

Enough Violation



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## Annual Report 2006

This report is the outcome of PCHR's activities in 2006. PCHR has published annual reports since 1997.

PCHR's 2005 Annual Report is divided into two sections:

**Part One:** provides a comprehensive picture of the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) from 1 January to 31 December 2006. It is divided into two sub-sections:

- 1) Violations of international human rights and humanitarian law perpetrated by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) in the OPT; and
- 2) Human rights violations perpetrated by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and obstacles to democratic reform.

**Part Two:** documents all PCHR's activities from 1 January to 31 December 2005.

PCHR's 2005 financial report, which is prepared by an independent professional auditing institution, will be published as a separate document.

PCHR hopes that this report will contribute to the struggle for human rights by providing a comprehensive picture of the human rights situation in the OPT. It also hopes that relevant parties will follow the recommendations mentioned in this report, especially those recommendations which are directed to the international community and the PNA. This report serves as a guide for PCHR's future work and also reflects PCHR's strong belief in the importance of transparency for a non-profit, non-governmental organization that provides services to the community. It should also serve as a call for victims of human rights violations to approach PCHR for advice and assistance.



**PART ONE**

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**HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION  
IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY**

## Summary

On 25 January 2006, Palestinian voters cast their ballots to elect their representatives in the second Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections in the OPT since the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in 1994. The elections were transparent and fair, and were highly praised by both local and international observers. These elections were a key junction in Palestinian politics, which would have deep impacts on the Palestinian political regime and democratic reform in the PNA. These elections were another basic step in a series of steps taken by the Palestinian leadership following the death of the late Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in November 2004, including holding the second presidential election in January 2005 and holding partial elections for 265 local councils in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The elections renewed the legitimacy of the PLC, whose term ended in 1999 as established in the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement, according to which the first general elections were held in January 1996. Most political parties boycotted the first PLC elections in 1996 for reasons that included the fact that they were purely majoritarian elections. However, all political parties except Islamic Jihad participated in the second elections. This participation stemmed out of the desire to participate in the decision-making process. The wide participation of national and Islamic parties affected the campaigning period, which was very competitive. The competition was extremely fierce between the two main parties in the OPT: Hamas and Fatah. Election results showed a landslide victory for the Change and Reform Bloc (Hamas), as it obtained 74 out of the 132 seats in the PLC. This victory surprised observers and put an end for one decade of the control of one single party (Fatah movement) over the PLC and the government. On 18 March 2006, the new Palestinian government gained parliamentary confidence, marking the beginning of a new stage of Palestinian politics.

There were hopes that this positive development would be followed by other basic steps that would push forwards democratic reform following years of immobility, including the completion of elections of local councils, which started in late December 2004 and was supposed to be completed by the end of 2005. There were hopes also that developments related to the peaceful transition of authority, including holding the legislative elections, would constitute an internal power for the Palestinian people that would be used to serve their aspirations and struggle for liberation, independence, self-determination and the end of the 4-decade Israeli occupation.

However, the developments that followed the Palestinian legislative elections and the formation of the new Palestinian government have undermined steps and efforts made by the PNA in the past two years towards democratic reform, and have revealed the fact that the Israeli occupation of the OPT has been reinforced, especially in the Gaza Strip, where Israel claims that it ended its occupation with the implementation of the unilat-

The record of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the OPT in 2006 may have been the worst since 1967

eral disengagement plan. In 2006, IOF escalated their attacks on Palestinian civilians, the elected PLC and the new government. They arrested 10 cabinet ministers and 31 PLC members, including the Speaker. They also stopped the transfer of tax revenues to the PNA; tightened the siege imposed on the OPT; escalated attacks on Palestinian civilians and their property. Furthermore, the United States, European Union, Japan and Canada decided to suspend financial aid to the PNA, which marked the first time in history that sanctions were imposed on a people under occupation. At the internal level, the state of lawlessness seriously escalated in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip, which PCHR repeatedly warned of, in light of the PNA's failure to take effective measures to stop it. The major manifestation of the state of lawlessness was the political conflict between Fatah and Hamas movement, which escalated to fighting between armed wings of the two movements.

According to investigations conducted by PCHR into hundreds of attacks launched by IOF, including killings, against Palestinian civilians in the OPT, such attacks were characterized by the excessive use of force indiscriminately and without any consideration to the lives of Palestinian civilians

The record of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the OPT in 2006 may have been the worst since 1967, both with regard to crimes committed by IOF against Palestinian civilians and property, and at the Palestinian internal situation, especially the escalation in the state of lawlessness and hindrances to democratic reform.

In 2006, IOF continued their attacks on Palestinian civilians and property throughout the OPT. These attacks included: willful killing; tightened closure; destruction of property; settlement expansion; and continued construction of the Annexation Wall inside the West Bank. These attacks seriously escalated, especially in the Gaza Strip, in the aftermath of an attack by the Palestinian resistance on an IOF military post to the east of Rafah.<sup>1</sup> Such escalation on the ground reveals the reality of the unilateral Israeli Disengagement Plan and proves PCHR's position first cited in a position paper it issued in 2004 that the plan is merely a form of redeployment of IOF around the Gaza Strip and does not end the occupation rather it reinforces it.<sup>2</sup> Since the armed attacks on the IOF military post in Rafah, IOF have committed a series of crimes in the Gaza Strip. These crimes have included wide scale invasions of Palestinian areas; destruction of the civilian infrastructure, including bridges and Gaza power plant, which provided 45% of the electricity used by the population; willful killings; extra-judicial executions; destruction of houses as a means of collective punishment against families of Palestinian Intifada activists; and the closure of all border crossings, including Rafah International Crossing Point on the Egyptian border.

In 2006, IOF continued the use of excessive force, willful killing and violations of the right to life against the Palestinian civilian population in the OPT. According to investigations conducted by PCHR into hundreds of attacks launched by IOF, including killings, against Palestinian civilians in the OPT, such attacks were characterized by the excessive use of force indiscriminately and without any consideration

<sup>1</sup> On 25 June 2006, the Palestinian resistance launched an armed attack on an IOF military post to the east of Rafah, during which two IOF soldiers were killed and a third one was captured.

<sup>2</sup> See 'Sharon's Gaza Redeployment Plan: A Denial of Human Rights, Not an End to Occupation', position paper, PCHR: 2004.

to the lives of Palestinian civilians. The vast majority of Palestinians civilians killed by IOF were killed in circumstances that did not include any threats to the lives of IOF soldiers. According to PCHR's documentation, in 2006, 647 Palestinians, including 119 children and 36 women were killed by IOF. In addition, 1700 Palestinians were wounded by IOF in the Gaza Strip alone. Thus, the number of Palestinians killed by IOF and settlers since the beginning of current Intifada in September 2000 has increased to 4025, including 3226 civilians. Of these civilians, 740 are children and 141 are women. In addition, tens of thousands of Palestinians, including at least 10000 in the Gaza Strip, have been wounded since September 2000. Hundreds of those wounded sustained permanent disabilities.

Extra-judicial executions constitute the most blatant form of willful killing committed by IOF against Palestinian civilians, predetermined and approved by the Israeli political and judiciary establishments. In 2006, IOF escalated such attacks, using warplanes in the Gaza Strip and undercover unit in the West Bank. According to PCHR's documentation, in 2006, IOF carried out 48 extra-judicial execution attacks, in which 140 Palestinians were killed. Of those killed, 94 were targeted persons, and 46, including, 20 children, were non-targeted civilian bystanders. In addition, dozens of Palestinians were injured. Between 29 September 2000 and 31 December 2006, a total of 613 Palestinians (19% of the total number of Palestinians killed by Israeli forces in the same period) were killed in these attacks. Of those killed, 212, including 75 children, were non-targeted civilian bystanders.

In 2006, IOF escalated attacks on Palestinian medical personnel in the OPT. Palestinian paramedics were particularly subject to various kinds of attacks, including killing, beating, humiliation and restrictions on their movement. According to PCHR's documentation, in 2006, IOF killed 5 Palestinian medical personnel in the Gaza Strip and wounded a number of others.

In 2006, IOF continued to demolish Palestinian houses in the OPT as a collective punishment against the Palestinian civilian population in violation of international humanitarian law. IOF continued to destroy houses in the Gaza Strip in spite of the IOF redeployment from the Gaza Strip as an implementation of the "Disengagement Plan" in 2005, which further proves that the IOF withdrawal from the Gaza Strip was an illusion. Most house demolitions in the Gaza Strip took place in the second half of the year. According to PCHR's documentation, in 2006, IOF demolished 810 houses in the Gaza Strip (205 completely and 605 partially). Most of those houses were demolished during wide scale incursion into Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps.

Since the end of July 2006, IOF have adopted a new approach in house demolitions, through informing owners of targeted houses on their phones about the intention to demolish those houses a short time prior to the actual demolition. According to PCHR's documentation, until the end of 2006, IOF destroyed 73 houses in the Gaza Strip using this method. Many neighboring houses were also severely damaged. PCHR believes

that the bombardment of houses this way constitute a form of collective punishment.

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In the West Bank, IOF have systematically demolished Palestinian houses. This policy has its clearest manifestation in occupied Arab Jerusalem where IOF have increasingly demolished houses since the signing of the Oslo Accords. In 2006, IOF demolished 116 houses and 65 civilian establishments in the West Bank, including 17 houses and 13 civilian establishments located near the Annexation Wall.

By the end of 2006, at least 11,000 Palestinians, including 383 children and 114 women, were still in Israeli custody in detention facilities mostly inside Israel, in violation of article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention which obligates the occupying power to hold residents arrested inside occupied territory within that territory. Also by the end of 2006, at least 750 of these Palestinians were still in custody without any charge under administrative detention orders issued by IOF. In 2006, IOF arrested at least 3500 Palestinians, including 115 in the Gaza Strip. In addition, arrest campaigns also targeted political leaders and representatives of the Palestinian people, which demonstrated Israel's disregard for the will of the Palestinian people personalized in their political leaders and members of their legislature. On 14 March 2006, IOF stormed the Jericho Prison, in which Ahmad Saadat, the Secretary-General of the PFLP and the elected member of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), a number of PFLP activists charged with assassinating Rehavam Ze'vi (Israeli ex-Minister of Tourism), and General Fuad El-Shobaki, a member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council who is charged with smuggling the 'Karin A' arms shipment, were detained. In June and July, IOF arrested 31 PLC members and 10 cabinet ministers, including 8 who are also PLC members, including the Speaker of the PLC, Second Deputy Speaker of the PLC and the Deputy Prime Minister. In most cases, Palestinian detainees are subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, including physical torture, deprivation of sleep, denial of appropriate medical care, deprivation of family visitation and denial of access to legal counsel.

In 2006, IOF continued to impose a total closure on the OPT. Even though, the Israeli-Palestinian [US-brokered] Boarder Agreement entered into force on 25 November 2005, IOF imposed additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians and goods to and from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. They continued to close border crossings, or at best imposing severe restrictions on the movement through them, especially Rafah International Crossing Point on the Egyptian border and al-Karama International Crossing Point on the Jordanian border, isolating the Palestinian civilian population from the outside world. Since 25 June 2006, IOF have escalated restrictions imposed on the movement of the Palestinian civilian population. From that date until the end of 2006, Rafah International Crossing Point had been closed completely for 160 days and was been partially reopened for 30 days only.

In 2006, IOF imposed restrictions at border crossings between the OPT and Israel, preventing hundreds of Palestinian patients from receiving medical care in the West

Bank, including occupied Jerusalem, students from the Gaza Strip from attending their universities in the West Bank, and worshippers from reaching religious sites in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron.

In the West Bank, IOF have imposed more severe restrictions on the internal movement of Palestinian civilians through 528 checkpoints and barriers established at the entrances of Palestinian communities and on the main roads.

IOF have continued to restrict access to occupied East Jerusalem for residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. On 4 April 2006, IOF started to operate Qalandya checkpoint between East Jerusalem Ramallah as a border crossing between the West Bank and Israel.

The total siege imposed by IOF on the OPT, together with the international financial boycott imposed on the Palestinian government, have left disastrous impacts on the humanitarian situation and has violated the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population, particularly the rights to appropriate living conditions, health and education. It has also paralyzed most economic sectors. As a consequence of the total closure imposed on the OPT, unemployment has mounted to 40% and the level of poverty has increased to 64%; in the Gaza Strip, poverty has mounted to 73%. In the first three years of the current Palestinian Intifada, the per capita individual income decreased by 32%, and by 40% in subsequent years.

In 2006, Israeli settlement activities continued throughout the OPT to create new facts on the ground. They continued to establish new settlements, expand existing ones and establish bypass roads on Palestinian land. On 13 March 2006, the Israeli television channel 2 reported that IOF started to establish a police station as part of the settlement project known as "E1" plan, which links "Ma'ale Adomim" settlement bloc with East Jerusalem. The plan includes constructing 3500 housing units for settlers by annexing Palestinian lands in east Jerusalem area and separating the Palestinian territories by blocking any geographical contiguity. On 21 September 2006, the Israeli daily Ma'ariv reported that the Israeli Ministry of Housing published an invitation for bids to construct 164 housing units in settlements in the West Bank: "Ariel"; "Alfeh Menasheh"; and "Kerni Shomron."

Furthermore, for the purpose of settlement expansion, IOF confiscated and razed more areas of Palestinian land to establish roads for settlers, expand existing settlements and establish military observation facilities, especially near military checkpoints. IOF also demolished more houses and civilian facilities for the same purpose.

In 2006, Israeli settler attacks against Palestinian civilians and property continued. Such attacks included shootings, running down civilians with vehicles and destruction of or damage to civilian property. In 2006, a Palestinian civilian and a number of others were wounded by Israeli settlers in the OPT. This brings the number of Palestin-

ian civilians killed by Israeli settlers to 36, including 9 children, since the beginning of the current Intifada in September 2000. In 2006, PCHR documented 100 attacks by Israeli settlers: 75% in Hebron; 10% in Nablus; 6% in Qalqilya; 5% in Bethlehem; and 2% in Jenin and Jericho. These attacks included: shooting; running down; attacks on houses; attacks on schools and students; attacks on religious sites; attacks on farmers and shepherds; and other attacks.

IOF have continued to construct the Annexation Wall inside the occupied West Bank in violation of international humanitarian law and the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice in Hague on 9 July 2004. In 2006, the construction was mainly focused around occupied Jerusalem, in spite of the petitions submitted to courts by Palestinian civilians living in villages located around the city, whose properties were destroyed or confiscated. IOF also continued to construct sections of the wall in other Palestinian districts, especially Bethlehem and Hebron, and near large settlements, such as "Ariel" near Nablus, and those of a military nature, such as "Shavi Shomron" also near Nablus.

The construction of the Wall by IOF in the OPT violates a general principle of international humanitarian law that the occupying power is prohibited from changing the nature of the territory it occupies except for military necessities or unless it is deemed beneficial for the population of the occupied territories. The construction of the Wall is not beneficial for the Palestinian population and can never be justified as a military necessity, contrary to Israeli claims of its security necessity.

Denial of justice for Palestinian civilians is deeply rooted in the Israeli judicial system in general; and the military judiciary in particular. IOF rarely investigate attacks on Palestinian civilians, and often deny responsibility for them. One of the significant examples that prove the non-seriousness of investigations in cases of killing or injuring civilians in the OPT by IOF was the case of the Ghalia family in the Gaza Strip. On 9 June 2006, an Israeli gunboat stationed off the coast of Beit Lahya fired seven successive artillery shells at civilians on the beach in the Waha area, north of Beit Lahia. Seven civilians from the same family (father, mother and five children) were killed. IOF claimed that "it was likely the blast stemmed from a bomb placed by the Palestinians at the site or some form of unexploded ordnance." The conclusions of the IOF probe were completely contrary to conclusions of the investigations conducted by PCHR, which proved that members of the Ghalia family were killed by the IOF shelling. They are also contrary to investigations conducted by Human Rights Watch, which asserted that "the size of the craters and the type of injuries to the victims are not consistent with the theory that a mine caused the explosion" and that "Israeli artillery fire was to blame."

Through our long experience, PCHR has concluded that the Israeli judiciary is used to provide legal cover for IOF to commit war crimes against Palestinian civilians, and that it is a means used to avoid resorting to the international justice directly under the pretext of the existence of a just Israeli national judiciary.

While IOF have escalated violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, the internal security situation in the OPT deteriorated in 2006

In light of these facts, and following the exhaustion of national legal means (in this case the Israeli ones), PCHR, in cooperation with a number of international legal and human rights organizations, has resorted to international legal means to prosecute Israeli war criminals. In 2006, PCHR, in cooperation with Hickman & Rose Solicitors – UK, built a legal file on Moshe Ya’alon is a 56- year-old Israeli national who was Chief of Staff of the Israeli military from 9 July 2002 to 1 June 2005, answerable directly to the Prime Minister. Moshe Ya’alon was spared arrest or any proper prosecution process in New Zealand on 28 November 2006. PCHR, on behalf of the Palestinian victims, was dismayed that Moshe Ya’alon evaded justice in New Zealand, especially as it was not the first time an Israeli war criminal evaded justice. PCHR is concerned that the success of those war criminals in evading justice is an indicator that political considerations are often placed above justice. However, PCHR will continue its efforts, together with other attorneys, to prosecute war criminals before other national jurisdictions.

While IOF have escalated violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, the internal security situation in the OPT deteriorated in 2006. In spite of the notable development in the process of democratic reform, including holding the legislative elections, [which were described by all observers, including PCHR, as fair and transparent] this process faced many obstructions and more human rights violations were recorded, especially in light of the deterioration of the internal security situation and the proliferation and misuse of weapons, which impacted the rule of law.

The internal Palestinian situation seriously deteriorated. The year 2006 has been the worst since the beginning of the current Intifada with regard to the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons in the OPT

The second PLC elections constituted an important, substantial step towards democratic reforms in Palestine. Instead of encouraging these important democratic reforms, the international community and Israel subjected the Palestinian people to an organized campaign of diplomatic and economic sanctions. The sanctions included, inter alia, a boycott on the new Hamas-led Palestinian government that was formed constitutionally in March 2006; and stopping aid to the Palestinian government, which led to economic deterioration and escalating poverty in the OPT. In addition, the Israeli government stopped the transfer of Palestinian tax revenues collected from Palestinian businesses and workers in Israel to the Palestinian government. The level of humanitarian services provided by the PNA declined, including health, educational, and social services. As a result, frustration, tension and stress increased among Palestinians.

The internal Palestinian situation seriously deteriorated. The year 2006 has been the worst since the beginning of the current Intifada with regard to the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons in the OPT. The political struggle between Fatah and Hamas and the division of the Executive between the Presidency and Government negatively affected the internal Palestinian situation. This conflict escalated into bloody clashes between the armed wings of two movements and the divided security forces. These clashes were an extension of the state of lawlessness plaguing the OPT and include manifestations of such transgressions on the rule of law, vigilante justice, and preference of the rule of the jungle over the rule of law. According to PCHR’s documentation, 296 Palestinians were killed in incidents of security chaos during the

year 2006. This includes 235 killed in the Gaza Strip and 61 killed in the West Bank. The victims included 34 children and 31 women. In addition, 1,538 Palestinians were injured, including 220 children and 66 women.

The year 2006 has been the worst year in terms of clashes between security forces and/or armed groups. The year witnessed a series of armed clashes between different security branches, and clashes between security forces and their affiliates against armed groups from Hamas or Fatah. These clashes resulted in the deaths of 71 Palestinians, including 5 children and 2 women. Another 708 Palestinians were injured, including 69 children and 18 women. The tension in the OPT, especially the Gaza Strip, was not manifested in armed clashes only, but included attacks on institutions of the sides involved and mutual kidnappings between parties. Most abductees were released by mediators; however some abductees were killed or tortured.

Several international organizations came under attack and a number of internationals were kidnapped by armed Palestinian groups during 2006. These attacks were a component of the security chaos plaguing the OPT over the past few years due to the negligence of the PNA security forces in imposing order, investigating such crimes, and prosecuting the perpetrators. According to PCHR's documentation, 13 international organizations (such as the UN and Red Cross) came under attack in 2006. The attacks included gunfire, arson, theft, and destruction of property. In addition, armed groups kidnapped 25 international relief workers and journalists. All abductees were released without harm after a few hours or days. It is noted that in all cases no legal action was taken against the perpetrators of these crimes despite the fact that their identities were known to security forces.

The bloody clashes between security forces and armed groups, and the uncontrolled proliferation of arms among the population encouraged people to take the law into their own hands by force. This was clearly reflected in clan and personal clashes where weapons were frequently used. These armed clashes resulted in the killing of 88 people, including 4 children and 5 women. Another 307 people were injured, including 51 children and 17 women.

In 2006, 107 Palestinians, including 25 children and 10 women, were killed in incidents categorized as "misuse of weapons by armed groups and security personnel." In addition, 310 people, including 98 children and 27 women, were injured in these incidents. Most of the victims died due to accidents by Palestinian resistance factions in storing explosives or firing rockets from populated areas, or from near them. PCHR condemns such use of arms in or being fired at civilian areas, both inside the OPT and Israel. In addition, victims fell by incidents of mishandling and misusing weapons by security personnel, armed people, or ordinary people.

The year 2006 witnessed an increase in extra-judicial killing by Palestinian armed groups of suspected collaborators with Israeli security services. During the year, PCHR

documented 9 deaths, including 2 women.

In 2006, 14 Palestinians were killed in incidents motivated by “honor.” The victims were 12 women and 2 men.

The situation in the OPT negatively affected the performance of the PLC, particularly as IOF imposed severe restrictions on the movement of PLC members, especially those of the Hamas majority. IOF arrested 31 PLC members, including the Speaker. IOF also arrested 10 Cabinet Ministers, 8 of them are also PLC members. These arrests took place during the period June – August 2006. These IOF actions came in the context of reprisals and collective punishment against Palestinian civilians in the aftermath of an armed attack by the Palestinian resistance on an IOF military post in Karm Abu Salem area to the east of Rafah on 25 June 2006, in which two IOF soldiers were killed and a third one was captured.

The detention of the PLC Speaker, Secretary-General, and many Hamas PLC members coupled with restrictions of movement of other members inside the West Bank and between the Gaza Strip and West Bank led to the deterioration of the PLC’s activities on the monitoring and legislative fronts.

The year 2006 witnessed additional efforts by the Executive to intervene into matters of Palestinian judiciary in a way that undermines its independence and power. Furthermore, the strike by public servants in the OPT has had negative effects on the Palestinian judicial system. The previous PLC, in its closing session on 13 February 2006, approved the President’s amendments on the Higher Constitutional Court Law. After the closing session of 13 February 2006, the President issued a number of decisions pertaining to amendments of the judicial authority. In contravention with the law, these decisions were not submitted to the PLC for discussion.

The year 2006 witnessed significant deterioration in the Palestinian judicial system. After the summer recess, courts went on strike from September to December 2006. The strike was motivated by the non-payment of salaries by the PNA. Work was resumed in the beginning of December. The strike suspended work in courts throughout the OPT. As a result, the judicial process was suspended in 50,000 cases in these courts, including 6,000 criminal and serious cases. Only emergency cases were considered, such as releasing prisoners or extending their detention.

The year 2006 witnessed positive developments pertaining to the death penalty under the PNA. Palestinian courts did not issue any death sentences throughout the year. This is an unprecedented development as all the previous years (1994-2005) in the PNA’s history witnessed issuance of death sentences or their implementation. It is noted that the total of death sentences passed from 1994-2005 was 76 sentences against Palestinians convicted with crimes and national security offenses. Twelve sentences were implemented during that time span. Despite these positive developments in 2006,

PCHR remains concerned over the fact that the death penalty remains institutionalized in the PNA's legislation and legal procedures. PCHR views the remaining existence of the death penalty in legislation and procedures as an open door towards resuming death sentences and their implementation, enabling the PNA to violate the right to life.

Despite maintaining the legal status quo on freedom of expression during the year, there has been a change in the parties that perpetrate violations of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. On the one hand, the year witnessed a decline in the number of violations perpetrated by official bodies due to a general weakening of the PNA, which has persisted since the beginning of the al-Aqsa Intifada in 2000. On the other hand, there has been an escalation in such violations by unofficial parties, encouraged by the failure of the Attorney-General to investigate these crimes and prosecute their perpetrators. The year witnessed a continuation of violations of freedom of expression in the OPT. However, the year was distinguished because of the decline in such violations by official parties. In addition, it is noted that attacks on journalists were the most striking form of violation by unofficial parties. According to PCHR's documentation, 8 journalists, including 6 internationals, were abducted by armed Palestinian groups.

The year 2006 witnessed dozens of public meetings, demonstrations, and sit-ins throughout the OPT. Most of them did not adhere to the conditions set in the Executive Bill of the law governing such actions, noting PCHR's reservations over this bill. Some of these demonstrations witnessed violations by their organizers and participants who did not act peacefully, and attacked public and private institutions. In some incidents, attacks were perpetrated against international organizations working in the OPT.

## Recommendations

This section details PCHR's recommendations to the international community and the PNA. PCHR hopes that the international community will take PCHR's recommendations into consideration and take effective steps to enforce international law. PCHR also hopes that the PNA will work towards realizing these recommendations in the context of its responsibilities.

### Recommendations to the International Community

PCHR calls upon the international community, including the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, to:

1. PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to fulfill their legal obligations, including to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the OPT in accordance with Article 1. PCHR believes that the international silence towards grave breaches of the Convention perpetrated by IOF in the OPT serves to encourage Israel to act as a state above law and results in the perpetration of more grave breaches.
2. PCHR reminds the international community and the High Contracting Parties to the

Fourth Geneva Convention that the Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip remains effective in its physical and legal forms in spite of the implementation of the Disengagement Plan, which is a form of redeployment of IOF rather than an end to occupation in the Gaza Strip.

3. PCHR believes that the High Contracting Parties are responsible for searching for and prosecuting Israelis responsible for grave breaches, some of which have been defined as war crimes, as the Israeli judiciary does not prosecute them and even provided legal cover for these individuals in many cases.
4. PCHR calls upon international civil society organizations, including human rights organizations, bar associations and solidarity groups, to lobby for governmental action in respect of bringing Israelis responsible for the violations of international law to justice.
5. PCHR calls upon the international community to take effective steps to dismantle the Annexation Wall being constructed inside the West Bank territory. PCHR particularly calls upon the United Nations to take measures that conforms to the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice, the highest international judicial body, in 2004, which considers the Wall illegal.
6. PCHR calls upon the European Union to activate Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, which provides that both sides must respect human rights as a precondition for economic cooperation between the EU states and Israel. PCHR also calls upon all states to prohibit import of goods produced in illegal Israeli settlements in the OPT.
7. As Israel and its occupation forces have continued to impose severe restrictions on access of international solidarity groups to the OPT and Israel, PCHR calls for ensuring the freedom of movement of international delegations visiting the OPT similar to the freedom enjoyed by Israeli citizens abroad or for Israeli citizens to be given the same treatment abroad as EU citizens are given in Israel and the OPT.
8. PCHR reiterates that any political settlement not based on international human rights law and humanitarian law cannot lead to a peaceful and just solution of the Palestinian cause. Rather, such a settlement can only lead to further suffering and instability in the region. PCHR calls upon governments and civil society organizations to implement the international law at the Palestinian level.

## Recommendations to the PNA

1. PCHR calls for enhancing the peaceful transition of authority in the PNA in accordance with result of the legislative elections, and calls upon the President and the Government to assume their constitutional authorities in accordance with the Basic Law.
2. PCHR calls for stopping the political conflict, which is manifested in the crisis between the President and the Government on one hand and the internal fighting between Fatah and Hamas movements on the other hand.
3. PCHR calls for uniting and restructuring Palestinian security services on professional foundations that can ensure their political neutrality to be out of any partisan

conflicts.

4. PCHR calls for taking effective measures to enhance the rule of law, end the state of lawlessness and investigate relevant crimes, including the kidnappings of internationals, and bring their perpetrators to justice.
5. PCHR calls for ensuring for the independence of the judiciary including through enforcement of court rulings, for a presidential decree to be issued to actually abolish State Security Courts, as the decision taken by the Palestinian Minister of Justice in July 2003 abolishing these courts has not been sufficient.
6. PCHR calls for abstaining from implementing death sentences and abolishing the death penalty in the Palestinian legislation.
7. PCHR calls for holding elections for the remaining local councils as soon as possible, and concluding a formula acceptable to all concerned political factions to repeat elections of the local councils of Rafah, al-Boreij and Beit Lahia. PCHR suggests repeating the whole elections in these communities in accordance with the new law, according to which the third and fourth stages of local elections were held.
8. PCHR calls upon the PNA to adhere to international human rights standards and make sure that all measures it takes conform to international human rights standards and respect basic rights of citizens.
9. PCHR calls for judicial monitoring of prisons and detention facilities to ensure an end to illegal arrests.
10. PCHR calls for ensuring the right to freedom of expression, reconsidering related laws, including the Press Law of 1995, and enacting a law to organize the work of private televisions and radios.

## Section 1

## Israeli Violations of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law

### Excessive Use of Force, Killings and Other Violations of the Right to Life

In 2006, IOF continued the use of excessive force, and to carry out willful killings and violations of the right to life against the Palestinian civilian population in the OPT. According to investigations conducted by PCHR into hundreds of attacks launched by IOF, including killings, against Palestinian civilians in the OPT, such attacks were characterized by two aspects. First, IOF employed its full-fledged arsenal, including warplanes, tanks and gunboats, which are usually used in conventional wars, against unarmed Palestinian civilians in densely-populated areas, which caused maximum casualties. Second, IOF used excessive force indiscriminately and without any consideration to the lives of Palestinian civilians, including children. The vast majority of Palestinians civilians killed by IOF were killed in circumstances that did not include any threats to the lives of IOF soldiers, including the bombardment of houses and civilians facilities; extra-judicial executions of activists of Palestinian factions; sniping when the situation was completely quiet; or in direct armed clashes with IOF during incursions into Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2006, 647 Palestinians, including 498 civilians, died as a result of actions by IOF and settlers. Of the civilians killed, 119 were children and 36 were women

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2006, 647 Palestinians, including 498 civilians, died as a result of actions by IOF and settlers.<sup>3</sup> IOF continued to disregard the principles of proportionality and distinction in their actions in the OPT, resulting in the death of 498 unarmed civilians, who were killed whilst posing no threat to Israeli soldiers or settlers. Of the civilians killed, 119 were children and 36 were women. In addition, 1700 Palestinians were wounded by IOF in the Gaza Strip alone. Thus, the number of Palestinians killed by IOF and settlers since the beginning of current Intifada in September 2000 has increased to 4025, including 3226 civilians. Of these civilians, 740 are children and 141 are women. In addition, tens of thousands of Palestinians, including at least 10000 in the Gaza Strip, have been wounded since September 2000. Hundreds of those wounded sustained permanent disabilities.

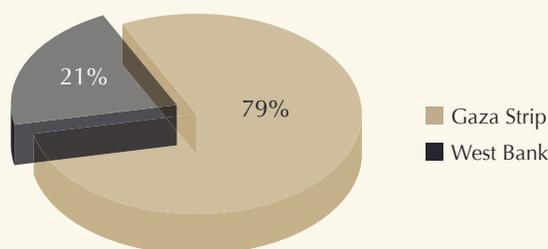
In the Gaza Strip particularly, IOF escalated their

<sup>3</sup> In 2006, 4 Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli settlers in the West Bank.

attacks alarmingly since 25 June 2006, when members of the Palestinian resistance captured an IOF soldier during an attack on a military post on the Gaza Strip border, during which also a number of other IOF soldiers were killed or injured. Following this attack, IOF launched a wide scale military campaign against the Gaza Strip allegedly to release the captured IOF soldier and prevent the launching of home-made rockets from the Gaza Strip at Israeli civilian areas. The campaign was called “Operation Summer Rains.” During this campaign, which continued for several months, IOF deployed military vehicles supported by warplanes into Palestinian communities. They even seized complete control over Palestinian towns after destroying the civilian infrastructure, houses and land. During this military campaign, IOF killed hundreds of Palestinians. In November, IOF launched another military campaign called “Autumn Clouds” allegedly to prevent launching home-made rockets from the northern Gaza Strip at Israeli territory. This campaign was more aggressive and focused on Beit Hanoun town. IOF seized complete control over the town and afflicted wide scale destruction to infrastructure, houses, civilian facilities and agricultural land. During this campaign, IOF killed dozens of Palestinians and wounded hundreds of others. Both military campaigns did not succeed in achieving their goals, namely the release of the captured IOF soldier or the cessation of firing of home-made rockets, as members of the Palestinian resistance continued to launch home-made rockets at Israeli civilian targets. Launching rockets from the northern Gaza Strip at Israeli targets stopped only when the Palestinian and Israeli sides agreed on a truce on 26 November 2006.<sup>4</sup>

The continued attacks by IOF against Palestinian civilians support PCHR’s indications concerning the illusion of the IOF withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005, and facts on the ground undoubtedly prove that the Gaza Strip is still occupied both physically and legally. Attacks by IOF have even been escalated following the withdrawal, marking the worst stage since the beginning of the IOF occupation of the Gaza Strip in 1967.

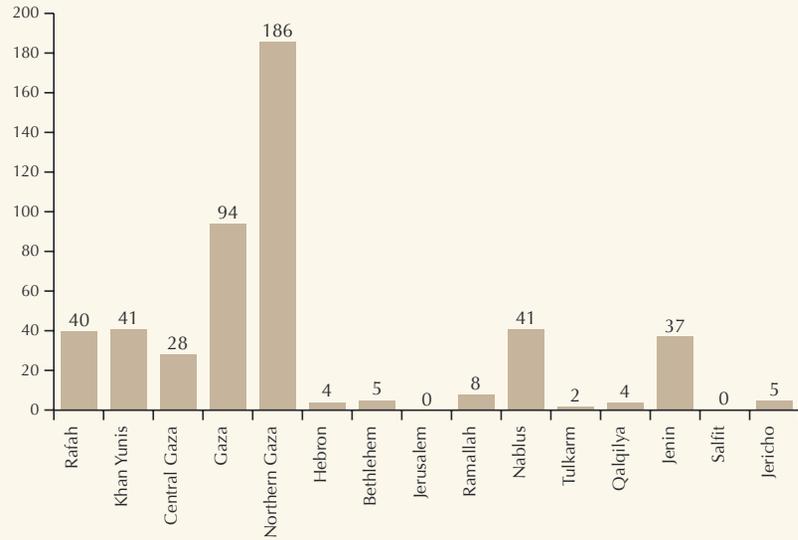
Diagram (1):  
Geographical Distribution of Palestinian Civilians Killed by IOF in 2006



As shown in the above diagram, these numbers show a significant increase in the number of civilians killed by IOF in the Gaza Strip, where 392 civilians were killed, in comparison with the number of those killed in the West Bank, whose number was 106. This high number of deaths in the Gaza Strip is attributed to the excessive use of force against civilians in an unprecedented manner and treating Palestinians as if they were under a sovereign authority following

<sup>4</sup> On 26 November 2006, the Palestinian and Israeli sides declared that they agreed on a truce, under which all mutual attacks would be stopped.

Diagram (2):  
Geographical Distribution of Palestinian Civilians Killed by IOF in 2006 (By Districts)



It is clear from the above diagram that the highest numbers of deaths were in Northern Gaza, which was subject to two wide scale military campaigns in the second half of 2006.

Diagram (3):  
Monthly Distribution of Palestinian Civilians Killed by IOF in 2006

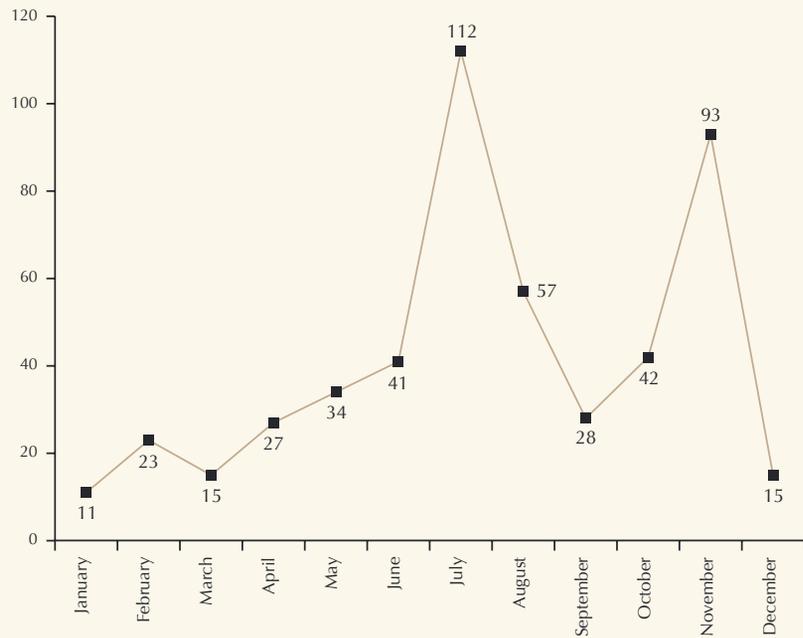


Diagram (2) demonstrates that the number of deaths was increasing since the beginning of the year and peaked in July, when IOF launched Operation Summer Rains against the Gaza Strip, which resulted in many deaths. In the following three months, the number of deaths decreased even though the military operation was still ongoing. However, the number of deaths sharply increased in November, when IOF launched another military campaign on the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun.

Diagram (4):  
Distribution of Fatalities Caused by  
Live Bullets

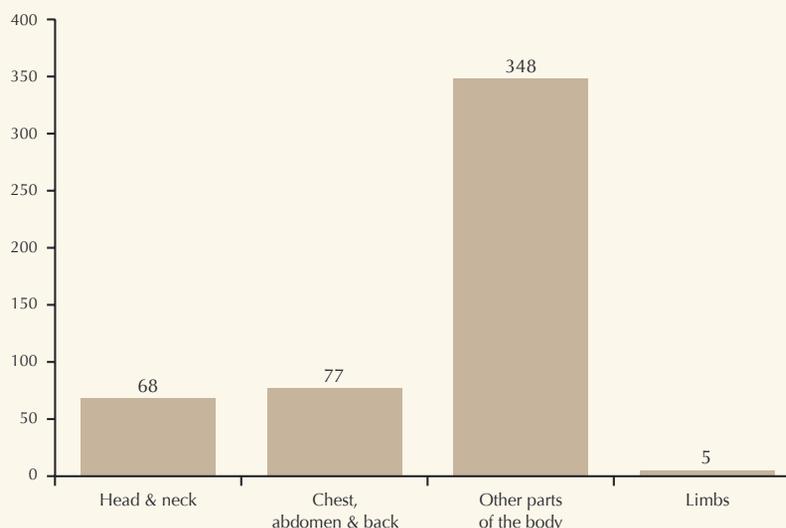


Diagram (4) shows the distribution, according to the location of the wounds of the total of 145 Palestinian civilians who were killed by gunshots fired by IOF in 2005. Of these, 68 civilians (29%) were shot to the head or the neck, and 77 civilians (15.4%) were shot to the chest and the abdomen. In addition, 348 persons (70%) were shot to other parts of the body. Most deaths resulted from aerial attacks.

## Incursions into Palestinian Communities

In the second half of 2006, IOF conducted unprecedented wide scale incursions into the Gaza Strip, causing hundreds of deaths and casualties among Palestinian civilians and afflicting large destruction to civilian property and infrastructure

In 2006, IOF repeatedly encroached into Palestinian communities, but the second half of the year witnessed an escalation in incursions conducted by IOF into Palestinian communities. From the beginning of the year until the end of June, IOF conducted limited incursions into the Gaza Strip, during which they destroyed houses, agricultural land and civilian facilities. Most of those incursions did not result in casualties. At the same time, IOF continued to attack civilian and security targets and extra-judicially execute members of the Palestinian resistance causing many casualties among civilians. In an example of systematic massive killing, on 9 June 2007, IOF committed a hideous crime against the Ghalia family in the northern Gaza Strip. An IOF gunboat positioned opposite to Beit Lahia coast fired 7 shells at many Palestinian civilians who were at the beach. Seven members of the Ghalia family (the parents and 5 of their children) were killed, whereas a sixth child survived the attack. In addition, 32 civilians, including 13 children, were wounded, the wounds of two of them were described by medical sources as serious.

In the second half of 2006, IOF conducted unprecedented wide scale incursions into the Gaza Strip, causing hundreds of deaths and casualties among Palestinian civilians and afflicting large destruction to civilian property and infrastructure. Following an attack launched by a Palestinian resistance group on an IOF military post on 25 June 2006, IOF waged a wide scale military campaign on the Gaza Strip, which included the destruction of the main electricity generation plant, bridges, public and education institutions, and the infrastructure, and extra-judicial executions. This campaign was

characterized by seizure of control over large Palestinian areas and even complete towns sometimes.

During this campaign, named "Operation Summer Rains", IOF invaded most Palestinian towns in the Gaza Strip, especially in the east and the north. IOF employed warplanes, tanks and gunboats and killed and wounded hundreds of Palestinians.

The escalation in incursions into the Gaza Strip started shortly following the aforementioned attacks on the IOF military post, as IOF destroyed a farm in the southeast of Rafah, from which the Palestinian resistance group launched the attack. On 28 June 2006, IOF seized control over Gaza International Airport, and moved nearly 300-500 meters into al-Shouka village, east of Rafah. They razed large areas of agricultural land and shelled houses. At least 150 Palestinian families were forced to leave their houses. UNRWA absorbed those families at a harbour center in the town.

In the period 3-5 July 2006, IOF moved into the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun. They seized control over large areas in the town, killed a number of Palestinians and destroyed some houses, agricultural areas and other civilian property. In the period 15 – 18 July 2006, IOF moved into the town again. They largely destroyed civilian property, killed 7 Palestinians, including a child, and wounded 30 others, including 5 children and two women.

In the period, 6-8 July 2006, IOF moved into al-Salatin neighborhood in Beit Lahia town in the northern Gaza Strip. Fierce clashes erupted between IOF and Palestinian resistance groups. Dozens of Palestinians, mostly civilians, including a number of children, were killed by the IOF gunfire.

Since the beginning of the military campaign against the Gaza Strip, IOF repeatedly moved into al-Fukhari village near the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel. They took position near Sofa crossing on the border, and repeatedly moved into the village. They killed a number of Palestinian civilians and wounded others. They also shelled houses and razed large areas of agricultural land. At least 100 houses were damaged by the IOF shelling. On 12 July 2007, IOF moved into al-Qarara village, north of Khan Yunis, reaching al-Matahen and Abu Houli intersections on Salah al-Din Street – the main road between the north and south of the Gaza Strip. IOF seized control over the road and prohibited the movement of Palestinian civilians between the north and south of the Gaza Strip. This incursion lasted for two days, after which time IOF moved back to the eastern border of the Gaza Strip. During this incursion, IOF killed 8 Palestinians and wounded dozens of others.

In the period 19-21 July 2006, IOF invaded al-Maghazi refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip. They killed 19 Palestinians, including 4 children and a woman, and wounded 125 others, mostly civilians, including 30 children and 4 paramedics. According to medical sources, 31 of the wounded were in a serious condition. Additionally, IOF

caused severe damage to houses, agricultural land and civilian infrastructure.

In the period 26-28 July, IOF moved nearly one kilometer into the east of Gaza City and took position at the edges of al-Tuffah and al-Sha'af neighborhoods. They killed 20 Palestinians, including a 3-year-old child, and wounded 67 others, including 12 children and two journalists. They also destroyed or damaged civilian property.

On 1 November, IOF initiated a wide scale military campaign (Operation Autumn Clouds) on the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun. They seized complete control over the town and sealed it off from its surroundings for nearly one week, during which time they denied access to basic services and medical care. They arrested several Palestinians. IOF redeployed outside of the town on 7 November. On 8 November, IOF committed a horrible crime in the town, when they fired at least 10 artillery shells at a residential area, killing 19 Palestinian civilians, including 17 ones from one same family who were asleep when their houses were attacked. In addition, 56 civilians were wounded. During this military campaign, IOF killed a total of 76 Palestinians, including 15 children and 10 women, and wounded at least 250 others.

### Extra-Judicial Executions ('Political Assassinations')

Extra-judicial executions constitute the most blatant form of willful killing committed by IOF against Palestinian civilians, predetermined and approved by the Israeli political establishment and the judiciary, represented by the High Court. Despite the relative calm that followed the IOF redeployment from the Gaza Strip in September 2005, IOF committed more extra-judicial executions. Israel uses the term "targeted killing" to describe this type of crimes. It claims that it targets wanted persons, who pose a threat to the security of the State of Israel. In another attempt to legalise such crimes, the Israeli High Court ruled that "targeted killing" does not violate international law. The court ruling came in response to a petition submitted by human rights organizations against the policy of extra-judicial executions.

In 2006, IOF increasingly committed extra-judicial executions against Palestinians, either by bombarding civilian establishments, houses and cars in the Gaza Strip, or by undercover units in the West Bank. According to PCHR's documentation, IOF committed 48 extra-judicial executions, in which 140 Palestinians were killed. Of those killed, 94 were targeted persons (64 in the Gaza Strip and 30 in the West Bank), and 46 (41 in Gaza and 5 in the West Bank) were non-targeted civilian bystanders, including 20 children. In addition, dozens of Palestinians, mostly civilian bystanders, were wounded.

