to a military vehicle and drove him to an interrogation centre in "Kriat Arbaa" settlement established on Palestinians' lands in Hebron. Al-Jaabari was questioned about the reasons of his presence in the area and interrogation officers accused him of stoning IOF. Al-Jaabari denied the accusation directed to him. Al-Jaabari remained in detention till 03 March 2011 as he was presented to a military court and the court ordered releasing him.
- On 25 February 2011, IOF arrested an Israeli journalist whose name was David while covering IOF attacks on demonstrators in al-Nabi Saleh village, west of Ramallah in the centre of the West Bank. IOF led David to an unknown destination. Dozens of Palestinian civilians and international solidarity activists organized a demonstration in the village in protest against confiscation of more Palestinian land by Israeli settlers from "Halmish" settlement.
- On 5 March 2011, IOF soldiers held Jweid al-Tamimi, reporter for Wafa, while preparing a report on the old city of Hebron in the south of the West Bank. Al-Tamimi was on duty near the Ibrahim Mosque when a number of IOF soldiers stopped him and forced him to stop his work. They forced him to stand up in an open area for four hours and then released him.
- On 16 March 2011, members from the Israeli border guards stopped five media workers who were travelling in a car on their way to their offices in occupied Jerusalem in the centre of the West Bank. The media workers were stopped in the Mount of Olives area in Jerusalem. The Israeli border guards provoked the media workers and insulted them. As the media workers protested, the border guards threatened them with arrest. They called a car from the Israeli police and arrested Ahmed Jalajel, a cameraman. When the other media workers expressed solidarity with Jalajel, the border guards transferred them to "al-Maskoubeyeh" police station in occupied Jerusalem. The Israeli police held Jalajel for around three and a half hours before releasing him. When the media workers were stopped, they were returning to their offices from a sit-in organized by media workers in protest against the death of al-Jazeera cameraman in Libya Ali Hassan al-Jaber. The five media workers are:
  1. Diala Jweihan, Reporter for Qudsnet;
  2. Nader Bebars, cameraman for Palestine TV;
  3. Ashraf al-Shobaki, cameraman for Palmedia Company;
  4. Hamza Neaji, cameraman for Palmedia Company; and
  5. Ahmed Jalajel, cameraman of Palestine Media and Communication Company (PMCC).
- At approximately 09:00 on 15 April 2011, IOF raided the house of Abdul Menem Shebli, editor of al-Ayam newspaper, in al-Bireh city in the centre of the West Bank. IOF soldiers searched the house and then took Shebli who was transferred to an interrogation centre in "Beit El" settlement which is established on Palestinian land in Ramallah, and then to "Ofar" military prison. Shebli was questioned in "Ofar" military prison about personal information and the nature of his work. He was released at approximately 19:00 on 16 April 2011.
- On 23 April 2011, members of the Israeli police stopped Farid Saleh, journalist at "Toyour al-Jannah" satellite channel, while covering a children's festival organized by three organizations in the yard of the al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem in the centre of the West Bank. Saleh was taken to a police station and gave him an order preventing him from entering the yard of the al-Aqsa Mosque for 15 days claiming that he filmed in an area where filming is prohibited although there were no signs to indicate such a prohibition. He was then released.

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- In the early morning of 8 May 2011, IOF raided the house of Walid Khaled, director of Falastine newspaper, in Sakaka village in Salfit, in northern West Bank. They searched the house and then arrested Khaled. IOF detained Khaled in "Majedo" central prison. On 15 May 2011, an Israeli military court ordered the administrative detention of Khaled for a period of six months without charging to him. At the end of June 2011, IOF transferred Khaled to "Nafha" prison where he served his sentence.
- On 1 June 2011, Muna al-Qawasmi, reporter of al-Quds newspaper, and Maysa Abu Ghazala, reporter of "Bokra.net" website, were detained by members of the Israeli police while covering a festival called "Unification of Jerusalem" organized by Israelis who celebrated the occupation of Jerusalem in 1967 in the yard of the al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem in the centre of the West Bank. A member of the Israeli police stopped al-Qawasmi and Abu Ghazala and confiscated their ID cards and cameras. He then took them to Bab al-Silsila police station in occupied Jerusalem. Al-Qawasmi and Abu Ghazala were questioned about their presence in the area. Interrogators also checked what they filmed. Approximately one hour and a half later, they were transferred to another interrogation centre where they were questioned for around three hours. They were released later on the same day.
- On 19 June 2011, Moayad al-Ashqar, cameraman for AP and Maan news network, was detained by IOF soldiers whilst on duty in Toulkarm city in the north of the West Bank. Al-Ashqar was covering Israeli intelligence members searching students from Khaddouri college in Toulkarm when an IOF soldier stopped him and confiscated his ID card and camera. Half an hour later, after intervention by Associated Press, the soldier returned to al-Ashqar with his ID card and camera.
- On 22 June 2011, while raiding Beit Sahour city in Bethlehem, south of the West Bank, a military Israeli force held George Qanawati, director of "Bethlehem 2000" TV and radio. The members of the force stopped Qanawati while covering raiding al-Quds Open University in Beit Sahour by IOF. One of the soldiers confiscated Qanawati's press card and another soldier confiscated his ID card and prevented him from covering the raid. Qanawati was held for two hours and then released.
- On 28 June 2011, IOF backed by military vehicles moved into Kafr Qalil village in the east of Nablus, north of the West Bank. They surrounded the house of Nawwaf Ibrahim al-Amer, program coordinator at al-Quds satellite channel. IOF arrested al-Amer after raiding and searching his house. IOF detained al-Amer in "Hawwara" prison without charging him. He was then transferred to "Majeddo" central prison. On 5 July 2011, an Israeli military court sentenced al-Amer to six months of administrative detention.