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When committing extra-judicial executions, IOF do not pay attention to the lives of civilians, especially children. In an example of such disregard for the lives of Palestinian civilians, on 20 May 2006, IOF aircrafts attacked a car, in which Mohammed Sha'ban al-Dahdouh, 28, a member of the Islamic Jihad, was traveling, in the center of

Gaza City. He was killed. In addition to him, 3 civilian bystanders were killed: Hanan Mohammed Aamen, 45; Na'ima Mahmoud Aamen, 25; and Muhannad Mohammed Aamen, 4. The three victims were from one same family, and 4 other members of the family were wounded.

In the most horrible crime in 2006, IOF killed all members of a Palestinian family in Gaza City. According to PCHR's documentation, on 12 July 2006, IOF fighter jets bombarded a house belonging to Dr. Nabeel Abu Silmiya in Sheikh Radwan neighborhood in Gaza City, the house was destroyed and the man, his wife and their 7 children were killed when they were asleep. Additionally 34 neighbors were wounded. IOF claimed that the attack targeted Mohammed al-Daif, the leader of the 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades (the armed wing of Hamas), and a number of his colleagues.

Between 29 September 2000 and 31 December 2006, a total of 613 Palestinians (19% of the total number of Palestinians killed by IOF in the same period) were killed in extra-judicial executions. Of those killed, 212, including 75 children, were non-targeted civilian bystanders. In the West Bank, 233 targeted persons and 72 civilian bystanders were killed. In the Gaza Strip, 168 targeted persons and 140 civilian bystanders were killed.

## Killing of Palestinian Children

Children are granted a range of special protections under international human rights instruments. In 2006, 119 Palestinian children (100 in the Gaza Strip and 19 in the West Bank) were killed by IOF. Thus, the number of Palestinian children killed by IOF between 29 September 2000 and 31 December 2006 increased to 760 (462 in the Gaza Strip and 298 in the West Bank), approximately 23.5% of the total number of Palestinian civilians killed by IOF in the same period. These children were killed as a result of the excessive and indiscriminate use of force by IOF.

The year 2006 was characterized by the deaths of a number of complete families, including children. For example, on 8 November 2006, 19 Palestinian civilians, including 17 ones from one same family, were killed when IOF fired at least 10 artillery shells at two houses in the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun. The victims included 6 children and 7 women. Additionally 56 civilians were wounded.

In another example, on 20 May 2006, IOF aircrafts attacked a car of a member of the Islamic Jihad in a densely-populated area in Gaza City. He was killed together with 3 civilian bystanders (a woman, her sister and her child). Additionally, 4 other civilians were wounded, including a 5-year-old child who suffered from complete paralysis.

In another crime, 5 children were killed when IOF attacked a family in Beit Lahia town on 9 June 2006. According to PCHR's documentation, an IOF gunboat fired 7 artillery shells at a number of Palestinian civilians who were at the beach in Beit Lahia town. As

In 2006, 119 Palestinian children (100 in the Gaza Strip and 19 in the West Bank) were killed by IOF

a result, a man, a woman and their 5 children were killed. A sixth child survived the attack. In addition, 32 civilians, including 13 children, were wounded.

## Attacks on Medical Crews

In 2006, IOF escalated attacks on Palestinian medical personnel in the OPT. Palestinian paramedics were particularly subject to various kinds of attacks, including killing, beating, humiliation and restrictions on their movement. Such attacks are deliberate and aim at deterring medical personnel from carrying out their humanitarian mission prescribed by relevant international human rights instruments. According to investigations conducted by PCHR, IOF have used excessive lethal force against medical personnel.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2006, IOF killed 5 Palestinian personnel in the Gaza Strip and wounded a number of others.

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in the  
Gaza Strip

On 13 June 2006, an IOF aircraft launched one missile at a civilian vehicle that was traveling near Martyr Mohammed al-Durra Hospital in al-Tuffah neighborhood in the northeast of Gaza City. Two members of the al-Quds Brigades (the armed wing of Islamic Jihad) were traveling in the car. The missile directly hit the car, killing one of them. Palestinian civilians living in the area gathered around the car and two paramedics from the nearby hospital came to provide first aid. Immediately, IOF aircrafts launched another missile at the car, killing 9 civilians, including the two paramedics: Mousa Nasrallah, 34; and 'Ali al-'Omari, 23. Additionally, 30 civilians were wounded.

On 6 November 2006, IOF killed Ahmed Motee' al-Husari, 30, a paramedic from Gaza City, during an incursion into the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun.

On 13 November 2006, IOF killed two paramedics in Be'r al-Na'ja area in the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Lahia: Ahmed Shihda al-Madhoun, 43; and Mustafa Habeeb, 30.

## House Demolitions

In 2006, IOF continued to demolish Palestinian houses in the OPT as a collective punishment against the Palestinian civilian population in violation of international humanitarian law. IOF continued to destroy houses in spite of the IOF redeployment from the Gaza Strip as an implementation of the "Disengagement Plan" in 2005, which further proves that the IOF withdrawal from the Gaza Strip was an illusion. Most house demolitions in the Gaza Strip took place in the second half of the year following an attack on an IOF military post to the east of Rafah on 25 June 2006, in which two IOF soldiers were killed and a third one was captured. IOF invaded most areas in the Gaza Strip, killed hundreds of Palestinian civilians and destroyed houses, civilian facilities and infrastructure.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2006, IOF demolished 810 houses in the Gaza Strip (205 completely and 605 partially). Most of those houses were demolished during wide scale incursion into Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps, especially in the northern Gaza Strip. According to PCHR's documentation, IOF demolished at least 100 houses, in which 1000 individuals (148 families) used to live, during an incursion into Beit Lahia town in the period 6-8 July in the context of "Operation Summer Rains." In November, IOF launched "Operation Autumn's Clouds," another wide scale offensive on the northern Gaza Strip, especially Beit Hanoun town. During that military campaign, IOF killed or wounded hundreds of Palestinian civilians and destroyed civilian property. IOF destroyed 406 houses (51 completely and 355 partially).

in 2006, IOF demolished 810 houses in the Gaza Strip (205 completely and 605 partially)

Since 23 June, IOF have adopted a new approach in house demolitions, through informing owners of targeted houses on their phones about the intention to demolish those houses a short time prior to the actual demolition. According to PCHR's documentation, until the end of 2006, IOF destroyed 73 houses in the Gaza Strip using this method. According to residents of the affected houses, IOF did not offer them enough time to vacate their belongings. Such houses are not necessarily located in areas of clashes or those from which home-made rockets could be launched. In targeting these houses, IOF have not provided any evidence to justify attacking them.

IOF attacked houses using fighter jets and helicopter gunships. Houses were completely destroyed and many neighboring houses were severely damaged. Residents of neighboring houses were often forced to leave their houses when IOF informed about their intentions to attack certain houses.

In addition to the destruction of houses, those attacks killed 3 Palestinians (a 14-year-old girl, and a man and his son). According to PCHR's documentation, on 16 August 2006, IOF killed an elderly Palestinian and his son in Khan Yunis, when an IOF fighter jet leveled their house with a bomb. IOF did not give them sufficient time to evacuate the house, and they were killed during the evacuation. In addition, a second son and two neighbours were moderately wounded by shrapnel. The IOF intelligence called Radwan Sha'at, 31, on his mobile phone, and ordered him to evacuate his house in the densely populated Sheikh Nasser area in the east of Khan Yunis as it would be bombarded in a few minutes. Sha'at was not in the house at the time of the call, and he called his family to inform them of the warning. The household started to evacuate the house at night and in the dark as electricity was cut off from the area at the time. During the evacuation, the IOF intelligence called Sha'at again and informed him that the house would be bombarded in a few minutes. Fifteen minutes after the first call and as the household were evacuating, an IOF fighter jet dropped a bomb on the house, destroying it completely. Hassan Radwan Shahin Sha'ath, the 69-year-old owner of the house, and his son Ibrahim, 45, were killed. In addition, three civilians, including an owner's son were wounded.

On 26 September 2006, an IOF fighter jet dropped a bomb on a house belonging

to Sami Salem al-Sha'er in al-Brazil neighborhood in Rafah. The house was largely destroyed. Nearly an hour and a half later, an IOF fighter jet dropped a second bomb on the same house, totally destroying it. Debris of the house fell onto a number of houses in the neighboring al-Brazil neighborhood. As a result, 14-year-old Dam al-'Ez Ahmed Hammad was killed. According to her father, his only child was sleeping near her disabled mother, when she was hit by the debris.

In addition to the houses that were actually attacked, PCHR documented dozens of cases in which Palestinians were informed by phone that their houses would be attacked, but they were not. In most of these cases, residents of the houses were forced to leave their houses for several days.

On Sunday, 30 July 2006, PCHR addressed the appeal department at the Israeli attorney general office concerning the policy of informing about the intention of Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) to destroy Palestinian houses shortly before the claimed destruction takes place, expressing our dissatisfaction at this policy. PCHR attached three conclusions to its letter concerning the informing of Palestinians before their houses were destroyed by warplanes:

1. The short time, less than one hour, offered by IOF to Palestinians to evacuate their houses before they are destroyed deprives these Palestinians of their right to take legal steps to appeal against the destruction of their houses.
2. The short time offered by IOF, when they inform families by phone that their houses would be destroyed, does not allow these families to take their belongings out.
3. The destruction of houses is based on intelligence reports, which can be inaccurate or out of date and often do not justify attacks on civilians and their property.

On 2 August, PCHR received a response to its complaint from the Israeli military prosecutor. The response claimed that IOF operations against "terrorists parties are conducted in accordance with war regulations and international law... and they are legally supported by the military prosecutor." The military prosecutor refused to provide enough space of time to evacuate houses following warning their residents, claiming that "time for the evacuation of houses can change from one case to another." Concerning the third conclusion, the military prosecutor claimed that attacks on houses "are based on credible and updated information."

PCHR stresses that warning civilians before the bombardment of their houses does not in any way justify damaging civilian property protected by the Fourth Geneva Convention. The bombardment of houses in this way constitutes a form of collective punishment.

It is worth noting that IOF have adopted a policy of demolishing houses belonging to families of activists of the Palestinian resistance or those who protect them. They demolished hundreds of such houses. Due to the international pressure, the Israeli govern-

In 2006, IOF demolished 116 houses and 65 civilian establishments in the West Bank

ment decided in February 2005 to stop this policy, which had catastrophic impacts on Palestinian civilians and property.

In the West Bank, IOF have systematically demolished Palestinian houses since 1967 in the context of efforts to uproot the Palestinian people and plant settlements. This policy has its clearest manifestation in occupied East Jerusalem where IOF have increasingly demolished houses since the signing of the Oslo Accords.

The Municipality of Jerusalem and the Israeli Ministry of Interior demolish Palestinian houses under various pretexts, including the lack of building licenses. The Municipality requires Palestinians to obtain building licenses, but it does not offer such licenses in most Palestinian areas in Jerusalem due to the lack of structural and organizational maps/ If such maps exist, they only include areas that were densely populated before the beginning of the Israeli occupation. The reasons for this are clear; at least 34% of Palestinian land was seized for Jewish settlement construction, and at least 52% of the land of the city is “green” where construction is prohibited to be a reserve for Jewish settlement. Only 14% of land, which is already densely populated, is allowed for construction. The policy adopted by the Municipality for offering building licenses is of a racist nature when it allows the construction of up to 5 or more floors for Jewish settlers, but only one floor for Palestinians, even though settlements are constructed on Palestinian-owned lands.

In a report of demolition and expropriation of Palestinian houses it issued at the end of 2000, Amnesty International stated that “the number of houses demolished annually is small if compared with that of the houses under threat of demolition,” indicating that 12,000 orders to demolish houses in East Jerusalem, where one third of the population live, were issued.” Policies practiced by IOF in Jerusalem are not different in essence and form from those applied to the rest of the OPT. IOF have adopted policies that limit construction development in an attempt to decrease the Palestinian population as much as possible.

In 2006, IOF demolished 116 houses and 65 civilian establishments in the West Bank, including 17 houses and 13 civilian establishments located near the Annexation Wall.

Distribution of Houses and Civilian Establishments Demolished by IOF in the West Bank

District	Number of Houses	Number of Civilian Establishments
Jerusalem	78	33
Bethlehem	9	5
Hebron	3	2
Ramallah	7	

Nablus	5	7
Jenin	8	5
Qalqilya	4	12
Tulkarm	1	
Jericho	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>65</b>

## Torture and Ill-Treatment of Palestinian Detainees

By the end of 2006, at least 11,000 Palestinians, including 383 children and 114 women, were still in Israeli custody in detention facilities mostly inside Israel, in violation of article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention which obliges the occupying power to detain persons from occupied territory in that territory. Most arrests have taken place during house raids, especially in the West Bank, and Israeli incursions into Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Hundreds of Palestinians were also arrested at Israeli military checkpoints and roadblocks erected on roads and at entrances to Palestinian communities and at border crossings, especially in the West Bank. In 2006, IOF arrested at least 3500 Palestinians, including 115 in the Gaza Strip.

In addition, arrest campaigns also targeted political leaders and representatives of the Palestinian people, which demonstrated Israel's disregard for the will of the Palestinian people as represented in their political leaders and members of their legislature. On 14 March 2006, IOF stormed the Jericho Prison, in which Ahmad Saadat, the Secretary-General of the PFLP and the elected member of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), a number of PFLP activists charged with assassinating Rehavam Ze'vi (Israeli ex-Minister of Tourism), and General Fuad El-Shobaki, a member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council who is charged with smuggling the Karin A arms shipment, were detained. During the operation, IOF bombarded the prison and governorate complex before and after bulldozing the buildings inside. The bombardment included tank shells and rockets fired from attack helicopters. The operation ended with the detention of the aforementioned as well as scores of political and criminal prisoners, security guards, and members of the National Security Service, who use the governorate building as their headquarters. In addition, 2 Palestinians were killed, one a prison guard and the other a prisoner detained on criminal charges. Another 50 Palestinians were injured.<sup>5</sup>

On 29 June 2006, IOF arrested 8 Palestinian cabinet ministers, 21 members of the Palestinian Legislative

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<sup>5</sup> It is worth noting that This operation was initiated 15 minutes after the sudden withdrawal of American and British monitors charged with guarding Saadat, in accordance with an agreement, drafted mainly by the United States. Israeli, American, and British officials attempted to deny any prior coordination between them. However, the Israeli Defense Minister, Shaul Mofaz, said in statements to Haaretz newspaper after the operation that Israel knew before hand about the time of the monitors' withdrawal from Jericho prison. Further, he stated that the army had been prepared for over a week to storm the prison and kidnap the prisoners.

Council (PLC) representing Hamas and a number of other political leaders in the West Bank. On 6 July 2006, IOF arrested the Second Deputy Speaker of the PLC Dr. Hasan Khuraisha, when he was on his way back to the West Bank through al-Karama International Crossing Point on the Jordanian border.<sup>6</sup> On 6 August 2006, IOF arrested Dr. 'Aziz al-Dweik, 58, Speaker of the PLC. On 19 August 2006, IOF arrested Dr. Nasser al-Din al-Sha'er, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, from his house in Ramallah.<sup>7</sup> In June and July, IOF arrested 31 PLC members and 10 cabinet ministers, including 8 who are also PLC members.

In October and November 2006, IOF arrested dozens of Palestinian civilians, especially in the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun, which was subjected to a series of human rights violations in the last quarter of 2006 (Operation Autumn Clouds) that killed and wounded dozens of Palestinians.

In most cases, Palestinian detainees are subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, including physical torture, deprivation of sleep, denial of appropriate medical care, deprivation of family visitation and denial of access to legal counsel. In another attempt to overcome international legal standards in order to justify continued detention of Palestinian prisoners following the IOF redeployment from the Gaza Strip in September 2005, Israel adapted the concept of "illegitimate combatant" to describe Palestinian prisoners who are in fact civilian persons protected under the Fourth Geneva Convention, and consequently justify their detention in accordance with a special law called "Illegitimate Combatants" issued in 2002. According to this law, the IOF Chief of Staff has the authority to issue an arrest warrant against a person if there is a basis to assume that such person is "an illegitimate combatant."

In another attempt to exempt the Israeli government of their responsibilities, under international law, for Palestinian detainees, on 27 June 2006, the Israeli parliamentary Constitution, Law and Justice Committee approved and forwarded the law concerning the detention of persons suspected of security offences that allows court deliberations on the extension of the detention of a security suspect to be held in absentia to the Knesset plenum for the second and third reading. The law which grants the Head of the Interrogation Section of the GSS the authority to make the decision concerning the extension of a person's interrogation without judicial oversight to 96 hours instead of 24 as in the past. The Bill also proposes to stop suspects from seeing legal representatives for 50 days, as opposed to the current 21 days. This unwarranted authority, along with other provisions of the law, may increase the risk that security detainees will be subjected to

<sup>6</sup> Khuraisha remained in custody until 30 July 2006, when he was released on bail. IOF also released Wasfi Qabaha, Minister of Prisoners' Affairs, and Mohammed al-Barghouthi, Minister of Labor, whereas other ministers and PLC members have remained in custody.

<sup>7</sup> PCHR believes that such arrests came in the context of Israeli efforts to undermine the results of free and democratic elections conducted in the OPT on 25 January 2006. They are a form of reprisal and collective punishment. Such actions followed an attack on an Israeli military post to the east of Rafah on 25 June 2006, in which two IOF soldiers were killed and a third one was captured. Soon after, IOF launched a wide scale military campaign on the Gaza Strip allegedly to release the captured IOF soldiers. During this campaign, Palestinian civilians were subjected to systematic violations of human rights.

illegal methods of interrogation, including torture.<sup>8</sup>

The new law grants wider authorities to interrogated residents of the OPT, particularly the Gaza Strip, and forcibly obtain confessions from them. Thus, it allows interrogators of the Israeli GSS to practice torture against Palestinian detainees, in violation of international humanitarian law and human rights law, especially the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949 and Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1984. It further strengthens the racist nature that governs the behavior of the Israeli political, military and judicial establishments, which have neglected international humanitarian law to facilitate the use of interrogation methods that violate international standards for the treatment of Palestinian detainees.

## Torture and Ill-Treatment

In 2006, PCHR received increased reports regarding various methods of interrogation used against Palestinian detainees, including minors, held in Israeli jails and detentions centers, which constitute torture and ill treatment as defined both in the Convention against Torture and other international instruments. These methods include:

1. Blindfolding and hitting a detainee, especially on the face and the abdomen;
2. Strangling a detainee in a way that causes extreme difficulties in breathing;
3. Insulting a detainee and swearing on God;
4. Forcibly removing the hair of the beard;
5. Hanging a detainee with his feet up and face down, and hitting him on sensitive parts of the body, such as the testicles;
6. Bridging – a method in which 3 interrogators carry a detainee using chains, with his face down, which, in one case, led a detainee to urinate blood;
7. Sexually abusing detainees, and raping them in some cases using iron bars.
8. *Shabeh*<sup>9</sup> for long periods that sometimes amount to 48 hours.
9. Tightened handcuffing; tying the hands and legs with plastic chains that cause severe pains;
10. Sleep deprivation for long hours; incommunicado detention; compulsory standing for long hours; and insulting.

The aforementioned methods of torture are being used under a cover from the Israeli judiciary

The aforementioned methods of torture are being used under a cover from the Israeli judiciary, in a manner that indicates that such methods used by Israeli interrogators are developing to be similar to the situation that preceded the Israeli High Court ruling in 1999

<sup>8</sup> On October 31, 2005, the Government of Israel submitted a bill to the Israeli Knesset entitled “Criminal Procedure (Enforcement Powers – Detention) (Non-resident Detainee Suspected of Security Offense) (Temporary Order)”. The bill passed its first reading in the Knesset on the same day. According to the Knesset’s decision it was to be considered by a joint parliamentary committee composed of members of the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee and the Foreign Affairs and Security Committee. On 27 June 2006, the committee approved the law and forwarded it to the Knesset plenum for the second and third reading. See press released issued by the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel on 20 November 2005 and 28 June 2006 (<http://www.stoptorture.org.il/eng/press.asp?menu=6&submenu=1>).

<sup>9</sup> *Shabeh* entails shackling the detainee’s hands and legs to a small chair, angled to slant forward so that the detainee cannot sit in a stable position.

prohibiting the use of torture against Palestinian detainees. It is obvious that the Israeli judiciary does not seriously consider complaints submitted by PCHR and other human rights organizations against the use of torture against Palestinian detainees. Responses to complaints submitted by PCHR often indicate like that: “The complaint was considered, and it was concluded that the complainant was arrested to be interrogated for serious suspicions based on credible information, which revealed that he was involved in carrying out or facilitating terrorist attacks. Conclusions of the interrogation officer were submitted to the State prosecutor, and when they were subsequently considered by the Attorney-General, it was concluded that there no ground to take any serious judicial or whatsoever measures against interrogators.”

Such responses are similar to many responses received by the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel (PCATI) to complaints it submitted against the use of torture by GSS interrogators. According to PCATI, responses had a standard formula: “An examination showed that Mr. ... was detained for questioning due to a serious suspicion, based on credible information, that he was ostensibly involved in or was an accessory to carrying out major terror activities that were liable to have been carried out in a very short time frame and which could have hurt or threatened human life.” In plain English, a “ticking bomb.”<sup>10</sup> Also according to PCATI, the attorney general’s office responded as follows: “All complaints are examined very thoroughly by the [Shin Bet complaint handler] before being submitted, with no exceptions, to a thorough examination on the part of the senior prosecutor who is in charge of that handler. Some of the complaints are found to be baseless and others refer to events covered by the necessity defense. In certain cases, the examination leads to a change in procedures. In a few cases, when it is determined that a violation of procedures has taken place, a decision is taken to initiate a disciplinary or criminal procedure.”<sup>11</sup>

PCHR condemns the Israeli judiciary’s conspiracy with the GSS to facilitate the use of methods that violate international standards for the treatment of prisoners. PCHR calls upon the international community, particularly the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, to take effective steps to ensure Israel’s respect for international humanitarian law, especially the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, as a first step towards stopping torture against Palestinian prisoners, before their release as their detention inside the Israeli territory in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

## Administrative Detention

Administrative detention has been used by IOF to arrest and detain Palestinians without charge or trial for long periods. Current administrative detention orders permit for periods of detention of up to 3-6 months that are indefinitely renewable without reference to charge or trial. These orders are issued by Israeli district military commanders in the West

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/objects/pages/PrintArticleEn.jhtml?itemNo=785371>.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

Bank and Gaza Strip. By the end of 2006, at least 750 Palestinians were still in custody under administrative detention orders issued by IOF. Administrative detention violates the Fourth Geneva Convention, whose article 78 prohibits the use of this measure as a form of punishment, rather as an exceptional measure for “imperative reasons of security.”

With the implementation of the concept of “illegitimate combatant,” Israel would maintain the essence of administrative detention, but in new methods to overcome the international law. In this context, PCHR is gravely concerned over the cases of Riad Sa’di ‘Ayad, 32, and Hassan Mas’oud ‘Ayad, 33, both from Gaza, who have been held under administrative detention. The IOF Chief of Staff issued decisions ordering their continued detention considering them “illegitimate combatants.” Riad ‘Ayad was arrested by IOF on 1 January 2002, and on 17 March 2002, he was placed under a renewable 6-month administrative detention. He has been detained without any charge. With regard to Hassan ‘Ayad, he was arrested by IOF on 24 January 2003, and he was placed under a renewable 6-month administrative detention without any charge on 24 February 2003. On 12 September 2005, the same day of the declaration of the end of Israeli military government in the Gaza Strip, the IOF Chief of Staff ordered to continue the detention of Riad and Hassan in accordance with the concept of “illegitimate combatant”, in violation of international human rights instruments, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention.

## Ongoing Policy of Total Closure & Violation of the Right to Freedom of Movement

The policy of closure imposed by IOF on the OPT is a form of collective punishment against the Palestinian civilian population, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law and human rights law

IOF have continued to impose a tightened siege on the OPT, including complete control over the movement of the Palestinian population and goods. The policy of closure imposed by IOF on the OPT is a form of collective punishment against the Palestinian civilian population, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law and human rights law.

In 2006, IOF continued to impose a total closure on the OPT. Even though, Israeli-Palestinian US-brokered Border Agreement entered into force on 25 November 2005, IOF imposed additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians and goods to and from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

They continued to close border crossings, or at best imposing severe restrictions on the movement through them, especially Rafah International Crossing Point on the Egyptian border and al-Karama International Crossing Point on the Jordanian border, isolating the Palestinian civilian population from the outside world.<sup>12</sup> They also imposed restrictions at border crossings between the OPT and Israel,<sup>13</sup> preventing hundreds of Palestinian patients from receiving medical care in the West Bank, including occupied

<sup>12</sup> IOF destroyed the runway of Gaza International Airport at the beginning of the current Intifada, completely stopping aviation. The airport had been operated according to the Israeli – Palestinian Interim Agreements.

<sup>13</sup> IOF have discontinued the “Safe Passage” between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank since the beginning of the current Intifada. The “Safe Passage” was opened in October 1999 according to the Wye River Memorandum of Understandings between the PNA and Israel in 1998.

East Jerusalem, students from the Gaza Strip from attending their universities in the West Bank, and worshippers from reaching religious sites in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron.

IOF have also continued to prevent the majority of Palestinian civilians, including patients, from entering Israel. With regard to internal movement, IOF continued to impose severe restrictions at hundreds of military checkpoints established at the entrances to Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps in the West Bank.

Since the implementation of the "Disengagement Plan" in September 2005, IOF have transformed the Gaza Strip into a big jail, and subjected its economy to a process of stranglehold.

In the first half of 2006, the Border Crossings Agreement was implemented at Rafah International Crossing Point on the Egyptian border, which was reopened on 25 November 2005. Palestinians and EU observers operated the Palestinian side of the crossing point, while cameras transmitted live images to a joint control room several kilometers away. Palestinian and Israeli security officers would view the camera feeds and monitor the crossing point from there. Traveling through the crossing point during that period went smoothly and no congestion was noticed.

However, since 25 June 2006, IOF have escalated restrictions imposed on the movement of the Palestinian civilian population. From that date until the end of 2006, Rafah International Crossing Point was closed completely for 160 and was partially reopened for 30 days only. Palestinians had to suffer from additional burdens to travel. Dozens of patients were not able to travel to Egypt and other countries to receive appropriate medical treatment not available in the Gaza Strip, so their health conditions deteriorated. Many Palestinians were also cut off from their families, and were blocked at the Egyptian side of the crossing point for several days lacking minimum health safety requirements. As a result, 4 Palestinian patients, including a woman and a child, died at the Egyptian side of the crossing point. Additionally, two other patients died at an Egyptian hospital after they had been forced to wait for long periods at the Egyptian side of the crossing point.

In 2006, al-Mentar (Karni) commercial crossing had been completely closed for 162 days and partially opened for 213 days. As a result of the closure of the crossing, many basic foodstuffs have been lacked in the markets

Beit Hanoun (Erez) Crossing had been completely closed for 322 days in 2006, excluding a few humanitarian cases.

IOF have violated the provisions of the Border Crossings Agreement, when they have denied the exportation of agricultural products through al-Mentar (Karni) crossing and Rafah International Crossing Point. They have not opened Karm Abu Salem (Kerem

Shalom) commercial crossing for importation. Additionally, IOF have not implemented a provision in the agreement, under which transportation convoys would be allowed between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank starting from 15 December 2005, and convoys of trucks starting from 15 January 2006.<sup>14</sup>

Also according to the agreement, IOF would ease restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians in the West Bank. However, IOF have established additional check-points, which have further restricted the movement of Palestinian civilians. Moreover, IOF have not allowed the construction of Gaza harbour and have not considered the re-operation of Gaza International Airport, contrary to the provisions of the Border Agreement.

Under the Border Crossings Agreement, IOF have maintained control over the movement of Palestinian civilians through Rafah International Crossing Point, and over the movement of persons and goods between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Thousands of Palestinians who live in the Gaza Strip but do not have permanent residence have been deprived of visiting their families abroad. Additionally, IOF have not been committed to the provisions related to commercial crossings in the agreement, which had led to further deterioration in the Palestinian economy. They have also postponed discussions related to the re-operation of Gaza International Airport.

IOF have continued to restrict access to occupied East Jerusalem for residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip

IOF have continued to restrict access to occupied East Jerusalem for residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As a result, Palestinians have been denied access to advanced medical care provided by hospitals in East Jerusalem, to family, education, to work and to religious sites in the city. The construction of the Annexation Wall around East Jerusalem would establish a permanent barrier for Palestinians seeking to enter occupied East Jerusalem.

On 4 April 2006, IOF started to operate Qalandya checkpoint between East Jerusalem Ramallah as a border crossing between the West Bank and Israel. On 27 March 2006, IOF declared their intention to transform Qalandya checkpoint into a border crossing. Only residents of Jerusalem, who have Israeli identity cards, and residents of the West Bank, who have permits to enter Jerusalem, would be allowed to pass through the "crossing." According to the new procedures, residents of the West Bank would be able to travel from Ramallah to the southern West Bank without having to pass through the "crossing", as alternative roads would be available to them as IOF claimed. PCHR stressed that IOF always claim that they would open roads and gates designed for the passage of Palestinians, but they continue to control such roads and gates and impose restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians. An example of such roads and gates are those, which pass through the Annexation Wall, as IOF have imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians across the Wall. Later, IOF established a permanent

<sup>14</sup> IOF have closed the Safe Passage routes between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank since the beginning of the current Palestinian Intifada. It had been operated in October 1999 in accordance of the Wye River Memorandum, which was reached between the Palestinian National Authority and Israel in 1998.

On 22 April 2006, IOF started to implement a plan to divide the West Bank into three parts (the north, the center and the south)

checkpoint near Jaba' village, northeast of Jerusalem, only 3 kilometers away from Qalandya crossing. This checkpoint is operated by the 'Boarder Police', whose members arbitrarily harass Palestinian civilians passing through the checkpoint.

In the West Bank, IOF have continued to construct the Annexation Wall, which has added more restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians and has further cut off Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank.

On 22 April 2006, IOF started to implement a plan to divide the West Bank into three parts (the north, the center and the south). For this purpose, IOF transformed Za'tara checkpoint, south of Nablus, into a border crossing similar to Qalandya crossing, which was officially opened on 4 April 2006. This measure caused further economic and humanitarian hardships to the Palestinian people.

In a similar step, IOF implemented a plan to cut off the east of the West Bank from its other parts. They prevented at least 2 million Palestinians from entering the area, which constitute nearly one third of the total area of the West Bank. IOF also imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinians living in the area itself.

In October 2006, David Shearer, Head of UN Office Coordinating Humanitarian Affairs in Jerusalem, said that there had been "a 40% rise in the number of Israeli checkpoints in the West Bank" since August 2005, pointing that the number had increased from 367 to 528.

IOF discriminate between Palestinian civilians and Israeli settlers with regard to the freedom of movement in the OPT, as settlers have their own roads, whose use is prohibited for Palestinian civilians.

The total siege imposed by IOF on the OPT, left disastrous impacts on the humanitarian situation and has violated the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population

The total siege imposed by IOF on the OPT, together with the international financial boycott imposed on the Palestinian government, have left disastrous impacts on the humanitarian situation and has violated the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population, particularly the rights to appropriate living conditions, health and education. It has also paralyzed most economic sectors. As a consequence of the total closure imposed on the OPT, unemployment has mounted to 40% and the level of poverty has increased to 64%; in the Gaza Strip, poverty has mounted to 73%. In the first three years of the current Palestinian Intifada, the per capita individual income decreased by 32%, and by 40% in subsequent years.

IOF have continued to prohibit family visitation for Palestinian prisoners detained in Israeli jails. They have also continued to prevent Palestinian lawyers from visiting prisoners, who have been increasingly subject to cruel and inhuman treatment by IOF.

The policy of closure is a form of collective punishment prohibited by international

humanitarian law. Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention specifically prohibits punishment of protected persons for offences they have not personally committed. It also prohibits collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or terrorism. IOF have implemented these restrictions in an entirely disproportionate and excessive manner. The closure policy has been implemented as a means of punishment, intimidation and retaliation against Palestinian civilians. Article 12(1) of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights prescribes that “everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence.”

## Settlement Activities & Attacks by Settlers against Palestinian Civilians & Property

In September 2005, IOF evacuated the 21 Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip, in addition to 4 ones in the northern West Bank. This development was positive as it put an end to the direct control of IOF over at least 40% of the total area of the Gaza Strip. The PNA had control over areas that were classified as areas B and C according to the Palestinian –Israeli Interim Agreements of 1994 and 1995.<sup>15</sup> However, this positive development did not come in the context of Israel’s respect for its obligations under international law neither did it represent an end of Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank. It was rather a part of a unilateral Israeli strategic plan to serve the creation of facts on the ground that fit its strategic goals. Under this plan, Israel evacuated its occupation forces and settlers from the Gaza Strip, but maintained its control over the Gaza Strip’s air space, sea and border crossing, thus preserving the essence of occupation. On the other hand, the implementation of the plan was accompanied by intensified settlement activities throughout the West Bank and confiscation of large areas of Palestinian land for the purpose of settlement expansion. In 2006, Israeli settlers escalated their attacks on Palestinian civilians and property throughout the OPT.

Israeli settlement activities in the OPT clearly violate international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention. Article 49 of the Convention provides that “the Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.” However, successive Israeli governments have supported settlement activities through providing financial, legal and administrative means to encourage their Jewish population to live in settlements established in the OPT. Israel has seized large areas of land in the OPT, devoting them for settlement activities. In spite of the evacuation of settlements in the Gaza Strip, at least 480,000 Israeli settlers have continued to live in at least 130 settlements in the West Bank. Nearly half of those settlers live in settlements inside and around occupied Jerusalem. IOF have continued to make efforts to Judaize the city.

the Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies

Israeli settlement activities have led to an increase in the number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank, including occupied Jerusalem, up to 480,000, at

<sup>15</sup> Areas C were under full Israeli control, and areas B were under Israeli security control and Palestinian civil control.

Israeli settlement activities have led to an increase in the number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank, including occupied Jerusalem, up to 480,000, at least half of them live in Jerusalem

least half of them live in Jerusalem. Israel would be able to incorporate at least 408,000 Israeli settlers into its controlled areas by the completion of the construction of the Annexation Wall, which is being built in the west of the West Bank and will cut off 555 square kilometers (10%) from the West Bank. Additionally, Israel has isolated the eastern part of the West Bank, whose area is estimated at 155 square kilometers (27.5% of the total area of the West Bank). Israel will completely control this isolated area through at least 25 checkpoints, and 5 'secure routes' that will be like the area within the Annexation Wall. Those 'secure routes' will control 371 kilometers (6.5% of the total areas of the West Bank). Israel has also established a buffer zone, which is 200 meters long, along the annexation wall. The area of the buffer zone is 259 square meters (4.5% of the total area of the West Bank).<sup>16</sup>

In the past four decades, Israel has created an apartheid system, the only one of its kind all over the world. Israeli settlers enjoy all privileges, care and protection, whereas Palestinians are persecuted and suffocated. Israeli settlements occupy large areas of Palestinian land, but only a small portion of this land is devoted for settlement construction.<sup>17</sup> The other portions of land are devoted to create buffer zones around settlements, establish bypass roads for the transportation of settlers, and for future strategic expansion. Palestinian civilians living in communities located near Israeli settlements are subject to severe Israeli practices which seek to force them to leave their land, especially as IOF have continued to construct the Annexation Wall in the West Bank, which seize large areas of Palestinian land.

In 2006, Israeli settlement activities continued throughout the OPT to create new facts on the ground. They continued to establish new settlements, expand existing ones and establish bypass roads on Palestinian land.

Israel has created an apartheid system, the only one of its kind all over the world. Israeli settlers enjoy all privileges, care and protection, whereas Palestinians are persecuted and suffocated

On 13 March 2006, the Israeli television channel 2 reported that IOF started to establish a police station as part of the settlement project known as "E1" plan, which links "Ma'ale Adomim" settlement bloc with East Jerusalem. The plan includes constructing 3500 housing units for settlers by annexing Palestinian lands in east Jerusalem and separating the Palestinian territories by preventing any geographical contiguity. The plan to construct the police station was originally approved by the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon. The then acting Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, said that the E1 project aimed to connect "Ma'ale Adumim" settlement to Jerusalem.

It is worth noting that "Ma'ale Adomim" settlement block blocks the geographical contiguity between the north and south of the West Bank. Palestinians use a road near the western entrance of "Ma'ale Adomim" settlement bloc, which links the settlement bloc with "E1" settlement project, to travel between the north and south of the West Bank as they have been denied passing through occupied East Jerusalem.

<sup>16</sup> Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem, <http://www.arij.org/pub/index.htm>.

<sup>17</sup> According to a study made by an Israeli human rights organization, settlements stand on 1.7% of the West Bank land, but effectively control 41.9% of the area of the West Bank. For more details, see: B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, *Land Grab: Israel's settlement Policy in the West Bank*, May 2002.

On 4 September 2006, the Israeli Ministry of Housing and Construction issued tenders to construct 690 new housing units, of which, 342 units to be built in “Betar Illit” settlement in Bethlehem Governorate and the remaining 348 units in “Ma’ale Adomim” in Jerusalem. Israel had already declared its intention to expand the two settlements and link them with Jerusalem to create a geographical contiguity of what it calls “Greater Jerusalem.” “Betar Illit” settlement is one of the most rapidly expanding settlements in the West Bank as the Israeli government provides many privileges, which has made it a home for extremist Jews. At least 25,000 settlers live in it. Concerning “Ma’ale Adomim” settlement, the Israeli government intend to expand it through “E1” settlement project to link it with Jerusalem. At least 32,000 Israeli settlers live in it.<sup>18</sup>

On 21 September 2006, the Israeli daily Ma’ariv reported that the Israeli Ministry of Housing published an invitation for bids to construct 164 housing units in settlements in the West Bank: “Ariel” (88 units); “Alfeh Menasheh” (56 units); and “Kerni Shomron” (20 units). Three weeks ago, the Israeli government issued another invitation for bids to construct 342 units in “Beitar Elite” settlement, and 348 others in “Ma’aleh Adomim” settlement in the center of the West Bank.

Furthermore, for the purpose of settlement expansion, IOF confiscated and razed more areas of Palestinian land to establish roads for settlers, expand existing settlements and establish military observations facilities, especially near military checkpoints. IOF also demolished more houses and civilian facilities for the same purpose.

On 7 January 2006, IOF razed a two-donum area of agricultural land belonging to Mohammed Saleem ‘Eissa in al-Khader village, southwest of Bethlehem, near bypass settler road (60).

On 23 February 2006, IOF razed areas of Palestinian agricultural land in the northern Jordan valley in order to allow expansion of “Silit” settlement. They also razed areas of Palestinian agricultural land in the Shwai’er area near the Jordan River.

On 13 March 2006, IOF started to establish a settler road linking between “Ramat Yishai” settlement outpost in Tal al-Rumaida neighborhood and “Abraham Avino” settlement outpost in the old town of Hebron. The length of the road would be nearly 300 meters, and it would isolate many Palestinian houses and annex areas of land.

On 17 September 2006, IOF started to raze large areas of agricultural land in the south of al-Zahiriya village, southwest of Hebron, to establish a new road for settlers linking bypass road #60 with a “Teena” settlement. According to local sources, hundreds of donums of land are threatened to be razed and confiscated.

Concerning military orders issued by IOF to confiscate Palestinian land, on 30 March 2006, IOF issued a military order seizing a 200-square-meter area of land in al-‘Arroub refugee camp

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<sup>18</sup> Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem.

near Hebron, in order to expand an IOF military post established at the northwestern entrance of the camp.

On 25 May 2006, IOF handed a military order to the local council of Northern 'Assira village, north of Nablus, seizing 5,400 square meters of land from January 2006 until 31 December 2007. They claimed that the seizure was for military necessities.

On 14 September 2006, IOF informed the heirs of Yousef al-Haj Daoud Jadallah to vacate a tract of land they own in Deir Estia village, southwest of Nablus, in 45 days, considering it as public land. The area of the land is nearly 40 donums, planted with at least 500 olive trees. IOF confiscated the land to annex it to the neighboring "Arbaba" settlement.

On 21 September 2006, IOF issued a military order confiscating a 10200-square-meter area of agricultural land belonging to the heirs of 'Ata Ibrahim 'Abdul Raziq in Deir Estia village, southwest of Jenin, for alleged military purposes. The land is planted with olive trees.

## Attacks by Israeli Settlers against Palestinian civilians and Property

In 2006, Israeli settler attacks against Palestinian civilians and property continued. Such attacks included shootings, running down civilians with vehicles and destruction of or damage to civilian property. In 2006, a Palestinian civilian and a number of others were wounded by Israeli settlers in the OPT. This brings the number of Palestinian civilians killed by Israeli settlers to 36, including 9 children, since the beginning of the current Intifada in September 2000. In 2006, PCHR documented 100 attacks by Israeli settlers: 75% in Hebron; 10% in Nablus; 6% in Qalqilya; 5% in Bethlehem; and 2% in Jenin and Jericho.

### ■ Shooting

IOF allows settlers to carry weapons. Settlers do not hesitate to use weapons against Palestinian civilians. IOF have turned a blind eye to crimes committed by settlers against Palestinian civilians, which has encouraged them to commit more crimes. In 2006, Israeli settlers shot dead a Palestinian civilians and wounded a number of others.

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continued

- On 6 August 2006, a number of Israeli settlers traveling in a civilian car opened fire at a Palestinian truck that was traveling before them near Douma village, southeast of Nablus. As a result, Hussein Fahmi 'Ali Mardawi, 48, from Habla village southeast of Qalqilya, was killed by two gunshots to the heart, and his son, 17-year-old 'Ameed, was wounded by shrapnel to the left hand and shoulder. The victim's nephew, 15-year-old Ahmed Khaled Mardawi, who is dumb and was accompanying his uncle, survived the attack.
- On 25 July 2006, an Israeli settler from "Beitar Elite" settlement, west of Bethlehem, fired at Mousa 'Atiya Hamamra, 47, from Housan village, when he was on his way

back home. Hamamra was wounded by a gunshot to the lower jaw.

- On 26 July 2006, an Israeli settler traveling in a civilian car at two Palestinian civilians, while they were grazing animals near al-Zahiriya village, south of Hebron. One of these civilians, Suleiman Shafiq al-Tal, 27, was wounded by shrapnel to the legs, and 3 sheep were killed. The settler then escaped towards the neighboring “Tina Omarim” settlement.
- On 26 August 2006, a number of Israeli settlers from “Eitamar” settlement, southeast of Nablus, opened fire at a number of Palestinian children in Beit Fourik village, east of the city. One of the children, 12-year-old Hakim ‘Ersan Mahmoud Hanani, was seriously wounded by a bullet that entered the buttock and exited the abdomen.
- On 3 December 2006, an Israeli settlers traveling in his car on bypass road (60) near Kherbat Qalqas village, south of Hebron, fired at a Palestinian house in the area. As a result, 6-year-old Mohammed Firas Fares al-Atrash was seriously wounded by a bullet that entered the right shoulder and settled in the neck.

### ■ Running down

Israeli settlers ran down two Palestinian children and hit a civilian vehicle.

- On 4 May 2006, an Israeli settler from “Kiryat Arba” settlement, southeast of Hebron, ran down 3-year-old ‘Abdullah Jalal al-Ja’bari while driving a civilian car in the Wad al-Husain neighborhood to the southwest of the settlement. The settler fled to the settlement. The child sustained bruises.
- On 10 September 2006, an Israeli civilian vehicle deliberately ran down Hiba Jamal al-‘Azazma, 10, when she was on her way back home from school near the main road leading to Qalqilya. The driver fled from the area. The child was seriously injured.
- On 30 August 2006, an Israeli truck intentionally deviated and hit a Palestinian civilian vehicle that was traveling on Nablus – Ramallah road. Four Palestinian civilians, from Kufor al-Labad village east of Tulkarm, were traveling in the vehicle, and they were all injured.

### ■ Attacks on Houses

In 2006, Israeli settlers launched 42 attacks on Palestinian houses, mostly in Hebron. Those attacks included storming and seizing houses for some time; beating civilians inside houses; setting fire to houses; and throwing stones and empty bottles at houses. IOF were present when most of those attacks were launched, but did not intervene to stop them. They even often neglect complaints submitted by Palestinian civilians concerning such attacks.

### ■ Attacks on Schools and Students

In 2006, PCHR documented 5 attacks launched by Israeli settlers on Palestinian schools and students, all of them took place in Hebron.

On 2 February 2006, an Israeli settler car intercepted a Palestinian school bus that was

traveling on the Bethlehem – Hebron road, on its way to al-'Arroub refugee camp. Four settlers, armed with pistols and M16 rifles, got out of the car. Two of the settlers entered the bus screaming at the driver and children and threatening and insulting them. The children were terrified and a number of them jumped out of the bus. A number of these children fainted or sustained bruises and fractures. Then, the two settlers violently beat the children who remained in the bus. Five children were injured.

- On 1 April 2006, Israeli settlers from “Beit Hadasa” settlement outpost in the center of Hebron attacked a number of Palestinian school children, who were accompanied by two activists from Safe Passage. The settlers threw stones and empty bottles at them. A Swiss activist from Safe Passage was injured in the forehead, and two school children sustained bruises to the feet.
- On 6 May 2006, several Israeli settlers from “Ma’oun” settlement to the south of Yatta village, south of Hebron, attacked at least 20 Palestinian children in al-Tawani village, while they were on their way back home in the neighboring Touba village, accompanied by some members of the Israeli Coexistence Movement. The settlers beat and threw stones at the children. As a result, 5 children sustained bruises.
- On 11 November 2006, 6 armed Israeli settlers from “Aviga’il” settlement, south of Hebron, attacked at least 40 schoolchildren, aged 8-12, in al-Tawani village. A number of children sustained bruises. The settlers also took a number of schoolbags from the children.
- On 27 November 2006, 4 female Israeli settlers from “Ramat Yishai” settlement in Tal Rumaida neighborhood in the center of Hebron pursued and attacked a number of female Palestinian school children in Jabal al-Rahma neighborhood. They violently beat 9-year-old Woroud Mohammed Shabana. She sustained acute bruises throughout the body.

### ■ Attacks on Religious Sites

In 2006, PCHR documented 4 attacks by Israeli settlers on Islamic religious sites.

- On 12 February 2006, two Israeli settlers wrote slogans in Hebrew on the walls of a mosque in Nabli Elias village, east of Qalqilya, insulting the Prophet Mohammed.
- On 11 August 2006, many Israeli settlers from “Kiryat Arba” and “Kharsina” settlements, southeast of Hebron, and other settlement outposts in the center of Hebron, entered the Ibrahimi Mosque under escort by IOF. They brought musical instruments and loudspeakers to celebrate a Jewish wedding. The wedding party continued until 13:10, as Palestinians were doing the Friday Prayer. The Muezzin was not able to call for the prayer. Palestinian clerks demanded the IOF Civil Administration to stop the wedding party inside the mosque, but all efforts failed.
- On 27 August 2006, 11 Israeli settlers broke into the Ibrahimi mosque in Hebron through its western gate. The Imam of the mosque attempted to prevent them from entering the mosque and informed the Palestinian police, but his attempts went in vain. There are specific days on which settlers are allowed to enter the mosque to pray, but not that day.
- On 10 September 2006, a number of Israeli settlers from “Gush Etzion” and “Kermi

Tsur” settlements, escorted by IOF, moved into Halhoul town, north of Hebron. They broke into Prophet Younis Mosque in the northeast of the town, and conducted Jewish prayers inside it for a number of hours.

### ■ Attacks on Farmers and Shepherds

In 2006, Israeli settlers launched 23 attacks on Palestinian farmers and shepherds and their property. These attacks included shooting, beating, land leveling and preventing farmers from working on their land.

### ■ Other Attacks

These included closing roads and attacking civilian vehicles.

## Annexation Wall in the West Bank

IOF have continued to construct the Annexation Wall inside the occupied West Bank in violation of international humanitarian law and the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice in Hague on 9 July 2004. In 2006, the construction was mainly focused around occupied East Jerusalem, in spite of the petitions submitted to courts by Palestinian civilians living in villages located around the city, whose properties were destroyed or confiscated. IOF also continued to construct sections of the wall in other Palestinian districts, especially Bethlehem and Hebron, and near large settlements, such as “Ariel” near Nablus, and those of a military nature, such as “Shavi Shomron” also near Nablus. The construction took place at least 22 kilometers deep into the West Bank Territory.

As the Israeli government declared its unilateral Disengagement Plan from the Gaza Strip in 2005, the then Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and other ministers unleashed plans of settlement expansion in the West Bank, and acceleration of construction of the Annexation Wall around occupied East Jerusalem. They decided to complete the construction of the Wall around the city either by the end of 2005 or March 2006. Thus, Israel has decided the future of the occupied city, and has effectively annexed it in violation of international humanitarian law.

The construction of the Wall by IOF in the OPT violates a general principle of international humanitarian law that the occupying power is prohibited from changing the nature of the territory it occupies except for military necessity or unless it is deemed beneficial for the population of the occupied territories. The construction of the Wall is not beneficial for the Palestinian population and can never be justified as a military necessity, contrary to Israeli claims of its security necessity.

On 1 December 2005, the Israeli Minister of Justice Tzipi Livni stated that “the Israeli High Court issue judicial rulings to decide the borders of Israel through the separation fence.” This statement contradicts the Israeli attorney general’s office, which has repeatedly claimed that the Wall is being constructed for security purposes rather than

political ones and that it is a temporary means to protect security.<sup>19</sup>

Contrary to Israeli security claims regarding the purpose of the construction of the Wall, the then acting Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said in interviews published on 10 March 2006, that Israel plans to impose a border on the West Bank. He further said that by 2010, “no Israeli settlers will be on the eastern side of the Wall.” This statement is the first by an Israeli senior official admitting that the final goal of the Wall supposedly being constructed by Israel to prevent attacks against Israeli civilians is to draw the final borders of Israel. Olmert asserted to the Israeli daily *Maariv* that Jerusalem would remain united, major settlement blocs in the West Bank would continue to exist and expand, and in the end, Israel would be completely separate from the majority of Palestinians.

PCHR has emphasized since Israel started to construct the Annexation Wall in the West Bank that the Wall represents the most recent and blatant form of the Israeli policy of territorial expansion. It also violates international humanitarian law in that it effectively disrupts the geographical contiguity of the West Bank, and, more dangerously, annex occupied Palestinian territories to Israel. Moreover, the methods used by IOF in the construction of the Wall violates international human rights law and international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War whose article 147 prohibits extensive destruction and appropriation of property.

On 9 July 2004, the International Court of Justice in Hague issued its advisory opinion regarding the legal consequences of the Wall being constructed by Israel in the OPT, including Jerusalem, in response to a request by a UN General Assembly resolution on 8 December 2004. The Court ruled the wall being constructed by Israel in the OPT, including Jerusalem, violates international law. The court also decided that Israel is obliged to stop its violations of international law, stop the construction of the wall, tear down the sections already constructed, abolish all relevant legislations and orders and compensate Palestinians harmed during the construction of the wall. On 20 July 2004, the UN General Assembly issued a resolution calling on Israel to comply with legal obligations included in the Advisory Opinion. However, Israel has refused to accept the Advisory Opinion and has continued to construct the Wall disregarding international resolutions. The Israeli judiciary has also been supportive in its rulings to the expansionist settlement activities and other human rights violations perpetrated by IOF against Palestinian civilians and their property.

In a step towards enhancing the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice on 9 July 2004, which considers the Annexation Wall illegal, the UN General Assembly endorsed on 15 December 2006, by a vote of 162 in favor, 7 against, including Israel and the United States and 7 absten-

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<sup>19</sup> The Israeli attorney general's office admitted for the first time in its response to a petition submitted by residents of 'Azzoun village, north of Qalqilya that not only security considerations decide the route of the Wall. It also demanded the Israeli High Court to approve the original route of the Wall, claiming that changing the route would be “too costly.” For more details, see *Haaretz*, 4 July 2005.

tions, a resolution to establish a UN registry to handle Palestinian claims of damages resulting from the construction of the Wall in the West Bank. The registry would have a temporary office in Vienna made up of a 3-member board and a small secretariat.

## Israeli Judiciary As a Political Body

Since the start of the construction of the Annexation Wall, the Israeli High Court as a body for petition has been under question. Palestinians impacted by the construction of the Wall appealed to the Court to reject the confiscation of their land for the purpose of the construction of the Wall or isolating their land behind the Wall and denying them access to their land. The Court rejected these appeals and even often issued decisions supporting the construction of the Wall taking into consideration “humanitarian needs” of the Palestinian population. Thus, the Court supports the construction of the Wall in the OPT in violation of the international law, but called for minimizing the resulting suffering, as cited in its ruling on 30 June 2004 with regard to the case of Beit Sourik village, northwest of Jerusalem. On 15 September 2005, the Israeli High Court gave the Israeli government and IOF a green light to continue the construction of the Annexation Wall inside West Bank territory. The Court claimed that “Israel as a matter of principle has the authority to construct the Wall in the West Bank for security reasons.” This decision will impact on 44 petitions against the construction of the Wall submitted to the court.

In 2006, the Israeli High Court rejected many petitions against the construction of the Wall, whose consideration had been postponed from previous years. In a step that reflects the influence of Israeli political officials on the court rulings, the Israeli Minister of Justice, Haim Ramon, pledged on 8 May 2006 to make efforts with the judiciary to accelerate judicial procedures needed for the construction of the remaining sections of the Wall.

On 9 January 2006, the Israeli High Court rejected a petition submitted by Palestinian civilians from the villages of Beit Siera and Shaqba, west of Ramallah, and residents of the Jewish towns of “Makhabim” and “Ra’ot” against the route of the Wall near “Mode’in” settlement. The court also canceled all previous temporary injunctions stopping the construction of the Wall in the area. The Israeli daily Ha’aretz reported that since the submission of these petitions, the route of the Wall was moved only 75 meters. It also reported that the Israeli authorities offered 13 dunums to residents of Beit Siera village in exchange for the land seized by the Wall. Residents of the Jewish towns of “Makhabim” and “Ra’ot” claimed that the Wall is very close to their homes. The court claimed that “the state made efforts to minimize the damage incurred to Palestinians, while seeking to achieve the security goal of the Wall.” Thus, the court supported the construction of the Wall inside the West Bank territory in violation of international law.

Two weeks following statements made by the Israeli Minister of Justice Haim Ramon

Since the start of the construction of the Annexation Wall, the Israeli High Court as a body for petition has been under question, the Court supports the construction of the Wall in the OPT in violation of the international law

before Israeli security officials, in which he vowed to make efforts with the judiciary to accelerate legal procedures to construct the remaining sections of the Wall, the Israeli High Court issued two decisions in this regard. On 22 May 2006, the High Court approved the route of the Wall in Ramallah. According to Israeli media sources, the route of the Wall approved by the court incorporates “Beit Arieh” and “Oufarim” settlements, and isolates at least 3,900 dunums of land in ‘Aaboud village. At least 1,100 olive trees would also be uprooted. In taking this decision, the court rejected a petition submitted by the local council of “Beit Arieh” settlement, and another submitted by the local council of ‘Aaboud village. On 23 May 2006, the court rejected a petition submitted by residents of al-‘Eizariya village, east of Jerusalem, to reroute the Wall. The court also allowed IOF to continue to construct a section of the Wall linking Jerusalem with “Ma’ale Adomim” settlement, to annex this settlement to Israel.

On 30 May 2006, the Israeli High Court approved the construction of a section of the Wall around “Shavi Shomron” settlement, northwest of Nablus, near the Nablus–Jenin road. The court rejected petitions by local councils from Palestinian villages on whose lands the settlement stands. The petitioner argued that the construction of the Wall in the area impacts Palestinian villagers and will lead to the uprooting of hundreds of olive trees. The court claimed that “there is a balance between security needs and the Israeli population’s rights on one hand, and the Palestinian population’s rights on the other hand.” It is worth noting that the route of the Wall in the area would seize 53 dunums of land in the villages of Sabastia, al-Naqoura and Deir Sharaf; would lead to the uprooting of at least 350 olive trees; and would separate Palestinian farmers from their agricultural land, which would be located behind the Wall.

On 10 September 2006, the Israeli High Court approved the planned route of the Wall in villages located to the northwest of occupied East Jerusalem. Thus, at least 500 dunums of Palestinian land would be effectively annexed to Israel. In taking this decision, the court rejected 7 petitions submitted by residents of these villages. It is worth noting that 5 Israeli settlements stand in the area. The court claimed that “the purpose of the construction of the Wall is to protect the lives of Israeli citizens from terrorist attacks, so its expected benefit is great.” The court further claimed that the new route “minimized the impact of the wall on Palestinians, and created a balance between the right of Israelis to be secure, and the right of Palestinians to farm their lands.”

On 26 November 2006, the Israeli High Court approved a decision taken by IOF to surround the villages of Bir Nabala, al-Jeeb, Beit Hanina, Qalandya and al-Jdaira with the Wall from all directions. This section of the wall would be linked to two roads; one leading to Ramallah and the other leading to Biddu village. The court left the door open for the Palestinian local population to appeal against it if they found that the gates which would be established into the Wall did not meet their needs. Taking such a decision, the Israeli High Court legalised the establishment of “a ghetto” to the northwest of Jerusalem. It is worth noting that at least 17,000 Palestinians live in the affected villages, and many of them have Jerusalem identity cards.

In its decisions, the Israeli High Court disregarded the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice on 9 July 2004, which considered the construction of the Wall illegal and called for its dismantlement. It also violated the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and other international human rights instruments, to which Israel is a party.

## Chronology of Developments in 2006

In 2006, IOF continued to construct the Annexation Wall. The construction was mainly focused around occupied East Jerusalem, with a lesser degree on Ramallah, Bethlehem and Hebron. In the northern West Bank, IOF completed the construction of the Wall and established separation barriers around a number of settlements

In 2006, IOF continued to construct the Annexation Wall. The construction was mainly focused around occupied East Jerusalem, with a lesser degree on Ramallah, Bethlehem and Hebron. In the northern West Bank, IOF completed the construction of the Wall and established separation barriers around a number of settlements.

According to PCHR's documentation, IOF confiscated at least 4298 donums of Palestinian land. The lands razed or isolated for the purpose of the construction are much wider than the figures declared in confiscation orders.

IOF also continued to implement their plans to annex large settlements to Israel, such as "Ariel", the largest settlement in the northern West Bank which is located 22 kilometers deep inside the West Bank, "Ma'le Adomim" settlement to the east of occupied Jerusalem, and "Gush Etzion" settlement bloc between Bethlehem and Hebron. Under these plans, the length of the Wall once it is completed would be 670 Kilometers instead of 720 Kilometers. The Wall would extend for 135 Kilometers along the Green Line, which separates between the West Bank and Israel, instead of 48 kilometers. According to a report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories John Dugard to the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly, the construction of the Wall around the settlements of "Ariel", "Ma'ale Adomim" and "Gush Etzion" would annex nearly 10% of the West Bank territory to Israel, in addition to the already annexed 12.7%. The areas behind the Wall would include 170,000 Israeli settlers, not including settlers in East Jerusalem, and 49,000 Palestinians living in 39 villages.

IOF had also completed the construction of the northern section of the Wall, which extends from Jenin to the northeastern Jordan Valley at the northern border of the West Bank. Even though IOF have not started to construct the section of the Wall along the western border of the Jordan River, this section is included in Israeli plans for the construction of the Wall. Once the construction of all sections of the Wall completed, over half the area of the West Bank would be annexed to Israel.

## Isolation of East Jerusalem

Since the beginning of the first Palestinian Intifada, IOF have imposed severe restrictions on the access of Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to occupied Jerusalem. On 4 April 2006, IOF started to operate Qalandya checkpoint, south of

Ramallah, as a border crossing between the West Bank and Israel. Soon after, IOF established cement barriers in the northern suburbs of Jerusalem to cut off the city from the northern West Bank. After IOF had closed all outlets through the section of the Annexation Wall extending along the main road linking between Dahiat al-Barid checkpoint, north of occupied Jerusalem, and Qalandya crossing, south of Ramallah, they closed all outlets in Dahiat al-Barid suburb opposite to the Palestinian Post area.

With the operation of Qalandya checkpoint as border crossing, IOF have practically divided the West Bank into 3 isolated parts: the north; the center; and the south

The closure of those outlets has caused extreme suffering to Palestinian civilians living in Dahiat al-Barid suburb and al-Ram village, particularly those wishing to travel to Jerusalem or students who attend schools on the other side of the main road. Transportation costs have also become high, as Palestinian civilians have to travel first to Qalandya crossing in the north and then travel towards Jerusalem in the south, after they used to travel directly to Jerusalem through Dahiat al-Barid checkpoint. Thus, IOF have cut off Dahiat al-Barid suburb and al-Ram village from Jerusalem. At least 90,000 Palestinians living in Dahiat al-Barid and Samiramees suburbs and al-Ram Kufor 'Aqab villages, who have Jerusalem identity cards, have become threatened to be totally cut off from the city, and thus deprived of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Hundreds of Palestinian families were forced to go back to live in Jerusalem to maintain their residence rights in the city. The construction of the Wall in this area have caused large losses to dozens of Palestinian traders from various areas in the West Bank, who opened shop in the area due to the difficult situation in their areas. Those traders were forced to close their shops.

With the operation of Qalandya checkpoint as border crossing, IOF have practically divided the West Bank into 3 isolated parts: the north; the center; and the south. In 2006, IOF also established another crossing at Za'tara intersection, south of Nablus. The establishment of such construction together with the construction of the Annexation Wall aim at isolating Palestinian communities and controlling the movement of their population; annexing large parts of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, to Israel; and undermining the possibility of the establishment of a viable Palestinian state.

In May 2006, IOF placed barbed wire around Sho'fat refugee camp and the neighboring Ras Khamis area, north of Jerusalem, to separate them from Jerusalem. According to a report issued by UNRWA in 2004, the population of Sho'fat refugee camp, which was established in 1965-1966 included 10,290 refugees with Israeli identity cards. The separation of the camp from Jerusalem will impact the access of its population to educational and medical services in the city. Palestinians living outside the camp will also face difficulties in accessing services inside the camp.

At the beginning of 2006, IOF razed areas of land in Beit Jala town to the southwest of Jerusalem to construct a section of the Wall in the area. They also razed areas of land in al-Walaja village, northwest of Bethlehem, and al-Khader village, southwest of the town. The construction of the Wall in the area has isolated at least 5,000 donums of land in al-Khader village. At the end of the year, IOF started to raze large areas of Pales-

tinian land in Jourat al-Sham'a village, south of Bethlehem, to construct a new section of the Wall near "Efrat" settlement, southwest of Bethlehem.

In February 2006, IOF completed the construction of the last section of the wall at the north of Bethlehem. For this purpose, IOF razed areas of land near Bilal Ben Rabah, Rachel's Tomb and the Islamic cemetery, located between Bethlehem and East Jerusalem. With the construction of this section, Bethlehem was completely separated from East Jerusalem. At least 40 Palestinian families would have no access to work places, schools, markets, hospitals and religious sites.

In the south of the West Bank, IOF razed large areas of Palestinian land in villages located near Hebron to construct sections of the Wall.

On 2 March 2006, IOF started preparations for the construction of a new section of the Wall to the south of Hebron. They placed cement blocks on the sides of settler bypass roads #60 and #317, southwest of al-Sammou' village. They also levelled areas of land, where the new section of the Wall will be constructed. According to eyewitnesses, this new section of the Wall would form 32 kilometres along settler bypass roads 60 and 317, up to "Karbi'el" settlement to the east of Yatta village. Dozens of Palestinian families living in 16 communities would be isolated as a result of the construction of this new section of the Wall. According to Israeli information, there were plans to construct sections of the Wall that end at the middle of Hebron Desert, but do not reach the Dead Sea, as the route of the Wall in this area was still under planning in the context of Israeli plans to establish the so-called "Eastern Barrier" to separate the Jordan Valley from the West Bank. The construction of this section of the Wall would isolate at least half a million donums of land, and would impact the natural life in the area.

According to 'Abdul Hadi Hantash, a land and settlement expert, the construction of new sections of the Wall in Hebron would isolate dozens of thousands of donums of Palestinian land. The construction of the Wall near Hebron has seized at least 6,191 donums of agricultural land.<sup>20</sup>

## Restrictions on the Movement of Palestinian Farmers

IOF have imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinians on both sides of the Wall

Contrary to claims by the Israeli government that it would ensure access of Palestinian farmers to their agricultural lands, which have been isolated by the Wall, and ensure the freedom of movement of Palestinian civilians who live in communities that have been isolated by the Wall, IOF have imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinians on both sides of the Wall. Palestinians have to obtain permits issued by IOF to be able to move on both sides of the Wall, and IOF often obstructs procedures to issue such permits.

On 13 February 2006, IOF closed the sole entrance

<sup>20</sup> A statement to a PCHR field worker.

to Marda village, west of Nablus, with an iron gate intended to control the movement of Palestinian civilians to and from the village. According to local sources, IOF installed the iron gate after they had placed an iron fence to the north of the village and constructed a barrier to the south of the village to separate it from “Ariel” settlement.

On 19 February 2006, IOF placed an iron gate at the entrance to Kufol Hares village, southwest of Hebron. This gate would restrict the movement of Palestinian civilians to and from the village.

Also on 19 February 2006, IOF placed an iron gate at the southern entrance of Jama'in village, southwest of Nablus, which lead to the 'Trans-Samaria' settlers' road. IOF had already placed a fence of barbed wire along the aforementioned roads, isolating a number of Palestinian villages.

IOF have continued to prevent Palestinian farmers from reaching their agricultural lands located behind the Annexation Wall to cultivate olives, which constitute the only source of income for hundreds of Palestinian families. According to Palestinian farmers, IOF soldiers positioned at iron gates established on the Wall have continued to prevent them from reaching their lands even though they have valid permits that allow them to cross those gates.

Many Palestinian villages have been cut off from their surroundings by the Wall. One of these villages is 'Azzoun 'Atma village, south of Qalqilya, which has been isolated behind the Wall. IOF have established iron gates at the entrances of the villages to control the movement of the Palestinian civilian population. These gates are opened from 06:00 to 22:00, and only residents of the village and other Palestinians who have permits issued by IOF are allowed to pass through those gates. In 2006, IOF repeatedly prevented medical crews from entering the village, and prevented school children from the neighboring Beit Ameen village from reaching their school in 'Azzoun 'Atma village. At the end of the year, IOF started to construct a new section of the Wall in the village, which would extend from “Uranit” settlement, west of the village, to “Sha'ari Tikva” settlement, southeast of the village. With the construction of this section, the village would be totally surrounded. The lands that would be seized for the construction of the new section of the Wall include 10 houses and a well. The new section would also isolate at least 4,000 donums of agricultural land planted with olives and citrus.

## Impacts of the Construction of the Annexation Wall around Jerusalem

Since the beginning of the first Palestinian Intifada, IOF have imposed severe restrictions on access of Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to East Jerusalem. IOF have required them to obtain permits to be able to enter the city. Since the start of the Intifada, IOF imposed additional restrictions on the entry of Palestinian civilians into the city, including patients, students and employees. IOF have also imposed restrictions on activities of NGOs, which have been forced to open branches outside the city to be

able to continue to provide services to Palestinian civilians. When the construction of the Wall around the city is completed, the city will be totally isolated from its surroundings and the movement to and from the city will be only through border crossings controlled by IOF, such as Qalandya crossing between Ramallah and Jerusalem.

On 13 March 2005, the Israeli government approved the new route of the wall around Jerusalem, under which neighborhoods and villages located to the north of the city would be isolated and Shu'fat refugee camp would be surrounded by fences. It would also isolate the villages of Kufor 'Aqab and al-Ram and the areas of Dahiat al-Barid and Samiramees, north of the city, where more than 90,000 Palestinians live. IOF have also isolated 9 villages, in which 30,000 Palestinians live, located to the northwest of Jerusalem. Hundreds of Palestinian families living in these areas were forced to go back to live inside Jerusalem to maintain their residence rights in the city.

The Annexation Wall has placed Kufor 'Aqab village, north of Jerusalem, outside the boundaries of city. IOF had incorporated the village into the boundaries of Jerusalem in the context of efforts to annex the city. The Wall has also isolated al-Ram village and Dahiat al-Barid suburb, in which at least 60,000 Palestinians live, nearly half of them have Jerusalem identity cards.

#### • Land Confiscation and Isolation

With the construction of the Annexation Wall around Jerusalem, Israeli measures to isolate the city have become more complicated. In 2005, IOF accelerated the construction of the Wall around the city to complete it as soon as possible in an implementation of decisions taken by the Israeli political and security establishments. According to PCHR's documentation, in 2006, IOF issued 3 military orders confiscating 2017 donums of Palestinian land in Beit Hanina village, north of Jerusalem, 'Anata village, east of the city, and villages located to the northwest of Jerusalem.

#### • Denial of Rights of the Palestinian Civilian Population

Israeli illegal and arbitrary measures in East Jerusalem lead to violations of civil, political, economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population.

#### ■ Violation of the Right to Citizenship

The construction of the Annexation Wall around Jerusalem falls under Israeli policies aimed at the Judaization and the annexation of the city with the least Palestinian population. These policies seek to make the Palestinian population constitute only 22% of the total population of the city, according to the Israeli ministerial committee for Jerusalem's affairs. In the past years, the Israeli government has implemented instructions issued by the Israeli Ministry of Interior that Palestinians must prove their permanent residence in the city, a measure known as "the centre of life." Every Palestinian living in Jerusalem must prove that he has lived in the city in the past seven years when he/she refers to any

When the construction of the Wall around the city is completed, the city will be totally isolated from its surroundings and the movement to and from the city will be only through border crossings controlled by IOF

Israeli official body, otherwise, he/she will lose his/her Israeli identity card. It is worth noting that IOF imposed Israeli identity cards on the Palestinian population in the city following its occupation in 1967 in the context of measures aimed at the annexation of the city. These measures have resulted in the dispersion of families; and denial of the rights of families to receive social services and medical care, which are enjoyed by residents of Jerusalem.

The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed its concern at the effect of the directive of the Ministry of the Interior, according to which Palestinians may lose their right to live in the city if they cannot prove that East Jerusalem has been their “centre of life” for the past seven years. The Committee also regretted a serious lack of transparency in the application of the directive. In its comment on Israel’s preliminary report on the rights included prescribed by articles 1-15 of the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee noted with concern that this policy is being applied retroactively both to Palestinians who live abroad and to those who live in the West Bank or in nearby Jerusalem suburbs, but not to Israeli Jews or to foreign Jews who are considered ‘permanent’ residents of East Jerusalem. This system has resulted in, inter alia, the separation of Palestinian families and the denial of their right to social services and health care, including maternity care for Palestinian women, which are privileges linked to residency status in Jerusalem. The Committee was deeply concerned that the implementation of a quota system for the reunification of Palestinian families affected by this residency law involves long delays and does not meet the needs of all divided families. Similarly, the granting of residency status is often a long process and, as a result, many children are separated from at least one of their parents and spouses are not able to live together.<sup>21</sup>

### ■ Violation of the Right of Education

The construction of the Wall violate the Palestinian right of education. In addition to Hind al-Husseini College for Social sciences, belonging to the al-Quds University, there are many private schools in the city, where Palestinians wish to educate their children. Israeli official sources estimate that approximately 3,655 students who have Israeli identity cards will be isolated behind the Wall, but Palestinian sources consider this figure too small. At least 700 teachers who have Palestinian identity cards are prohibited from entering Jerusalem to reach their jobs at private schools and those of the Islamic Endowments Bureau. IOF have continued to prevent at least 700 teachers from reaching their work places in Jerusalem. When the construction of a section of the Wall to the north of Jerusalem is completed, thousands of students will be forced to cross 11 military checkpoints everyday to reach their schools.

### ■ Violation of the Right to Health Care

There are several hospitals in Jerusalem which provide medical services not available in hospitals in the West Bank. Palestinians who have Israeli identity cards receive medical services at medical centers incorporated in the Israeli health insurance system. Palestinians living

<sup>21</sup> See document: E/1999/22.

in the West Bank, and residents of the city who have been isolated behind the Wall are deprived of these services.

### ■ Violation of the Right to Work

Following the outbreak of the current Intifada and the accompanying restrictions on movement, many Palestinians lost their jobs at Palestinian institutions in the city. Others have taken the risk and entered the city without permits, but once the construction of the Wall is completed, they will not be able to enter the city and will lose their jobs. The construction of the Wall will also impact the operation of hospitals and medical centers in the city, as many of their staff members are from the West Bank and need permits to enter the city.

### ■ Violation of the Right of Worship

Thousands of Palestinian Muslims and Christians have been prevented from reaching religious sites in Jerusalem, especially during religious occasions. According to information available to PCHR, at least half a million Muslims used to attend the last Friday Prayer of Ramadan at al-Aqsa Mosque before the current Intifada. In Ramadan last year, the number of prayers was less than one quarter of this figure. The same applies to Palestinian Christians with regard to Christian sites in the city.

## Developments Relevant to Civil Wrongs (Liability of State) Law

On 12 December 2006, the Israeli High Court issued a decision invalidating amended article 5c of the Civil Wrongs (Liability of the State) Law that releases the State of Israel from all liability for compensation for any damages caused to Palestinians by IOF in areas designated as “conflict zones” in the OPT.

27 July 2005, the Israeli Knesset passed Amendment No. 5 to the Civil Wrongs (Liability of State) Law. The amendment effectively stops Palestinians in the OPT from seeking compensation in Israeli courts on the basis of their residence.<sup>22</sup> The amendment is contrary to Israel’s international law obligations and demonstrates again the impunity that is granted to the Israeli Occupying Forces (IOF) by Israel. The amendment denies residents of the 1967 OPT, citizens of “Enemy States” and activists or members of a “Terrorist Organization” the right to compensation for damages caused to them by IOF in the context of a military operation. The amended law grants the Israeli Minister of Defense the authority to proclaim any area outside of the State of Israel a “Conflict Zone,” even if no war-related activity has taken place there. In a previous amendment in 2002 the Israeli Knesset ensured that compensation claims would be out of reach for most Palestinians through an expanded definition of what Israel calls “war time actions” and strict procedural amendments.

<sup>22</sup> The law goes on to create an ‘Exceptions Committee’ appointed by the Minister of Defence which will allow the Minister to propose exceptional amounts of money in exceptional cases. No criteria are stipulated to define what amounts to an “exceptional” violation of a Palestinian’s basic rights. Awards made in “exceptional” cases are outside any legal framework and allow the claimant no right of appeal to a Court. The awards never constitute an admission of wrongdoing on the part of the IOF.

The amendments to the law are contrary to international humanitarian law and Israel's responsibility as an 'Occupying Power'

The amendments to the law are contrary to international humanitarian law and Israel's responsibility as an 'Occupying Power'. International humanitarian law governs situations of occupation and Article 3 of the Hague Regulations of 1907 (Annexed to the Fourth Hague Convention) provides that "A belligerent party which violates the provisions of the said Regulations shall, if the case demands, be liable to pay compensation. It shall be responsible for all acts committed by persons forming part of its armed forces". The Hague Regulations are widely considered customary international law (including by the Israeli High Court of Justice) and thus binding on all States.

Furthermore, the law is contrary to international human rights instruments to which Israel is a party to including Article 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Article 2(3) provides "Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes: (a) to ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms are herein recognized are violated shall have an effective remedy, notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity."

Consequently, nine human rights organizations in Israel and the OPT, including PCHR, filed a petition to the Israeli High Court demanding that the Court declare void the amendments to the Civil Wrongs (Liability of the State) Law.<sup>23</sup> In the petition, the organizations emphasized that the Law grossly violates the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, which apply in the OPT. The petitioners further argued that the Law sends out a dangerous and extreme message that the lives and rights of those injured in a "Conflict Zone" have no value, as the courts will not come to their aid, and those who caused their injuries will face no punishment. As a result, the Law is both immoral and racist. The petitioners also argued that the articles of the Law de facto terminate monitoring of the Israeli military's activities in the OPT, discourage investigations and bringing those responsible for cases of death or injury before the courts. The Law thus violates the fundamental rights to life, bodily integrity, equality, dignity and property, as well as the constitutional right of access to the courts.

The Israeli High Court decided that the petition would be considered in February 2006, as the amendments to the law entered into force on 10 August 2005, according to which a 6-month period was decided to specify the operation zones where Palestinians are deprived of compensation for damages incurred to them. On 12 December 2006, the Israeli High Court issued a decision invalidating amended article 5c of the Civil Wrongs (Liability of the State) Law that releases the State of Israel from all liability for compensation for any damages caused to Palestinians by IOF in areas designated as "conflict zones" in the OPT.

<sup>23</sup> The petition was submitted by HaMoked, Adalah, ACRI, Al-Haq (West Bank), The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (Gaza Strip), B'Tselem, Physicians for Human Rights, The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, Rabbis for Human Rights, by Adalah Attorneys Hassan Jabareen and Orna Kohn, Hamoked Attorney Gil Gan-Mor, and ACRI Attorney Dan Yakir.

## Impunity

On 8 November 2006, IOF shelled a residential

area in the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun, killing 18 Palestinian civilians, including 17 members of the al-'Athamna family (including 6 children and 7 women), and wounding 56 others. This crime, which was widely condemned, came as the Israeli judiciary ignored hundreds of complaints submitted by human rights organizations, including PCHR, on behalf of victims of the Israeli violence. In this context, B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, published on 27 June 2005 statistics which demonstrated that the Israeli police conducted investigations into 108 cases of killing and injuring Palestinians in the OPT out of thousands of similar cases, and that bills of indictments were submitted in just 19 cases, which led to only two soldiers being convicted of killing Palestinians.

One of the significant examples that prove the non-seriousness of investigations in cases of killing or injuring civilians in the OPT by IOF was the case of the Ghalia family in the Gaza Strip. On 9 June 2006, an Israeli gunboat stationed off the coast of Beit Lahya fired seven successive artillery shells at civilians on the beach in the Waha area, north of Beit Lahia. The shells landed on the beach, which had been crowded with civilian men, women and children at the time. Seven civilians from the same family (father, mother and five children) were killed. A sixth child from the same family escaped death but was seen on television crying hysterically beside her father's body. A further thirty-two civilians, including thirteen children, were injured. Two of the injured sustained serious wounds.<sup>24</sup>

Although IOF declared that they would initiate a probe into the attack, the conclusions of the probe, as usual, exempted IOF from any legal or moral responsibility for the attack. The head of the IOF investigation, Major Meir Klifi, said that "it was likely the blast stemmed from a bomb placed by the Palestinians at the site or some form of unexploded ordnance." Klifi added that "the likelihood [that the shell caused the killing] is absolutely zero. There is no chance of this."<sup>25</sup>

The conclusions of the IOF probe were completely contrary to conclusions of the investigations conducted by PCHR, which proved that members of the Ghalia family were killed by the IOF shelling. They are also contrary to investigations conducted by Human Rights Watch, which asserted that "the size of the craters and the type of injuries to the victims are not consistent with the theory that a mine caused the explosion. The craters are too large to be made by bounding mines, the only type of landmines capable of producing head and torso injuries of the type suffered by the victims on June 9. Additionally, Palestinian armed groups are not known to have, or to have used, bounding mines..." "There has been much speculation about the cause of the beach killings, but the evidence we have gathered strongly suggests Israeli artillery fire was to blame," said Sarah Leah Whitson, director of the Middle East and Africa division at Human Rights Watch.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> See PCHR's press release on 10 June 2006.

<sup>25</sup> See Haaretz on 14 June 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/objects/pages/PrintArticleEn.jhtml?itemNo=726830>.

<sup>26</sup> See Human Rights Watch's press release on 13 June 2006, <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2006/06/13/isrlpa13544.htm>.

Impunity granted by the Israeli judiciary to IOF, in violation of international human rights standards, encouraged IOF to escalate their crimes against Palestinian civilians

Apparently because IOF were clearly responsible for the attack, the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert rejected the idea of establishing an international inquiry commission to investigate the attack, considering it “unjustified” and adding that “the conclusion of investigations (conducted by IOF) are undoubted.”<sup>27</sup> Conclusions of investigations conducted by IOF, which the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert considers beyond doubt, encouraged IOF soldiers to kill a 10-year-old Palestinian child at the entrance of al-Yamoun village, northwest of the northern West Bank town of Jenin, in March 2006. As usual, investigations conducted by IOF claimed that the 10-year-old girl and her aunt were traveling in a taxi, and IOF soldier shot at the taxi after it tried to circumvent one of these checkpoints. They further claimed that the soldier followed the standard procedure for arresting a suspect and aimed their fire at the taxi’s wheels.<sup>28</sup>

Impunity granted by the Israeli judiciary to IOF, in violation of international human rights standards, encouraged IOF to escalate their crimes against Palestinian civilians in 2006. In May 2006, 3 Palestinian civilians from the Amen family were killed in Gaza City,<sup>29</sup> when IOF launched an attack to extra-judicially execute a leader of the Islamic Jihad. Israel Air Force chief Major General Eliezer Shkedi claimed the next day that “we still have to check” what killed the Amen family.<sup>30</sup> It remains unclear whether IOF brought the perpetrators of the crime to justice.

Even when perpetrators of crimes are brought to justice, the punishment against them does not account for the level of seriousness of such crimes. This is attributed to the fact that IOF are both the accused and the judge (in breach of the principle of *nemo iudex in causa sua*), so IOF soldiers are often exempted from responsibility. In very rare cases, especially those related to attacks by IOF soldiers on foreign citizens and property, the Israeli civilian judiciary is allowed to conduct investigations. However, victims need several years to be able to obtain a decision to conducted investigations. Following three and a half years of pursuit with the Israeli judiciary, in November 2006, the Israeli military advocate general instructed military police investigators to open a probe into the question of whether IOF soldiers bear criminal responsibility in the shooting of a 24-year-old American citizen, Brian Avery, a member of the International Solidarity Movement, in Jenin refugee camp in April 2003. For three and a half years, IOF had denied responsibility for the attack. IOF had refused to order such a probe, arguing that the military investigation after the incident should suffice.<sup>31</sup> Avery was seriously wounded to the face and the eye. He underwent 3 surgeries at Rambam Hospital in Haifa, and then traveled to the United States to complete medical treatment. Avery’s attorney, Michael Sfar, said “it is unfortunate that it takes three and a half years and pressure of the High Court justices for the military advocate general to order what is fair and desirable in a place where human life is not worthless. There are a few soldiers who were involved in the incident and thought the

IOF are both the accused and the judge (in breach of the principle of *nemo iudex in causa sua*), so IOF soldiers are often exempted from responsibility

<sup>27</sup> Al-Ayyam, 19 June 2006.

<sup>28</sup> See Haaretz, 19 March 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/objects/pages/PrintArticleEn.jhtml?itemNo=695601>.

<sup>29</sup> The victims are: Muhannad, 7; his mother Na’ima, 27; and his grandmother Hanan, 46.

<sup>30</sup> See Haaretz, 1 June 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/objects/pages/PrintArticleEn.jhtml?itemNo=721483>.

See Haaretz, 26 November 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/objects/pages/PrintArticleEn.jhtml?itemNo=792477>.

story was over. The message from the High Court is that the story is not over. Brian and I will continue to fight until the truth comes out," Sfard said.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, the legislative developments relevant to the Israeli judiciary apparently reinforced the impunity granted to IOF soldiers, especially in committing crimes in the OPT. In December 2006, the Israeli High Court ruled that the policy of targeting "wanted" Palestinians by IOF does not violate international law.<sup>33</sup> This court ruling legalizes extra-judicial executions committed by IOF against Palestinians and encourages them to commit more of such crimes, whose victims are mainly civilians. Those legislative developments further raise the urgent need for the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to stop Israeli war crimes and bring war criminals to international justice, especially in light of the failure of the Israeli judiciary to take legal actions against them.

### Efforts to Prosecute Israeli War Criminals before the International Judiciary

Through our long experience, PCHR has concluded that the Israeli judiciary is used to provide legal cover for IOF to commit war crimes against Palestinian civilians, and that it is a means used to avoid resorting to the international justice system under the pretext of the existence of a just Israeli national judiciary.

Denial of justice for Palestinian civilians is deeply rooted in the Israeli judicial system in general; and the military judiciary in particular. Through our long experience, PCHR has concluded that the Israeli judiciary is used to provide legal cover for IOF to commit war crimes against Palestinian civilians, and that it is a means used to avoid resorting to the international justice system under the pretext of the existence of a just Israeli national judiciary.

In light of these facts, and following the exhaustion of national legal means (in this case the Israeli ones), PCHR, in cooperation with a number of international legal and human rights organizations, has resorted to international legal means to prosecute Israeli war criminals. In 2006, PCHR, in cooperation with Hickman & Rose Solicitors – UK, built a legal file on Moshe Ya'alon. Ya'alon is a 56-year-old Israeli national who was Chief of Staff of the Israeli military from 9 July 2002 to 1 June 2005, answerable directly to the Prime Minister. Under his command the Israeli military were responsible for a countless variety of extensive human rights violations and war crimes inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory during its belligerent occupation.

Moshe Ya'alon was spared arrest or any proper prosecution process in New Zealand on 28 November, despite a decision on 27 November 2006 by His Honour Judge Avinash Deobhakta in the District Court at Auckland to issue warrants for his arrest on suspicion of committing a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention 1949, which is a criminal offence in New Zealand under the Geneva Conventions Act 1958 and International Crimes and International Criminal Court Act 2000.

The Court's decision came after years of failed efforts to pursue the suspect through the Israeli judicial system. It was because of the failure of the Israeli judiciary to even deal with petitions asking for a

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> See Haaretz on 14 December 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/801083.html>.

criminal investigation or for a decision as to the lawfulness of the assassination policy that PCHR proceeded to build a file of evidence with Hickman & Rose solicitors (London, UK) to bring war crimes suspects to justice outside Israel in accordance with the legal principle of universal jurisdiction.

Lawyers in New Zealand presented the above evidence in support of the application for the arrest of Moshe Ya'alon, and the issue of the warrants obliged the police to arrest him. However, the police instead sought the advice of the Solicitor-General in New Zealand, who advises the Attorney-General when he makes decisions on authorising such prosecutions and other relevant decisions, including staying them. After initial indications that the Solicitor-General would be advising the Attorney-General to refuse to authorise a prosecution, at 5pm New Zealand time on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2006, the Attorney-General filed papers directing the District Court to stay the prosecution permanently, so the arrest warrants were extinguished. The Attorney-General has given no reasons for staying the prosecution, despite the ruling of the judge that there were 'good and sufficient reasons' to justify the arrest of Moshe Ya'alon.

At 6pm (New Zealand time) on Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> November, District Judge Deobhakta lifted the suppression order and confirmed in a ruling that the AG's decision had brought an end to the proceedings, and provided the following details:

"When no arrest was forthcoming [on 27/28 November] despite the Police having the warrants with them for some 30 hours, the informant moved the Court for orders regarding their execution.

As this hearing the Commissioner of Police was represented by counsel. He submitted that the New Zealand Police was an independent body and could not be subject to any direction from this Court as to how it conducted its function particularly in relation to the execution of arrest warrants.

This Court was well aware of this demarcation. All it could have done was to make a strong urging to the Police to process the Court's orders without further delay. What the informant could not understand is why the Police when aware of the gravity of the allegations and urgency in the matter had either refused to or neglected to execute the warrants. They knew of his whereabouts he having apparently been under surveillance. Instead, on the material supplied to this Court by the informant's solicitors, and if accurate, the Police chose to wait for some response or reaction from the Solicitor-General before effecting arrest.

In the end the Attorney-General in the afternoon of 28 November filed a warrant staying further proceedings on the information filed. In other circumstances that decision of the Attorney-General might have been subject to a judicial review by the High Court if arrest of the defendant had eventuated and if time had permitted."

PCHR, on behalf of the Palestinian victims, was dismayed that Moshe Ya'alon evaded justice in New Zealand, especially as it was not the first time an Israeli war criminal evaded justice.

In September 2005, Major General (retired) Doron Almog today spent time 'airside' at Heathrow airport before taking a return flight to Israel. He had learned that he was facing arrest by British police after a decision on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2005 by Chief London Magistrate<sup>[1]</sup> Timothy Workman to issue a warrant for his arrest on suspicion of committing a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention 1949 (which is a criminal offence in the UK under the Geneva Conventions Act 1957). The warrant issued on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2005 is in relation to the wanton destruction of 59 houses in Rafah refugee camp on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2002.

PCHR is concerned that the success of those war criminals in evading justice is an indicator that political considerations are often placed above justice. However, PCHR will continue its efforts, together with other attorneys, to prosecute war criminals before other national judiciaries.

## Section 2

## Palestinian Violations of Human Rights & Obstacles to Democratic Reforms

### Elections: Palestinian Democracy under Siege

On 25 January 2006, one-million and forty-two thousand Palestinian voters cast their ballots to elect 132 parliamentarians from among hundreds of candidates who competed in the second Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections in the OPT since the establishment of the PNA in 1994. These elections were a key junction in Palestinian politics. The elections were held after the PNA passed a new elections law on 13 August 2006.

The new law adopted a mixed system (proportional representation and majoritarian). In addition, this law increased the number of PLC members from 88 to 132. The law stipulated that 66 members would be elected by majoritarian method in districts and the other 66 would be elected by proportional representation considering the OPT as one district<sup>34</sup>. In addition, 6 seats were allocated to Christians from the majoritarian quota. A Presidential Decree outlined the distribution of these 6 seats as follows: Jerusalem (2), Ramallah and El-Bireh (1), Gaza (1), and Bethlehem (2). PCHR was also involved in the civil society coalition, which worked to ensure that women received favorable status in the new law. Article 4 of the law stated, "Each list of candidates for the proportional representation quota must have a minimum female representation of one in slots 1-3; slots 4-7; each subsequent 5 slots till the end of the list.

Most political parties boycotted the first PLC elections in 1996 for reasons that included the fact that they were purely majoritarian elections. However, all political parties except Islamic Jihad participated in the second elections. This participation stemmed out of the desire to participate in the decision-making process. The wide participation of national and Islamic parties affected the campaigning period, which was very competitive. The competition was extremely fierce between the two main parties in the OPT: Hamas and Fatah. In addition, there was unprecedented local, regional, and international attention and press coverage in the

<sup>34</sup> Articles 1-3 of Law No. 9 for the Year 2005 on Elections. In the Palestinian Legal Journal, the Official PNA Publication; Issue 57; 18 August 2005.

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monitoring process.

PCHR noted that the polling process was fair and transparent.<sup>35</sup> The Centre's monitors registered minor violations by supporters of candidates and parties. The most notable violation was the continuation of campaigning at entrances and inside polling centers, and in the media, especially that supported by the two main parties.