## 4. Restrictions on Movement

Restrictions imposed on the freedom of movement are a form of collective punishment of Palestinian civilians in the OPT practiced by IOF. Media workers face extreme difficulties in covering events, as they cannot reach locations. Restrictions on the movement of media workers include: denial of permission to travel abroad; denial of movement between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; denial of movement from one area to another in the West Bank by military checkpoints; and denial of access to locations where incidents have taken place. As a result, media workers at local and international level experience daily hardship due to these restrictions.

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### 1. Denial of Access to Location of Incidents

According to investigations conducted by PCHR, 32 cases of media workers were denied access to location of incidents and 8 cases were subjected to confiscation of press cards, equipment and material.

- On 31 December 2010, IOF prevented local and international media workers from accessing an area where there were dozens of Palestinians and international solidarity movement participating in a weekly demonstration against the annexation wall in Bil'in village in the west of Ramallah, in the centre of the West Bank. That morning, IOF closed all the entrances of Bil'in village and prevented media workers from reaching the village. They arrested Silan Dalal, an Israeli journalist, who managed to reach the village and took her to an unknown destination. It should be noted that on the reporting day three Palestinians were wounded while Jawaher Ibrahim Abu Rahmeh, 35, suffered from tear gas inhalation and fainted. She was transferred to Palestine Medical Compound in Ramallah city for treatment. Abu Rahmeh was pronounced dead on the following day<sup>8</sup>.
- On 11 March 2011, IOF prevented 21 local and international media workers from having access to the Silwan neighbourhood in occupied Jerusalem in the centre of the West Bank, to cover confrontations between IOF and Palestinian civilians following Friday prayers.
- On 27 May 2011, three media workers were subjected to maltreatment at the hands of a force from the Israeli border guards and were prevented from covering IOF and Israeli settler attacks on Palestinians who were demonstrating in protest against the establishment and opening of "Maale Zeitim" settlement on Palestinian lands in Bab al-Amoud area in occupied Jerusalem in the centre of the West Bank. These media workers are:
  1. Diala Jweihan, reporter for Quds.net news agency,
  2. Ata Oweisat who works for various foreign news agencies; and
  3. Suleiman Khader, freelance cameraman.

### 2. Denial of Travel

During the reporting period, PCHR documented 3 cases in which media workers were denied their right to travel abroad via crossings controlled by IOF:

- On 17 January 2011, IOF positioned at "al-Karama" crossing on the border between the West Bank and Jordan prevented Awad al-Rjoub, reporter for aljazeera.net from travelling without providing any reason. Al-Rjoub was travelling to Amman on his way to Doha to participate in the "International Conference for Electronic Journalism" organized by al-Jazeera satellite channel between 19 and 20 January 2011.
- On 26 June 2011, IOF positioned at "al-Karama" crossing on the border between the West Bank and Jordan prevented Farid Abu Dheir, writer and lecturer at the Faculty of Information of An-Najah National University in Nablus, north of the West Bank, from travelling. Abu Dheir was on his way to Doha in Qatar to participate in the "World Conference of Science Journalists" organized by UNESCO at the end of June 2011.

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<sup>8</sup> For more information please see PCHR weekly report, Ref. 1, covering the period between 30 December 2010 and 05 January 2011. Available at: [www.pchrgaza.org](http://www.pchrgaza.org).



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- On 08 July 2011, IOF prevented Mustafa Sabri, journalist, from Qalqilya in the north of the West Bank, from travelling via "al-Karama" crossing on the border between the West Bank and Jordan. After waiting at the crossing for more than three hours, Sabri was informed by an Israeli officer that he was not allowed to travel for security reasons.