Election results showed a landslide victory for the Change and Reform Bloc ( Hamas), especially at the district level. Change and Reform candidates won 45 out of 66 seats at the district (majoritarian) level and Fatah won 17 seats. The remaining 4 seats went to independent candidates. In the proportional representation quota,<sup>36</sup> the gap was closer. Change and Reform won 29 seats to Fatah's 28. Thus the combined results gave Change and Reform 74 seats, and Fatah 45 seats. The remaining seats in the proportional representation quota went to Abu Ali Mustafa List (3), Third Way (2), Badil (2), Palestine Independents (2).<sup>37</sup>

The second PLC elections constituted an important, substantial step towards democratic reforms in Palestine. The elections renewed the legitimacy of the PLC, whose term ended in 1999 as set in the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement. Instead of encouraging these important democratic reforms, the international community and Israel subjected the Palestinian people to an organized campaign of diplomatic and economic sanctions. The sanctions included, inter alia, a boycott on the new Palestinian government that was formed constitutionally in March 2006; and stopping aid to the Palestinian government, which led to economic deterioration and escalating poverty in the OPT. In addition, Israel stopped the transfer of Palestinian tax revenues collected from Palestinian businesses and workers in Israel to the Palestinian government. The level of humanitarian services provided by the PNA declined, including health, educational, and social services. As a result, frustration, tension, and stress increased among Palestinians.

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The Palestinian situation worsened with increased tension between Fatah and Hamas resulting from the conflict over power and security authority. This conflict took a major turn when the Minister of Interior, Sa'id Seyam, announced on 17 May 2006 the establishment of a new security force called the "Executive Force" to uphold public order and security, and to restore the integrity of the law. Prior to this decision, President Mahmoud Abbas issued a decree on 20 February 2006 appointing General Rashid Abu Sh'bak as Director of Preventive Security and Director-General of Internal Security.

Further, IOF escalated their war crimes against Palestinian civilians, including an intensification of collective punishment measures, targeting civilians, and attacking civilian properties. IOF crimes reached

<sup>35</sup> PCHR recruited 600 monitors, half of them females, to monitor 988 polling stations in 254 polling centers throughout the Gaza Strip.

<sup>36</sup> The minimum vote requirement for a seat in the proportional representation quota was 19,817 correct votes. Refer to the Central Elections Commission (CEC) web site for details: [www.elections.ps](http://www.elections.ps).

<sup>37</sup> Op. cit.

an unprecedented level after armed Palestinian groups conducted an operation in the Karm Abu Salim Crossing on 25 June 2006. Since this date, IOF escalated their punitive measures against Palestinians throughout the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip. These measures included: isolation of the Gaza Strip from the outside world and depriving it of the most basic services (i.e. water and electricity). The Israeli government held the PNA, especially the Hamas government, responsible for the operation. The Israelis threatened harsh retaliation if the life of the abducted soldier is jeopardized. In fulfillment of these threats, IOF conducted wide-scale arrests of PLC members and government officials in the period from June – August 2006. Thirty-one PLC members, including the Speaker, and ten Hamas Cabinet Ministers were detained. In addition, many Hamas political leaders were detained in the West Bank.<sup>38</sup>

The detention of PLC members and Ministers is viewed as part of the Israeli effort aiming to undermine the results of the democratic elections of 25 January 2006 and the Palestinian government

The detention of PLC members and Ministers is viewed as part of the Israeli effort aiming to undermine the results of the democratic elections of 25 January 2006 and the Palestinian government in order to relegate any Palestinian partner, as a first step towards unilateral definition of the borders of the future Palestinian State in accordance with the Israeli vision. This vision of resolving the conflict centers on a Palestinian State with no or limited sovereignty in the Gaza Strip and at most 42% of the West Bank in isolated Bantustans.

PCHR stresses the need to confront this challenge and Israeli plan with constructive and calm dialogue between all Palestinian parties. This is essential in order to reach a joint vision on how to divide the roles and authorities in a way that guarantees internal order and security, and restores the rule of law. The Centre views violence that violates international human rights standards as something that will not contribute to building a democratic society that respects public freedoms, such as freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and freedom to participate in decision-making, which are essential in facing different Israeli challenges. In addition, violence will not ensure building transparent and accountable state institutions that rely on the rule of law and division of authorities in their functioning and mandate. In this context, PCHR appreciates the role of all Palestinian parties working to speed up and facilitate national dialogue in order to reach internal Palestinian agreement. The Centre points that it is high time that parties and factions overcome their narrow factional interests in favor of national interests in the form of Palestinian unity, restoring the rule of law, respecting the civil, political, economic, and social rights of the Palestinian people.

## Incomplete Local Council Elections

The international siege imposed on Palestinians and the internal security chaos have had their impact on democratic reforms in institutions at the national and local levels. The year 2006 ended without conducting elections in 59 local council in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, in violation of the Law No. 10 for

<sup>38</sup> It is noted that PLC member Dr. Hasan Khreishah was detained till 30 July, and was released on 10,000 New Israeli Shekel Bail. IOF also released Minister of Prisoners' Affairs, Wasfi Qabha, and Minister of Labor, Mohammad El-Barghouthi. However, most Ministers and PLC members remain in prison.

the Year 2005 on Local Council Elections. This law stipulated that all local councils must be institutionalized in an elected system that works transparently, is accountable, and can fulfill its service-providing role in conjunction with national institutions. In addition, these local councils have a role in strengthening political participation in decision making as a first step towards creating future political leaders.

The 59 local councils were slotted for a fifth round of local council elections. It is noted that in 2004 local council elections were scheduled in 5 stages<sup>39</sup> during the period from December 2004 to December 2005. However, only 4 stages were held during the predetermined timeframe, covering 265 local councils in the OPT. The remaining 59 local councils did not hold elections.

The second stage of local elections in 84 local councils (8 in the Gaza Strip and 76 in the West Bank) on 5 May 2005 registered some problems. The “Faith to Al-Aqsa” Fatah list submitted appeals to the CEC and local elections districts against the results in Rafah, El-Bureij, Beit Lahia, and El-Moghraga local councils. It is noted that the Change and Reform List ( Hamas) won a majority in these localities. The appeals court decided to hold a partial rerun of the elections in Rafah, Beit Lahia, and El-Bureij. Accordingly, the CEC designated 1 June 2005 as the rerun date. However, the CEC postponed the rerun indefinitely after Hamas announced a boycott of the rerun if it is held. The issue remains unresolved; and it is not known how it will be resolved.

It is noted that the results of the first two stages of local council elections exposed very serious deficiencies in Law No. 5 of the Year 1996 on Local Council Elections and its amendments. In August 2005, the PNA issued Law No. 10 of the Year 2005 on Local Council Elections. The new law adopted the proportional representation system over the previous majoritarian system in the 1996 law. Stages 3 and 4 of local council elections were held under the new law, and covered 148 local councils (145 in the West Bank and 3 in the Gaza Strip).

The tension between Fatah and Hamas, the deteriorating security situation, and the escalation of Israeli incursions in PNA areas, it was not clear to anyone when and how the fifth stage of local elections will be held. In addition, no mechanism was set for the partial rerun in Rafah, El-Bureij, and Beit Lahia. It becomes clear that resolving these issues is linked to reaching a national unity deal between the two main parties: Fatah and Hamas. PCHR hopes that such a deal can be reached as soon as possible.

The Centre looks forward to the completion of local council elections without further delay, and towards reaching an acceptable solution to the problems of Rafah, El-Bureij, and Beit Lahia. The partial rerun in these three areas cannot be considered in isolation of the legal developments pertaining to the issuance of Law No. 10 for the Year 2005, the legal basis for

<sup>39</sup> On 10 May 2004, the Palestinian Cabinet issued a decision to hold local council elections “.... Over 3 incremental stages starting from August 2004 and ending within a year of that date if circumstances permit that.” However in the same year, the elections were rescheduled over 5 stages.

The Centre looks forward to the completion of local council elections without further delay, and towards reaching an acceptable solution to the problems of Rafah, El-Bureij, and Beit Lahia

stages 3 and 4 of local council elections. The Centre proposes holding a complete rerun in the three localities in the fifth and final stage under the new law.

## Continuation of Security Chaos and Proliferation of Arms

Since the start of the Second Intifada in September 2000, the year 2006 was the worst year thus far in terms of internal security chaos and proliferation of arms in the OPT. The political struggle between Fatah and Hamas and the division of the Executive between the Presidency and Government negatively affected the internal Palestinian situation. This conflict escalated into bloody clashes between the armed wings of two movements and the divided security forces. These clashes were an extension of the security chaos plaguing the OPT and includes manifestations of such transgressions on the rule of law, vigilante justice, and preference of the rule of the jungle of the rule of law.

296 Palestinians were killed in incidents of security chaos during the year 2006. This includes 235 killed in the Gaza Strip and 61 killed in the West Bank. The victims included 34 children and 31 women

Security chaos and proliferation of arms threatens the lives of Palestinians, their property, and their security. In addition, it expands to threaten public and private institutions alike. In addition, this problem includes killings by misused and mishandled weapons by individuals or groups, such as storing explosives or using them in demonstrations and firing rockets from densely-populated areas.

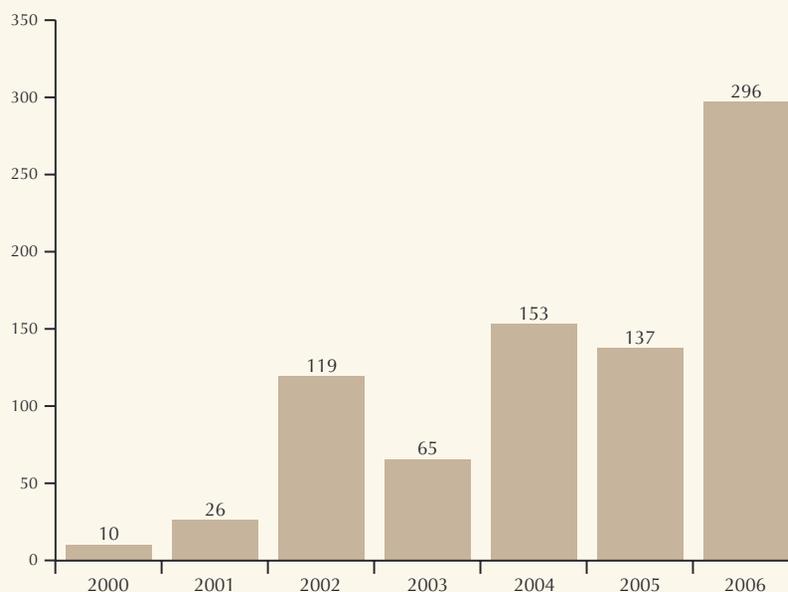
The problem has deteriorated in an unprecedented way as members of security forces and armed groups participated in these incidents without being held accountable. In many incidents these armed groups and security forces cover up the crimes perpetrated by their members, and fail to investigate them and bring the perpetrators to justice. In general, law-enforcement bodies violate the law, and act as if they are above the law. Undermining the rule of law by its protectors encouraged individuals and parties to take the law in their hands, and to override the law with the language of force and the rule of the jungle in their daily lives.

The impunity offered to law-enforcement personnel and members of armed groups involved in incidents of security chaos, and the failure of the Attorney-General to investigate these crimes and prosecute the perpetrators have played a key role in the escalation of security chaos to very serious levels. The situation deteriorated to a degree of near civil war between the conflicting parties at the end of the year.

PCHR's documentation indicates that 296 Palestinians<sup>40</sup> were killed in incidents of security chaos during the year 2006. This includes 235 killed in the Gaza Strip and 61 killed in the West Bank. The victims included 34 children and 31 women. In addition, 1,538 Palestinians were injured, including 220 children and 66 women.

<sup>40</sup> This number includes those killed by firearms or explosives only, and does not include those killed by "white" weaponry.

Diagram (1):  
Victims of Lawlessness and Prolif-  
eration of Weapons during the Years  
of the Second Intifada



### Clashes between Security Forces and/or Armed Groups

The year 2006 has been the worst year in terms of clashes between security forces and/or armed groups. The year witnessed a series of armed clashes between different security branches, and clashes between security forces and their affiliates against armed groups from Hamas or Fatah. These clashes resulted in the death of 71 Palestinians, including 5 children and 2 women. Another 708 Palestinians were injured, including 69 children and 18 women. The tension in the OPT, especially the Gaza Strip, was not manifested in armed clashes only, but included attacks on institutions of the sides involved and mutual kidnappings between parties. Most abductees were released by mediators; however some abductees were killed or tortured.

The most notable security chaos crime was killing 3 children of an intelligence officer in Gaza City. The oldest child was 9 years old. In the morning of 11 December 2006, unknown gunmen fired at a vehicle belonging to Baha Mesbah Ba'lousha (34), who is an officer in the General Intelligence. The officer's three children, his niece, and 2 guards were in the car. The shooting, which took place in the center of Gaza City, resulted in the death of Salam Baha Ba'lousah (4), Ahmad Baha Ba'lousha (7), Osama Baha Ba'lousha (9), and the driver-guard Mahmoud Mohammad El-Habeel (22). The second guard, officer's niece, and two sisters on their way to school were also injured.

And on 31 March 2006, armed clashes broke out in Gaza City between members of the Popular Resistance Committees (PRC) on the one hand and members of the Preventive Security Apparatus and guards of a Fatah leader on the other. The clashes broke out after the PRC spokesperson accused Fatah leaders and security officers of the assassination of Yousef Abdel Karim El-Qouqa by an explosive-laden car. It is noted that El-Qouqa was the Secretary-General of Naser Salah El-Deen Brigades, the armed wing of the PRC. The clashes resulted in the death of 3 Palestinians: a PRC member, a

guard of Colonel Nabil Tammous (Preventive Security), and a child who was passing in the area. Thirty-four people were injured in the clashes, including 3 whose injuries were serious.

In another crime, clashes broke out between gunmen and Palestinian police on the one hand and members of the Interior Ministry Executive Force on the other. The clashes resulted in the killing of Khaled Faleh El-Radayda (54), who works in the Jordanian Representative Office to the PNA, and the injury of 11 others, most of them civilian bystanders.

On 1 October 2006, armed clashes erupted in different parts of the Gaza Strip between members of the Executive Force and members of other security forces. The clashes resulted in killing 6 Palestinians and injuring at least 115 others, most of them civilians. The clashes started in Khan Yunis, and then spread to Gaza City. In the evening of the same day, the clashes between Fatah and Hamas supporters erupted in El-Bureij refugee camp.

## Attacks on International Institutions and Individuals

Several international organizations came under attack and a number of internationals were kidnapped by armed Palestinian groups during 2006. These attacks were a component of the security chaos plaguing the OPT over the past few years due to the negligence of the PNA security forces in imposing order, investigating such crimes, and prosecuting the perpetrators.

According to PCHR's documentation, 13 international organizations (such as the UN and Red Cross) came under attack in 2006. The attacks included gunfire, arson, theft, and destruction of property. In addition, armed groups kidnapped 25 international relief workers and journalists. All abductees were released without harm after a few hours or days. It is noted that in all cases no legal action was taken against the perpetrators of these crimes despite the fact that their identities were exposed to security forces. Moreover, the PNA sometimes succumbed to the demands of the kidnappers, which encouraged an increase in this problem.

The first attack against an international organization took place in the first few hours of the New Year. An armed Palestinian group planted and detonated explosives in the UN Beach Club located on the Gaza City beach. The assailants attacked the guard, and bound him. They followed by storming the club and planting and detonating two explosive devices. The explosion resulted in destroying the club's wooden ceiling, damaging an office, meetings room, kitchen, video library, game room, and cafeteria. In addition, the wall between the club and the Civil Defense Compound was destroyed. Minor damages were inflicted on a hydraulic ladder used in firefighting and a flood-water pump.

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The most notable attacks on international organizations and individuals came as an aftermath of the IOF abduction of the Secretary-General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (Ahmad Sa'dat) from his Jericho prison on 14 March 2006. The abduction took place after British and American monitors withdrew from the prison. As news of the abduction spread, attacks were launched against diplomatic missions, humanitarian organizations, and cultural centers. In addition, internationals were kidnapped, including journalists and staff of development and humanitarian organizations. The Gaza Strip witnessed combing operations in search of internationals that included hotels, institutions, schools, and homes. This caused a state of fear and apprehension among international civilians providing humanitarian services to Palestinians.

As a result of these attacks, all international organizations evacuated their international staff from the Gaza Strip. This included diplomatic missions, UN organizations, Red Cross, and other humanitarian and media organizations. The Gaza Strip was nearly devoid of international presence.

In the West Bank, gunmen and protestors stormed the British Council located in the fourth floor of a building in Ramallah, and ransacked it.

## Armed Clans and Personal Clashes

The bloody clashes between security forces and armed groups, and the uncontrolled proliferation of arms among the population encouraged people to take the law into their own hands by force. This was clearly reflected in clan and personal clashes where weapons were frequently used. These armed clashes resulted in the killing of 88 people, including 4 children and 5 women. Another 307 people were injured, including 51 children and 17 women.

The most notable clan clash was in the city of Khan Yunis between El-Masri and Abu Taha clans. Clashes between them continued for extended periods of time and led to the killing of 12 people and injury of dozens in the year 2006 alone. In one round of clashes on 4 November 2006, five people (including one woman) were killed. Seven others, including a woman and a child, were injured.

In another crime on 7 June, two people were killed in an armed clan clash in Gaza City. Jawdat Issan Dughmush, a 32-year old resident of El-Sabra Quarter in Gaza City, was killed at 19:30. He was hit with a bullet that penetrated his left thigh and hit his right thigh. He was hit in an armed clash with El-Kafarna clan in El-Karama area north of Gaza City. He was taken to Shifa Hospital, where he died due to intense bleeding. And in a development of the same clan clash at approximately 22:15 on the same day, Majdi El-Bahri Dughmush, a 32-year old resident of El-Sabra Quarter in Gaza City, was killed in El-Tuffah Quarter in Gaza City.

Another crime on 2 July 2006 was perpetrated and resulted in the death of Zahir Salman

Maharieqa (27) from the town of Deir Esteya near Salfit. Zahir was an activist in Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades. He was alleged to have been killed by Tha'er Suliman Madi, a 26-year old resident of Salfit. The incident was motivated by a personal dispute. Immediately after the incident, gunmen from Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades arrived and chased Tha'er in the building. They fired at him, and hit him with several bullets in the chest that killed him. In addition, 2 bystanders were injured, one of them a child. In a related development, members of Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades headed to the Salfit Hospital, where Zahir Maharieqa's body was kept. They found Fa'iq Ata Madi (50), Tha'er Madi's uncle, inside the hospital. They fired at him, hitting with several bullets in the chest that killed him instantly.

## Attacks on Public Institutions and Officials

There was considerable escalation in attacks against public institutions and officials during 2006. This included attacks against security buildings, civilian institutions, schools, universities, and officials, including judges, security officials, and politicians. The attacks included shooting at institutions and officials

There was considerable escalation in attacks against public institutions and officials during 2006. This included attacks against security buildings, civilian institutions, schools, universities, and officials, including judges, security officials, and politicians. The attacks included shooting at institutions and officials, arson, destruction of property, and firing at on-duty security personnel and officials. PCHR documented the death of 7 political and security officials killed while performing their duty. In addition, 35 Palestinians were injured, including 2 children and 2 women.

The most notable attacks on public institutions and officials were:

On 11 April 2006, a group of 20 masked gunmen stormed the New District Court in the town of New Abasan, to the east of Khan Yunis. The assailants forced the court staff and the staff of the district attorney's office to leave the premises. The gunmen, who lit tires around the court building, deployed inside the building and on the roof. The attack was conducted by gunmen from the eastern towns of Khan Yunis to protest the High Judicial Council decision to close the New Abasan District Court, and place the district under the jurisdiction of the Khan Yunis court. At approximately 11:15, the gunmen withdrew from the building after confiscating a number of files as well as the official court seals.

On 4 August 2006, Palestinian gunmen disguised in police uniforms and traveling in a car with governmental license plates infiltrated into Jericho Central Prison. They broke into a prison cell and fired at the inmates inside it. They were targeting 6 brothers in the cell. Four of the brothers from El-Amla clan were killed. They were residents of the town of Qablan near Nablus. Two other prisoners from Ramallah and Nablus were mistakenly killed. Three other prisoners were seriously injured.

On 29 August 2006, a large number of workers conducted a protest to the vicinity of the PLC building in Gaza City. A number of protestors attempted to break into the PLC building. They threw stones at it, causing material damages. Some protestors succeeded in forcing open the outer eastern gate leading to the building. They

rushed inside towards the PLC building despite efforts by police, armed with sticks, to stop them. After the break in, tens of members of the Executive Force deployed at the entrances of the PLC. They fired in the air and threw a teargas bomb and a sound bomb in an attempt to break up the protestors and prevent their entry inside the PLC building. The clashes between the protestors and security forces resulted in the light injury of 6 policemen and 1 protestor.

In the worst crime of its kind, unknown gunmen killed a General in the Palestinian General Intelligence Service and four guards in Gaza City. PCHR's documentation indicate that on 15 September 2006, gunmen intercepted the vehicle of General Jad Tayeh and his 4 bodyguards on Sea Street near the residence of Prime Minister Ismail Haniyya. They fired at the car from close range after it stopped. The crime resulted in the killing of Tayeh and his four bodyguards: 1) Nayef Mohammad Abu al-'Oun, 54; 2) Mohammad Suliman Abu Shari'a, 34; 3) Mohammad Zeyad al-Sakani, 24; and 4) Yosri Yunis Abu Zayed, 30.

On 1 October 2006, scores of demonstrators gathered and burned tires before heading to the PLC and Government buildings in Ramallah. Gunmen among the demonstrators fired at the PLC building, then headed to the nearby Government Building. They stormed into the building and destroyed windows and furniture. They also threw files into the street, and burned a number of rooms. The security forces charged with guarding the building only intervened after half an hour. The demonstrators then headed to the Ministry of Education; however, guards prevented them from entering the building. The demonstrators, nonetheless, burned two ministry cars. The demonstrators headed to the pro-Hamas Change and Reform office in the Isra' building in Ramallah, and ransacked the office. Gunmen also attacked the house of the Deputy Minister in the Finance Ministry, Tamer El-Birawi. They also kidnapped him and took him to an undisclosed location. He was released at a later time. In addition, gunmen attacked the Change and Reform office in Hebron. They ransacked the office and burned furniture and files in the street. The attacks spread to Nablus where the house of the Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Naser El-Deen El-Sha'er, came under fire. The Deputy PM was in his house during the attack; but no injuries were reported.

## **Misuse of Weapons by Armed Groups and Security Personnel**

In 2006, 107 Palestinians, including 25 children and 10 women, were killed in incidents categorized as "misuse of weapons by armed groups and security personnel." In addition, 310 people, including 98 children and 27 women, were injured in these incidents. Most of the victims died due to accidents by Palestinian resistance factions in storing explosives or firing rockets from populated areas, or from near them. PCHR condemns all such incidents as well as attacks which impact on Palestinian or Israeli civilians. In addition, victims fell by incidents of mishandling and misusing weapons by security personnel, armed people, or ordinary people.

The most serious incident during 2006 took place in Jenin in the West Bank, and resulted in the death of 3 children in a wedding celebration where gunmen fired their guns in celebration. PCHR's documentation indicates that on 3 August 2006, the children Razi Naser Salim El-Asmar (13), Ahmad Samir Abu Jelda (15), and Ala Adel Faris Hardan (17) were killed when a gunman lost control of the assault rifle he was firing during a wedding celebration in Marah Quarter in Jenin. It is noted that many gunmen were firing in the air during the wedding.

In another incident, two people were killed and 5 others injured by explosives stored in a populated area. On 28 June, a homemade rocket exploded in the house belonging to Mohammad Qasim Mohammad Mas'oud (53) in Khan Yunis refugee camp. Qasim, the houseowner's son, stored the rocket in the house. The accidental explosion of the rocket killed the son and his niece. Five other family members, including a child, were injured.

### Extra-judicial Killing of Suspected Collaborators with Israeli Security Services

The year 2006 witnessed an increase in extra-judicial killing by Palestinian armed groups of suspected collaborators with Israeli security services

The year 2006 witnessed an increase in extra-judicial killing by Palestinian armed groups of suspected collaborators with Israeli security services. During the year, PCHR documented 9 cases, including 2 women, compared with 7 cases in 2005. In one of the incidents on 18 March 2006, an unknown gunman fired at Khaled Yunis as he stood with his wife in front of their house in Kfar Saba Quarter in Qalqilya in the West Bank. Yunis was hit by several bullets and died instantly. And on 20 March 2006 in the town of Salfit in the West Bank, a masked gunman disembarked from a car in front of the house of Ahmad Salim, and rang the doorbell. As soon as Salim opened the door, the gunman shot him. The victim was hit by a bullet in the face, and was taken to the emergency hospital in the town. However, he died before reaching the hospital.

### Honor Killings

During the year 2006, fourteen Palestinians were killed in incidents motivated by "honor." The victims were 12 women and 2 men

During the year 2006, fourteen Palestinians were killed in incidents motivated by "honor." The victims were 12 women and 2 men. On 12 April 2006, Khalil Sa'id El-Aloul (21-year man from Gaza City) was stabbed to death by assailants who claimed that he harassed a 10-year old girl from their family. El-Aloul worked as a tailor in a sewing factory owned by the assailants near the Ophthalmic Hospital in Gaza City. He was stabbed to death and thrown out of the window of an apartment owned by the family of the assailants.

In another incident on 9 August 2006, the bodies of two young women were found in the Sawarha area to the west of Nuseirat refugee camp in the center of the Gaza Strip. The bodies were taken to Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, and then to the forensic medicine department in Shifa Hospital in Gaza City. Sources at Shifa Hospital indicated that both were killed by gunshots. Each one was shot twice in the head. In addition, they

were severely beaten and tortured before they were killed. Four days after the bodies were found, Palestinian Police in Deir El-Balah detained a Palestinian who confessed to killing his two sisters in an alleged “Honor Killing.” The victims are Fatheya Kamel Kullab (27) and Amani Kamel Kullab (21). They were living in Jabalia refugee camp.

## Death Penalty under the PNA

The year 2006 witnessed positive developments pertaining to the death penalty under the PNA. Palestinian courts did not issue any death sentences throughout the year.

The year 2006 witnessed positive developments pertaining to the death penalty under the PNA. Palestinian courts did not issue any death sentences throughout the year. This is an unprecedented development as all the previous years (1994-2005) in the PNA's history witnessed issuance of death sentences or their implementation. It is noted that the total of death sentences passed from 1994-2005 was 76 sentences against Palestinians convicted with crimes and national security offenses. Twelve sentences were implemented during that time span.<sup>41</sup>

The majority of death sentences were passed by State Security Courts, which were established by Presidential Decree in February 1995. It is noted that State Security Courts are a clear violation of international standards of fair trial and legal procedures. These courts usually deprive the defense of adequate time to prepare. In addition, their procedures are hasty. Lawyers are not informed of sessions in advance to sufficiently prepare their defense. In addition, these courts lack technical reports from independent legal sources such as the forensic laboratory and forensic medicine laboratory. In addition, sentences passed by these courts are usually harsh (death sentence or life imprisonment), and cannot be appealed.

In another positive development, President Mahmoud Abbas issued a decree on 22 June 2005 stipulating that civilian courts are to review all death sentences issued by State Security Courts, since the latter courts lacked standards of fair trial. The practical implementation of this decision started on 14 February 2006 when 11 cases of persons sentenced to death by State Security Courts were transferred for review in civilian courts.

Despite these positive developments in 2006, PCHR remains concerned over the fact that the death penalty remains institutionalized in the PNA's legislation and legal procedures. These include the Palestinian Penal Code No. 74 for the Year 1936 (applicable in the Gaza Strip), the Jordanian Penal Code No. 16 for the Year 1960 (applicable in the West Bank), and the Revolutionary Penal Code of the Year 1979 for the PLO. It is noted that the Revolutionary Penal Code is not approved by the PLC.

PCHR views the remaining existence of the death penalty in legislation and procedures as an open door towards resuming death sentences and their implementation, enabling the PNA to violate the right to life. The death penalty is a flagrant violation of Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 6 of the

<sup>41</sup> These statistics are based on PCHR documentation.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), which establish the right to life as something people cannot be deprived of arbitrarily. In addition, the death penalty is a violation of the Convention against Torture (1984) that prohibits subjecting people to torture or cruel and inhumane treatment, including the death penalty.

PCHR calls upon the PNA to review all legislation and legal procedures permitting the death penalty, especially the Palestinian Penal Code No. 74 for the Year 1936 (applicable in the Gaza Strip) and the Jordanian Penal Code No. 16 for the Year 1960 (applicable in the West Bank). The Centre calls for passing a unified law that complies with international human rights standards, including those calling for the abolition of the death penalty.

The Centre calls upon the President of the PNA to use his constitutional powers to ensure the continued implementation of the decree of 22 May 2005, stipulating the transfer to civilian courts of all cases sentenced to death by State Security Courts.

The Centre also calls upon President Abbas to issue a decree that clearly abolishes State Security Courts and cancels work with the unconstitutional Revolutionary Penal Code.

## PLC: Renewed Democratic Legitimacy and Continued Weak Performance

The year 2006 witnessed one of the most important democratic reforms in Palestine. The Palestinian people succeeded in organizing the second parliamentary elections. These elections rejuvenated the PLC, whose mandate ended in May 1999 (according to the Israeli-Palestinian interim agreements and the elections law for the year 1995)<sup>42</sup>. Prior to the elections, the Council was suffering a legitimacy crisis in the eyes of civil society, as people were deprived of their right to hold elected officials accountable through elections.

On 25 January 2006 one decade after the first PLC elections, the second parliamentary elections were held. Hamas registered a landslide victory by winning 74 of 132 seats. The ruling party Fatah who dominated the Council for a decade received only 45 seats. The remaining seats were distributed among smaller parties. Thus, Hamas became the majority party, and Fatah was relegated to the opposition role. More importantly, these elections restored the people's right of accountability, and restored the Council's legitimacy. The new PLC was sworn in on 18 February 2006.

However democratic reforms were marred by an attempt by the outgoing majority to pass new laws that in effect withdrew powers from the incoming government. On 13 February 2006, the outgoing Council held a final session and passed legislation approving President Abbas' amendments to

<sup>42</sup> Article 2.1 in the Palestinian elections law for the year 1995 stated that the legal duration of the PLC is that of the interim period ending on 4 May 1999. This stipulation was in harmony of the first article of the Declaration of Principles and Oslo agreement that affirmed, “

The detention of the PLC Speaker, Secretary-General, & many Hamas PLC members coupled with restriction of movement of other members inside the West Bank & between the Gaza Strip and West Bank led to the deterioration of the PLC's activities on the monitoring & legislative fronts

the Higher Constitutional Court, and created the new post of PLC Director-General and Deputy Director-General. PCHR criticized these decisions and legislations, and considered them unconstitutional, and a violation of democratic ethics (not law<sup>43</sup>). These democratic ethics demand that no substantial decisions are taken in the interim period from 25 January 2006 till the swearing in ceremony of the new Council on 18 February.<sup>44</sup> These decisions deprived the incoming PLC of the democratic context to fulfill its functions of legislation, accountability, and monitoring.

The deterioration in the PLC extended to a degree where the Council deteriorated as a parliamentary institution. This was caused mainly by the restrictions IOF imposed on the movement of PLC members, especially those of the Hamas majority. IOF arrested 31 PLC members, including the Speaker. IOF also arrested 10 Cabinet Ministers, 8 of them are also PLC members. These arrests took place during the period June – August 2006. These IOF actions came in the context of reprisals and collective punishment against Palestinian civilians in the aftermath of an armed attack by the Palestinian resistance on an IOF military post in Karm Abu Salem area to the east of Rafah on 25 June 2006, in which two IOF soldiers were killed and a third one was captured.

The detention of the PLC Speaker, Secretary-General, and many Hamas PLC members coupled with restriction of movement of other members inside the West Bank and between the Gaza Strip and West Bank led to the deterioration of the PLC's activities on the monitoring and legislative fronts.

## The Judiciary: Continued Efforts by the Executive to Dominate the Judiciary

The year 2006 witnessed additional efforts by the Executive to intervene into matters of Palestinian judiciary in a way that undermines its independence and power. Furthermore, the strike by public servants in the OPT has had negative effects in the Palestinian judicial system. The previous PLC in its closing session on 13 February 2006 approved the President's amendments on the Higher Constitutional Court Law. Accordingly, the President passed the new law on 17 February 2006 under the title of Law No. 3 for the Year 2006 on the Higher Constitutional Court. The law was published in issue 62 of the Palestinian legal journal on 25 March 2006. However, the court has not been established, and its judges have not been selected. The High Court still fulfills the role of a constitutional court until the latter is formed.

PCHR strongly supports the passage of a constitutional court law with guarantees to ensure its indepen-

<sup>43</sup> Article 47 of the Basic Law for the year 2005 amended some articles in the Basic Law of 2003. Accordingly, the mandate of the outgoing PLC ends "when the new PLC members are sworn in."

<sup>44</sup> In a press release issued on 16 February 2006, PCHR stated that the Constitutional Court Law is very important; and PCHR requests placing guarantees to ensure its impartiality and independence. This will enforce the principle of independence of the judiciary, as stated in the Basic Law and its amendments, and in the Judicial Authority Law #1 of 2002. - The Constitutional Court Law and the amendments approved by the outgoing PLC in its final session contradict with the Basic Law and Judicial Authority Law in a number of points: 1- Amending Article 5 stipulating that the initial forming of the court by appointing the court's chief justice and judges via a presidential decree "in consultation" with the Higher

dence. This will directly contribute to the independence of the judiciary as stated in the Law No. 1 for the Year 2002 on the Judicial Authority. However, the law passed in the previous Council's closing sessions contradicts with the Basic Law and Judicial Authority Law in a number of fronts. The most notable contradictions are:

- Amending Article 5 stipulating that the initial forming of the court by appointing the court's chief justice and judges via a presidential decree "in consultation" with the Higher Judicial Council and Minister of Justice; and
- Articles 24.2 in the initial draft determined the jurisdiction of the court as "monitoring the constitutionality of laws, decrees, presidential decisions, cabinet decisions, and regulations." In the amended version, this is limited to "monitoring the constitutionality of law and regulations."

The year 2006 witnessed additional efforts by the Executive to intervene into matters of Palestinian judiciary in a way that undermines its independence and power. Furthermore, the strike by public servants in the OPT has had negative effects in the Palestinian judicial system

After the closing session of 13 February 2006, the President issued a number of decisions pertaining to amendments of the judicial authority. In contravention of the law, these decisions were not submitted to the PLC for discussion. Most of the decisions were passed prior to the swearing in ceremony of the new PLC on 18 February 2006. One of the decisions was relevant to Law No. 5 for the Year 2006 on Amended Law for the Formation of Regular Courts Law. The decision was issued on 16 February 2006, and published in issue 62 of the Palestinian legal journal on 25 March 2006. Another decision was issued on 15 February on Law No. 7 for the year 2006 on the Serious Crimes Court. It was published in issue 64 of the Palestinian legal journal on 31 May 2006. A third decision was issued on 15 February on Law No. 8 for the Year 2006 on Amended Penal Procedures Law. The decision was published on 31 May 2006. The fourth decision was issued on 16 February 2006 on Law No. 2 for the Year 2001 on Principles of Civil and Commercial Courts. It was published on 31 May 2006.

The year 2006 witnessed significant deterioration in the Palestinian judicial system. After the summer recess, courts went on strike from September to December 2006. The strike was motivated by the non-payment of salaries by the PNA. Work resumed in the beginning of December. The strike suspended work in courts throughout the OPT. As a result, the judicial process was suspended in 50,000 cases in these courts, including 6,000 criminal and serious cases. Only emergency cases were considered, such as releasing prisoners or extending their detention.

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Judicial Council and Minister of Justice. Article 99 of the Basic Law and its amendments provides that appointing judges is conducted through the means stated in the Judicial Authority Law. Article 18 of the Judicial Authority Law prescribes that "filling judicial vacancies is done through a decision by the President of the PNA based on nominations by the Higher Judicial Council..." There is a clear difference between "consultation" and "nomination." In addition, the Minister of Justice is given access, in contravention with the law, to an authority of the Higher Judicial Council. 2-Articles 24.2 in the initial draft determined the jurisdiction of the court as "monitoring the constitutionality of laws, decrees, presidential decisions, cabinet decisions, and regulations." In the amended version, this is limited to "monitoring the constitutionality of law and regulations." Thus, decrees and presidential decisions were removed from the court's jurisdiction. It is noted that Article 103.1.a of the Basic Law states that the court has the jurisdiction to monitor "the constitutionality of laws, regulations, and others." In addition, the Centre criticized the decision to create the posts of "Secretary-General" and "Deputy Secretary-General" in the PLC. This decision contradicts with Article 50 of the Basic Law and its amendments, which determines the PLC Presidency Office in the Speaker, 2 Deputy Speakers, and Secretary, all of whom are elected in the first session of the PLC. Article 4 of the PLC Bylaws states this clearly as well. In addition, Article 11 of the Bylaws states that a "General Secretariat" is formed by the PLC Presidency Office, and is headed by the Secretary, to oversee the administrative, financial, legal, media, public relations, protocol issues and other tasks.

Legislation governing freedom of expression and peaceful assembly did not change during the year. The Law No. 13 for the Year 1995 on Publications remained in effect as a clear challenge to freedom of expression. In addition, the Presidential Decree No. 3 issued in 1998 on “Strengthening National Unity and Preventing Incitement” remains in effect. This decree constitutes a serious challenge to freedom of expression. The decree was published a second time on 21 July 2003. In addition, the Law No. 12 for the Year 1998 on Public Assembly and its executive bylaws passed by presidential decree on 30 April 2000 remained the legal framework governing peaceful assembly. In this regard, PCHR reiterates the call to the PNA to cancel the executive bylaws of this law, or to amend them in a way that is in line with the law. This is essential in order for Palestinians to enjoy their right to peaceful assembly as guaranteed by the Basic Law and Law on Public Assembly in line with international human rights standards.

Despite maintaining the legal status quo on freedom of expression during the year, there has been a change in the parties that perpetrate violations of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. On the one hand, the year witnessed a decline in the number of violations perpetrated by official bodies due to a general weakening of the PNA, which has persisted since the start of the al-Aqsa Intifada in 2000. On the other hand, there has been an escalation in such violations by unofficial parties, encouraged by the failure of the Attorney-General to investigate these crimes and prosecute their perpetrators.

it is noted that attacks on journalists were the most striking form of violation by unofficial parties

### ■ Violations of Freedom of Expression

The year witnessed a continuation of violations of freedom of expression in the OPT. However, the year was distinguished for the decline in such violations by official parties. In addition, it is noted that attacks on journalists were the most striking form of violation by unofficial parties.

#### Violations of Freedom of Expression by Official Parties:

As stated, there was a decline in the number of incidents of violation of freedom of expression by official parties in 2006. Nonetheless, PCHR documented these violations, which included:

- On 11 May 2006 Palestinian police prevented the journalists Basem Abdallah (cameraman for Palestine TV) and Bassam Masoud (cameraman for Reuters) from taking pictures in the evacuated settlement of Muraj in the southern Gaza Strip. It is noted that the land in the area was looted by armed groups.
- On 20 May 2006, members of the General Intelligence Apparatus beat and humiliated a group of journalists in Shifa Hospital in Gaza City. The journalists were covering the aftermath of the explosion that hit the General Intelligence headquarters in Gaza City in the morning. The explosion resulted in the death of one General Intelligence

operative and the injury of 10 others, including the Director of General Intelligence “General Tariq Shneiwra (Abu Rajab).”

### Violations of Freedom of Expression by Unofficial Parties:

These violations included attacks on international journalists as well as international workers in foreign institutions and cultural centers. During the year, eight journalists (including 6 internationals) were abducted by armed Palestinian groups. The kidnappings lasted from several hours to several days. The kidnappers released their captives without harm. One such incident took place on 14 August 2006, an armed group abducted Steve Centanni, a 60-year old correspondent for Foxnews; Olaf Wiig, a 35-year old freelance cameraman working for Foxnews; and Khalil El-Fishawi, a 25-year old Palestinian fixer. The group that called itself the “Holy Jihad Battalions” demanded in a statement on 23 August 2006 that the US administration release Muslim prisoners in American jails in exchange for the journalists. On 27 August 2007, the journalists were released after a video tape was sent to the media showing their conversion to Islam.

During the year, eight journalists (including 6 internationals) were abducted by armed Palestinian groups

### ■ Violations of the Right to Peaceful Assembly

The year 2006 witnessed dozens of public meetings, demonstrations, and sit-ins throughout the OPT. Most of them did not adhere to the conditions set in the Executive Bill of the law governing such actions, noting PCHR’s reservations over this bill. Some of these demonstrations witnessed violations by their organizers and participants who did not act peacefully, and attacked public and private institutions. In some incidents, attacks were perpetrated against international organizations working in the OPT in a manner that has seriously undermined the reputation of the Palestinian people internationally, and affected the lobbying of international public opinion in favor of Palestinian independence and freedom. In addition, PCHR registered some violations of the “right to peaceful assembly” by official parties.

### Violations to the “Right to Peaceful Assembly” by Official Parties:

- On 29 August 2006 hundreds of Palestinian police prevented a peaceful march of nearly 1,000 teachers in Ramallah. The march was in support of the Palestinian government and detained PLC members, and against the diplomatic and international boycott of the Palestinian people. The demonstrators tried to reach the Government Office; however, a police line prevented them from reaching it. The police beat demonstrators with their hands and batons, and claimed that the demonstration was not licensed by the Ministry of Interior. The demonstrators tried to head to the Ministry of Education; but the police prevented them from doing this as well.
- On 3 September 2006 members of the Preventive Security Apparatus fired at demonstrators near the Preventive Security compound in the town of Birzeit near Ramallah. The shooting resulted in the death of Ehab Abed Fayez (20) by a bullet to the chest.

It is noted that a group of people from the Mazra'a Qibleya demonstrated near the compound and demanded the release of Othman Ali and Abdel Moti Othman from the village, who were detained by Preventive Security because of personal disputes with Preventive Security members. The demonstrators threw rocks and empty bottles at the compound. The security forces inside the compound called for a back up force to control the demonstrators. The back up force arrived and shot at the demonstrators, killing Ehab Fayeze.

- On 15 December 2006 a joint force of the Presidential Guard and Police accompanied by gunmen from Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades surrounded Jamal Abdel Naser Mosque in El-Bireh shortly before Friday prayers. When dozens of worshippers moved in a demonstration towards El-Manara square, the Presidential Guards fired at them. The demonstrators threw stones at the security forces and both sides clashed. Fourteen demonstrators and security forces were injured.

### Violations to the “Right to Peaceful Assembly” by Unofficial Parties:

The most notable violations are:

- On 14 March 2006 a large number of demonstrators broke into the British Council in the fourth floor of a building in the Ramallah, and destroyed furniture and equipment. According to eyewitnesses, dozens of protesters broke into the office of the British Council after they had broken its door. They destroyed its contents, including books, computers, compact discs and documents. They also set fire to it and threw some of its contents out of windows. At the same time, a number of protesters, including militants, attacked the office of Amideast in al-Remal neighborhood in Gaza City. They destroyed its windows and damaged its contents. They also raised the PFLP's flag on the office.
- On 5 June 2006 dozens of Hamas supporters, including gunmen, who were participating in the funeral of two victims of internal violence in Khan Yunis, attacked the Palestine TV building near the cemetery where the victims were buried. Shots were fired at the building. At the time of the attack, journalist Bassam Mustafa Abdallah (a cameraman), the station director and four guards were inside. The attackers asked the staff to get out and then proceeded to storm the studio and destroy the equipment inside. The equipment included transmission equipment, cameras, television sets, electricity generators, and communication equipment used by the guards. Shots were fired at the equipment, causing extensive damage.
- On 12 June 2006 a large number of gunmen attacked the Reform Forum newspaper (pro Hamas) in El-Rommana Building in Ramallah. They destroyed the furniture and equipment. The gunmen who perpetrated the attack had participated earlier in a Fatah demonstration that set fire to the Government Office in Ramallah.
- On 8 July 2006 the child Eyad Husam S'rour (16) from Jabalia refugee camp was killed by a bullet in Shifa Hospital in Gaza City. The child was standing near a window in the hospital during a visit to a friend. Gunmen in the funeral procession of a martyr were firing in the air, and a bullet hit the child. He was killed instantly.

PCHR is concerned over the increase in violations perpetrated by unofficial parties on public freedoms. The Centre calls upon the Attorney-General's office to fulfill its legal responsibility, and to intervene by conducting investigations in these crimes in order to prosecute the perpetrators

The violations to the right to peaceful assembly and to freedom of expression by official and non-official parties come as a natural result of the state of security chaos plaguing Palestinian society over the past few years. In addition, these violations stem from the absence of rule of law and the continued failure of the Attorney-General to investigate these crimes and prosecute the perpetrators. The situation worsened after the international community implemented an unjust economic and diplomatic boycott on the Palestinian people and their elected government. The international boycott led to further deterioration of the economic situation in the OPT. In addition, this embargo reduced the ability of the Palestinian government to perform its duties and provide economic, social, and health services to Palestinians. As a result, internal tension increased, and led to an increase in the crime rate and in attacks on the rule of law and on freedoms, including freedom of expression and right to peaceful assembly.

PCHR is concerned over the increase in violations perpetrated by unofficial parties on public freedoms. The Centre calls upon the Attorney-General's office to fulfill its legal responsibility, and to intervene by conducting investigations in these crimes in order to prosecute the perpetrators. The Centre calls upon Palestinians to respect the legal provisions of organizing public assemblies, which is a precondition to demand that others, including the PNA, respect their freedoms and rights. The Centre also calls upon human rights and legal international organizations to lobby their governments so as to put an end to the unjust economic and diplomatic boycott of the Palestinian people. The end of the boycott will be a first step towards enforcing the rule of law and the division of power in the PNA.

PART TWO

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**PCHR'S ACTIVITIES IN 2006**

## Introduction

The previous section of this report has detailed the human rights situation in the OPT in 2006. It shows the unprecedented deterioration in the human right situation in light of grave breaches perpetrated by IOF against the Palestinian civilian population, and the escalation in the state of lawlessness in the OPT. Humanitarian and living conditions in the OPT also deteriorated due to the international financial sanctions imposed on the new Hamas-led Palestinian government, which marked the first time in history that sanctions imposed on people under occupation.

Under these circumstances, PCHR has vowed to implement its plans and activities decided for 2006, with flexible and positive adaptation to field developments and emerging activities.

This section of the report details PCHR's activities in 2006. It details the activities of PCHR's units, participation in regional and international activities, receiving visiting delegations and interviews with the media. It also highlights PCHR's publications in 2006 and PCHR's web site.

### ■ Opening a Branch Office in the West Bank

By the end of 2006, PCHR had completed preparations to open a branch office in Ramallah in the West Bank. The opening of the branch office of Ramallah is the fruit of efforts made by PCHR, especially in the documentation of human rights violations in the West Bank. PCHR already employed a number of field workers in the West Bank since 2003 to document human rights violations there, following the collapse of LAW, with which PCHR used to exchange information. As IOF have continued to escalate human rights violations against Palestinian civilians and property in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, the need for PCHR to have a branch office in the West Bank has become more imperative. This branch office will facilitate the work of field workers in the West Bank in light of the restrictions imposed on the movement between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It will also serve to promote cooperation and coordination between PCHR and human rights and civil society organizations in the West Bank.

### ■ Coordination & Cooperation with Other Human Rights Organizations

The continued deterioration in the human rights situation in the OPT increases the need for cooperation and coordination among human rights organizations. In 2006, PCHR enhanced cooperation and coordination with other Palestinian human rights organizations, through contacts, meetings, exchange of opinions and expertise. This efforts was manifested in joint activities, such as the issuing joint press releases with

other human rights organizations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. PCHR also enhanced contacts with human rights organizations in Israel, especially in the field of legal aid to Palestinian victims of Israeli violations of human rights.

### ■ **International Protection for Palestinian Civilians**

IOF has continued its efforts to ensure international protection for Palestinian civilians from grave breaches of international humanitarian law and human rights law by IOF. In 2006, IOF made more efforts to urge the High Contracting Parties and the Swiss Government, the Depository of the Geneva Conventions, to convene a new conference of the High Contracting Parties to discuss the human rights situation in the OPT and establish new protection mechanisms, including tasking a strong international protection force within the 1967 border. PCHR has always aspired to achieve this goal, especially after the international community had tasked an international force to be deployed on the northern border to protect areas in the north of Israel from rocket attacks following the Israeli offensive on Lebanon.

In the past months, PCHR and International Federation for Human Rights (FDIH), in cooperation with a number of Palestinian, Israeli, Arab and international human rights organizations, made efforts to organize a conference on international protection for Palestinian civilians in OPT in the period 13-15 December 2006 in Geneva. The conference seeks to lobby the Swiss Government as Depository of the Fourth Geneva Convention to convene a meeting of the High Contracting Parties to task a strong international protection force within the OPT to protect Palestinian civilians and their property. Following an evaluation of the situation, PCHR and FDIH decided to postpone the conference as they believed that holding it on the specified period would not achieved its goals. However, PCHR and FDIH will continue their efforts to hold such conference according to future political and field developments.

## Activities of PCHR's Units

### Legal Aid Unit

The unit worked on all activities included in its annual plan for 2006 and made efforts to carry out all of these activities. The unit provides legal assistance to victims of human rights violations.

### Israeli Agenda

The unit carried out all activities set out in its annual plan regarding to providing legal assistance to victim of human rights violations perpetrated by IOF. In 2006, the unit was able to achieve a number of judicial precedents.

#### Output (1)

#### Legal Aid For Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli Jails

- 1) Making efforts to stop torture.
- 2) Providing medical care to prisoners.
- 3) Ensuring the release of prisoners.
- 4) Ensuring better detention conditions.
- 5) Determining the legal status and places of detention of prisoners.
- 6) Reports

#### Activities

The unit continued to provide legal aid for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, through representing them before courts, visiting them and submitting complaints and appeals to concerned bodies. In 2006, 145 Palestinian prisoners benefited from the legal aid provided by the unit.

## ■ Representing Palestinian Prisoners before Israeli Courts

The unit providing legal aid for 145 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, specifying places of their detention, visiting them and representing them before court. The lawyer authorized by the unit conducted 162 visits to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails to check their health conditions and legal status.

## ■ Submitting Complaints and Petitions

### 1. Complaints:

The unit submitted 54 complaints to Israeli official bodies, including the prisons' authority, the attorney general and the military legal advisor:

- In 2006, the unit followed up 13 complaints to stop torture. Three of these complaints were submitted to the Israeli attorney general's office to investigate cases of torture. The other ten complaints were submitted in previous years.
- In 2006, the unit followed up health conditions of 6 prisoners: two complaints were submitted to the Israeli Prison Authority; one complaint was submitted to the Israeli military legal advisor; and the unit followed up the health conditions of 3 other prisoners.
- The unit submitted two complaints to the Israeli attorney general's office and the Israeli prison authority to release Palestinian prisoners.
- The unit pursued 33 complaints to ensure family visitation to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, including 5 ones from 2005.

The unit was also able to obtain bill of indictments of 32 prisoners, and assisted families of 3 prisoners to pay bails to ensure their release.

### 2. Petitions:

The unit submitted one petition to the Israeli High Court demanding the release of a Palestinian detainee, and submitted 3 petitions to the central court in Bir al Saba (Beer Sheva) to allow family visitation to Palestinian prisoners.

## ■ Providing Medical Care to Prisoners

The unit coordinates and cooperates with a number of Israeli health care organizations, including Physicians for Human Rights and the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, to follow up health conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails through providing physicians who visit the prisoners. In 2006, the unit, in cooperation with Physicians for Human Rights, sent a physician to visit a Palestinian prisoner to check his health condition.

## ■ Legal Consultation to Victims

In 2006, the unit continued to receive clients at PCHR's offices in Gaza, Khan Yunis and Jabalya. The unit lawyers provided 512 legal consultations to clients.

## ■ Reports

The unit writes legal reports when necessary. In 2006, the unit issued two reports:

1. Deprived of Freedom: Report on Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli Occupation Jails. The report was published on the Palestinian Prisoners' Day.
2. Israeli Manipulation of Legal Instruments.

### Indicators

- The unit provided legal aid to 145 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- 30 prisoners, whose cases were pursued by the unit, were released, including 26 ones who were released without any charge and 4 ones who were released at the end of their imprisonment sentences.
- The lawyer authorized by the unit conducted 162 visits to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- The Israeli High Court approved an appeal submitted by the unit to stop the deportation of a Palestinian detainee.
- The Israeli attorney general's office initiated an investigation into one of the complaints submitted by the unit against torture. However, the unit has not received any responses to 9 other complaints submitted in the same context.
- The unit followed up health conditions of 6 Palestinian prisoners to ensure better health conditions for them.
- A number of families were allowed to visit to detained relatives following the unit's intervention with concerned bodies.
- The unit provided 512 legal consultations to hundreds of clients.
- 2000 copies of the two reports issued by the unit were printed.
- The two reports received notable attention from key specialists.

### Means of Verification

- The number of Palestinians arrested from the Gaza Strip increased and the unit pursued cases of 145 of these detainees.
- The Israeli High Court ordered the release of a Palestinian prisoner, which constituted a judicial precedent.
- The unit received a negative response to a complaint related to the torture of a Palestinian prisoner.
- Some prisoners were visited by PCHR lawyers more than once.
- The unit received two positive responses with regard to allowing family visitation to

Palestinian prisoners.

- The unit found out that 6 prisoners were suffering from health problems.
- The unit received a positive verbal response from the Israeli military legal advisor with regard to a Palestinian detainees.
- An Israeli court issued 3 decisions allowing family visitation to Palestinian prisoners.
- The unit provided 512 legal consultations to clients.
- The number of clients notably increased.
- All copies of the reports issued by the unit were disseminated.
- There were increasing demands to obtain copies of the two reports.

## Output (2)

### Legal Aid for Victims of Israeli Violations of International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law

- 1) Compensation for victims
- 2) Making use of universal jurisdiction.

#### 1) Compensation for Victims

To achieve this output, the unit carried out a number of activities as set out in its annual plan:

##### ■ Legal Documentation

The unit has continued to document Israeli violation of human rights. In 2006, the unit documented 333 files on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights as shown in the following table.

Table (1):  
Legal Files Prepared  
by the Unit on Israeli  
Violations of Human  
Rights in 2006

Violation	Number of Files
Killing	106
Injuries	143
Destruction of property	70
Robbery of property	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>333</b>

##### ■ Submitting Legal Complaints on Behalf of Victims to Concerned Bodies

In 2006, the unit pursued 333 complaints from Palestinian civilians who were subject to Israeli violations of human rights. These complaints were submitted to the Israeli military prosecutor and the compensation officer at the Israeli Ministry of Defense, demanding reparation for the victims. They included cases of killing, injury, torture and destruction and robbery of property.

Table (2):  
Complaints  
Regarding Cases of  
Killing, Injuries and  
Destruction and  
Robbery of Property  
and Results of  
Pursuits in 2006

Subject of Complaint	Number of Complaints	Current Status
Killing	106	Still being pursued
Injuries	143	Still being pursued
Destruction of private property	70	Still being pursued
Robbery of private property	14	Still being pursued
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>	

In the addition, the unit sent 343 written notices to the Israeli Defense Ministry in 2005, in accordance with amendments made on 24 July 2002 to the compensation law. It also sent reminding letters to the Israeli military prosecutor, the Israeli military legal advisor and the compensation office at the Israeli Ministry of Defense concerning complaints submitted in 2005. The unit further provided affidavits and medical reports upon the Israeli military prosecutor's request with regard to a complaint submitted in 2005. Also in 2006, the unit submitted an appeal to the Israeli military commander in the West Bank concerning the closure and confiscation of contents of a sports club.

#### ■ Claims Before the Israeli Judiciary

In 2006, the unit sued 45 claims before the Israeli judiciary against the State of Israel on behalf of victims of Israeli violations of human rights, including killings, injuries and house demolitions. The unit demanded compensation for the victims. In addition, the unit pursued 42 cases from 2004 and 2005.

#### ■ Petitioning Against the Civil Wrongs Law

In an attempt to exempt themselves of responsibility for human rights violations they perpetrate in the Gaza Strip, IOF continued to implement amendments to the Civil Wrongs (Liability of the State) Law, which were passed by the Israeli Knesset at the end of July 2005 and entered into force on 10 August 2005. Nine human rights organizations, including PCHR, submitted a petition to the Israeli High Court on 1 September challenging the amendments to the Civil Wrongs Law. On 12 December 2006, the Israeli High Court decided that the State of Israel cannot exempt itself from paying compensation to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza who have been harmed by IOF.

#### Indicators

##### • Report on Activities

In light of amendments to the Civil Wrongs (Liability of the State) Law, which were

passed by the Israeli Knesset in July 2005 and entered into force on 10 August 2005, 9 human rights organizations, including PCHR, submitted a petition to the Israeli High Court challenging these amendments. On 12 December 2006, the Israeli High Court decided that the State of Israel cannot exempt itself from paying compensation to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza who have been harmed by IOF. Thus, IOF has resumed pursuing 87 compensation claims submitted in 2006 and preceding years.

- **Compensation Payments**

1. The unit reached a financial compromise regarding the compensation for the family of Mahmoud Hassan Ahmed al-Talalqa, who was killed by IOF. This case had been the first one to receive compensation from IOF since the beginning of the current Intifada, and constituted a precedent.
2. Israeli occupation authorities pledged to pay compensation for two Palestinians whose goods were destroyed at Rafah International Crossing Point.

- **Cancellation of Amendments to the Civil Wrongs Law**

<b>Means of Verification</b>
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- The unit followed up 333 cases of victims of Israeli human rights violations, including killing, injuries and destruction and robbery of private property.
- In 2006, the unit received a number of responses from Israeli official bodies to its correspondences.

Table (3):  
Responses Received  
by the Unit from  
Israeli Authorities in  
2006

Concerned Party	Positive	Negative	Under pursuit	Total
Compensation officer at Defense Ministry	Nil	262	125	387
Israeli military prosecutor	Nil	Nil	10	10
Israeli attorney general's office	Nil	1	Nil	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>398</b>

Note: All responses received from the compensation officer at the Israeli Ministry of Defense were based on amendments to the Civil Wrongs Law which were later repealed.

<b>Notable Decisions</b>
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- On 1 November 2006, Gdaira magistrate court approved two agreements signed between a PCHR lawyer and the Israeli attorney general's office concerning payment of compensation for the destruction of Palestinian goods at Rafah International

Crossing Point.

- On 12 December 2006, the Israeli High Court decided that the State of Israel cannot exempt itself from paying compensation to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza who have been harmed by IOF. This decision came in response to a petition submitted by PCHR and 8 other Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations challenging amendments to the Civil Wrongs Law.

#### Judicial Precedents

- Paying compensation to the family of Mahmoud al-Talalqa, a Palestinian child who was killed by IOF in the northern Gaza Strip on 1 March 2002.
- The Israeli High Court ruling abolishing amendments to the Civil Wrongs Law.
- Paying compensation for the destruction of Palestinian goods at Rafah International Crossing Point by IOF following an agreement between a PCHR lawyer and the Israeli attorney general's office.

## 2) Making Use of Universal Jurisdiction

### 1. Prosecution of War Criminals

To achieve this output, the unit carried out a number of activities as set out in its annual plan:

#### ■ Legal Documentation

The unit has continued to document Israeli violation of human rights. In 2006, the unit documented 333 files on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights as shown in the following table.

Table (4):  
Legal Files Prepared  
by the Unit on Israeli  
Violations of Human  
Rights in 2006

Violation	Number of Files
Killing	106
Injuries	143
Destruction of property	70
Robbery of property	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>333</b>

#### ■ Claims Before the Israeli Judiciary

In 2006, the unit sued 45 claims before the Israeli judiciary against the State of Israel on behalf of 108 victims of Israeli violations of human rights, including killings, injuries and house demolitions. The unit demanded compensation for the victims.

## ■ **Contacts with International Attorneys and Legal Experts**

In 1006, the unit established contacts with international attorneys and legal experts in the contexts of its efforts to search for and prosecute Israeli war criminals. The Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) and PCHR brought a class action lawsuit today against Avi Dichter, the former Director of Israel's General Security Service, on behalf of the Palestinians who were killed or injured in a 2002 air strike in Gaza.

### **Indicators**

- In 2006, the unit continued its efforts to prosecute Israeli war criminals before national judiciaries in a number of States.
- The work to seek prosecution for Major General Doron Almog in the UK continues with some positive developments.
- Movement of a number of Israeli officials responsible for war crimes against Palestinians has been restricted in a number of countries due to claims brought against them before courts.
- On 27 November 2006, the District Court at Auckland in New Zealand issued an arrest warrant against Moshe Ya'alon, former Israeli Chief of Staff, on suspicion of committing a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention 1949. On 28 November, the Attorney-General filed papers directing the District Court to stay the prosecution permanently, so the arrest warrants were extinguished. The Attorney-General has given no reasons for staying the prosecution, despite the ruling of the judge that there were 'good and sufficient reasons' to justify the arrest of Moshe Ya'alon.

### **Means of Verification**

- This issue has a special Palestinian, Israeli and international legal attention.
- Raising this issue can deter many individuals from committing war crimes fearing from being prosecuted before the international judiciary.
- Wide publication in the press, available on PCHR's website under the section Universal Jurisdiction.

## **2. Consultative Meetings on Universal Jurisdiction**

PCHR, in conjunction with International Federation for Human Rights, Hickman and Rose Solicitors and al Quds Association, organized a conference from 28-30 April 2006 in Malaga, Spain on universal jurisdiction, in order to support the rule of law and the struggle against impunity.

### **Indicators**

- During the gathering, committed professionals - lawyers, human rights defenders, representatives of NGOs and international solidarity committees- from the Americas,

from Asia and from Europe, presented findings, and shared experiences, in universal jurisdiction cases spanning four continents.

- The participants of the conference called on the international community to use all legal mechanisms to pursue those accused of war crimes, irrespective of the nationality of the victim or the accused.
- They requested the support of international civil society in strengthening the rule of law and preventing further erosion of established and accepted human rights norms.

#### Means of Verification

- The conference was organized by PCHR, in conjunction with 3 human rights organizations. Participants from 4 continents attended the conference which continued for 3 days.
- Palestinian legal experts, excluding Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, were not able to participate in the conference due to restrictions imposed by IOF on the movement of Palestinians, including the closure of Rafah International Crossing Point.

### Output (3)

#### Legal Aid to Those Who Are Denied Freedom of Movement

The unit continued to provide legal aid for Palestinian civilians with regard to restrictions imposed on their freedom of movement. To achieve this, the unit carried out a number of activities as set out in its annual plan.

#### ■ Complaints Regarding Freedom of Movement

The unit pursued 121 complaints in 2006, including 81 ones from 2004. The unit submitted complaints to the Israeli military legal advisor.

Table (5):  
Complaints  
Regarding Freedom  
of Movement and  
Results of Pursuits in  
2006

Subject of Complaint	Number of Complaints	Current Status
Denial of travel for medical treatment	16	9 positive responses, 3 negative responses, 2 are still being pursued and 2 have received no responses
Denial of travel to the West Bank	6	2 positive responses, 2 are still being pursued and 2 have received no responses
Denial of entry into Israel to apply for visas	3	One positive response, and two others have received no responses
Denial of work inside Israel	15	7 positive responses, 7 negative responses, and one has received no response

Denial of accompanying patients	4	2 positive responses, one negative response, one is still being pursued
Denial of travel abroad	32	No responses
Denial of renewal of magnetic cards and cancellation of permits	22	No responses
Denial of travel abroad for medical treatment	21	No responses
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>21 positive, 11 negative, 5 are still being pursued, and 84 have received no responses</b>

The unit also submitted 3 appeals to the Israeli High Court in respect of freedom of movement.

Table (6):  
Appeals Submitted  
to the Israeli High  
Court in 2006  
Concerning Freedom  
of Movement

Subject	Number of Appeals	Current Status	Notes
Denial of entry into Israel for medical treatment	2	2 positive responses	
Reopening Rafah International Crossing Point	1	The case was cancelled as the crossing point was reopened	The appeal was submitted in cooperation with a number of human rights organizations
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3 positive responses</b>	

#### ■ Networking with Human Rights Organizations

PCHR has strong relations with a number of human rights organizations to help ensure the freedom of movement of Palestinian civilians. In this context, PCHR has relations with Physician for Human Rights in Israel, the ICRC and UNRWA.

#### Indicators

- In 2006, the unit pursued 133 complaints concerning freedom of movement.
- The unit submitted 3 appeals to Israeli courts with regard to the freedom of movement.
- The unit made several interventions with a number of international humanitarian organizations to assist Palestinian civilians during Israeli military incursions into Beit Hanoun town and Abu al-'Ajeen area in the Gaza Strip.

- Patients were satisfied by the assistance provided to them by PCHR.
- 9 patients were medically checked, and the checking was financially covered.

#### Means of Verification

- In 2006, the unit received 21 positive responses and 11 negative ones to its complaints.
- The Israeli High Court issued 3 positive decisions in response to appeals submitted by the unit.
- The unit held two meetings with Physicians for Human Rights and Medecin Du Monde to provide medical aid to Palestinian patients and discuss the conditions of Palestinian travelers blocked at Rafah International Crossing Point.

#### Output (4)

#### Contribution to International Advocacy Projects

##### 1) Contribution to PCHR's Interventions with UN Bodies

In 2006, the unit did not contribute to interventions with UN bodies.

##### 2) Testifying before the UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices

The unit director was not able to testify before the UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, which held sessions in Cairo, as he was not able to travel to Egypt due to the closure of Rafah International Crossing Point. The Committee postponed its meeting 3 times to allow participants to attend it, but they were not able to attend the meeting due to the closure of border crossings.

##### 3) Providing Assistance to International Organizations and Inquiry Missions

In 2006, the unit held meetings with, provided assistance to a number of international human rights organizations which were interested in the human rights situation in the OPT:

- 24 April: A delegation of Amnesty International.
- June: A delegation of Human Rights Watch.
- 11 June: The UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories and an accompanying delegation.
- 31 August: A delegation of Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network and International Federation for Human Rights.
- 20 November: UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- 6 December: The UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
- 9 December: Secretary General of Amnesty International.

### Indicator

Information provided by PCHR was incorporated in reports written by international human rights organizations.

### Means of Verification

- PCHR provided assistance to 7 committees of 5 international bodies.
- These committees incorporated legal information provided by the unit about human rights violations in the OPT in their reports.
- These committees are of the most important ones working on human rights violations in the OPT.

## Output (5)

### Raising Awareness of Legal Rights

#### 1. Legal Consultation to Clients

Legal consultation is a means of raising awareness legal rights. Legal consultations were made through referrals from PCHR's offices in Gaza City, Jabalya and Khan Yunis. In 2006, 1235 individuals referred to the unit for basic legal consultations. The unit lawyers provided 536 legal consultations on various issues.

### Indicator

Clients were satisfied with legal services provided by the unit.

### Means of Verification

- There was an increase in the number of clients seeking legal consultations (1235).
- There was an increase in the number of legal consultations provided by the unit (536).

#### 2. Participation in Training Activities Organized by PCHR

The unit contributed to 8 training courses organized by PCHR. Staff members of the unit delivered lectures on legal rights, the concept of the rule of law, prisoners' rights and Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials:

- On 28 June 2006, the unit staff members delivered a lecture on the rule of law and independence of the judiciary in a training course organized by PCHR on human rights and democracy, which targeted staff members of local NGOs.
- On 2 August 2006, the unit staff members delivered a lecture on Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials in a training course organized by PCHR on women's rights, which targeted female police officers.

- On 3 August 2006, the unit staff members delivered a lecture on women's rights in a training course organized by PCHR on women's rights, which targeted female police officers.
- On 17 August 2006, the unit staff members delivered a lecture on Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials in a training course organized by PCHR on women's rights, which targeted female police officers.
- On 17 August 2006, the unit staff members delivered a lecture on women's rights in a training course organized by PCHR on women's rights, which targeted female police officers.
- On 30 August 2006, the unit staff members delivered a lecture on women's rights in a training course organized by PCHR on women's rights, which targeted female police officers.
- On 31 August 2006, the unit staff members delivered a lecture on Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials in a training course organized by PCHR on women's rights, which targeted female police officers.
- On 21 November 2006, the unit staff members delivered a lecture on the rule of law and independence of the judiciary in a training course organized by PCHR on human rights and democracy, which targeted staff members of local NGOs.

#### Indicators

- Trainees' feedback: The trainees demonstrated effective interaction with their trainers and their evaluation of the courses was positive.

#### Means of Verification

- In 2006, the unit staff members delivered 8 lectures in training courses organized by PCHR.
- The number of trainees who participated in these courses was 147.
- A unit lawyer submitted a working paper on civil and political rights at a conference on human rights organized by Asyout University in Egypt in the period 13-15 March 2006.

### Output (6)

#### Providing Legal Aid to Ensure the Release Bodies of Palestinians Held by IOF

In 2006, the unit pursued 17 cases of requests for return of victims' bodies, including cases from previous years. IOF have continued to hold the bodies of some Palestinians, refusing to deliver them to their families for burial in violation of humanitarian norms.

#### Indicator

IOF have continued to hold the bodies of some Palestinians, refusing to deliver them to their families for burial.

### Means of Verification

- The unit pursued 17 cases of requests for return of victims' bodies.
- The unit received a verbal response from the office of the Israeli military legal advisor that the issue was under consideration with the Palestinian Liaison.

### Hindrances

IOF have continued to use this issue for political extortion, in violation of humanitarian norms.

## Palestinian Agenda

In 2006, the OPT witnessed aspects of lawlessness in the streets and strikes in the public sector, which impacted activities conducted by the unit.

### Output (1)

#### Providing Legal Aid for Prisoners in Palestinian Jails

- 1) Appeals against unjust sentences
- 2) Abolition of state security courts
- 3) Ensuring appropriate detention conditions
- 4) Ensuring the release of political prisoners
- 5) Retrial of those who had been convicted by state security courts

To achieve this output, the unit carried out a number of activities as set out in its annual plan:

- 1) Appeals Against Unjust Sentences
- 2) Abolition of State Security Courts

To achieve this output, the unit carried out a number of activities as set out in its annual plan.

#### ■ Monitoring Court Sessions

The unit lawyers monitored trials at civil courts, especially criminal ones, to ensure just trials for the accused persons.

### Indicator

The unit repeatedly demanded the abolition of state security courts, as they are illegal. However, these courts have continued to operate.

### Means of Verification

No meetings were held to discuss this issue.

### 3) Ensuring Appropriate Detention Conditions

To achieve this output, the unit carried out a number of activities as set out in its annual plan.

#### ■ Complaints Regarding Illegal Detention

- The unit submitted 8 complaints regarding the illegal detention of persons: 7 complaints were submitted to the Attorney General and the eighth one was submitted to the Minister of Interior.
- The unit sent 4 letters to the Director General of Reform and Rehabilitation Centers to permit the visitation of Gaza Central Prison.
- The unit submitted a petition to the Palestinian High Court of Justice demanding the release of a detainee who was arrested illegally.

### Indicators

- The unit conducted 3 visits to Gaza Central Prison, in which they visited 5 prisoners.
- The unit held a meeting with the Director General of Reform and Rehabilitation Centers to discuss measures taken by prison administrations against prisoners.
- The unit submitted one petition to the Palestinian High Court of Justice demanding the release of a detainee who was arrested illegally.
- Three prisoners were released following the unit's intervention.

### Means of Verification

- The unit received 4 positive responses: including one from the Attorney General, concerning the release of detainees; and 3 ones from the Director General of Reform and Rehabilitation Centers permitting visitation of Gaza Central Prison.
- Prisoners detained in Gaza Central Prison were interested in visits conducted by the unit lawyers.

### 4) Ensuring the Release of Political Prisoners

#### ■ Complaints

The unit submitted 4 complaints to the Attorney General demanding the release of 4 political prisoners from the West Bank.

### Indicator

The four political prisoners were released.

### Means of Verification

The unit received 4 positive responses from the Attorney General concerning the release of the prisoners.

## 5) Retrial of Those Who Had Been Convicted by State Security Courts

### ■ Meetings and Correspondences

The unit has repeatedly demanded concerned official bodies to abolish state security courts and retry those who had been convicted by them before the civil judiciary to ensure fair trials, especially following a decision taken by the Palestinian President ordering a retrial for those who had been sentenced to death by state security court before the civil judiciary. For this purpose, the unit held a number of meetings with the ICRC and the head of the human rights department at the Attorney General's office to discuss this issue. It also sent a letter to the Director General of Reform and Rehabilitation Centers.

### Indicators

- The unit held 3 meetings with the head of the human rights department at the Attorney General's office and the ICRC.
- The unit sent a letter to the Director General of Reform and Rehabilitation Centers.
- Civil courts have been considering cases of those who had been tried before state security courts.

### Means of Verification

- The unit documented 8 cases, which were referred to the civil judiciary for retrial.
- The unit received one negative verbal response from the Director General of Reform and Rehabilitation Centers concerning its request to obtain lists of those who had been sentenced to death.

### Hindrances

The Palestinian Legislative Council was not able to hold sessions and enact laws due arrests campaigns waged by IOF against its members, and the state of lawless continued to plague the OPT.

- 1) Ensuring the application of the Civil Service Law
- 2) Ensuring the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly

### 1) Ensuring the Application of the Civil Service Law

#### ■ Complaints & Claims Before Courts on Behalf of Victims of the Misuse of Authority

In 2006, the unit pursued 119 complaints on behalf of Palestinians with regard to the misuse of authority, including 3 ones that had been pursued since 2005. The unit also pursued 19 relevant claims before Palestinian courts, including 6 ones from 2005.

Table (7):  
Complaints and  
Appeals Submitted  
by the Unit to  
Official Bodies in  
2006

Official Body	Number	Result
UNRWA	1	Neutral
General Personnel Council	28	3 positive responses, 12 negative responses, 6 are still being pursued and two were cancelled
Ministry of Finance	8	2 positive responses, 3 negative ones and 3 ones have received no responses
General Corporation of Insurance and Severance Pay	5	3 negative responses and 2 ones are still being pursued
Municipality of Gaza	6	5 positive responses and one is still being pursued
Palestinian Chamber of Commerce	1	Positive
Ministry of Interior	4	No responses
Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs	6	Positive
Ministry of Education	3	One positive response, one negative and one has received no response
Ministry of Local Government	3	Positive responses
Governorate of Northern Gaza	1	Positive
Environment Authority	1	positive

Ministry of Health	35	One positive response, one negative response, 31 one are still being pursued and one has received no response
Palestine Airlines	1	Negative
President's Office	3	They are still being pursued
Higher Sharia' Judge	3	Negative responses
Ministry of Housing and Public Works	5	One positive response, 1 negative, 1 neutral and two have received no responses
Palestine Red Crescent Society	1	No responses
Ministry of Social Affairs	2	Positive responses
Municipality of Nusairat	1	Positive
Municipality Police	1	No response
Violation of Legal Orders	3	2 negative responses and one has received no response
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>28 positive responses, 27 negative responses, two neutral response, 43 are still being pursued, two were cancelled and 17 have not received any response</b>

Table (8):  
Cases Pursued by the  
Unit Before Palestin-  
ian Courts in 2006

Case	Number of Cases	Current Status	Notes
Payment a bonus to an employee for knowledge of a language	1	Negative	
Employment of an engineer as a lecturer at the College of Science and Technology	1	Under pursuit	
Employment of a teacher	1	Positive	The court cancelled the case as the teacher was employed in 2005
Payment of financial rights to employees	5	Under pursuit	Under pursuit since 2005
Rejection against the decrease of a salary	1	Positive	The case had been pursued since 2005

Rejection against a decision issued by the Higher Judiciary Council	1	Under pursuit	
Rejection against the prevention of the implementation of a decision issued by the High Court of Justice	1	Under pursuit	
Rejection of stopping the promotion of two employees and paying their bonuses retroactively	2	Under pursuit	
Demanding the implementation of a decision issued by the High Court of Justice	1	Under pursuit	The court is being considered by Gaza initial proceeding court
Changing a job title	2	Positive	The two cases had been pursued since 2005
Rejection against the amendment of the graduation year of a university student	1	Under pursuit	The case has been pursued since 2005
Rejection against the non-registration of a charity by the Ministry of Interior	1	Under pursuit	The case has been pursued since 2005
Severance payment of an employee	1	Negative	
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4 positive responses, two negative ones and 13 are still being pursued</b>	

#### Indicators

- The unit submitted 119 complaints to the Attorney General and concerned bodies on behalf of victims of the misuse of authority.
- The unit pursued 19 cases before Palestinian courts.

**Means of Verification**

- Palestinian courts issued 6 rulings; 4 positive ones and two negative ones.
- The unit received 57 responses to its complaints: 28 positive responses; 27 negative ones; and two neutral ones.

**Hindrances**

- In 2006, the Palestinian judiciary suspended work at court in protest to the non-payment of salaries starting from September. Thus, the consideration of all cases was postponed to unknown time.
- Some court rulings were not respected.
- The state of lawlessness has persisted, which has obstructed organizing workshops.

**2) Ensuring the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Peaceful Assembly**

The unit was not able to carry out this activity due to the situation in the OPT, which has been characterized by a state of lawlessness.

**Output (3)**

**Legal Aid to Victims of Lawlessness**

- 1) Ensuring bringing the kidnappers of internationals to justice
- 2) Making efforts to stop attacks on public property
- 3) Confronting the state of lawlessness and the proliferation of weapons

To achieve this output, the unit carried out a number of activities:

- The unit submitted a complaint to the Attorney General demanding investigations into the kidnappings of internationals and bringing the perpetrators to justice.
- The unit held a meeting with the head of human rights department at the Attorney General’s office for this purpose.
- The unit held a meeting with the head of property department in Khan Yunis to identify areas of land that had been taken over.
- The unit gathered affidavits from victims of the state of lawlessness and built legal files.
- The unit submitted pursued 5 complaints submitted to the Attorney General on behalf of victims of the state of lawlessness, including two complaints from 2005.
- The unit continued to pursue 3 cases before Gaza initial proceedings court concerning the murder of 3 prisoners in Gaza Central Prison by gunmen who broke into the prison in 2005.

**Indicators**

- The meetings were held.

- The unit pursued 5 complaints related to murdering persons by gunmen submitted to the Attorney General.
- The Attorney General office has failed to prosecute murders in the cases for which the unit submitted complaints.
- The Gaza initial proceedings court issued 3 decisions suspending the consideration of claims of compensation related to murdering 3 prisoners in Gaza Central Prison until the criminal court finishes the consideration of the case.

**Means of Verification**

The unit has received no responses to complaints submitted to the Attorney General on behalf on victims of the state of lawlessness and proliferation of small arms.

**Hindrances**

- The state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons has persisted in the OPT.
- The Palestinian National Authority has failed to enforce the law and order.

**Output (4)**

**Legal Aid During Elections**

The unit followed up court sessions related to challenges against the results of Palestinian parliamentary elections, which were held in January 2006, submitted by Change and Reform Block and Fatah movement to the Election Court. The court rejected all challenges. The unit also followed up the challenge submitted by Yahia Mohammed Shamiya concerning changing his number in Fatah electoral bloc.

**Indicator**

The unit documented 7 challenges against the results of elections in 2006 through attending court sessions.

**Means of Verification**

- The unit documented 7 challenges.
- The Election Court rejected all challenges.

**Output (5)**

**Legal Aid for Victims of Medical Negligence**

■ **Submitting Complaints**

In 2006, the unit pursued 5 complaints, including 3 ones from 2005, submitted on behalf on victims of medical negligence demanding investigation and reparation.

### ■ Documentation

Before submitting complaints, the unit gather information and build legal files. Based on these files, in 2006, the unit submitted two complaints related to medical negligence to Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Attorney General.

### ■ Compensation Claims Before Courts

The unit issued a compensation claim before Gaza initial proceedings court demanding compensation for the deaths of two twins due to medical negligence.

#### Indicators

- An inquiry committee was formed to investigate a case of medical negligence and a bill of indictment was presented against the perpetrators.
- Two people benefited from the compensation claim issued by the unit before the Gaza initial proceedings court.

#### Means of Verification

- The unit received a positive response that the investigation into the case of Huda al-Sharif was concluded and a bill of indictment was to be presented against the perpetrators.
- The unit issued one case to the Gaza initial proceeding court.
- The unit submitted two complaints.
- Clients were satisfied by the legal aid provided by the unit.

#### Hindrances

- The unit faces difficulties in following up complaints relevant to medical negligence due to the lack of appropriate medical equipment at hospitals and medical centers.

### Project of the Promotion of the Palestinian Judiciary

It is an EU-funded project implemented by 4 organizations: Icon Institute – Germany; PCHR; Association For Cultural Technical And Educational Cooperation – Belgium; and Center for International Legal Cooperation – Holland. The project aims at developing an effective independent Palestinian judiciary based on the Basic Law and the Judicial Authority Law. Its activities include:

- Capacity building at the Higher Judiciary Council through consultations with regard to institutional development.
- Development of the Constitutional Court and administrative courts and provision of consultations with regard to institutional development.

- Training judges, prosecutors and administrative staff at court (at least 130 judges and 90 prosecutors).
- Specifying the needs of courts, prosecution offices and the Higher Judiciary Council in the field of information technology.

**In 2006, the following activities were carried out:**

- August – October 2006: Training staff members of the judiciary in the field of information technology.
- August 2006: All process servers and informants at courts in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were trained. Two judges attended the training courses as observers. The courses focused on definition of judicial notification documents; the role of process servers in notification; the role of informants; the role of archives officers; duties of notification departments; proposed process of notification; professional prohibitions; professional hindrances; rights, obligations and penal measures related to the process of notification.
- A workshop on the Palestinian Insurance Law of 2005 (13-14 September 2006): All judges and 20 staff members of courts participated in the workshop, which was held in Jerusalem International Hotel. The workshop explained the law, its application and hindrances that face the application of the law.
- A workshop for judges in the West Bank on 30 and 31 August 2006: The workshop discussed the judicial professional morals, court rulings and the administration of cases.
- Participation in preparing a comparative study on judicial training and judicial education centers in the Arab World and Europe.
- Evaluation of STA report on the administrative judicial authority.

The project is currently holding a training course for 5 judges from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on judicial inspection.

The unit was able to implement all the activities set out in its 2006 annual plan, in addition to a number of other activities to meet changes in the surrounding environment. In 2006, the unit devoted special efforts, in cooperation with other civil society organizations, to monitor the Palestinian parliamentary elections, which were held in January. The unit further focused on the internal situation in the OPT, namely the state of lawlessness. In June 2006, in light of the results of the Palestinian parliamentary elections, which brought Hamas to power for the first time since the establishments of the Palestinian National Authority, the unit organized a conference on the new Palestinian government and human rights. The conference was one of the most important activities carried out by PCHR in 2006. although some minor changes were necessary taking into account events on the ground in the OPT. Activities included in the 2005 annual plan are detailed below and their implementation is measured through verifiable indicators and means of verification.

### Output (1)

#### **Raising Awareness of the International Community and the Local Public on Violations of Civil and Political Rights and International Human Rights Law in the OPT**

##### **Activities**

##### **1) PCHR's Annual Report That Contains an Detailed Evaluation of the Human Rights Situation in the OPT**

- The report was prepared and published by PCHR at the beginning of March 2006. A separate summary of the report was also published.
- PCHR held a press conference on 22 March 2006, declaring the publication of the report.

##### **2) Special Publications<sup>45</sup>**

- Punishing the Victim: PCHR Position Paper on the Decision to Stop International Aid to the Palestinian National Authority, published in April 2006.
- Reprisals against Civilians: Report on Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) Violations Against Palestinian Civilians in the Gaza Strip for the Period from the Palestinian Paramilitary Operation on 25 June 2006 Till 31 July 2006, published in August 006.
- Illusions of Withdrawal: Report on Israeli Violations of Human Rights in the Gaza Strip One Year Following the Implementation of the Disengagement Plan, published in October 2006.

##### **3) Press Releases and Other Media Outputs**

- The unit issued 35 press releases on Palestinian violations of human rights.
- In light of the escalation in the state of lawlessness,

<sup>45</sup> These publications were not included in the unit's annual plan, but there were prepared in response to developments related to the escalation in human rights violations perpetrated by IOF against Palestinian civilians, and the international boycott of the new Palestinian government following the parliamentary elections.

the unit started to write field updates related to the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons, which are published on PCHR's web page. Information included in these updates is gathered by PCHR Filed Work Unit. By the end of November 2006, the unit had written 193 filed updates.

- There was a special focus on raising awareness against violence against women, especially killings related to family honor. This issue was highlighted in field updates on the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons.

#### 4) Meetings and Contacts

The unit staff members participated in a number of meetings both locally and internationally, including interviews with the media.

1. The unit staff members made 42 media interviews on several issues related to human rights and democracy, including the death penalty, election, the human rights situation in the OPT and the state of lawlessness. The unit staff members were interviewed by some leading international newspapers, such as the Independent, The Times, International Herald Tribune and Los Angeles Times.<sup>46</sup>
2. The unit staff members participated in dozens of meetings and symposia organized by other civil society organizations. These meetings include two ones, in which unit staff members were main speakers:
  - The unit director submitted a working paper on the state of lawlessness from a human rights perspective at a workshop organized by Palestine Youth Peace Forum in Gaza Sports Club on 27 April 2006.
  - Unit researcher Tariq Mukhaimer submitted a working paper on the position of the law and human rights towards partisan intolerance at a conference on the culture of tolerance organized by al-Widad Association for Community Rehabilitation in Gaza on 4 December 2006.
3. The unit staff members participated in a number of meetings between PCHR and international figures.<sup>47</sup>

#### Indicators

- Local, regional and international media reported on these activities.
- A number of local and international organizations used information included in the unit's publications.
- Demands for information published by PCHR.
- Positive feedbacks.

#### Means of Verification

- The press conference declaring the publication of PCHR's annual report was shown live on al-Jazeera Live on 22 March 2006.
- Interviews with the unit staff members were

<sup>46</sup> For more information about media interviews, see P.=

<sup>47</sup> For more information, see P. =

published in local and international newspapers, such as New York Times, The Independent, International Herald Tribune and Los Angeles Times. The unit documents news articles on its activities published in international and local newspapers. For instance, Donald Macintyre, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, The Independent, interviewed the unit director on the situation in the OPT following the Palestinian parliamentary elections, focusing on the killing of children. The interview and other information provided by the unit directors were used in a report on the killing of children published on the first page of The Independent on 19 September 2006. The publication of this report was so important, and al-Quds daily local newspaper on 20 September and the Syrian news agency (Sana) on 19 September.

- A number of interviews were broadcast on radio and television stations.
- The report “Reprisals against Civilians” was submitted to Professor John Dugard, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories, and an updated version of the report was submitted to the Cuban ambassador to Geneva.
- On 5 February, PCHR issued a press release criticizing the continuous operation of the Higher Committee for Local Elections, and calling for its dissolution and the transfer of its authorities to the Central Election Commission in accordance with the law. The press release was widely published in the media, and the Higher Committee for Local Elections called the center to protest against its contents. In the weeks that followed, the Committee was dissolved and its authorities were transferred to the Central Election Commission.

## Output (2)

### **Efforts to Minimize Violations of the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Peaceful Assembly Through Reporting on These Violations**

#### **Activities**

##### **1) Monitoring and Documentation**

The unit staff members monitor and document such violations in conjunction with the Field Work Unit.

##### **2) Periodic Report on Violations of the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Peaceful Assembly**

It is a series of reports that highlight violations of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly under the Palestinian National Authority. A draft of the report covering the period 1 October 2005 – 30 September 2006. By the end of 2006, the report had not been published pending the approval of the PCHR Program Committee.

##### **3) Press Releases**

The unit issued a number of press releases and other publications to expose violations

of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

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#### Indicators

- There was a decrease in official violations on the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.
- There was an escalation by unofficial bodies (armed groups) in violations of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly in the context of the state of lawlessness prevailing in the OPT.

#### Means of Verification

- See the part of the human rights report focusing on such violations.
- The unit documents all news articles reporting on the unit's publications.

### Output (3)

#### Amending the Executive Bill of the Public Meetings Law (12) of 1998

##### Activities

1. The unit prepared a memorandum on the Executive Bill highlighting its contradictions with the law and calling for its abolishment.
2. Letters were sent to the Minister of Interior and members of the Palestinian Legislative Council demanding the abolishment, or at least, the amendment of the Bill.
3. The conference organized by PCHR on the new Palestinian government and human rights was an occasion to raise this issue. The first session of the conferences, which was attended by at least 50 persons representing civil society organizations, political parties, the Palestinian Legislative Council and the judiciary, discussed this issue. The Minister of Interior was supposed to attend the session, but he apologized for emergent security circumstances.

#### Indicators

- Amending the Executive Bill.
- Peaceful Public meetings and activities are organized more freely.

#### Means of Verification

- The Executive Bill has not been amended. It is clear that the escalation in attacks by IOF and the internal situation following the parliamentary elections impacted this activity.
- However, dozens of public meetings and peaceful gatherings were organized without referring to the Executive Bill. It cannot be claimed that this was a direct outcome of only PCHR's activities in 2006, rather it was the fruit of joints efforts by PCHR, other civil society groups and political parties over several years, in addition to the atmosphere that followed the Palestinian parliamentary elections.

### Activities

All activities set out in the unit's annual plan with regard to the abolishment or suspension of the death penalty under the Palestinian National Authority, extra-judicial executions committed by IOF against Palestinians and extra-judicial killings committed by armed Palestinian groups against some persons for alleged collaboration with IOF.

#### 1) Reports, Research Papers and Other Media Outputs

1. Report on Extra-Judicial Executions Committed by Israeli Occupation Forces Against Palestinian Civilians (September 2000 – July 2006), which was published in August 2006.
2. Position Paper: Death Penalty under the Palestinian National Authority, which was published in September 2006.
3. Research Paper: The Death Penalty Between International Human Rights Instruments and Palestinian Laws, which was published in December 2006.
4. Position Paper: Execution for Alleged Collaboration, which was published in 2006.
5. The unit prepared a poster on the World Day Against the Death Penalty.

#### 2) Meetings and Contacts

- The unit organized two workshops in Rafah and Khan Yunis to explain PCHR's position towards the death penalty. The first workshop was held at PCHR's office in Khan Yunis on 21 September 2006, and was attended by 20 representatives of civil society organizations. The second workshop was held at the offices of Sharek Youth Forum in Rafah on 24 September 2006, and was attended by 15 representatives of civil society organizations.
- The unit, in conjunction with PCHR Training Unit, organized a public meeting on the death penalty on 13 December 2006 in Deir al-Balah refugee camp. The meeting was attended by 40 persons.
- On 21 and 22 June 2006, the unit organized a conference on the new Palestinian government and human rights. The second session discussed the death penalty in the context of civil and political rights. Director of PCHR, Raji Sourani, submitted a working paper titled "The Right to Life: Death Penalty under the Palestinian National Authority.
- The unit worked to incorporate the issue of death penalty in training programs implemented by PCHR Training Unit. A session in each training course was devoted to the death penalty and the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. In this context, the unit facilitated 4 training sessions:
  1. A training session at Sahem Association in Gaza City on 20 June, in which 20 trainees participated.