### 5. Raiding Media Workers' Homes

PCHR documented five cases in which IOF raided and searched the homes of Palestinian media workers in the West Bank. Four of these cases were documented under "Detention and Holding of Media Workers" and the fifth case is presented below<sup>9</sup>:

- At dawn on 20 December 2010, IOF raided and searched the house of Nawwaf Ibrahim al-Amer, reporter for al-Quds satellite channel, in Kafr Qalil village, south of Nablus in the north of the West Bank. It should be noted that IOF moved into Kafr Qalil village at dawn on the reporting day and raided and searched a number of houses and arrested three Palestinians.

### 6. Destruction of Media Workers' Equipment

IOF and Israeli settlers in the West Bank hindered the work of media workers by destroying their tools, equipment and cars while covering IOF and settler violations against Palestinian civilians. During the reporting period, PCHR documented six cases in which IOF and Israeli settlers destroyed media workers' tools, equipment and cars. Two of these cases were reported under "Beating, Humiliation and Inhumane and Degrading Treatment."<sup>10</sup>

- On 29 December 2010, a number of settlers from "Masa Yair" settlement established on Palestinian land in "Um al-Arayes" area, east of Yatta in Hebron in the south of the West Bank, destroyed the wheels of vehicles of Reuters and Palmedia company while their crews were covering settler attacks on Palestinians and bulldozing of Palestinian land in the east of Yatta. The settlers destroyed three wheels of vehicles belonging to Reuters and Palmedia company although they were clearly marked as press vehicles. The settlers destroyed the wheels in view of IOF soldiers who did nothing.
- On 30 December 2010, Israeli settlers destroyed all the wheels of a vehicle used by Nasser al-Shyouki, AFP cameraman, while covering a peaceful demonstration organized by dozens of Palestinian civilians in protest against the confiscation of a piece of land belonging to a Palestinian family from Hebron in the south of the West Bank. It should be noted that al-Shyouki's vehicle clearly indicated that it was a press vehicle.
- On 14 April 2011, IOF raided a building in Hebron, south of the West Bank. A broadcasting device belonging to "Bethlehem 2000" local radio was installed on the ceiling of the raided building. IOF confiscated this device. George Qanawati, director of "Bethlehem 2000" radio submitted a complaint to the Palestinian Liaison Office to have the device returned. It broadcasts to the south of the West Bank and to the Gaza Strip. No response has been received from IOF.

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<sup>9</sup> For more information, see page 10.

<sup>10</sup> For more information, see page 9.

### **PCHR's Notes**

1. PCHR considers these practices against media workers as part of Israel's ongoing abuse of Palestinian civilians. PCHR also considers it evidence of Israel's disregard for international humanitarian law, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.
2. Most attacks by Israeli forces on local and international press agencies were willful and intentional, especially considering that members of the press wore clearly marked attire. The attacks are designed to prevent the objective coverage of incidents in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
3. These attacks are part of Israel's systematic policy of isolating the OPT so as to allow further illegal action against Palestinian civilians.
4. PCHR calls on the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to meet their obligations under the Convention and immediately provide international protection for the Palestinian people.
5. PCHR calls on all international media to intervene and to exert pressure on Israel to stop its forces attacks on media workers and to provide the proper climate for practice of their profession without restriction.

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### Appendix I

#### Media workers Killed by IOF while on Duty

#	Name	Age	Place of residence	Job	Date of killing	Place of killing
1.	Mohammed Abdul Karim al-Bishawi	27	Balata refugee camp – Nablus	Cameraman for al-Hayat Newspaper & al-Haq Voice Magazine	31 July 2011	Nablus
2.	Othman Abdul Qader al-Qatnani	24	Askar refugee camp – Nablus	Reporter for the Kuwaiti Kona news agency, working at Nablus Press office	31 July 2001	Nablus
3.	Raffaele Ciriello	42	Italy	Freelance cameraman	11 March 2002	Ramallah
4.	Imad Sobhi Abu Zohra	30	Jenin	Director of al-Nakhil office for press and media	12 July 2002	Jenin
5.	Isam Methqal al-Tallawi	30	Beitunia village – Ramallah	Palestine radio	22 September 2002	Ramallah
6.	Nazih Adel Darwaza	46	Nablus	Cameraman for Palestine and AP	19 April 2003	Nablus
7.	James Miller	34	UK	Owner of Frost Bit company for media production	02 May 2003	Rafah
8.	Mohammed Adel Abu Halima	22	Balata refugee camp – Nablus	Volunteer reporter of al-Najah Voice radio	22 March 2004	Nablus
9.	Fadel Sobhi Shana'a	23	Gaza	Reuters	16 April 2008	Juhr al-Deek village
10	Omar Abdul Hafez al-Silawi	28	Gaza	Al-Aqsa satellite channel	03 January 2009	Jabalia refugee camp
11	Basel Ibrahim Faraj	22	Gaza	Algerian TV	06 January 2009	Gaza City



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