2. A training session at PCHR's offices in Khan Yunis on 27 June, in which 34 trainees representing 10 civil society organizations participated.
  3. A training session at Deor al-Balah Sports Club on 7 November, in which 22 trainees representing 6 civil society organizations participated.
  4. A training session in Rafah on 20 November, in which 35 trainees representing 18 civil society organizations participated.
- The unit was active with the local and international media to explain PCHR's position towards the death penalty.
  - The unit staff members participated in a number of activities organized by civil society organizations to explain PCHR's position towards the death penalty.

#### Indicators

- Amendments to laws.
- Official statements.
- Media coverage of activities.
- Contribution to raising debate in the society over the death penalty.

#### Means of Verification

- No amendments were made to laws that allow the death penalty.
- No death sentences were issued by the Palestinian judiciary nor implemented in 2006.
- Retrying those who were sentenced to death by state security court before civil one, in accordance with a decision taken by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on 22 June 2005, is still ongoing.
- The unit documents media interviews, in which the unit staff members explained PCHR's position towards the death penalty.
- PCHR's position towards the death penalty was supported by some people.
- Discussions at workshops and meetings revealed that the viewpoint supporting the death penalty is still superior over that which rejects it.

#### Output (5)

#### Monitoring the Performance of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) and Urging it to Assume its Full Responsibilities

##### 1) Meetings with PLC Members

A number of PLC members were invited to participate in PCHR's activities. The unit held meetings with a number of PLC members.

##### 2) Attending Sessions and Observing Activities of the PLC

1. The unit staff members attend PLC's sessions.
2. The unit issued a press release on 16 February 2006, in which it expressed reser-

variations over decisions taken in the final session of the outgoing PLC, including creating the posts of “Secretary-General” and “Deputy Secretary-General” in the PLC. PCHR believed that it was unacceptable for the outgoing PLC to convene more than two weeks following the legislative elections to decide on ordinary issues, including staff recruitment, which could be discussed by the new PLC. Holding such a session could only be understood as an attempt by an outgoing majority to pass new laws and decisions before they become a minority in the new PLC.

3. The unit issued 3 press releases condemning attacks on the PLC and its members by gunmen in the context of the state of lawlessness and partisan differences following the parliamentary elections in the OPT.

### 3) A Detailed Study Evaluating the PLC’s Performance (1996-2006)

The unit issued this study titled “Palestinian Legislative Council: 10 Years of the Absent Accountability.” It was published in June 2006.

### 4) A Workshop on the PLC’s Performance

On 9 November 2006, the unit organized a workshop titled “Palestinian Legislative Council: Between Past Failures and Future Ambitions.” Interested people, representatives of civil society groups and a number of human rights activists attended the workshop, which was held in PCHR’s office in Khan Yunis. The discussions focused on a study issued by PCHR on the PLC titled “Palestinian Legislative Council: 10 Years of the Absent Accountability.”

<b>Indicators</b>
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- Media coverage of the unit’s activities.
- More knowledge of PCHR’s work and criticism of its performance.
- Changes to the PLC’s performance related to the unit’s activities.
- Feedbacks.

<b>Means of Verification</b>
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- The unit filed news articles on PCHR’s press release on the final session of the outgoing PLC.
- The new PLC reconsidered decisions taken by the outgoing PLC in its final session.
- The unit files news articles published in newspapers on the unit’s activities.
- The study on the PLC was circulated to PLC members.
- The participants in the unit’s workshop on the PLC highly appreciated PCHR’s role in defending the issues of democracy and human rights, and emphasized the importance of the study the unit made and its conclusions. They also called for widely disseminating the study in the Palestinian society to raise the awareness on the problems and

crises faced by the PLC in its first decade.

- The unit staff members attended 18 PLC sessions in 2006.

## Output (6)

### **Independent and Objective Evaluation of General and Local Elections Organized by the Palestinian National Authority to Encourage Holding Free, Fair and Credible Elections**

#### **■ Observation of the Palestinian Parliamentary Elections on 25 January 2006**

##### **1) Organizing a Campaign to Observe the Election in Conjunction with Other Civil Society Organizations**

1. The campaign was led by PCHR in cooperation with 54 NGOs throughout the Gaza Strip.
2. All stages of the electoral process were monitored: the electoral campaign; prior polling of the police on 21 and 23 January; the polling and counting of votes on 25 January; electoral challenges; and the declaration of final results.
3. The observation was conducted by a crew of observers selected from among persons who had received training courses in human rights and democracy organized by PCHR.
4. The number of observers was 516, including 159 women, who were all accredited by the Central Election Commission.
5. The process of training and rehabilitating the observers, in cooperation with PCHR Training Unit, was completed in January.
6. In each electoral constituency, observers were divided into groups, each of which was managed by a coordinator and supervised by the field worker in the area.
7. Field workers also participated in observing the elections.
8. Most of PCHR staff participated in the observation of elections.
9. The Legal Aid Unit observed the consideration of all challenges submitted to the Election Appeals Court.

##### **2) Reports and Press Releases on the Electoral Process**

1. A report on conclusions of observation of the election campaigns, published on 24 January 2006.
2. A preliminary evaluation on the polling and counting of votes, published on 26 January 2006.
3. A final report on the polling and counting of votes, published in July 2006, after all forms completed by observers in polling stations were verified and analyzed.
4. A number of press releases were issued during the electoral process.
5. A special section on PCHR's web page was devoted to report on all developments related to the electoral process. This section included 22 updates focusing on violations of the election campaigning.

### 3) Intervention with Concerned Bodies (Central Election Commission)

The unit maintained contacts with the Central Elections Commission, including the regional office and district offices in all stages of elections.

### 4) Providing Assistance to International Observers

#### 1. Efforts to Bring International Observers

PCHR encouraged partner international organizations to participate in observing the Palestinian parliamentary elections, but due to the deterioration in the security situations in the Gaza Strip and restrictions on the freedom of movement of internationals imposed by IOF, all of these organizations were not able to join the observation campaign. Only Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights was able to join the campaign, and delegated Sushetha Gopallawa. PCHR facilitated the accreditation of Gopallawa.

#### 2. Cooperation with International Observation Missions

- The unit met with Mr. Dariusz Resinski, Assistant Operation Expert in the EU Observation Team.
- The unit director was invited to join a meeting on elections organized by the National Democratic Institute in Ramallah on 23 January 2006.
- The unit staff members met in Gaza on 24 January 2006 with international observers from the National Democratic Institute.

### 5) Meetings and Activities Related to Elections

1. The unit made 10 media interviews as shown in the table below.
2. The unit participated in two meetings of Wednesday Dialogue organized by Cana'an Pedagogical Institute in Gaza. The first meeting, which was held on 4 January 2006, discussed the legal and moral limits of the election campaigning. The second meeting was held on 8 February 2006 and discussed the experience of the Central Election Commission.
3. On 2 March 2006, PCHR held a meeting with partner organizations in the observation campaign to evaluate the experience and honor these organizations.
4. On 24 April 2006, PCHR organized a ceremony at the YMCA headquarter in Gaza to honor at least 500 observers who participated in the observation campaign organized by PCHR, in cooperation with 54 NGOs throughout the Gaza Strip. The ceremony included speeches by PCHR staff, representatives of NGOs which participated in the observation campaign, and a number of observers. The attendants highly appreciated PCHR's efforts to organize the observation campaign.

### 6) Documentation

The unit prepared a draft report documenting PCHR's experience in observing elections in 2005 and 2006, in conjunction with other NGOs. The draft report is divided into 3 sections: observation of the presidential election in 2005; observation of elections of

local councils in 2005; and observation of parliamentary elections in 2006. The report is expected to be published in the beginning of 2007.

#### Indicators

- The elections were free and fair.
- The observation campaign organized by PCHR gained wide attention by the media.
- The media reported on PCHR's activities on observing the elections.

#### Means of Verification

- PCHR evaluated the electoral process objectively and neutrally.
- International organizations that observed the elections had the same conclusion.
- Media materials issued by PCHR contributed to the end of some violations. For example, the web site of the Ministry of Interior stopped publishing materials that supported of a candidate of the ruling party.
- The unit documented all media publications on its activities.

### Output (7)

#### Lobbying for the Incorporation of Human Rights in Governmental Policies<sup>48</sup>

##### Activities

##### ■ Conference on “The New Palestinian Government and the Human Rights Agenda”

1. The unit proposed the idea of holding this conference following the parliamentary elections, which was won by Hamas.
2. The conference sought to establish a framework for dialogue and exchange of viewpoints between representatives of the government and those of civil society organizations on human rights issues.
3. The issues discussed in the conference were relevant to activities set out in PCHR units' plans, including Democratic Development Unit; Legal Aid Unit; Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit; and Women's Rights Unit.
4. Issues of interest for PCHR were prioritized to be then distributed to working sessions to be discussed between civil society organizations and the government.
5. It was important to have senior representation of the government, especially by the Prime Minister and other ministers, in the conference.
6. PCHR contacted the government with regard to the conference and the government welcomed the idea.
7. The conference was held in Roots Lobby on 21 and 22 June 2006.

##### ■ Publications on Proceedings of the Conference

1. A number of press releases covering the proceedings of the conference were published.

<sup>48</sup> This output is not set out separately in the annual plan, as it was interpreted in all other outputs and activities. However, it is used here as a mechanism to explain the activities related the conference.

2. The unit wrote a booklet on the proceedings of the conference. It was published in December 2006.

**Indicators**

- Representatives of the government and civil society actively participated in the conference.
- The conference was an opportunity for dialogue and exchange of viewpoints between the government and the civil society.
- The media widely reported on the conference.
- The conference discussed several issues included in the unit’s, such as: the death penalty; the state of lawlessness; the right to freedom of expression; the right to peaceful assembly; and elections and democratic reform.

**Means of Verification**

- At least 500 figures, representing political factions, civil society activists, the Palestinian Legislative Council, academics, jurists and media officials, participated in the conference. Representatives of a number of international organizations also attended the conference as observers to witness Palestinian internal discussions.
- The Palestinian Prime Minister opened the conference officially, and delivered a speech expressing the government’s commitment to human rights issues.
- Minister of Information, Minister of Health, a representative of Minister of National Economy, the spokesman of the government and a number of former ministers participated in the conference.
- All interveners at the conference stressed its importance and the issues it raised.
- The conference served as a mechanism to hold the government accountable for human rights issues.
- Local and Arab media reported on the conference extensively, and the unit documented all media materials published on the conference.
- The proceedings of the conference are detailed on PCHR’s web page.

Media Interviews  
with the Unit  
Director

Date	Names of Journalists and Media Organizations	Subject	Notes
3 January	Hasan Jaber, Al-Ayyam newspaper	Elections	The interview was published on the following dat
18 January	Alwan Radio, Gaza	The rule of law	Live
18 January	Al-Iman Radio, Gaza	Elections	Live
21 January	Hasan Jaber, Al-Ayyam newspaper	Elections	

22 January	Palestine Radio	Elections	Live
22 January	Palestine Television	Elections	
24 January	Asmaa' al-Ghoul, Al-Ayyam newspaper	Election	
25 January	The Kuwaiti Al-Rai Television	Election	
25 January	Palestine Television	Elections	Live
26 January	Christine Hauser, New York Times	Elections	A Phone interview that was published on the same day, and parts of it were published in Denver Post on 2 February.
7 March	RTE Radio, Ireland	The human rights situation in the OPT	Live
10 March	News Talk Radio, Ireland	The human rights situation in the OPT	
3 April	Craig Nelson, Middle East Correspondent, Cox Newspaper, Washington	The state of lawlessness	
5 April	Fawzia al-Sheikh, Interpress Service	Death penalty	The interview was published in Envolverde on 6 April 2006
24 April	Gregory Kats, Houston Chronicle	Elections and lawlessness	
25 April	Mark Gravits and Gill Mardirosian, Radio France	Refugee	
3 May	Dutch Radio	The human rights situation	
4 May	Ajyal Radio	Elections	Phone interview
4 May	Zoi Constantine, Gulf News	Suspension of international aid	

25 May	Tim McGirk, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, Times Magazine	The state of lawlessness	
11 June	A press conference of the Ministry of Information	The killing of the Ghalia family in Beit Lahia on 9 June	
11 June	Palestine Radio	The killing of the Ghalia family in Beit Lahia on 9 June	
13 June	Dion Nissinbaum, Knight Ridder Newspaper	Israeli war crimes	
31 July	Ashraf Khalil, Los Angeles Times	The state of lawlessness	
13 August	Shirine Shwarazu, Wbai Radio Pacifica	Israeli war crimes	Live
6 September	Rori McCarthy, Middle East Correspondent, The Guardian	Israeli war crimes	
6 September	Dr. Klimetre Ferinkont, ARD German Radio	The human rights situation	
10 September	Shinichi Murakami, Middle East Correspondent, Jerusalem Bureau, The Asahi Shimbun, Japan's Leading National Newspaper	The state of security chaos	
12 September	Steve Erangler, New York Times	The human rights situation	
12 September	Abu Dhabi Television	The situation in the Gaza Strip one year after the IOF redeployment outside it	
13 September	Donald Macintyre, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, The Independent	The human rights situation and the killing of children	
19 September	Tim McGirk, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, Times Magazine	The human rights situation	

25 September	Al-Salam Radio	PCHR's position towards the death penalty	
2 October	Al-Shabab Radio, Gaza	The state of lawlessness	Live
3 October	Palestinian Workers Radio	The state of lawlessness	Live
17 October	Donald Macintyre, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, The Independent	The state of lawlessness	The interview focused on an attack on Palestinian Workers Radio and PCHR's press release on the attack
9 November	Financial Times	The human rights situation	
2 December	Sa'ed Abu Farha, Al-Ayyam Newspaper	PCHR's role in the prosecution of Israeli war criminals	
3 December	Al-Aqsa Television	Israeli attacks on journalists	
28 December	Abu Dhabi Television	Israeli war crimes in 2006	

In 2006, the Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights Unit continued to monitor and document violations of economic, social and cultural rights in the OPT, particularly the Gaza Strip, as set out in its annual plan. In 2006, the political, economic, and social conditions in the OPT dramatically deteriorated, as IOF escalated their violations of Palestinian human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights. The total siege imposed by IOF on the OPT has left disastrous impacts on the humanitarian situation and has violated the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population, particularly the rights to appropriate living conditions, health and education. This reality posed itself on the unit's 2006 annual plan, and the unit was forced to focus some activities on developments related to the impacts of the closure imposed by IOF on the Palestinian economic, social and cultural rights. For this purpose, the unit started to issue field updates documenting the impacts of the closure of border crossing of the Gaza Strip, especially Rafah International Crossing Point, on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, particularly after 25 June 2006. Despite continuous Israeli violations in the Gaza Strip that imposed themselves on the unit's agenda, the unit was able to carry out the activities included in its 2006 annual plan. The unit continued to write periodic reports and studies on violations of economic, social and cultural rights perpetrated by IOF. It also continued its efforts to promote economic, social and cultural rights in the Palestinian society.

The unit was able to continue its fundamental activities, including preparation of a number of regular reports on economic, social, and cultural rights; holding public workshops; and participation in other PCHR activities and activities organized by other civil society groups in the Gaza Strip. The unit also promoted its activities at the media and community levels.

### Output (1)

#### **Contribution to the Promotion of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the OPT, Especially the Gaza Strip**

##### **Activities**

The unit was forced to make some changes to such activities due to field developments in 2006 in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip, particularly the deterioration in the humanitarian situation in light the suspension of international financial aid, and the total siege and restrictions on the freedom of movement imposed by IOF.

##### **1) Database on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the OPT**

In 2006 the unit continued to create a database on economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip. This database has the main source of information for the unit of violations of the rights of education, appropriate living conditions,

work, health and development; attacks on fishermen; destruction of economic facilities; attacks on medical crews; deaths at border crossings and military checkpoints; and poverty and unemployment.

## 2) Meetings with Development Experts, Government Officials and Representatives of International Organizations

The unit held several meetings to raise the awareness on violations of the economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian civilian population. These meeting focused on the impacts of the total siege imposed by IOF on the OPT on the Palestinian economic, social and cultural rights.

- On 23 and 22 January 2006, the unit director was interviewed by a Swedish journalist, Bitá Hamargin, about the impacts of the siege imposed by IOF on the economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian civilian population. The unit director also escorted her to a field tour in the Gaza Strip, in which she met with political figures and victims of human rights violations.
- On 5 April 2006, the unit director delivered a lecture at offices of the Palestinian Farmers Association on the destruction of Palestinian agricultural land and property by IOF. The lecture was attended by 30 members of the association.
- On 8 April 2006, the unit director facilitated a workshop on development in the platform of the Palestinian government organized by Development Studies Program at Bir Zeit University. The workshop was held at the lobby of Palestine Red Crescent Society, and was attended by a number of academics and representatives of the government.
- On 25 April 2006, the unit director met with Sara Mallion from Christian Aid. He discussed with her the deterioration in the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip in light of the tightened Israeli siege the suspension of international financial aid.
- In the period 24-26 April 2006, the unit director escorted a mission of Amnesty International to field tours in the Gaza Strip to check the human rights situation. During these tours, members of the mission met with representatives of political parties and NGOs and victims of human rights violations.
- In the period 17-21 May 2006, the unit director met with Franciscus Van, a Belgian writer, and Carvalho Sousa, a journalist. He briefed them on the economic and social conditions in the OPT, and the impacts of the Israeli siege on living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population. He also escorted them to field tours in the Gaza Strip, during which they met with representatives of political factions, the government and NGOs, and victims of human rights violations.
- On 22 September 2006, the unit director and representatives of a number of NGOs met with Anique Vanden – Bosch, from NOVIB, and discussed with her Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT, and the deterioration in humanitarian conditions resulting from the Israeli siege.

### 3) An Annual Report on the Policy of Closure and Its Impacts on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the OPT

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As the living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population deteriorated and violations of their economic, social and cultural rights escalated, the unit was forced to focus most of its activities on this issue. Instead of issuing an annual report on the impacts of the Israeli closure imposed on the OPT, the unit issued 3 periodic reports on Israeli violations of Palestinian economic, social and cultural rights. In light of the closure of border crossings of the Gaza Strip after 25 June 2006, the unit started to issue monthly updates on the state of border crossings of the Gaza Strip. The unit also issued a report on the deterioration in health conditions as a result of the Israeli closure.

- **Closure Update: A Report on the Impact of Israeli Closure of the Gaza Strip on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, Issue 48:** The unit issued the 48th of these updates on 12 May 2006, detailing the impacts of the Israeli military closure of the Gaza Strip on economic, social and cultural rights. The report covers the period from 1 June to 11 September 2005.
- **Closure Update: A Report on the Impact of Israeli Closure of the Gaza Strip on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, Issue 49:** The unit issued the 49th of these updates on 12 June 2006, detailing the impacts of the Israeli military closure of the Gaza Strip on economic, social and cultural rights, in spite of the implementation of the Agreement on Border Crossings, which entered into force on 25 November 2005. The report covers the period from 12 September 2005 to 30 April 2006.
- **Closure Update: A Report on the Impact of Israeli Closure of the Gaza Strip on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, Issue 50:** The unit issued the 50th of these updates on 7 August 2006, detailing the impacts of the tightened Israeli military closure of the Gaza Strip, following an attack on an IOF military post in the Gaza Strip on 25 June 2006, on economic, social and cultural rights. The report covers the period from 1 May to 30 July 2006.
- **Field Updates on the State of Border Crossings of the Gaza Strip:** The unit issued 5 of these updates:
  - Field Update (1): 1-24 August 2006
  - Filed Update (2): 25 August – 25 September 2006
  - Filed Update (3): 26 September – 19 October 2006
  - Field Update (4): 20 October – 30 November 2006
  - Field Update (5): 1 -31 December 2006.
- **Report on Health Conditions in the Gaza Strip in Light of the Israeli Closure:** On 29 August 2006, the unit issued a special report on the impacts of the Israeli closure on health conditions in the Gaza Strip. The report highlights the shortages in medicines and the suffering of Palestinian patients who need medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip. The report also focused the deterioration in environmental conditions, as municipalities have not been able to provide clean drinking water and treat waste water due to the lack of fuels and electricity.

#### 4) Press Releases on Violations of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

In 2006, the unit issued 15 press releases that called upon the international community to intervene to stop the policy of collective punishment practiced by IOF against the Palestinian civilian population, in violation of their economic, social and cultural rights. Some press releases also called upon the EU Observation Team at Rafah International Crossing Point to make efforts to ensure the operation of the crossing point.

#### 5) Media and Public Relations Activities

The unit staff members were interviewed by the local and international media on issues related to economic, social and cultural rights:

- On 21 March 2006, the unit director was interviewed live by al-Salam Radio in the West Bank on the impacts of the closure imposed on the OPT by IOF.
- On 23 April 2006, the unit director was interviewed live by Palestine Radio on the impacts of the closure imposed by IOF on the OPT, especially the Gaza Strip.
- On 27 April 2006, the unit director was interviewed by a reporter from Sky News on the deterioration in humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip, focusing on a report on poverty issued by the unit.
- On 2 May 2006, the unit director was interviewed by Yousef al-Shayeb, a correspondent of al-Ayyam newspaper, on the economic and social rights and Palestinian children's rights.
- On 3 May 2006, a reporter from Gulf News interviewed the unit director on the deterioration in humanitarian conditions in the OPT as a result of the tightened Israeli siege.
- On 15 May 2006, Nidaa' Balata, a student at al-Aqsa University in Gaza, interviewed the unit director on the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip.
- On 1 June 2006, Asmaa' al-Ghoul, a correspondent of al-Ayyam newspaper, interviewed the unit director on the position of NGOs towards the economic crisis in Palestine.
- On 22 June 2006, the unit director was interviewed by Palestine Satellite Channel on the impacts of the Israeli closure imposed on the Gaza Strip on the Palestinian civilian population.
- On 26 July 2006, al-Salam Radio in the West Bank interviewed the unit director on the impacts of the Israeli closure imposed on the Gaza Strip on the Palestinian civilian population.
- On 29 October 2006, Ussama Radi, a reporter from Palestine News Agency, interviewed the unit directors on the impacts of the state of lawlessness on human rights.
- On 23 November 2006, the unit director was interviewed by Lina Shaheen from Palestine Television on the state of border crossing one year after the Agreement on Border Crossings entered into force.
- On 30 November 2006, the unit director was interviewed live by Palestine Radio

on the wide scale destruction caused by IOF in the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun.

- On 7 December 2006, Maysara Sha’ban, a journalist from al-Sa’ada Magazine, interviewed the unit director on the right to health and cases of medical negligence.

**Undone Activities**

1. **First National Conference on the Impacts of the Disengagement Plan on Economic and Social Rights:** This activities was not implemented due to changes made to the unit’s annual plan.
2. **Study on Economic and Social Rights in the OPT One Year Following the Implementation of the Disengagement Plan in the Gaza Strip:** The unit was not able to implement this activity as other activities emerged, especially those related to publications on the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip.

**Means of Verification**

- 3 Closure Updates were published.
- 5 Field Updates on the closure of border crossings in the Gaza Strip were published.
- The unit issued a special report on the deterioration in health conditions due to the Israeli closure imposed on the Gaza Strip.
- The unit issued news reports on the publication of these reports.
- The reports were widely disseminated.
- The reports or parts of them were published on local and Arab web pages.
- PCHR used statistics and information included in the reports in international interventions.
- The unit staff members were interviewed by the media on various issues related to economic, social and cultural rights.
- Governmental departments made use of the information included in the reports.
- A number of university students used the information included in the reports in preparing research papers.
- The unit started to issue field updates on the state of the Gaza Strip border crossings.
- The unit issued 21 press releases on violations of economic, social and cultural rights.
- The press releases were widely disseminated.
- The press releases or parts of them were published on a number of local web pages.

**Output (2)**

**Lobbying for the Enforcement of the Palestinian Law on the Rights of the Disabled (4) of 1999**

The unit carried out several activities in the context of lobbying for the enforcement of the law:

### **1) Monitoring and Documentation of the Rights of the Disabled**

In 2006, the unit continued to monitor and document violations of the rights of the disabled in various fields, including work, educations, health and social insurance. The unit also made statistics of disabled who were killed or injured and rehabilitation centers which were destroyed by IOF. These statistics were prepared through meetings with victims or their families, and staff members of rehabilitation centers.

### **2) Maintaining Contacts with Rehabilitation Centers**

The made efforts to promote relations with rehabilitation centers of the disabled, such as al-Nour Center, General Union of the Disabled, Atfaluna, the National Committee for the Defense of the Disabled and the Union of Disabled Graduates, through bilateral and multilateral meetings and providing legal consultations.

### **3) Lobbying with the Palestinian Legislative Council, Ministries, Political Factions and International Organizations to Support Rehabilitation Centers of the Disabled**

The unit held several meetings with representatives of the Ministries of Social Affairs, Health, Education and Labor, and members of the Palestinian Legislative Council to urge them to make efforts to enforce the Law on the Rights of the Disabled. The unit director also joint the meetings held between the Deputy Speaker and a number of committees of the Palestinian Legislative Council with a delegation of Atfaluna Association for the Deaf, on the International Day of Disabled Persons. During the meeting, the unit director proposed putting a timetable for the implementation of the law.

### **4) A Workshop to Train Disabled Persons on Advocacy Activities**

On 26 November 2006, the unit director participated in training 45 deaf persons at offices of Atfaluna Association for the Deaf on advocacy activities. This activity was concluded with a set-in near the Palestinian Legislative Council, in which a number of deaf persons and the unit director participated. They submitted a letter to the Deputy Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council to pressure the government to implement the Law on the Rights of the Disabled.

### **5) Press Releases**

On 3 December 2006, the unit issued a press release on the International Day of Disabled Persons, highlighting the suffering of disabled Palestinians. It also called for the implementation of the Law on the Rights of the Disabled.

### **6) Media and Awareness Activities**

The unit participated in several media and awareness activities to ensure respect for the

rights of disabled persons and lobby for the implementation of the Law on the Rights of the Disabled:

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- On 13 June 2006, the unit director delivered a lecture on the rights of disabled persons at offices of al-Nahda Association for Family Life in Khan Yunis. At least 50 relatives of disabled persons attended the lecture.
- On 15 June 2006, Mithaq Association interviewed the unit director on the rights of the disabled, which was broadcasted in al-Iman Radio.
- On 21 June 2006, the unit director submitted an intervention on the rights of disabled persons at the conference organized by PCHR on the new Palestinian government and human rights.
- On 22 June 2006, Palestine Satellite Channel interviewed the unit director on the economic and social rights of disabled Palestinians.
- On 26 November 2006, the unit director delivered a lecture on the rights of the disabled at Atfaluna Association for the Deaf, focusing on the Law on the Rights of the Disabled. At least 45 persons attended the lecture.
- On 27 November 2006, the unit director delivered a lecture on the rights of disabled persons for students of al-Nour Center for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons.
- On 6 December 2006, Erada Radio, in coordination with 5 other radio stations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the unit director live on the role of NGOs in protecting and promoting the rights of disabled persons on the International Day of Disabled Persons.

### 7) Report on the Rights of Disabled Persons in the Gaza Strip

The unit prepared a draft report on the rights of disabled persons in the Gaza Strip. It evaluates the implementation of the Law on the Rights of the Disabled in various fields such as employment, health, education, sports, etc. The final report is expected to be published in the beginning of 2007.

### 8) A Workshop on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Disabled Persons

The unit was not able to organize the workshop at the end of the year due to the deterioration in the security situation in the Gaza Strip. It will be organized in 2007.

#### Means of Verification

- There was an increase in demands by NGOs for information and statistics related to the rights of disabled persons.
- Local newspapers and web sites published several interviews with the unit director on the rights of disabled persons.
- Local radio station broadcasted joint special episodes on the rights of disabled persons.
- The unit participated in a sit-in for disabled persons near the Palestinian Legislative

Council to demand the enforcement of their rights.

- Deputy Speaker and a number of members of the Palestinian Legislative Council visited a center for the rehabilitation of disabled persons to consider the possibility of establishing a project for secondary education for deaf persons.
- The unit agreed with a number of centers for the rehabilitation of disabled persons to organize a training course for disabled persons in 2007.

### Output (3)

#### **Promotion of the Rights of Health Through Holding Those Responsible for Medical Negligence Accountable**

##### **1) Documentation of Cases of Medical Negligence**

The unit documents cases of medical negligence through meetings with victims or their families on health workers.

##### **2) Meetings Aimed at Activating Mechanisms of Accountability for Medical Negligence**

The unit held several meetings with officials of the Ministry of Health, representatives of health NGOs and members of the Health Committee at the Palestinian Legislative Council. These meetings discussed mechanism of accountability for medical negligence and the role of the Ministry of Health and the Palestinian Legislative Council in activating such mechanisms.

##### **3) Press Releases and Media Activities**

- The unit issued two press releases on violations of the right of health.
- The unit director was interviewed by al-Sa'ada Magazine on medical negligence.

##### **4) Report on Medical Negligence**

The unit prepared a draft report on medical negligence at hospitals and medical centers. It was presented to PCHR Program Committee. Its publication was postponed to 2007 to make some changes to it.

##### **5) A Booklet on the Right of Health**

The unit is currently preparing a booklet on the right of health, which is expected to be published in 2007.

##### **6) A Workshop on the Promotion of the Right of Health and Mechanism to Protect People from Medical Negligence**

The unit was not able to organize this workshop as it was involved in other activities.

The unit initiated preparations to carry out relevant activities in the second quarter of 2006. However, as all housing projects in the Gaza Strip were suspended due to the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip and the suspension of international financial aid to the Palestinian people, the unit was forced to postpone these activities to 2007.

### **Other Activities Not Included in the Units' Annual Plan**

The unit issued a number of reports, which were not included in its 2006 annual plan. It also contributed to training activities organized by PCHR Training Unit and other NGOs. Furthermore, the unit director was interviewed by the media on various issues related to economic, social and cultural rights.

#### **1) A Report on Poverty in the Gaza Strip**

On 9 May 2006, the unit issued a special report on poverty in the Gaza Strip, which highlights the impacts of the suspension of international aid to the Palestinian people in the OPT, especially the Gaza Strip, on economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian civilian population. The report calls upon donor countries to stop collective punishment against the Palestinian people and enforce international humanitarian law, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, international human rights law and regional human rights instruments, especially article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement. According to the report, unemployment and poverty rates have increased dramatically. The rate of unemployment is 34% in the OPT as a whole and 44% in the Gaza Strip. This rate rises to 55% during times of complete closure imposed by Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF). Likewise, the poverty rate in the OPT is nearly 50%, with the Gaza Strip rate at approximately 70%. This in turn has impacted the per capita income, which decreased by 32% over the past three years, and is actually 40%.

#### **Means of Verification**

- The Head of the Human Rights Committee in the European Parliament declared that she and other members of the committee would visit the Gaza Strip in 2007, in light of the discussions on the humanitarian conditions in the OPT. The unit's report was one of the main points of discussions.
- The report, or parts of it, was published on several local web sites.
- Information included in the report were used in al-Mentar - PCHR's monthly magazine.
- The unit director was interviewed by the international media on the report.

## 2) A Brief Report on the Closure Imposed on the OPT

This report highlights the impacts of the Israeli policy of closure on economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian civilian population. It is published in this annual report.

## 3) A Report on the Agreement on Gaza Strip Border Crossings

On 20 December 2006, the unit issued a report titled “The Agreement on Border Crossings: Another Year of Suffering.” It evaluates the conditions of all Gaza Strip border crossing one year after the Agreement on Gaza Strip Border Crossing entered into force. It refutes alleged Israeli facilitations concerning the freedom of movement of the Palestinian population. It also highlights the impacts of the agreement on economic, social and cultural rights. The report concludes that IOF use the agreement as a means to impose collective punishment on the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, and perpetrate more violations on international humanitarian law and human rights law.

### Means of Verification

- The unit issues a news release on the publication of the report.
- The report was widely disseminated.
- The report, or parts of it, was published on several local web sites.
- The unit director was interviewed by the media on issues highlighted in the report.

## 4) Working Paper on the Impacts of the Suspension of International Aid on the Economic and Social Rights of the Palestinian People

The paper focuses on the impacts of the international donors’ decision to stop providing financial aid to the Palestinian people on their economic and social rights. It highlights the deterioration in living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population and the increase in unemployment and poverty levels.

## 5) Participation in PCHR’s Campaign to Observe the Palestinian Parliamentary Elections

The unit director joined PCHR’s campaign to observe the Palestinian parliamentary election, through escorting international observers and writing about field developments related to polling and the counting of votes. On 24 and 25 January 2006, the unit director escorted international observers from The Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Right and Front Line – Defenders of Human Rights Defenders, in field tour to polling centers in the Gaza Strip, and to areas in Rafah and Khan Yunis, which were destroyed by IOF during the Intifada.

#### **6) Contribution to Training Courses Organized by PCHR Training Unit**

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The unit actively contributed to training activities organized by PCHR Training Unit. The unit director delivered 13 lectures in 12 training courses organized by the Training Unit.

In 2006, the Field Work Unit continued to monitor and document the human rights situation throughout the OPT, including Jerusalem, as set out in its 2006 annual plan. It also carried out other activities aimed to promote PCHR’s role in the local community. It is worth noting that IOF escalated their attacks on Palestinian civilians and property in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip, despite their redeployment outside the Gaza Strip in September 2005. At the Palestinian level, the most significant development was holding Palestinian legislative elections and the international and regional reactions to their results. Furthermore, second half of the year witnessed an unprecedented Israeli escalation in the Gaza Strip following the capture of an IOF soldier. Accordingly, all staff members of the unit were in a state of emergency to monitor and document developments on the ground. They also continued to monitor the internal human rights situation in light of the state of lawlessness, which seriously escalated in 2006.

**Output (1)**

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**1) Documentation of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the OPT**

- A. Violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by IOF
- B. Palestinian violations of human rights

**A. Documentation of Violations of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law by IOF**

The unit carried out the following activities:

- **Documentation of Willful and Extra-Judicial Killings, Injuries and Arrests Perpetrated by IOF:** In 2006, the unit documented 656 deaths, 1169 injuries and 115 arrests perpetrated by IOF.
- **Documentation of Incursions by IOF into Palestinian Communities:** In 2006, the unit documented at least 2000 incursion into Palestinian communities in the West Bank, and at least 30 ones into communities in the Gaza Strip.
- **Documentation of Air Raids on Houses, Civilian Facilities and Resistance Activists:** In 2006, the unit documented at least 600 air raids on houses, civilian facilities and resistance activists in the Gaza Strip.
- **Documentation of Restrictions Imposed by IOF on the Freedom of Movement:** The unit documented all cases of imposing curfews on Palestinian communities. It also documented 9 deaths, 200 arrests and 70 other attacks by IOF at border crossings and military checkpoints in the West Bank. The unit also documented two killings by IOF at military checkpoints in the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip, the unit observed movement at border crossings, especially following the capture of an IOF soldier in June 2006.
- **Documentation of Land Confiscations and House Demolitions:** In 2006, IOF demol-

ished 934 houses and civilian facilities and razed 4419 donums<sup>49</sup> of agricultural land in the Gaza Strip. Additionally, IOF have continued to demolish houses and civilian facilities in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, but the unit was not able to document all cases due to restrictions imposed by IOF on the freedom of movement.

To be able to document human rights violations, field workers carry out the following activities:

### **1. Field Visits and First-Hand Information**

Field workers conduct visits to the sites of violations of human rights, despite the dangers often existing in these areas, which are subject to indiscriminate Israeli shelling. On average, a field worker can make 2-3 field visits to document one incident. In 2006, field workers in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank conducted more than 10000 field visits.

### **2. Interviews with Victims and/or Their Families and Eyewitnesses**

Field workers usually make interviews with several people on every single violation in order to verify the accuracy of information. Eyewitnesses are very important to draw a clear and real picture of single violations, especially when field workers are not able to reach immediately following a violation having taken place due to dangers they may face. Field workers have to work hard in this regard as they have to interview as many people as possible to ensure the accuracy of information, and interviews usually take long times. In 2006, field workers made at least 9000 interviews with victims and eyewitnesses, and gathered at least 2000 testimonies from victims and eyewitnesses.

### **3. Collating Other Documentation Related to Human Rights Violations**

Documents, including medical reports, ownership documents, personal photographs, clichés and maps, are also necessary evidence for legal and historical record of incidents. Some of these documents were transferred to PCHR Legal Unit for legal proceedings.

### **4. Writing Reports on Human Rights Violations**

Field workers wrote detailed reports on human rights violations, in which eyewitnesses' testimonies and the field workers' notes are included, to give a comprehensive description of violations. In 2006, field workers wrote at least 7000 field reports on human rights violations.

### **5. Completion of Forms for Reports on Violations of Human Rights**

These forms are designed to gather clear and accurate

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<sup>49</sup> 1 donum is equal to 1000 square meters.

information to be entered into the database. Each form requests basic details on an incident, its location, timing, victim and witnesses. Field workers are required to complete a form for each violation they report. Many incidents require a number of different individual reports. In 2006, field workers filled in 6992 forms in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

## 6. Collating Photographic/Video Evidence

Field workers are required to take photographs or video footages of the scenes of violations wherever possible. Photographic or video evidence can provide valuable record of incidents for both legal and historical records.

### Indicators

- All human rights violations were covered in 48 weekly reports.
- The unit issued 69 press releases on human rights violations perpetrated by IOF.
- Dozens of cases were referred to PCHR Legal Aid Unit.
- Documents related restrictions on the freedom of movement were referred to PCHR Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- At least 10 stories demonstrating human suffering were referred to al-Mentar (PCHR's newsletter).
- All publications were put on PCHR's web page.
- The media reported about the unit's activities.

## B. Documentation of Palestinian Violations of Human Rights

The unit carried out the following activities:

- **Documentation of Killings for "Family Honor":** In 2006, the unit documented 15 cases of killing for "family honor".
- **Documentation of Killings and Injuries Related to the State of Lawlessness and Proliferation of Weapons in the OPT:** In this context, the unit documented 315 killings and 759 injuries related to the state of lawlessness and the misuse of weapons.
- **Documentation of Violations of the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Peaceful Assembly and Attacks on Journalists and Media Institutions:** The unit documented dozens of attacks on journalists and media institution or persons because of their positions and opinions.
- **Documentation of Attacks on Public Property:** The unit documented all attacks on public property by armed groups.
- **Documentation of Abductions of Locals and Internationals:** The unit documented at least 40 abductions of locals and internationals by armed groups.
- **Documentation of Cases of Medical Negligence Resulting in Death:** The unit documented two deaths resulting from medical negligence.
- **Observation of the State of Economic and Social Rights in the Gaza Strip:** The unit

observed strikes of municipalities, hospitals, the public sectors and others.

- **Participation in Observation of Palestinian Parliamentary Elections:** The unit staff members participated in PCHR's campaign to observe the Palestinian parliamentary elections, which were held on 25 January 2006.

To be able to document human rights violations, field workers carry out the following activities:

### **1. Field Visits and First-Hand Information**

Field workers conducted field visits to scenes of incidents, police stations, and hospitals to obtain further information on incidents. They also interviewed eyewitnesses. Field workers conducted hundreds of field visits in 2006.

### **2. Interviews with Victims and/or Families and Eyewitnesses**

Field workers are required to conduct interviews with several people regarding each incident in order to verify/cross-check information. Difficulties in obtaining accurate and detailed statements include witnesses' fears of reprisals. In 2006, field workers made at least 3000 interviews with victims and eyewitnesses, and gathered at least 500 testimonies from victims and eyewitnesses.

### **3. Collating Photographic/Video Evidence**

This activity is explained above.

### **4. Collating Other Documentation Related to Human Rights Violations**

Documents, including medical reports, ownership documents and, personal photographs, are also necessary evidence for legal and historical record of incidents. Obtaining such documents is not an easy job, but efforts made by field workers to obtain such documents are often fruitful. In 2006, field workers collated dozens of documents, including statements by political factions, medical reports, recordings and personal identification.

### **5. Writing reports on Human Rights Violations**

Field workers write detailed reports on human rights violations, in which eyewitnesses' testimonies and the field workers' notes are included, to give a comprehensive description of violations. In 2006, field workers wrote at least 1000 reports on human rights violations.

### **6. Creating Files of Specific Violations Perpetrated by the Palestinian National Authority for Transfer to Other PCHR's Units**

The unit make files of human rights violations that are classified in accordance of the kind of violation, such as sentences issued by civil and military courts, arbitrary arrests, misuse of weapons, medical negligence, killings for family honor, and the unit's experience in monitoring the parliamentary elections.

#### **Indicators**

- Cases documented by the unit with regard to the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons were transferred to PCHR Democratic Development Unit who writes field updates.
- Most human rights violations were highlighted in press releases issued by PCHR.
- Cases documented by the unit with regard to killings for family honor were transferred to Women's Rights Unit.
- The two cases of medical negligence and some cases of the misuse of weapons were highlighted in al-Mentar (PCHR's monthly newsletter).
- All publications were put on PCHR's web page.
- The media reported about these activities.
- Information gathered by the unit was used in PCHR's annual report.
- Information gathered by the unit was used in specialized reports written by other units.
- Field workers' notes during the observation of the Palestinian parliamentary elections were sent to Democratic Development Unit.
- Cases related to strikes were sent to Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit.

#### **Means of Verification**

- The unit has a well-classified database on such violations, which has been used by PCHR units and the media.
- The unit classified these violations into 5 categories.
- 1074 field updates on the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons were published on PCHR's web page.
- The unit has at least 1000 field reports on such violations in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including Jerusalem.
- The unit has an archive of field photographs.
- Information and photographs gathered by the unit were used by other local, regional and international organizations.
- The unit received at least 150 phones calls from interested people inquiring about certain violations.
- Information gathered by the unit was used in PCHR's annual report.
- The unit staff members were interviewed by the media about violations dozens of times.

2) Strengthening Community Relations

1. Meetings and Contacts with Victims of Human Rights Violations

Field workers meet with victims of human rights violations, provide them with information about the services provided by PCHR and encourage them to go to PCHR’s offices to receive appropriate legal aid and assistance.

2. Media Activities

The unit staff members were interviewed by the local and international media on violations of human rights perpetrated by IOF. In 2005, the unit conducted 20 interviews.

3. Contribution to the Circulation of PCHR’s Publications

A number of field workers contributed to the circulation of PCHR’s publications.

**Indicators**

- Many victims refer to PCHR’s Legal Aid Unit through field workers.
- Field workers in the central Gaza Strip and Tulkarm circulated all PCHR’s publications in the area.
- The interviews were reported in the media.
- Victims cooperated with field workers.
- Other organizations cooperated with field workers.
- Field workers participated in community activities.

**Means of Verification**

- Hundreds of victims referred to PCHR’s offices.
- Dozens of them came to the center to submit complaints.
- Hundreds of people participated in PCHR’s activities, such as training courses and workshops.
- Thousands of copied of the weekly report were disseminated.
- The unit staff members had a number of media interviews:

Media Interviews  
Conducted by the  
Unit in 2005

Date	Names of Journalists and Media Organizations	Subject
7 January	Palestine Radio, Ramallah	The state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons in the Gaza Strip
18 January	An-Najah Radio, Nablus	The closure imposed on the Gaza Strip

28 January	Palestine Media Network	Israeli shelling of Khan Yunis
31 January	Al-Salam Radio	Extra-judicial executions in the West Bank
19 March	Palestine Radio, Ramallah	The abduction of Mr. Ahmed Sa'adat from Jericho Prison
9 April	Al-Aqsa Radio, Gaza	The state of lawlessness
29 May	Palestine Radio, Ramallah	Israeli shelling of the northern Gaza Strip
21 June	Al-Quds Radio, Gaza	An Israeli air raid on a house in Khan Yunis
16 August	Al-Akhbar Daily, Lebanon	An Israeli air raid on a house in Khan Yunis
23 August	Ramattan News Agency, Gaza	An Israeli aerial attack which killed 3 Palestinian civilians in Khan Yunis
1 October	Al-Mahabba Radio, Nablus	The state of lawlessness
7 November	Palestine Satellite Channel and al-Quds Educational Television	Israeli war crimes in Beit Hanoun
8 November	Al-Iman Radio, Gaza	Israeli shelling of border areas in Khan Yunis
15 November	Palestine Radio, Ramallah	Human rights in the Declaration of Independence
20 December	Al-Ekhbariya News Channel, Saudi Arabia	The state of lawlessness

### 3) Reporting on Israeli violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the OPT

#### Verifiable Indicators

1. Weekly Report on Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT
2. Press Releases on Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT

#### 1. Weekly Report on Israeli Violations of Human Rights in the OPT

The unit coordinator prepares weekly reports on Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT. The weekly reports are based on information collated each week by the field workers and aims to provide a comprehensive account of Israeli violations of human rights of Palestinians throughout the OPT each week. They are published on Thursday.

### Means of Verification

- The unit prepared 48 weekly reports in 2006.
- Summaries of the reports are often published in local newspapers and some web sites, such as aljazeera.net, Palestine Press, Palestine Media Center and Arab 48.
- These reports are published on PCHR's web page and are distributed by email.
- There are increasing demands to obtain copies of these reports.
- Follow-up inquiries for further information on incidents described in the reports. The unit director received dozens of inquiries from a number of organizations working in the Gaza Strip.
- Some information included in the reports was used by Palestinian minister in their interventions at conferences and meetings abroad.

## 2. Press Releases on Israeli Violations of Human Rights in the OPT

The unit staff members prepare press releases on specific incidents as they occur. Press releases are issued on events that are of particular significance.

### Means of Verification

- The unit prepared 25 press releases in 2006, all of which were on Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT.
- Press releases are published on PCHR's web page and distributed by email.
- Press releases are often covered by local and international media.

## 4) Escorting International Delegations on Field Visits

In 2006, the unit staff members escorted visiting international delegations and individuals on visits to locations throughout the Gaza Strip and provide on the spot briefings on recent incidents. They also organized meetings for international figures and PCHR international staff with victims.

### Indicator

The unit staff members briefed the international delegations they escorted on the human rights situation in the OPT.

### Means of Verification

In 2006, the unit staff members escorted 11 visiting international delegations on field visits throughout the Gaza Strip, including delegations of Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, International Federation for Human Rights and Al-Quds Association in Malaga.

In 2006, the unit carried out activities detailed in its annual plan. The unit also carried out a number of activities which were not included in its annual plan, with small changes that did not damage the plan, in order to adapt to developments and urgent needs created by the complicated political, security and field situation in the OPT, especially the Gaza Strip.

Human rights violations perpetrated by IOF in the OPT have negatively impacted the human rights and democracy education, as the international community has failed to stop them. This failure has increasingly made ordinary people feel that human rights and democracy are subject to political considerations and interests, supported by double standards. The escalation in human rights violations by IOF in the Gaza Strip in the last quarters of 2006 forced the unit to postpone a number of training courses.

**Output (1)**

**Provision of Training Courses on Human Rights and Democracy**

Due to the deterioration in the human rights situation in 2006, the unit was forced to make slight changes to activities set out in its 2006 annual plan, without undermining the essence of the output.

In 2006, the unit organized 16 training courses that included 223 training hours. The number of participants in these courses was 373, 49% of them were women. Attendance was estimated at 89%.

Table (1):  
Training Courses  
Organized by the  
Unit in 2006

No.	Number of Courses	Number of Participants	Number of Training Hours	Women's Participation
1	7 courses for school staff members	145	98	37%
2	3 courses for members of the female police	58	42	100%
3	4 courses for members of NGOs	109	65	41%
4	2 courses for PCHR observers monitoring the elections	61	18	48%

The unit carried out its activities in cooperation and coordination with 12 non-governmental and governmental organizations, including the female police and UNRWA. The number of participants in these courses was 373 persons representing at least 65 centers, societies and unions throughout the Gaza Strip.

The unit, in cooperation with the Democratic Development Unit, was also involved in arranging the campaign to monitor the Palestinian parliamentary elections, which were held on 25 January 2006. The unit organized a number of training courses for PCHR observers participating in monitoring the elections.

PCHR took the initiative to establish relations with the female police. In this context, the unit organized 3 training courses for members of the female police. Later, other women's organizations started to organize training courses for the female police.

A number of specialized trainers from all PCHR units deliver lectures at training courses.

Table (2):  
Training Courses  
Organized by the  
Unit in 2006

No.	Target Group	Number of Trainees	Place	Training Hours	Period	Female Participation
1	Participants in PCHR's campaign to monitor the parliamentary elections	24	PCHR's office in Jabalya	9	3-1 Jan.	47%
2	Participants in PCHR's campaign to monitor the parliamentary elections	37	PCHR's office in Jabalya	9	4-5 Jan.	49%
3	Administrative and educational staff of UBRWA Vocational Training Center	19	Women's Activities Center in Jabalya	12	8-11 Mar.	19%
4	Teachers of social sciences in the Gaza Strip	22	Al-Zaytoun Preparatory School	12	14-16 Mar.	32%
5	Teachers of social sciences	21	Khan Yunis Preparatory School	12	19-21 Mar.	34%
6	Directors, administrative assistants and supervisors of schools	21	UNRWA training lobby	20	26-30 Mar.	33%

7	Teachers of Islamic education in Gaza	18	UNRWA training lobby	14	16-18 Apr.	43%
8	Teachers of social sciences in Northern Gaza	24	Jabalya Preparatory School	14	23-25 Apr.	50%
9	Teachers of Islamic education in Northern Gaza	20	Jabalya Preparatory School	14	2-4 May	50%
10	Members of Sahem Association for Empowerment of the Youth	18	Offices of the association	15	18-20 Jun.	17%
11	Members of 10 NGOs in Khan Yunis	34	PCHR's office in Khan Yunis	16	16-29 Jun.	48%
12	Members of the female police in Gaza	20	PCHR's office in Gaza	14	31 Jul. – 3 Aug.	100%
13	Members of the female police in the central and southern Gaza Strip	21	PCHR's office in Khan Yunis	14	14-17 Aug.	100%
14	Members of the female police in Northern Gaza	17	PCHR's office in Jabalya	14	28-31 Aug.	100%
15	Youth leaders of society groups in Deir al-Balah	22	Deir al-Balah Service Club	16	6-9 Nov.	59%
16	Youth leaders of society groups in Rafah	35	Offices of Sharek Youth Forum in Rafah	18	19-23 Nov.	40%

In 2006, the unit was able to carry out most activities aimed at achieving this output. However, the unit was not able to carry out a number of activities due to the security

situation in the Gaza Strip, but the output was not notably affected.

Table (3):  
Activities That Were  
Not Implemented

No.	Activity	Place	Reasons of non-implementation
1	A training course for youth leaders active in society groups in Northern Gaza	PCHR's office in Jabalya	The course was cancelled due to repeated incursions by IOF into the northern Gaza Strip
2	A training course for PCHR staff members on the incorporation of gender concepts into PCHR's plans	PCHR's office in Gaza	The course was postponed as a specialized female trainer from the West Bank was not able to obtain permission to come to Gaza
3	An external training course for media specialists	Jordan or Egypt	The course was cancelled due to repeated closure of Rafah International Crossing Point
4	Two training courses for youth lawyers	PCHR's office in Khan Yunis and offices of the Bar Association in Gaza	The two courses were replaced with two training courses for PCHR observers participating in monitoring the parliamentary elections due to reasons related to the Bar Association

The unit adopted some tool to measure the effects of training on the persons who participated in training courses.

Table (4):  
Effects of Training

No.	Tool	Indicators
1	Observation	<p>The unit director, who attended all lectures, noticed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainees demonstrated increased respect for discussion and other opinions.</li> <li>• Trainees demonstrated increased abilities to express themselves.</li> <li>• Attendance increased on the last days of courses.</li> </ul>

<p>2</p>	<p>Comparison between the participants' expectations at the beginning of training courses and the outcome and suggestions and at the end of the courses through questionnaires</p>	<p>The participants identified the following expectations at the beginning of the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquiring new information on human rights and democracy, noting that details varies from one segment to another depending on their needs.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making new contacts.</li> <li>• Obtaining certificates of participation.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The participants evaluated the courses as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They acquired new information on human rights and international humanitarian law.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They made new contacts.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• They obtained certificates of participation.</li> <li>• They would think of organizing joint activities.</li> </ul> <p>The participants suggested the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holding more similar training courses.</li> <li>• Holding specialized training courses on the rights of women and children.</li> <li>• Organizing training courses for trainers of human rights and democracy.</li> </ul> <p>The questionnaire explained the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contents of lectures were appropriate to the trainees' expectations.</li> <li>• The trainers were qualified and efficient.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training methods varied.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Interaction between trainers and trainees and between the trainees and the contents of training courses enhanced.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Tracing effects of training at the personal and professional levels</p>	<p>Although it's difficult to trace effects of training on trainers at the personal and professional levels, the unit director was able to notice the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The unit director was able through his personal contacts with the director of an organization, whose members often receive training at PCHR, to inquire about the effects of training on a number of trainees, and the director stressed that their skills and interaction with colleagues notably developed.</li> <li>• 5 trainers participated in activities organized by NGOs active in their areas of residence.</li> <li>• A number of trainees were able to organize preliminary courses on human rights and democracy, and the unit provided them with training materials.</li> <li>• One of the trainees joined a project related to the rights of the child.</li> <li>• At least 50 persons who received training visited PCHR in 2006.</li> </ul>

4	Informing about human rights violations and referring victims to PCHR	In 2006, the unit director received information from trainees on human rights violations at least 15 times, and 5 trainees accompanied victims to PCHR.
5	Participation in PCHR's activities	<p>Many trainees participated in PCHR's activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of trainees participated in PCHR's campaign to monitor the Palestinian parliamentary elections.</li> <li>• A number of trainees attended the conference organized by PCHR on the new Palestinian government and human rights.</li> <li>• A number of trainees participated in workshops organized by PCHR. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of trainees were supposed to assist in organizing 4 training courses in cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, but the Ministry apologized for its own reasons.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A number of trainees assisted in the organization of two public meetings on death penalty in the OPT.</li> </ul>
6	Trainees' initiatives	<p>Trainees made a number of initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizing lectures for mothers and female teachers on the rights of the child, and inviting the unit director to deliver a number of lectures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizing visits for school children to PCHR's offices.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A number of trainees delivered preliminary lectures on human rights and democracy.</li> <li>• A number of trainees invited a number of PCHR staff members to participate in workshops organized by their organizations.</li> <li>• A number of trainees assisted in organizing summer camps for children. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the trainees jointed a project focusing on the rights of the child.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A number of trainees informed PCHR on human rights violations and escorted victims to PCHR's offices.</li> </ul>
7	Requests for organizing training courses	In the first half of 2006, the unit received requests from a number of civil society organizations to organize training courses for their members on human rights and democracy, and to be invited to participate in activities organized by PCHR.

#### ■ Issuing News Releases Related to the Unit's Activities

In 2006, the unit issued 15 news releases covering its activities. Local newspapers reported on these activities.

This activities sought to develop skills of PCHR training staff members and provide them with updated information on techniques of training.

Table (5):  
Activities to Develop  
Skills of PCHR  
Training Staff

No.	Activity	Implementation	Means of Verification	Indicators
1	Providing PCHR training staff with updated information on techniques of training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The unit was provided with a laptop and a projector in the first half of the year, and a number of training staff members were trained to use them in training.</li> <li>Some training materials were computerized.</li> <li>This technology has been used by a number of PCHR training staff members.</li> </ul>	Holding meetings with training staff members to evaluate how much they benefit from the use of modern technology in training.	The unit director held meetings with PCHR training staff members who used modern technology in training, and they asserted that it saves time and efforts and makes it easy to provide appropriate training.
2	Nominating a number of PCHR training staff members to participate in training courses of trainers	Two members of PCHR training staff participated in a 5-day training course on advocacy organized by Dan Church Aid in November in Gaza.	Holding meetings with those who benefited from the course.	One of the beneficiaries evaluated the courses as fruitful.

The unit continued its efforts to establish an alumni body that combines individuals who receive training at PCHR. The unit received dozens of persons who received training at PCHR and presented the idea of the alumni body to them. They welcomed the idea. However, the unit was not able, for reasons out of its control related to field developments in the Gaza Strip, to officially declare the establishment of the alumni body in spite of its de facto existence. The unit laid foundations for establishing this body through a number of steps. The unit prepared a brochure to introduce the alumni body, including its goals, membership conditions and advantages, etc.

In 2006, the unit filed contract details of 373 trainees. The list includes names, places of residence, work places, telephone and fax numbers, e-mails, the coordinating insti-

tutions, and the dates and places of courses.

In 2006, persons who received training at PCHR contributed to a number of activities organized by PCHR and other organizations:

- A number of trainees participated in PCHR’s campaign to monitor the Palestinian parliamentary elections.
- A number of trainees attended the conference organized by PCHR on the new Palestinian government and human rights.
- A number of trainees participated in workshops organized by PCHR.
- A number of trainees assisted in the organization of 4 training courses, which were supposed to be conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, but the Ministry apologized for its own reasons.
- A number of trainees assisted PCHR in organizing two public meetings that discussed the death penalty in the OPT.

**Output (4)**

**Maintaining Relations with Civil Society Organizations through Training Activities**

The unit contributes to promote PCHR’s relations with civil society organizations through participating in training activities organized by these organizations. The unit receives many invitations from governmental and non-governmental organizations to organize training courses for their members, delivering lectures or designing training programs due to the unit’s high professionalism.

The unit was fully committed to its priority activities in 2006 and was not able to accept many of the invitations received from other organizations to participate in external training activities. The unit prioritized those external activities which most closely fulfilled its own mandate.

Table (6):  
Activities  
Conducted by the  
Unit to Enhance  
Relations with Other  
Civil Society  
Organizations

No.	Activity	Implement- ation	Means of Verification	Indicators
1	Participation in training activities organized by other civil society organizations, especially those focusing on women and the disabled	The unit organized two training courses and delivered two lectures in training activities organized by other civil society organizations	An increase in the number of invitations sent by other civil society organizations to PCHR to participate in training activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The unit received 21 requests from other civil society organizations to organize training courses for their members or deliver lectures in training courses they organized.</li> <li>• The unit organized two training courses and delivered 7 lectures at other civil society organizations.</li> <li>• The unit directors received 3 letters thanking him for participating in training activities organized by other civil society organizations.</li> </ul>

2	Hosting activities or small civil society organizations, especially those focusing on women and the disabled	This activity was not implemented	Requests send to the unit to host such activities	The unit did not implement this activity as it did not receive any request from other organizations.
3	Assisting small civil society organizations, especially those focusing on the rights of women and the disabled, in designing training courses	The unit provided technical assistance to design a training program and a 3-year training plan	An increase in the number of organizations requesting the unit's assistance in designing training courses	The unit designed a training course for the media department at the Ministry of Interior
4	Inviting trainers from other organizations to contribute to training activities organized by the unit	This activity was not implemented	The number of trainers who contributed to the unit's training activities	The unit did not invite external trainers as PCHR has enough qualified ones

Table (7):  
Lecture Delivered  
by the Unit at  
Training Courses  
Organized by Other  
Organizations

No.	Organization	Place	Date	Number of Participants	Subject
1	Women's Affairs Technical Staff	Offices of Women's Affairs Technical Staff in Gaza	21 Jan.	28	Observation of elections
2	Media department at the Ministry of Interior	Offices of the media department in Gaza	12 Mar.	20	Human rights and the rights and duties of security officials

3	Jabalya Female Elementary School "F"	Jabalya Female Elementary School "F"	6 Apr.	26	Convention on the rights of the Child
4	Jabalya Female Elementary School "E"	Jabalya Female Elementary School "E"	4 May	40	Convention on the rights of the Child
5	Palestinian Commission for Human Rights Culture	Offices of the commission in Gaza	25 May	25	Civil and political rights
6	Tami Training Institute	Offices of Rural Women Development Association in Abasan village	17 Dec.	24	International Bill of Human Rights
7	Tami Training Institute	Offices of Rural Women Development Association in Beit Hanoun	25 Dec.	25	International Bill of Human Rights

#### **Other Activities Not Included in the Unit's Annual Plan**

The unit prepared the Human Rights Guide, which includes a number of international human rights instruments: International Bill of Human Rights (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights); Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women; Convention on the Rights of the Child; and Declaration on the Right to Development.

In 2006, the unit carried out most activities set out in its 2006 annual plan. However, it was not able to carry out some activities due to the deterioration in the internal security situation in the Gaza Strip, especially since June 2006. This atmosphere obstructed some activities of the unit.

### Output (1)

#### Legal Aid for Women

- 1) Representation of women before Sharia' courts
- 2) Representation of women before civil court

The unit continued to represent women before Sharia' and civil courts and provide legal consultations in coordination with Sharia' courts, women's institutions and the female police.

#### 1) Representation of Women before Sharia' Courts

The unit continued to represent women before Sharia' and civil courts. In 2006, the unit pursued 595 cases in Sharia' courts, in addition to 88 others from 2005. and 4 cases in civil courts.

Table (1):  
Sharia' Court Cases  
Pursued by the Unit  
in 2006

Case Type	Number
Alimony	283
and rights to household property	122
Custody rights	32
Access rights to children	12
Payment for childbirth	12
Delayed dowry	42
Separation	58
Obedience	4
Divorce assurance	1
Custody payment	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>595</b>

Table (2):  
Results of Cases  
Followed by the Unit  
before Sharia' Courts  
in 2004

Rulings	Under-consideration	Reconciled	Cancelled	Postponed to 2007	Total
283	43	151	69	49	595

■ **Legal Aid in PCHR's Branch Offices in Jabalya and Khan Yunis**

In 2005, the unit activated legal aid at PCHR's branch offices in Jabalya and Khan Yunis. The unit announced about the legal services provided by the unit and the days on which the unit lawyers are present in PCHR's offices in Jabalya and Khan Yunis to receive clients. In 2006, PCHR's branch office in Khan Yunis received 138 cases, and the branch office in Jabalya received 101 cases, which marks an increase by 40% in comparison with 2005.

■ **Providing Legal Consultation for Women**

In 2006, the unit provided 292 legal consultations to women in person or by telephone: 155 consultation in Gaza office; 99 ones in Jabalya office; and 38 ones in Khan Yunis offices.

**2) Representation of Women Before Civil Courts**

In 2006, the unit pursued 10 cases of women before civil court, including 9 ones whose pursuit was completed.

**Indicators**

- There was an increase of 12% in the number of cases received by the unit in 2006 in comparison with 2005. There was also an increase of 18% in the number of cases pursued by the unit in 2006 in comparison with 2005.
- Courts issued rulings in 50% of the cases pursued by the unit.
- The unit pursued a number of cases referred to it by Women Health Center in Jabalya.
- The unit pursued 3 cases referred to it by Women's Center for Legal and Social Consultation, which has cooperated with the unit in the field for legal aid.
- The unit has maintained cooperation with the Sharia' courts.
- The unit has maintained cooperation with the female police.

**Means of Verification**

- The unit received 507 cases, which were pursued before Sharia' courts in 2006, marking

an increase of 150% in comparison with the number of set out in the annual plan.

- The unit pursued 10 cases before the Gaza Magistrate Court.
- In 2006, the unit continued to pursue 88 cases from 2005.
- Courts issued 283 rulings in favor of women.
- The unit provided 292 consultations to women, marking an increase of 190% to the number set out in its annual plan.
- Sharia' court referred 36 cases to the unit.
- Women's institutions referred 36 cases to the unit.
- Female police referred 4 cases to the unit.

#### **Hindrances**

The unit intended to represent 50 women before civil courts, but she was able to represent 10 women only, due to the strike in civil court which continued for 5 months.

#### **Output (2)**

#### **Legal Awareness for Women: Raising Awareness of 2000 Women of Their Rights Ensured by Local Laws and Human Rights Instruments**

- 1) Organizing legal awareness lectures on the rights of women and children in coordination with women's organizations
- 2) Awareness raising publications
- 3) Cooperation with the media
- 4) Contribution to training courses organized by PCHR Training Unit

#### **1) Organizing Legal Awareness Lectures on the Rights of Women and Children**

- The unit implemented the second stage of the field legal awareness and assistance project for women in cooperation with the Swedish Kvinna Till Kvinna from 1 January to 31 December 2006. This stage included organizing 38 lectures on violence against women, with a special focus on the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1993.
- The unit organized 36 lectures on the Family Law (marriage contracts, divorce and the right to separation by a court ruling).
- The unit cooperated with new civil society organizations and schools.
- The unit delivered a number of legal awareness lectures in response to invitations by other women's organizations.

#### **Indicators**

- In 2006, the unit received 15 invitations from women's organizations and schools to deliver legal awareness lectures.
- The unit delivered a number of lectures at a number of women's organizations in

response to demands by women, such as Jabalya Women Activities Center in Jabalya, Women Activities Center in al-Daraj neighborhood in Gaza City, Tomorrow Development Society and Ghassan Kanafani Association.

#### Means of Verification

- In 2006, the unit organized 102 lectures to raise the legal awareness of women.
- 38 lectures focused on violence against women.
- 10 lectures focused on women's political participation, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 18 lectures were organized upon invitations by 15 organizations: Middle East Council of Churches; Women's Affairs Technical Staff; Tomorrow Development Society; Women's Affairs Center; Palestinian Youth Forum; Women Health Center in Jabalya; Voice of the Society; Zakher Association; Gizan al-Najjar Local Committee; Martyr Abu Hmaid Elementary School; Bani Suhaila Secondary School; Subhi Abu Karsh Elementary School; and Homeland Sons Association.
- 2150 women attended these lectures.
- 45 women referred to the unit for legal aid after having attended these lectures.
- The unit provided 252 on-the-spot legal consultations to women during these lectures.
- These lectures were organized in cooperation with 45 institutions throughout the Gaza Strip, including women's centers at UNRWA.
- The unit organized lectures in cooperation with 15 schools.

#### Hindrances

- The deterioration in the internal security situation in the Gaza Strip impacted the activities carried out by the unit and forced it to cancel a number of legal awareness lectures.
- Israeli violations of human rights in the Gaza Strip prevented the unit from holding a number of lectures, especially in the north.

## 2) Awareness Raising Publications

The unit reprinted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1993 to be used in the context of the legal awareness project implemented by the unit on violence against women. This activity coincided with the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence from 25 November to 10 December 2006.

### ■ A Poster on International Women's Day

The unit prepared a poster on the occasion of International Women's Day on 8 March.

### ■ A Poster on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

The unit prepared a poster on the occasion of International Day from the Elimination of Violence Against Women, to raise awareness on the issue of violence against women.

#### Indicators

- Copies of the Declaration were distributed in lectures.
- Copies of the poster were circulated to governmental and non-governmental organizations, especially those which are interested in women's rights.
- Copies of the poster on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women were circulated.

#### Means of Verification

- 2000 copies of the Declaration were printed.
- 2000 copies of each poster were published and circulated.
- The poster on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women was published on PCHR's web page.

### 3) Cooperation with the Media

The unit firmly believes that the media plays a vitally important role in raising awareness of women and children's legal rights in Palestinian society. Consequently, in 2006, the unit made efforts to further develop cooperation with the local media.

#### ■ Press Interviews

1. On 19 February, the unit director was interviewed by journalist Majeda Ahmed on the issue of violence against women and cooperation with the female police. The interview was published in Voice of Women.
2. On 11 September, the unit director was interviewed by Steven Erangler from New York Times on the impacts of security and economic conditions on women.
3. On 13 November, the unit directors was interviewed by Samar al-Drainli from al-Ghaidaa Newsletter published by Women's Affairs Center on international women's rights instruments.
4. On 21 December, the unit director was interviewed by Stephen Farrell from The Times on the impacts of the state of lawlessness on women in the Gaza Strip.

#### ■ Radio Interviews

1. On 2 March, unit lawyer Hanan Matar participated in an episode of Female Issue, a program broadcasted by Voice of Workers Radio in Gaza.
2. On 8 March, the unit director was interviewed by Voice of Workers Radio on Inter-

national Women's Day.

3. On 26 November 2006, al-Shabab (Youth) Radio hosted and interviewed the unit director and Ms. Manal Awad, Director of Women Empowerment Project of Gaza Community Mental Health Programme on the role of women's organizations in the Gaza Strip.
4. On 10 December, unit lawyer Hanan Matara and lawyer Rajaa' Eid from Women Empowerment Project of Gaza Community Mental Health Programme were interviewed by al-Shabab (Youth) Radio on the importance of raising legal awareness of women.

#### Indicator

The unit director received a phone call from the female police following the publication of her interview in Voice of Women on 22 February 2006, emphasizing continued cooperation between the unit and the female police.

#### Means of Verification

- The unit made 4 press interviews.
- The unit made 5 radio interviews.
- Reports on the unit's activities were published in local newspapers.
- Reports on the unit's activities were published in PCHR's al-Mentar Newsletter.
- The unit wrote an article on the rights of women in international human rights instruments, which was published in al-Ghaidaa' Newsletter of Women's Affairs Center in Autumn 2006.

#### 4) Contribution to Training Courses Organized by PCHR's Training Unit

The unit contributed to 14 training courses on democracy and human rights and CEDAW organized by PCHR's Training Unit. It also organized 3 training courses in cooperation with Training Unit for the female police. In 2006, a number of training sessions were devoted to gender issues.

##### ■ Training Courses for Female Police

In the context of a joint project with the Swedish Kvinna Till Kvinna, the unit organized 3 training courses for the female police on human rights and women, which were held in Gaza City, Khan Yunis and Jabalya. Each course included 16 training hours. At least 60 members of the female police participated in these courses. Before these courses, the unit director and director of the Training Unit met with Major Einas Shalabi, commander of the female police, to discuss the needs of female police. Based on this meeting, the training courses focused on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Family Law, Convention Against

#### Indicator

This activity constituted the first joint activity among the unit, Training Unit and the female police with regard to organizing training courses on women's rights for the female police. It also represented the first training of its kind directed to the female police.

#### Means of Verification

60 members of the female police participated in the course.

#### ■ Organizing a Training Course on Gender and Its Incorporation into Strategic Plans for PCHR Staff Members

The unit's 2006 annual plan included the organization of a training course on gender for PCHR staff members in the context of a joint project with Kvinna Till Kvinna. In the first months of the year, the unit made efforts to bring a trainer from Bir Zeit University in Ramallah, but she was not able to come to the Gaza Strip as she was not granted permission by IOF.

#### Hindrances

The unit was not able to organize the training course on gender due to restrictions on the freedom of movement between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip imposed by IOF.

### Output (3)

#### Lobbying

- 1) Lobbying for raising the age of marriage to 18 and over.
- 2) Lobbying for equality between women and men in testifying before Sharia' courts
- 3) Lobbying for raising the limit of age of child custody
- 4) Lobbying for enacting a law to protect victims of violence against women

The unit follows up draft laws discussed by the Palestinian Legislative Council, especially those relevant to the rights of women and children, to comment on them and ensure the incorporation of international standards of the rights of women and children in these laws. The unit's 2006 annual plan included activities aimed at discussing issued related to the draft Family Law with women's organizations and Sharia' judges and lawyers.

## Activities

1. The unit made comments on the draft Family Law prepared by the Higher Sharia' Judiciary Council and the Legislation Council, including demanding raising the age of marriage to at least 18, raising the age limit of child custody and ensuring the equality between women and men in testifying before Sharia' courts.
2. The unit organized 3 workshops to discuss the draft family Law in Khan Yunis and Jabalya. A number of Sharia' judges, Sharia' lawyers, and representatives of women's organizations active in the southern and northern Gaza Strip participated in these workshops. The participants discussed comments made by the unit on the draft Family Law.
3. The unit organized a meeting at PCHR's office in Gaza City with women's organizations to discuss the draft Family Law.

### Indicators

- The unit made comments on the draft Family Law.
- The participants in the workshops called for holding more meetings to discuss the draft Family Law.
- Sharia' judges expressed their interest in comments made by the unit on the draft Family Law.
- Sharia' judges rejected a number of comments made by the unit, especially those related to raising the age of marriage from 15 to 18, abolition of polygamy, allowing adult girls to get married without approval of their custodians and equality between women and men in testifying before Sharia' courts.

### Means of Verification

- 7 Sharia' judges participated in the workshop that was held in Khan Yunis.
- 30 representatives of women's organizations participated in the workshop that was held in Khan Yunis.
- 5 Sharia' judges participated in the workshop that was held in Jabalya.
- 28 representatives of women's organizations participated in the workshop that was held in Jabalya.
- The unit issued news releases about each workshop.
- Local newspapers reported on the workshops.

### Hindrances

- Sharia' judges rejected a number of comments made by the unit on the draft Family Law.
- The unit was not able to hold meetings with the Palestinian Legislative Council as the performance of the Council was weak and it was not able to hold regular sessions.

### ■ **Coordination and Cooperation with Local, Regional and International Women's Organizations**

1. The unit director participated in meetings of the steering committee of the project of raising awareness of the right of the child, which is implemented by Cana'an Pedagogical Institute, in cooperation with Unicef. The committee includes representatives of Gaza Community Mental Health Programme, UNRWA Education Department, Ministry of Education and Women and Children Unit at the Palestinian Legislative Council.
2. The unit director participated in meetings of the consultative committee concerned with the campaign on women's rights and violence against women, which is implemented by Women's Affairs Center in cooperation with United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

### ■ **Participation in Local, Regional and International Activities**

#### Local Activities

The unit staff members participated in a number of meetings, workshops and conferences organized by local NGOs in 2006. For instance, on 11 December 2006, the unit director participated in a conference organized by Women's Affairs Technical Staff on women's demands from the national unity government. She submitted a working paper on women's demands related to security reform and confronting interfamily violence.

### ■ **Activities Related to the 16 Days Campaign against Violence against Women (25 November – 26 December 2006)**

- The unit prepared a poster on the occasion of International Day from the Elimination of Violence Against Women on 25 November.
- The unit reprinted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1993.
- The unit issued a press release on International Women's Day.
- On 26 November 2006, the unit director participated in a workshop organized by Women's Affairs Center, in cooperation with UNIFEM. She talked about mechanisms of legal aid to women based on the unit's experience.
- On 29 November 2006, the unit director participated in a workshop organized by the National Campaign Against Violence Against Women on the impacts of the current situation on the women's psychological and physiological health. She submitted a working paper on violence against women in international human rights instruments.

#### Regional Activities

On 2-3 June 2006, the unit director participated in a seminar organized by Dan Church Aid in Cairo to discuss challenges that face Palestinian women movement after the Palestinian parliamentary elections. Representatives of various women's organizations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip participated in the seminar, which established

the Alternative Women Forum, which would attempt to create a clear united stance of women based on equality between the two sexes.

#### International Activities

The unit hosted a delegation of Kvinna Till Kvinna. On 27 September 2006, the unit organized a meeting between members of the delegation and representatives of a number of women's organizations in the Gaza Strip. The meeting discussed a report issued by Kvinna Till Kvinna on the experience of women's organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina in creating strategies for peace. The meetings also discussed the experience of women in Palestine in comparison with those in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### Output (4)

#### Documentation of Cases of Violence Against Women and Violations of Their Rights

##### Activities

The unit cooperates with Field Work Unit and Democratic Development Unit in documenting violations of women's rights, especially murders for the so-called family honor. The unit pays a special attention to this issue as there was a notable increase in the number of murders related to "family honor" in 2006. This issue is linked with the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons that plagues the OPT, especially the Gaza Strip.

##### Indicators

- The unit, in cooperation with the Field Work Unit, has documented murders related to "family honor" in the Gaza Strip.
- The unit has statistics from the female place in murders, rapes and assaults against women.
- Documented cases were used by the unit director in workshops and conferences.
- The unit's information on this issue was used by a number of researchers in their research on murders for "family honor" and raping.

##### Means of Verification

- The unit documented 12 murders of women related to "family honor" in the Gaza Strip.
- 4 press releases condemning murdering women for "family honor" were issued in the context of PCHR's documentation of incidents related to the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons.

##### Hindrances

- There are no accurate figures of murders related to "family honor."
- There are no accurate figures of cases of violence against women.

### Introduction

Since the Israeli “disengagement” from Gaza, the Strip has been placed under a total siege. Nothing enters or leaves the Strip without Israel’s permission as absolute control is maintained; the occupation of Gaza continued during 2006 in its legal, physical and political forms. This had a severe impact on the international unit as internationals, who form the core of the unit, had difficulties entering the Gaza Strip. A handful of expected international interns were rejected entry into Gaza or decided not to work for PCHR because of the difficult situation. During 2006 the unit was without staff representation between June and October, bar the International Fundraiser, who thus had to do the international unit’s duties when time allowed.

In general terms, the international unit has supported the other units of the organisation to maintain and strengthen international bonds and has acted as a bridge between PCHR and the international community. During this year, in contrary to earlier years, the unit has focused more on support of administration duties due to the situation of shortage of staff members and less on research and advocacy. The staff has corresponded on a daily basis and thus supported the director in maintaining contacts with international organisations and institutions as well as accompanied international delegations during their visits in Gaza. On a weekly basis staff members have edited various reports and press releases produced by other units of the organisation and assisted to update the website.

In order to increase the awareness within the international community regarding human rights violations and the situation in the OPT; the unit maintained contacts with solidarity groups and human rights organisations. The unit succeeds in spreading our press releases and weekly reports to via the Palestinian solidarity website Electronic Intifada, which has up to 750 000 viewers per month.

The International Unit also produced various publications and edited the 2005 annual report and completed an alternative annual report for the Ford Foundation. Staff from the unit also produced a book about PCHR for the 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary. The International Unit assisted PCHR fundraiser, writing proposals and corresponding with donors. The unit also assisted PCHR fundraiser with writing reports to our donors.

### 1) International Legal Work

#### **Activity: Maintenance of Contacts with current International Legal Partners**

- Staff assisted other units in the organisation of universal jurisdiction conference in Malaga and attended the conference as well as follow-up on issues relating to the conference afterwards.

- The International Unit assisted Legal Unit with completion of assessment forms for clients to be used then by Hickman & Rose Solicitors, London.
- During the visit from law firm Hickman and Rose, the unit accompanied them on field trips in Gaza and to Jericho prison to interview clients.

## 2) The general election to Palestinian Legislative Council

### Activity: Monitor the parliamentary elections

- Staff from the International Unit, together with the other units from PCHR, was part of the team which monitored the parliamentary elections in January.
- Staff members wrote reports following the parliament elections.
- The unit also accompanied other international delegations on field trips in Gaza during the parliamentary elections.

## 3) Intervention at UN Bodies

### Activity: Intervention to UN

- PCHR International Unit produced an intervention to the UN regarding the situation in the summer following the Israeli forces deliberate destruction of Palestinian infrastructure and the massive escalation of human rights violations in Gaza.

### Activity: Intervention to UN General Assembly

- In the light of ICJ AO, PCHR, with the assistance of the international unit, together with Al-Haq, Al-Mezan and Adalah, produced an intervention to member states of the United Nations to request the president of the general assembly to reconvene its tenth emergency special session in order to condemn the Israeli construction of the wall in the west bank.

### Activity: Intervention to UN High Commissioner on Human Rights

- The staff wrote an intervention to Ms. Louise Arbour, UNCHR, regarding the Israeli breaches of the fourth Geneva Convention during their military campaign "operation summer rain" that began in 25 June, in particular breaches of article 23 and 55 of the Convention related to the Israeli denial of food and medical supplies. The intervention called for her to visit the OPT and condemn the breaches of international law. The intervention also called for her to mobilize the HCP to the Fourth Geneva Convention to fulfil their obligations to protect civilians and to lobby for an international protection force via the Security Council.
- Together with several other Palestinian human rights organizations, the international unit produced an intervention to UNCHR due to its visit to the OPT in November. The intervention embraced the decision for UNCHR to visit the OPT and to witness

the impact of the recent incursions and human rights violations. The intervention also called for UNCHR to urge to the appropriate UN bodies to convene a global conference in order to protect the civilian population and implement human rights in the OPT.

### **Outcome**

- The intervention succeeded in the fact that Ms. Louise Arbour visited the OPT and witnessed with her own eyes the severe situation, particularly in Gaza. Unfortunately, the statement released by Ms. Arbour after her visit was a disappointment in her use of language and her failure to address the obligations of the Palestinian Authority and Israel to uphold humanitarian law. Ms. Arbour claimed the immediate action from the international community would be to advocate for international law.

### **Activity: Intervention to UN High Commissioner on Human Rights after her visit in the OPT**

- In cooperation with Al-Mezan and Ad Damer the International Unit produced an intervention regarding UNCHR unsatisfactory statements after her visit in the OPT. In her statements she equated the victims and the executer. Her language was also unsatisfactory, for example, she referred to the “barrier” despite ICJ clearly designed the barrier as an illegal wall.

## **4) Interventions at Non-UN Forum**

### **Activity: Human rights conference in Gaza.**

- On the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of June, the international unit attended PCHR Human Rights conference titled “The New Palestinian Government and the Human Rights Agenda” in Gaza, which involved participation by PA representatives. The aim of the conference was to establish a framework for dialogue between the government and civil society organisations. In connection with the conference, the unit accompanied international delegation who attended the conference on field visits.

### **Activity: Intervention to Swiss government**

- The staff wrote a memorandum to the Swiss Government as the depository of the Fourth Geneva Convention regarding the Israeli military campaign “operation summer rain” that began on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June, and the breaches to international humanitarian law that followed. The intervention called for the government to take a leading role to mobilize the high contracting parties to the Convention and to urge the Security Council to send an international protection force to OPT.

**Activity: Intervention to the High Contracting Parties of the Fourth Geneva Convention**

- The staff wrote a memorandum to the High Contracting Parties to fulfil their obligations to uphold the Fourth Geneva Convention related to the Israeli military campaign “operation summer rain” that began on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June and the breaches to international humanitarian law that followed the operation. The intervention also called for the HCP to make efforts via the Security Council to establish an international protection force for the Palestinian civilian population.

**Activity: Rule of law and Universal Jurisdiction Conference**

- Staff assisted other units in the organisation of a universal jurisdiction conference in Malaga in April and attended the conference. Lawyers, human rights activists from for continents were represented at the conference. The aim of the conference was to discuss issues such as universal jurisdiction and impunity and to establish a subcommittee to the development of universal jurisdiction remedies for violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.

## Participation in International and Regional Conferences and Meetings

In 2006, PCHR received invitations to participate in many international and regional conferences and meetings. PCHR's participation in such events was restricted by the ongoing restrictions on freedom of movement imposed by IOF on the Gaza Strip. External travel in particular has been subject to delays and restrictions, as Rafah International Crossing Point has been repeatedly closed. These conditions have resulted in reduced participation by PCHR staff in international and regional events held outside the Gaza Strip. Despite the continued escalation of violations of human rights by IOF in the OPT and the necessity of PCHR's presence at the local level, PCHR made efforts to meet some of these invitations.

### Second Civil Forum Parallel to the Arab Summit – Morocco

In the period 17-19 February 2006, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in the meetings of the Second Civil Forum Parallel to the Arab Summit, which focused on two years of reform in the Arab World. The forum was organized in Morocco by Cairo Center for Human Rights Studies and the Arab Organization for Human Rights, in cooperation with International Federation of Human Rights and the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network. It discusses several issues, including the evaluation of democratic reform in the past two years; the contribution of elections to democratic reform; the crisis of justice in the Arab world; evaluation of the civil society's role in democratic reform; the evaluation of international initiatives for reform; and human rights in Iraq, Palestine and Darfor.

### Second Conference of National Human Rights Organizations in the Arab World – Qatar

In the period, 4-6 March 2006, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in the second conference of national human rights organizations in the Arab World, which was organized in Duha by the Arab Committee for Human Rights. The conference focused on the culture of human rights in response to recommendations of the first conference. It also discussed a number of related issues, including the problems that face the culture of human rights; the international framework of human rights organiza-

### **Colloquium of the Irish Solidarity Campaign – Ireland**

Hamdi Shaqqoura, Director of PCHR Democratic Development Unit, represented PCHR at a colloquium organized by the Irish Solidarity Campaign with Palestine, and was held in Ireland on 7 March 2006. Shaqqoura talked about the situation following the election of Hamas, focusing on steps of democratic reform in the Palestinian National Authority since 2004, and the boycott imposed on the Palestinian people for their democratic choice, and the outcome of the peace process in 12 years.

### **Colloquium on the Palestinian Cause – Qatar**

During his visit to Qatar, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in a colloquium organized at the divan of Dr. 'Ali al-Kawari, a prominent Arab academic, on 8 March 2006. Sourani talked about implications and impacts of the unilateral Israeli disengagement plan from the Gaza Strip, the reality of Israeli policies and Palestinian elections and the developments that followed.

### **Meeting with Members of the Committee of Foreign and Security Affairs in the Irish Parliament – Ireland**

On 8 March 2006, Hamdi Sahqqoura, Director of PCHR Democratic Development Unit, met with members of the Committee of Foreign and Security Affairs in the Irish Parliament. The meeting was coordinated by Christian Aid and Trocaire. In his speech before the committee, Shaqqoura talked about the human rights situation in the OPT, the unilateral Israeli disengagement plan from the Gaza Strip, and the Palestinian disappointment by the international positions towards Palestinian issues, especially the results of the latest parliamentary elections.

### **Colloquium on the Annexation Wall – Ireland**

On 10 March 2006, Hamdi Sahqqoura, Director of PCHR Democratic Development Unit, participated in a colloquium organized by Trocaire in Ireland, one of PCHR's international partners, on the Annexation Wall being constructed by Israel in the West Bank. Shaqqoura talked about the construction of the Wall, considering it a flagrant demonstration of unilateral steps. He also talked about the unilateral Israeli disengagement plan from the Gaza Strip and the northern West Bank, stressing that it sought to create irreversible facts on the ground.

### **Meeting with Deputy Director of Asia and Middle East Department in the Irish Foreign Ministry – Ireland**

On 10 March 2006, , Hamdi Sahqqoura, Director of PCHR Democratic Development

Unit, met with Deputy Director of Asia and Middle East Department in the Irish Foreign Ministry. The meeting discussed several issues, including the steps that Europe should take to stop the deterioration in the human rights situation in the OPT.

### **Meetings of the FIDH Executive Office – Paris**

Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in meetings of the Executive Office of International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) in the period 10-12 March 2006. It is worth noting that Sourani is the deputy chairman of FIDH.

### **Regional Workshop – Cairo**

On 12 and 13 March 2006, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in a regional workshop organized by UNDP program for democratic governance in the Arab countries, in cooperation with the National Council for Human Rights in Egypt. The workshop was titled "Towards Free and Fair Arab Elections." The workshops discussed a number of issues: the roles of bodies supervising elections in Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine and Iraq; challenges of the electoral process; the civil society's role; international observation of elections; and evaluation of elections. Sourani submitted an intervention on Palestinian elections.

### **First Conference of Asyout University – Egypt**

In the period 14-16 March 2006, PCHR Legal Aid Unit lawyer Ashraf Nasrallah participated in the first conference organized by Asyout University on human rights in constitutional regimes. The conference discussed a number of issues, including human rights in Arab constitutions; legal guarantees for human rights protection; realistic guarantees for human rights protection; and the establishment of an Arab regional system for human rights protection. University professors, judges, representatives of human rights organizations, government officials and media representatives participated in the conference.

### **An International Conference – Dublin**

On 1 and 2 April 2006, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in an international conference titled "Towards Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel," which was organized by Limerick University in Dublin, Ireland. The conference discussed a number of issues, including the history and impacts of occupation; international role in Middle East peace; international solidarity; and boycott.

### **Colloquium on the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights – Cairo**

On 7 April 2006, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in a colloquium on challenges and chances of applying the European Initiative for Democracy and Human

Rights, which was organized by the European Committee in Cairo. It included extensive discussion and exchange of information and viewpoints concerning the initiative.

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### **Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Organization for Human Rights – Cairo**

On 8 and 9 April 2006, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, representing PCHR, participated in the meetings of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Organization for Human Rights in Cairo.

### **Evaluation Meeting of Front Line – Geneva**

In the period 12-14 April 2006, Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, participated in a meeting organized by Front Line in Geneva to evaluate its work since its establishment in 2001. The meeting, in which a number of international human rights organizations, in addition to PCHR, discussed mechanisms to defend human rights defenders.

### **Meetings in Switzerland**

In the period 12-15 April 2006, Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, held a number of meetings in Switzerland, including meetings with: the mayor of Geneva; an official of the Swiss Agency for Development and International Cooperation; representatives of Swiss organizations supporting the Palestinian people; and a number of Swiss solidarity activists.

### **Meetings of the General Assembly of EMHRN – Madrid**

On 12 and 14 May 2006, Hamdi Shaqqoura, Director of Democratic Development Unit, and Eyad Alami, Director of Legal Aid Unit, participated in meetings of the General Assembly of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network in Madrid. The meetings discussed the political report, the report of activities from 2003 to 2006, the financial report, and the work plan for 2006 and 2007.

### **Meeting of the Executive Committee of the International Commission of Jurists - Geneva**

On 23 and 24 May 2006, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in the meeting of the Executive Committee of the International Commission of Jurists in Geneva.

### **International Conference on the Enforcement of International Humanitarian Law – Geneva**

In response to an invitation from the European Coordination Committee for the Palestinian Cause, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in an international confer-

ence titled “International Law Enforcement: Towards Just peace in Palestine and Israel,” in Geneva from 26 to 28 May 2006. Sourani submitted an intervention titled “International Law: An Important Factor in the Struggle for Just Peace.” In his intervention, Sourani stressed that international humanitarian law is in favor of Palestinians, and considers crimes committed by IOF, including, inter alia, settlement, torture, ethnic cleansing, the Annexation Wall, the illegal annexation of Jerusalem, war crimes.

### **Seminar on Challenges That Face Palestinian Women’s Movement – Cairo**

Muna Shawa, Director of PCHR Women’s Rights Unit, represented PCHR to a seminar organized in Cairo by Dan Church Aid from 2 to 4 June 2006 on the challenges that face the Palestinian women’s movement following the latest parliamentary elections. Representatives of 15 human rights and women’s organizations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and a number of independent experts participated in the seminar.

### **International Conference on the Palestinian Cause – London**

Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in an international conference titled “Rights-Based Approach to Solve the Palestinian – Israeli Conflict” organized by Exeter University in London from 8 to 11 June 2006. He submitted an intervention on the re-institutionalization of occupation, in which he talked about racist actions by IOF and the protection of civilians under international humanitarian law.

### **Regional Meeting on Conflict and Security in the Middle East – Amman**

On 6 and 6 September 2006, Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, participated in a meeting organized in Amman by Quakers Service on conflict and security in the middle east. The meeting was attended by representatives of the civil society in the Arab World, who discussed the escalation of violence and tension in the region.

### **UN Conference of NGOs for Palestine – Geneva**

On 7 and 8 September 2006, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in the UN Conference of NGOs for Palestine in Geneva. Representatives of diplomatic missions to the UN, Palestinian and international NGOs and UN agencies working in the Middle East participated in the two-day conference, which discussed the Israeli offensive on Lebanon, the boycott of the Palestinian National Authority and the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip.

### **Conference on Civilizations – Paris**

From 13 to 15 September 2006, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in a conference in Paris on the dialogue of civilizations in the Mediterranean region. The conference discussed a number of issues, including the dialogue of civilizations, the

avoidance of conflicts, efforts to achieve good neighborhood instead of collision.

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### **Meeting of the Executive Committee of the International Commission of Jurists - Geneva**

On 23 and 24 October 2006, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in the meeting of the Executive Committee of the International Commission of Jurists in Geneva. Sourani is a member of the Committee.

### **Annual Conference of Scandinavian Bar Associations – Stockholm**

Upon an invitation from the Swedish Bar Association, Raji Dourani, Director of PCHR, delivered a speech at the annual conference of Scandinavian bar associations on 9 and 10 November 2006. Sourani submitted an intervention on the distinguished experience of institutional and democratic construction in Palestine, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. At the Palestinian level, Souranbi talked about the experience of institutional and democratic construction in Palestine, problems of the Palestinian judiciary, the position towards state security courts, the misuse of weapons, and the kidnapping of internationals. At the Israeli level, Sourani talked about Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights, particularly the killings of 19 Palestinian civilians in Beit Hanoun; the crisis of the Israeli soldier, who had been captured by a Palestinian resistance groups, and subsequent Israeli attacks; ethnic cleansing in Jerusalem; the Annexation Wall and the Israeli position towards the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice; and the role of the Israeli High Court in providing a legal cover for crimes committed by IOF.

### **Third Civil Forum Parallel to Future Forum – Amman**

On 27 and 28 November 2006, Raji Dourani, Director of PCHR, participated in the Third Civil Forum Parallel to Future Forum in Amman. The forum discussed several issues, including transparency and corruption; the legal environment of the civil society; the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary; political pluralism and elections; empowerment of women; political and economic empowerment of the youth; and the independence of the media.

## Visiting International Delegations and Figures

PCHR pays special attention to activities related to receiving international delegations and figures, as part of its efforts to provide the international community with a comprehensive overview and explanation of violations of human rights perpetrated by IOF in the OPT. PCHR organizes visits for these delegations and figures throughout the Gaza Strip, and allows them to meet victims of human rights violations. These delegations and figures include politicians, diplomats, representatives of the United Nations bodies and human rights organizations and journalists.

In 2006, PCHR received several visiting delegations and figures. During some of these visits, PCHR escorted delegations and figures on field visits to areas in the Gaza Strip most affected by policies and practices of IOF. Since 2003, Israeli authorities have imposed unprecedented restrictions on access for internationals to the Gaza Strip. As a result of these restrictions, the number of visiting international delegations to the Gaza Strip, especially solidarity groups, has sharply decreased.

### Deputy Moroccan Representative to the PNA

On 3 January 2006, PCHR received Sa'id Ben Mubarak, Deputy Moroccan Representative to the PNA. The Deputy Ambassador met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed him on developments in the OPT, especially the Gaza Strip.

### Austrian Representative to the PA Visits PCHR

On 9 January 2006, Leon Hard Moll, Head of Austrian Representative Office to the PNA, and his deputy, Wolfgang Muhlberger, visited PCHR. They met Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Hamdi Shaqqura, Director of PCHR Democratic Development Unit. The meeting discussed the overall situation in the OPT, especially in light of the preparations for the legislative elections.

## UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process

On 16 January 2006, PCHR received Al Varo De Soto, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the UN Secretary General to the PNA. He met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed him on the Palestinian legislative elections, reiterating PCHR's position demanding the PNA to provide appropriate conditions to hold free and fair elections.

## European Union Election Observation Mission

On 17 January 2006, PCHR received Dariusz Rasinski, Operations Exp. Deputy, European Union Election Observation Mission for the Palestinian legislative elections.

## Quartet Election Consultants

On 22 January 2006, PCHR received two election consultants for the Quartet: Peter Erben, Senior Advisor, International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES); Jarrett Blanc, IFES. They met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who discussed with them the Palestinian legislative elections and PCHR's role in monitoring them.

## British Consul General

On 1 February 2006, PCHR received the British Consul General, Ross Allen. She met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed her on the situation in the OPT following elections.

## EU Delegation

On 1 February 2006, PCHR received a 3-member EU delegation. Members of the delegation met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed them on the human rights situation in the OPT.

## Deputy Head of the South African Representative Office to the PNA

On 27 February 2006, PCHR received the Deputy Head of the South African Representative Office to the PNA. He met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, who discussed with him the Palestinian elections and PCHR' role in monitoring them.

## Director of UNRWA Operations

On 21 March 2006, PCHR received John Gang, Director of UNRWA Operation, Gaza. He met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed him on the human rights situation in the OPT, especially Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights and the

kidnappings of internationals.

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### **Deputy Head of the South African Representative Office to the PNA**

On 27 February 2006, PCHR received the Deputy Head of the South African Representative Office to the PNA. He met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, who briefed him on the human rights situation in the OPT.

### **Medecins Du Monde Delegation**

On 4 April 2006, PCHR received a 4-member delegation of Medecins Du Monde. Members of the delegation met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed them on the deterioration of humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population.

### **European Parliament Delegation**

On 26 April 2006, PCHR received a 6-member delegation of the European Parliament. Members of the delegation met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, who briefed them on the human rights situation in the OPT.

### **ICRC Delegation**

On 7 May 2006, PCHR received a two-members delegation of the ICRC. Members of the delegation met with Eyad Alami, Director of PCHR Legal Aid Unit, who briefed them on the human rights situation in the OPT.

### **Egyptian Ambassador to the PNA**

On 8 May 2006, PCHR received Ashraf Aqel, Egyptian Ambassador to the PNA, and his deputy, Hazem Ramadan. They met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, who briefed them on the human rights situation and humanitarian conditions in the OPT.

### **Belgian Author Franciscus Van**

On 16, 17 and 21 May 2006, PCHR received Franciscus Van, a Belgian author, who was writing a book on the Palestinian political regime, and Carvalho Sousa, a journalist. PCHR organized a field tour for the visitors to Rafah and Khan Yunis. The visitors, who were escorted in their field tour by Khalil Shahin, Director of PCHR Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit, met with victims of human rights violations. PCHR also facilitated meetings for the visitors with representatives of a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations. These meetings discussed the political situation in Palestine, the Palestinian vision of the situation in the OPT, the impacts of the Israeli disengagement plan, poverty in the Gaza Strip and the living and health conditions of

the population in the Gaza Strip.

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### **Lawyers Representing the Swedish Bar Association, the International Bar Association and the International Legal Assistance Consortium**

From 18 to 20 May 2006, PCHR received lawyers Per Stadig and Hans Hjalms, representing the Swedish Bar Association, the International Bar Association and the International Legal Assistance Consortium. The visitors met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Eyad Alami, Director of the Legal Aid Unit. The meeting discussed latest developments in the OPT. In addition, PCHR facilitated meetings for the visitors with representatives of the Palestinian judiciary, the Palestinian Legislative Council and the local community.

### **French Consul General**

On Tuesday, 30 May 2006, PCHR received Alain Remy, the Consul General of France in Jerusalem, and Jacqueline Coulon-Lascaux from the Consulate staff. The Consul General met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR; Hamdi Shaqqoura, Director of Democratic Development Unit; Eyad Alami, Director of Legal Aid Unit; and Muna Shawa, Director of Women's Rights Unit; and Darrin Waller, from the International Unit.

### **Coordinator of Middle East and Southern Africa Department in the Swedish Foreign Ministry**

On 4 June 2006, PCHR received Coordinator of Middle East and Southern Africa Department in the Swedish Foreign Ministry. He met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed him on the human rights situation in the OPT.

### **Director of Human Rights Watch**

On 4 June 2006, PCHR received Director of Human Rights Watch, who met with Raji Saourani, Director of PCHR.

### **German Representative to the PNA**

On 7 June 2006, Jorg Ranau, Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany in Ramallah, and Philip Barret Holzapfel, Second Secretary and Political Officer at the Representative Office, visited PCHR. The guests met Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed them about the human rights situation and the deteriorating economic, social and humanitarian situation in the OPT.

### **World Council of Churches Delegation**

On 19 July 2006, PCHR received a delegation of the World Council of Churches. Raji

Sourani, Director of PCHR, briefed the delegation on Israeli practices against the Palestinian civilian population.

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### **Press and Public Information Officer of the EU observers at Rafah International Crossing Point**

On 14 August 2006, PCHR received Ms. Maria Teleria, Press and Public Information Officer of the EU observers at Rafah International Crossing Point. She met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR.

### **Deputy German Representative to the PNA**

On 16 August 2006, PCHR received Deputy Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to the PNA, who met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed him on the human rights situation in the OPT.

### **EMHRN and FDIH Delegation**

On 31 August 2006, PCHR received a 4-member delegation of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network and International Federation of Human Rights. Members of the delegation met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, and Hamdi Shaqqoura, Director of Democratic Development Unit, who briefed them on the human rights situations in the OPT.

### **Sida Delegation**

On 24 September 2006, PCHR received a 5-member delegation of the Swedish Agency for Development Cooperation. Members of the delegation met with Hamdi Shaqqoura, Director of PCHR Democratic Development Unit, who briefed them on humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population and the detention conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

### **Kvinna Till Kvinna Delegation**

On 26 and 27 September 2006, PCHR received a delegation of the Swedish Kvinna Till Kvinna. Members of the delegation met with Muna Shawa, Director of Women's Rights Unit, who briefed them on living conditions of Palestinian women and joint activities between the unit and the Swedish organization.

### **Irish Representative to the PNA**

On 4 October 2006, PCHR received the Irish Representative to the PNA. He met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, who briefed him on the human rights situation in the OPT.

## Irish Aid Delegation

On 14 November 2006, PCHR received a 5-member delegation of Irish Aid. Members of the delegation met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, Hamdi Shaqqoura, Director of Democratic Development Unit, and Eyad Alami, Director of Legal Aid Unit.

## Christian Aid Delegation

On 26 November 2006, PCHR received a delegation of Christian Aid. Members of the delegation met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, who briefed them on the human rights situation.

## UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories

On 6 December 2006, PCHR received the UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), Professor John Dugard. He met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, and Hamdi Shaqqoura, Director of Democratic Development Unit, who briefed him on developments related to the human rights situation in the OPT since 25 June 2006.

## Danish Representative to the PNA

On 6 December 2006, PCHR received Rolf M. Hay Pereira Holomboe, the Danish Representative to the PNA. He met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, and Hamdi Shaqqoura, Director of Democratic Development Unit, who briefed him on the human rights situation in the OPT.

## Secretary General of Amnesty International

On 8 December 2006, Irene Khan, Secretary General of Amnesty International, met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR; Hamdi Shaqqoura, Director of PCHR Democracy Development Unit; and Khalil Shaheen, Director of PCHR Economic and Social Rights Unit, in the context of her visit to the OPT to check the human rights situation. On 9 December 2006, Wishah and Shaeen escorted Ms. Khan and the accompanying mission in a field tour, during which she visited the towns of Beit Hanoun, Jabalya and Rafah. She met with a number of Palestinian civilians who were affected by IOF's attacks.

## Belgian Parliamentary Delegation

On 11 December 2006, PCHR received a 3-member Belgian parliamentary delegation. Members of the delegation met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, who briefed them on the human rights situation in the OPT.

Visitors of  
PCHR in 2006

Date	Visitors	Number of Visitors
3 January	Phil Anderson, Executive Director, Partners For Peace	1
3 January	Said Benmark, Deputy Representative of Morocco to the PNA	1
4 January	A meeting in al-Deera Hotel with: Veronique De Keyser, the Chief Observer of the EU Election Observation Mission for the West Bank and Gaza 2006 Juan Garcia, EU Election Observation Mission for the West Bank and Gaza 2006	2
9 January	Leon Hard Moll, Head of the Austrian Representative Office to the PNA Wolfgang Muhlberger, Deputy Head of the Austrian Representative Office - PA	2
16 January	Kate Maynard, Hickman & Rose Solicitors	1
16 January	Al Varo De Soto, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary General to the PLO and PNA. A delegation of the European Union	4
17 January	Dariusz Rasinski, Operations Exp. Deputy, European Union, Election Observation Mission – West Bank and Gaza 2006	1
17 January	Seamus Dunne, Senior Social Development Officer, International Management Group Cap. Roberto Ribaudó, Comando General Della Guardia Di Finanza, Il Reparto	
19 January	Hazem Ramadan, Deputy Egyptian Ambassador, at his office	1
22 January	Election consultants for the Quartet: Peter Erben, Senior Advisor, International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) Jarrett Blanc, IFES	2
23 January	Dr. Ussama Antar, Friedrich Ebert	1
24 January	Dinner at Beach Hotel with: Luisa Morgantini, Member of the European Parliament Richard Howitt, Labour Member of the European Parliament for the East of England	2
26 January	A delegation from Brithright Unplugged Because Knowledge is a journey	2

30 January	Rev. Chris Fergusow, Jerusalem Representative, World Council of Churches	2
30 January	Richard Stanforth, Regional Campaigns, Policy Officer, Oxfam - GB Caroline Abu Sada, Oxfam, Jerusalem	2
1 February	Ross Allen, Her Majesty's Consul (Political & Press), British Consulate General, Jerusalem Kamal al-Gherbawi, Office Manager	2
1 February	Mastenbrueh Edith, European Parliament, Belgium Amani Abu Ramadan, EU Observation Mission – West Bank and Gaza	2
7 February	Stewart Sheperd, OCHA Hamada al-Bayari, OCHA	2
7 February	A meeting in al-Deera Hotel with: Janit Sebbel, EU Representative Office, Jerusalem	1
8 February	A delegation from Front Line: Marry Lawler Ouin Murray Andro Andersen	3
12 February	Na'e Younis, director of a project to support the democratic process in Palestine (DAI)	1
22 February	A delegation of Unicef	
27 February	Royce Kuzwayo, Deputy Representative, South Africa Representative Office	1
28 February	Fadia Daibes, Programme Consultant – Middle East, Dan Church Aid	1
7 March	Kate Maynard, Hickman & Rose Solicitors	1
21 March	Mr. John Gang, Director of UNRWA Operations, Gaza	1
22 March	Royce Kuzwayo, Deputy Representative, South Africa Representative Office	1
30 March	Fadia Daibes, Programme Consultant – Middle East, Dan Church Aid	1
3 April	Judge Claudia Fenz, Special Advisor for the Rule of Law, European Union Coordination Office for Palestinian Police Support	1
4 April	A delegation from Medecins Du Monde, France	4

6 April	Emily Harding, Political Parties Program, National Democratic Institute (NDI) Jafar Felfel, Program Officer, NDI Ghadeer Dajani	3
24 April	Donatella Rovera and Dr. Abdul Salam Sayed Ahmed, Amnesty International	2
24 April	Jacqueline Lascaut, French Consulate, Jerusalem	1
24 April	Janit Sebbel, EU Representative Office, Jerusalem	1
27 April	Tahija Vikalo, Coordinator, Middle East and Europe Region AFSC – International Program – American Friends Service Committee	1
7 May	Oliver Hoehne, ICRC, Gaza Dejan Ivkov, Interpreter	2
8 May	Ashraf Aqel, Egyptian Ambassador to the PNA	2
10 May	Nicolas Pelham, Senior Analyst, Crisis Group, working to prevent conflict worldwide, Center for Political Studies	1
16, 17 and 21 May	Franciscus Van, a Belgian author Carvalho Sousa, a journalist	2
17 May	Kjersti Lindoe Project Coordinator, GOCX – Norway, KFUM Global	8
18-20 May	A delegation from Internal National Legal Assistance Consortium, Stockholm: Per Stadig Hans Hjalms	2
30 May	Alan Remy, Consul General de France a Jerusalem Jacqueline Coulon –Lascou, Coordinator, Consul General de France a Jerusalem	2
4 June	Mr. Fredrik Floren, Coordinator for the Peace Process at the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. Fredrik Kirst, Consul for Political Affairs, Swedish Consulate, Jerusalem	2
4 June	Peter Bouckaert, Director, Human Rights Watch	1
5 June	Salah al-Haj Yahia and Ibrahim Habib, Medecins Du Monde	2
7 June	Jorg Ranau, Representative. Philip Barrett Holzapfel, Second Secretary Political Officer, Representative Office of Germany	2

11 June	A meeting with Professor John Dugard, UN Special Rapporteur for the OPT at the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights	
11 June	Dian Avikov, ICRC	
19 June	Matthew Hodes, Director of the Carter Center Conflict Resolution Program, USA Joshua Robert, Office Coordinator, The Carter Center – West Bank and Gaza	2
5 July	Dr. Ussama Antar, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Germany	1
9 July	Jamal Eid, Medecins Du Monde	1
19 July	A delegation of World Council of Churches	3
19 July	David Shearer, OCHA, Jerusalem	1
20 July	French Assistant Foreign Minister Jacqueline Coulon-Lascaux, Attachee de Cooperation Sociale et Humanitaire, Consulat General De France A Jerusalem	2
25 July	Jan Egeland, the UN Undersecretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Alvaro de Soto, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process	2
27 July	A delegation from the Basque	9
1 August	A meeting with Karen Abu Zayd, UNRWA Commissioner General	
8 August	Fuzzkitto, Consultant, Australia Carolyn Kitto, Evang Elism and Church Support Coordinator Suhaila Tarazi, National Arab Hospital, Gaza	3
10 August	June Ray, Head of Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the OPT Alaa' Shalabi, Head of Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Gaza Saber al-Nairab, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Gaza	3
12-16	Quin Murray, Officer of Palestine Programme, Trocaire	1
14 August	Maria Telleria, Press and Public Information Officer, European Union Border Assistance Mission in Rafah	1
15 August	A meeting with Mr. Ahmed Bahar, Deputy Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council	

15 August	Alaa' Shalabi, Head of Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Gaza Khalil Abu Shammala, Director of Al-Dameer Association for Human Rights	2
16 August	Hubert Gajer, Deputy Representative, Representative Office of Germany	1
16 August	A delegation from Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights – Geneva: Karin Lucky, Officer, Arab Department Sabrevu Hollychild, Capacity Building Officer	2
19 August	Ms. Jameela al-Shanti, Member of the Palestinian Legislative Council	1
23 August	Jarat Chopra, Consultant, International Transition Assistance Group	1
31 August	A delegation from the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network and International Federation for Human Rights	4
18 September	Oliver Hoehne, ICRC	1
16 September	A meeting with Members of the British Parliament through video conference	
22 September	Anique Vanden, Bosch, Media Department, Novib	1
24 September	A delegation from SIDA: Eva Asplund, Assistant Director General and Head of Asia Department Fredrik Westerholm, Country Programme Coordinator Department of Asia, Middle East and North Africa Samer Abu Jobara, Country Programme Coordinator Department for Asia, Middle East and North Africa Maria Bjernevi, Country Programme Co-ordinator Department for Asia, Middle East and North Africa Elisabet Hellsten, Country Programme Coordinator Department for Asia, Middle East and North Africa	5
25 September	Urban Caluori, Deputy Head of Sub-delegation, ICRC – Gaza	1
26-28 September	A delegation from Kvinna till Kvinna	
27 September	A delegation from Dan Church Aid headed by Uffe Gjerding	13

4 October	Conor O’Riordan - Representative office of Ireland to the Palestinian Authority, - Ramallah	1
14 October	A Spanish delegation from the Basque	13
1 November	A delegation from Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF) Corine Wagnert, Field Coordinator, Gaza Ayman Al Jaroucha, Assistant FC, MSF	2
2 November	Delegation from Trocaire, Ireland: Lara Kelly, Campaign Officer, Trocaire Fr. Eoin Gassidy, of the Irish Commission for Justice and Social Affairs Eoin Murray, Officer of Palestine Programme, Trocaire	3
2 November	Cristina Mansfield, Dan Church Aid	1
14 November	Conor O’Riordan, Head of the Representative Office of Ireland to the Palestinian Authority Colm O’Conaill, Deputy Representative in the Representative Office of Ireland to the Palestinian Authority Brendan McMahon, Director of Emergency & Recovery Section, Development Co-operation Directorate in Irish Aid Cait Moran, Deputy Director of Emergency & Recovery Section, Development Co-operation Directorate in Irish Aid Dermot McGauran, Deputy Regional Director of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Irish Aid	5
20 November	A meeting with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour, during her visit to the OPT	
21 November	Jennifer Moorehead, Advocacy Officer, Save the Children, UK	1
21 November	Iain Guest, Executive Director, Department of International Relations, George Town University Dr. Usama Antar, Program Manager, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung	2
26 November	Janet Symes, Middle East Regional Manager, Christian Aid Helen Murray, Advocacy Officer in the Middle East Team, Christian Aid	2
3 December	Elena Tiffert–Vaughan, Programme Coordinator, MAP, Jerusalem Medical Aid for Palestinians Tom Hutchinson, Fundraising Programme officer, MAP, London	2

6 December	Said Nihad Al Ghandour, Director, Project for Municipal Development and Administration in the Central Gaza Strip Mr. Rolf Holmboe, Head of Danish Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority	2
6 December	Professor John Dugard, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the OPT Ms Darka Tubali, his aide	
7 December	A delegation from Human Rights Watch	2
9 December	Ms. Irene Khan, Secretary General of Amnesty International Donatella Rovera, Amnesty International	2
11 December	Pierre Galand, Senator, Brussels Nadia Farkh, Association Belgo Daniel Fontaine,-journalist	3

## Interviews with Local and International Media in 2006

PCHR continues promote cooperation with local and international media. PCHR considers that the media plays a vital role in disseminating information on the human rights and humanitarian situation in the OPTs. In 2006, PCHR continued to conduct interviews with local and international media and respond to requests for information on human rights in the OPT.

Media Interviews  
Conducted by PCHR  
Staff IN 2004

Date	Names of Journalists and Media Organizations
12 January	Gwenaelle Lenoir, Journalist, Europe – Monde, France 3
15 January	Gilles Paris, Correspondent, Le Monde
15 January	Ken Ellingwood, staff writer, Los Angeles Times
15 January	Fayed Abu Shammala, BBC
17 January	Harvey Morris, Financial Times
18 January	Leena Reikko, journalist, Finnish Broadcasting Company Christer Friden, Middle East Correspondent, Swedish Broadcasting Corp.
21 January	Hiroto Kanu, Middle East Bureau Chief, Sanki Jamal al-Halabi, Japanese news agency
21 January	Marianne Klaric, TV Belgium
21 January	A live interview with al-Quds Radio, Gaza
21 January	Bitte Hammargren, Foreign Affairs Reporter, Svenska Dagbladet, Sweden
22 January	Matthen Fisher, Canada
22 January	Anna Dahlberg, Editorial Writer, Expressen, Sweden

23 January	Hajime Yoshioka, Staff Correspondent, Middle Eastern & African General Bureau
24 January	Alex Burghoorn, Correspondent, Israel and the Palestinian Territories, De Volkskrant, Dutch National Daily Newspaper
24 January	BBC Radio, Gaza
24 January	BBC Radio, Cairo
24 January	Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel
24 January	Associated Press
25 January	Al-Arabiya Satellite Channel
25 January	BBC, London
25 January	BBC, Cairo
25 January	South Africa Radio
25 January	Cape Town Radio
26 January	Alexandra Lucas Coelho, Correspondent, PUBLICO Luis Lema, Journalist, Le Temps
26 January	Eva Lude Manne, Journalist, NOS TV Netherlands
26 January	Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel
28 January	Donald Macintyre, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, The Independent
28 January	Yuki Hasegawa, Cairo Correspondent, The Yomiuri Shimbun, Japanese Daily News paper.
30 January	CNN, Turkey
30 January	Al-Aqsa Radio in English, Gaza
31 January	Ben Wedmoin, CNN
1 February	Shinichi Murakami, Middle East Correspondent, The Asani Shimbun
2 February	Fayed Abu Shammala, BBC
2 February	Jamila Abu Shanab, Al-Hurra Satellite Channel
5 February	Zakariya al-Talmas, Danish TV
19 February	Harvey Morris, Financial Times
13 March	International Press Service, Canada

16 March	Palestine Television
21 March	BBC, London
3 April	Craig Nelson, Middle East Correspondent, Cox Newspaper, Washington
20 April	Wendy Christiansen, Le Monde Diplomatique, London
24 April	Craig Cads, Houston Chronicle, USA
26 April	More Kravetz, Radio France
4 May	Ghosoun Bisharat, Al-Jazeera International, Jerusalem
9 May	Danish Radio
11 May	United Arab Emirates Radio
15 May	Sameer Abu Shammala, Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel
16 May	Charles Levinson, France Press
18 May	Storer Rolli, Chicago Tribune
24 May	Tim Mcgirk, Jerusalem Bureau Chief & Alexandra Boulat, Time Magazine
1 June	Karin Wewqer, Swiss journalist
11 June	Face the Press TV Program, Gaza
29 June	Richard Coroili, Irish TV
30 June	Aletanira Lucas Coeitto, Publico newspaper, Portugal
30 June	Los Angeles Times
30 June	John Murphy, Correspondent, The Baltimore Sun
2 July	Saif al-Din Shahin, Al-Arabiya Satellite Channel
2 July	Scott Wilson, Burean Chief, The Washington Post
2 July	Maria Gianniti, RAI- Giornale Radio Italy.
4 July	Michel Jansen, Irish Times
19 July	Johannes Zang, Holy Land Correspondents, Die Tagespost Matthias Hubertus, Patriarcat Grec Catholic
23 July	Pissias Avenglols, Greece.
26 July	Toni O'loughlin & Tony Ulaltar, Australian Financial Review

27 July	Essam Abdullah, Al-Hiwar Television
27 July	Conal Urquhart, correspondent, UK
31 July	Jilane Jalal, Palestine Television
3 August	Karin Wenger, Journalist, Switzerland
6 August	Sybille Oetliker, Journalist, Jerusalem
16 August	Tomas Bengtsson, Reporter, Tidningarnas Telegrambyra (TT), The Swedish News Agency
17 August	Agnes Gruda, Reporter, LA Pqesse, Canada
17 August	Ian Mackinnon, Jerusalem Correspondent, The Times
20 August	Shirine Khalifa, The Democratic
20 August	Kaele Theo, Volksrant
22 August	Paul Macgrei, Australia
5 September	Pierre Terraire, Le Figaro
6 September	Dr. Clemens Veren Kotte, Bureau Chief, ARD German Radio
6 September	Roy McCarni, Middle East Correspondent, The Guardian
10 September	Shinichi Murakami, Middle East Correspondent, Jerusalem Bureau, The Asahi Shimbun, Japan's Leading National Newspaper
13 September	Donald Macintyre, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, The Independent Said al-Ghazali, journalist
19 September	Tim McGik, Bureau Chief, Time Magazine
6 October	Dr. Marx Bettina, correspondent, ARD German Public Radio
18 October	David s Halpin, FRCS Chairman, The Dove and the Dolphin
19 October	Patrick Saintpaul, Le Figaro Khafier Spenosse, El Mondo Michel Richard, Le Monde
16 November	Steffen Gassel, Stern, Germany
19 November	Barbara Lohr, Journalist / Report, Arte info
11 December	Kuwait English Television
11 December	Saudi English Television

12 December	Riham Abdul Karim, MBC
14 December	Palestine Television
14 December	Hans Fanter, journalist, Danmark
14 December	Al-Sharq Radio, Paris
14 December	Eric Westervelt, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, NPR News, National Public Radio
15 December	Palestine Television
20 December	Stephen Farrell, Middle East Correspondent, The Times
20 December	Karin Laub, Chief Correspondent, Ramallah, AP

## PCHR's Publications in 2006

In 2006, PCHR issued many publications as set out in the annual plans of its units. PCHR's publications include press releases, field updates on the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons, updates on the electoral process, al-Mentar (PCHR's newsletter), studies, periodic and special reports, leaflets, position papers, interventions to UN and other international bodies, working papers at international and local conferences, and posters.

### 1) Press Releases

PCHR regularly issues press releases providing detailed and timely information regarding specific incidents, violations of human rights and international humanitarian law or other important developments. In 2006, PCHR issued 127 press releases, including 35 that highlighted events relevant to human rights violations perpetrated by the PNA and internal Palestinian issues, and 88 were focused on human rights violations perpetrated by IOF. The remaining 4 press releases were focused on violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

PCHR's Press Releases on Israeli Violations of Palestinian Human Rights in 2006

No.	Date	Unit	Title
1	3 January	Filed Work Unit	IOF Extra-Judicially Execute 2 Palestinians and Continue to Shell Areas in the Gaza Strip
2	15 January	Filed Work Unit	A Woman and Son Killed and 5 Other Members of the Family Wounded by IOF in Nablus
3	17 January	Field Work Unit	Severe Restrictions on Movement in the West Bank Impact the Election Campaigns
4	30 January	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	PCHR Warns of the Consequences of the Continued Closure of Al-Muntar (Karni) Checkpoint

5	5 February	Field Work Unit	3 Palestinians Extra-Judicially Executed and a Civilian Facility Destroyed by IOF in Gaza
6	6 February	Field Work Unit	Two Palestinians Extra-Judicially Executed by IOF
7	7 February	Field Work Unit	3 Palestinians Extra-Judicially Executed by IOF
8	21 February	Field Work Unit	IOF Continue Military Operations in Nablus for 3 <sup>rd</sup> Consecutive Day
9	23 February	Field Work Unit	Serious Escalation of Israeli War Crimes in Nablus and Balata Refugee Camp: 5 Palestinians killed, 3 in an extra-judicial assassination
10	7 March	Field Work Unit	5 Palestinians Killed in another Extra-Judicial Execution Committed by IOF in Gaza
11	9 March	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	IOF Continued to Impose a Tightened Siege on the Gaza Strip
12	14 March	Field Work Unit	IOF Storm Jericho Prison in order to Arrest or Assassinate Ahmed Sa'adat: Two Guards Killed So Far in IOF Operation
13	15 March	Field Work Unit	PCHR Condemns the Detention of the PFLP Secretary-General and his Colleagues
14	19 March	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	IOF Practice a Starvation Policy against the Palestinian People: PCHR Warns of a Humanitarian Catastrophe in the Gaza Strip
15	3April	Field Work Unit	One Palestinian Extra-Judicially Executed and Another Injured and Arrested by IOF in Beit Sahour
16	6April	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	IOF Re-close Karni Commercial Crossing and Impose a Siege on the Palestinian Civilian Population in the Gaza Strip
17	8 April	Field Work Unit	5 Palestinians, Including a Child, Killed and 6 Others Injured in another Extra-Judicial Execution Committed by IOF
18	9 April	Field Work Unit	9 Palestinians Killed by IOF in the Gaza Strip in Less Than 24 Hours

19	11 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Retaliation Measures against Civilians
20	18 April	Field Work Unit	A Palestinian Child Killed and Two Others Wounded by IOF Artillery Shelling
21	23 April	Field Work Unit	Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) Completely Isolate the Northern West Bank from the South
22	24 April	Field Work Unit	PCHR Condemns Extra-Judicial Execution of Two Palestinians by IOF in Bethlehem
23	27 April	Field Work Unit	One Palestinian Extra-Judicially Killed and another One Wounded by IOF in the Central Gaza Strip
24	2 May	Field Work Unit	As a Form of Collective Punishment, IOF Continued to Arrest and Harass Mothers of Allegedly Wanted Palestinians
25	7 May	Field Work Unit	Two Palestinian Civilians Killed and 6 Others Wounded by IOF Artillery Shelling of the Northern Gaza Strip
26	15 May	Field Work Unit	6 Palestinians Killed and 16 Others Wounded by IOF in Qabatya and Jenin
27	21 May	Field Work Unit	5 Palestinians Killed and 4 Wounded by IOF in Gaza City and Balata Refugee Camp
28	26 May	Legal Aid Unit	British human rights lawyer denied entry to Israel
29	30 May	Field Work Unit	An IOF Undercover Unit Moves into Beit Lahia, Killing 4 Palestinians and Wounding 4 Medical Personnel and 2 Journalists
30	30 May	Legal Aid Unit	Center for Constitutional Rights Challenges Israeli Military's Extra-Judicial Killing in U.S. Court
31	6 June	Field Work Unit	Two Palestinians Extra-Judicially Executed by IOF in Jabalya
32	10 June	Field Work Unit	Serious Escalation in Israeli Attacks: 14 Palestinians Killed in Past 24 Hours in the Gaza Strip; Death Toll Includes 2 parents, 5 of their children and 2 brothers

33	13 June	Field Work Unit	11 Palestinians, Including a Man, His Two Children and Two paramedics, Killed and 30 Others Wounded in an IOF Air Strike on a Civilian Car in Gaza
34	21 June	Field Work Unit	3 Palestinian Children Killed and 15 Others Wounded in a Failed Extra-Judicial Execution Attempt Carried out by IOF
35	27 June	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) Paralyze Lives of Civilians in the Gaza Strip
36	28 June	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) Reprisals against Palestinian Civilians in the Gaza Strip
37	29 June	Field Work Unit	Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) Carry Out Reprisals against Palestinian Civilians in the West Bank
38	30 June	Field Work Unit	Two Palestinians Killed and 22 Others Wounded: IOF Escalate Policies of Retaliation against Palestinian civilian Population in the Gaza Strip
39	2 July	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) Intensify Aggression in the Gaza Strip and Continue Reprisals against Palestinian Civilians
40	2 July	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	PCHR Warns of a Humanitarian Crisis in the Gaza Strip, Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) Adopt a Policy of Collective Punishment against Palestinian Civilians
41	4 July	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Dozens of Medical Patients and Hundreds of Gaza Strip Residents Suffering Harsh Humanitarian Conditions due to the Closure of Rafah International Crossing Point
42	4 July	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) Bombard the Islamic University of Gaza for the Second Time in One Week
43	5 July	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Israeli Occupation Forces Destroy the Ministry of Interior Building and a School in Further Aerial Attacks on the Gaza Strip

44	7 July	Legal Aid Unit	Four Human Rights Organizations Petition the Israeli High Court to Allow Palestinian Patients to Return Home
45	7 July	Field Work Unit	24 Palestinians killed by Israeli Occupation Forces in the Gaza Strip and 2 killed in the West Bank, 115 others injured
46	8 July	Field Work Unit	IOF Offensive Continues in the Gaza Strip: 11 Palestinians Killed; Civilian Property Destroyed; Medical and Media Crews Attacked
47	9 July	Field Work Unit	Palestinian Family Members Killed and Injured in the Latest Israeli Military Escalation in the Gaza Strip
48	11 July	Field Work Unit	IOF Continue to Target Civilians in the Gaza Strip: 3 Children Killed and another Seriously Injured in an Air Raid on Beit Hanoun
49	12 July	Field Work Unit	In the Latest Example of State Terrorism: IOF Bomb a House in the Sheikh Radwan Quarter, Killing a Palestinian, his Wife, and 7 Children; 34 Civilians were Injured
50	15 July	Field Work Unit	IOF Offensive Continues in the Gaza Strip: 3 Palestinians Killed and 10 Others Wounded in 3 Separate Attacks and Governmental Buildings and Civilian Infrastructure Attacked
51	16 July	Field Work Unit	Israeli War Crimes Continue in the Gaza Strip: 4 Palestinians killed, including a woman, and 10 injured in Beit Hanoun and Rafah
52	17 July	Field Work Unit	IOF Occupy and Isolate Beit Hanoun, and Destroy the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
53	19 July	Field Work Unit	IOF Move into al-Maghazi Refugee Camp in Gaza and Nablus in the West Bank
54	22 July	Field Work Unit	Four from One Family Killed and 3 Injured in Gaza City, 20 Killed and 193 Injured in al-Maghazi and Nablus
55	24 July	Field Work Unit	5 Palestinian Civilians, Including Two Children and an Old Woman, Killed by IOF in the Northern Gaza Strip

56	26 July	Legal Aid Unit	PCHR is Concerned over the Policy of Prior Warning to Palestinian Civilians Used by IOF in an Attempt to Justify Bombarding Civilian Houses
57	26 July	Field Work Unit	PCHR Preliminary Investigation Reveals IOF Involvement in the Murder of 3 Members of Hajjaj Family by Targeting their House with 3 Rockets from Drones
58	26 July	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	11 Palestinians Killed, including a Child, and 45 Injured in IOF Attacks in the Gaza Strip
59	30 July	Field Work Unit	IOF Extra-Judicially Execute Two Palestinians in Nablus and Continue to Shell Houses and Civilian Facilities in the Gaza Strip
60	31 July	Legal Aid Unit	Demanding Offering Palestinian Families Enough Time to Vacate Their Houses and Appeal against Their Destruction, PCHR Addresses the Israeli Attorney General Office Concerning the Policy of Informing Palestinians Shortly before Destroying Their Houses
61	1 August	Field Work Unit	Woman and Child Killed by IOF Bombardment in Beit Hanoun
62	3 August	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	European Union Observers Contribute to the Strangulation and Deprivation of Gaza Strip Civilians
63	3 August	Field Work Unit	IOF Kill 8 Palestinians in Rafah, including a Child, and Injure 20 Others
64	5 August	Field Work Unit	Number of Deaths in the Offensive on Rafah is up to 16,; 39 Injured; Destruction of Property; and 2 Houses Bombed in Gaza City
65	6 August	Field Work Unit	PCHR Condemns the Detention of the Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council
66	13 August	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	In Response to Statement by EU Observers at Rafah International Crossing Point, PCHR Condemns Re-closure of the Crossing Point after Reopening it for Less Than 7 Hours in Two Days

67	15 August	Field Work Unit	3 Palestinian Civilians Killed and 3 Others Wounded by IOF in the Northern Gaza Strip
68	16 August	Field Work Unit	Elderly Palestinian and His Son Killed when IOF Bombard their House
69	20 August	Field Work Unit	PCHR Condemns the Kidnapping of the Palestinian Deputy Prime Minister
70	20 August	Field Work Unit	3 Palestinian Civilians Killed by IOF in the West Bank
71	23 August	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Opening Rafah International Crossing Point for Less Than 7 Hours Does Not Solve the Problem of Thousands of Palestinian Travelers
72	24 August	Field Work Unit	IOF Kill a Palestinian in Cold Blood, and Bomb his House after Abducting his Brother in Greater Abasan in Khan Yunis
73	27 August	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the IOF Bombardment of a News Agency Vehicle in Gaza City
74	3 September	Field Work Unit	IOF Special Forces Move into Beit Hanoun, Father and Son Killed in Cold Blood, 2 Daughters Seriously Injured, 9 Homes Destroyed, 2 Activists Detained, 6 Civilians Injured
75	6 September	Field Work Unit	In another Extra-Judicial Execution, 4 Palestinians Killed and 27 Others, including 5 Children, Wounded by IOF
76	20 September	Field Work Unit	IOF Confiscate 6 Million Shekels in Raids on One Bank and 11 Money Exchanges in the West Bank
77	21 September	Field Work Unit	IOF Kill 5 Civilians in the Gaza Strip and Injures 7 Others; Two of the Victims Bled to Death As IOF Prevented Ambulances from Rescuing Them
78	1 October	Field Work Unit	In the most Recent of War Crimes: Israeli Occupation Forces Kill 4 Civilians, including 2 brothers, in the Gaza Strip
79	10 October	Field Work Unit	Investigations Conducted by PCHR Indicate that IOF Willfully Killed 2 Palestinian Civilians at Military Checkpoints in Nablus

80	12 October	Field Work Unit	Two Palestinian Civilians (A Man and His Child) and 3 Members of the Palestinian Resistance Killed by IOF in Greater 'Abasan Village near Khan Yunis
81	15 October	Field Work Unit	10 Palestinian Killed by IOF in the Gaza Strip in the Past 2 Days
82	2 November	Field Work Unit	IOF Continue Their Offensive on Beit Hanoun Town for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Consecutive Day: 12 Palestinians Killed, at Least 50 Others Wound and Civilian Facilities Destroyed
83	4 November	Field Work Unit	For the 4 <sup>th</sup> Consecutive Day: IOF Perpetrate State-sponsored Terrorism in Beit Hanoun 34 Palestinians Killed and 150 Injured
84	6 November	Field Work Unit	IOF Kill a Palestinian Child and Injure 7 Others, including a Girl, in a Failed Extra-judicial Execution Attempt
85	8 November	Field Work Unit	In a Form of Systematic Massive Killing, IOF Kill 18 Palestinian Civilian, 17 of Whom, Including 6 Children and 7 women, Are from One Same Family, and Wound 56 Others in Beit Hanoun
86	30 November	Legal Aid Unit	New Zealand Attorney General Stays Prosecution of Israeli War Crimes Suspect, Enabling Him to Evade International Justice
87	10 December	Legal Aid Unit	On the 58 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of International Human Rights Day, Israeli Violations of Human Rights Continue and Palestinian Civilians Are the Victims
88	14 December	Legal Aid Unit	PCHR Closely Follows up through Cases the Israeli Supreme Court's Ruling on the Civil Wrongs Law

PCHR's Press Releases on Palestinian Violations of Human Rights in 2006

No.	Date	Unit	Title
1	2 January	Democratic Development Unit	Unknown Armed Persons Blow up UNRWA Beach Club in Gaza and Others Kidnap and Italian Citizen in Khan Yunis
2	4 January	Democratic Development Unit	Two Citizens Killed in a Family Quarrel in Khan Yunis and Gunmen Raid Public Institutions in Rafah

3	5 January	Democratic Development Unit	Security Chaos Deteriorates Daily: Two Egyptian Soldiers Killed by Palestinian Gunmen on the Egyptian Border, and a Palestinian is Killed by Gunmen in Gaza
4	5 January	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Strongly Condemns Interference in the Operations of the Central Election Committee
5	26 January	Democratic Development Unit	Palestinian Legislative Elections (January 2006): Preliminary Assessment of Polling and Vote Count Processes from Monitors
6	5 February	Democratic Development Unit	Continuous Operation of the Higher Committee for Local Elections Constitutes a Violation of the Law
7	5 February	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Strongly Condemns Attacks on International Institutions and Citizens
8	9 February	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Theft of Green Houses and Agricultural Equipment in the Evacuated Settlements
9	9 February	Democratic Development Unit	A Palestinian Family Survives a Stray Rocket Launched by Palestinian Gunmen against Israeli Targets
10	10 February	Democratic Development Unit	Egyptian Diplomat Kidnapped in Gaza
11	14 February	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	University Lecturer Injured by Gunmen in Gaza City
12	15 February	Democratic Development Unit	Child Killed in a Family Dispute in Khan Yunis
13	16 February	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Expresses Reservations over the Final Session of the Outgoing Palestinian Legislative Council
14	15 March	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Strongly Condemns Attacks on International Institutions and Citizens
15	1 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Clashes between Palestinian Gunmen and Security Personnel in Gaza City

16	23 April	Democratic Development Unit	Following Clashes and Tension between Fatah and Hamas, PCHR Calls for Use of Dialogue and the Law
17	29 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Attempted Abduction of Ashraf Nasrallah in Gaza
18	5 June	Democratic Development Unit	Serious Escalation in Tension Between Fatah and Hamas in the Gaza Strip
19	13 June	Democratic Development Unit	Serious Escalation in Tension between Fatah and Hamas in the Gaza Strip and West Bank
20	14 June	Democratic Development Unit	Two Palestinians Killed by National Security Forces
21	6 August	Democratic Development Unit	6 Palestinians Killed and 3 Injured by Gunmen in an Attack on Jericho Central Prison
22	15 August	Democratic Development Unit	Two International Journalists Kidnapped in Gaza City Yesterday
23	28 August	Democratic Development Unit	Palestinian Killed by the Executive Force in Khan Yunis
24	30 August	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Impending Health and Environmental Disaster Threatens Gaza City due to Uncollected Garbage in the Streets
25	5 September	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Civil Servants Strike Continues in the OPT
26	17 September	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Killing of a High-Ranked Officer in the General Intelligence Apparatus and His 4 Bodyguards in Gaza City
27	17 September	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Attacks on Palestinian Churches
28	20 September	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Attacks on Journalists and Wafa News Agency Office in Khan Yunis and Gaza

29	2 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Bloody Incidents in Gaza
30	3 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory
31	15 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Attack on Palestine Workers Radio
32	2 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Attack on the People's Voice Radio Station in Gaza City
33	11 December	Democratic Development Unit	Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Call upon the PNA to Urgently Take Measures to Ensure the Security of People
34	17 December	Democratic Development Unit	Human Rights NGOs Calls for Dialogue and Referring to the Law to End Tension in the OPT
35	19 December	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Escalating Violence between Fatah and Hamas Movements: 6 Persons Killed, 26 Others Wounded and Mutual Kidnappings

Other PCHR's Press Releases in 2006

No.	Date	Unit	Title
1	7 March	Women's Rights Unit	Palestinian Women Continue to Suffer Under Israeli Occupation as they Commemorate International Women's Day
2	10 October	Democratic Development Unit	On the World Day Against the Death Penalty, PCHR Calls for Making Efforts to Abolish the Death Penalty in the Occupied Palestinian Territory
3	26 November	Women's Rights Unit	On the Occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women: PCHR Calls for Doubling Efforts to Curb Violence against Women in the Occupied Palestinian Territory
4	3 December	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	On the Occasion of the International Day of Disabled Persons: PCHR calls upon the international community to put an end to the human rights violations perpetrated by IOF against handicapped Palestinians in the OPT

## 2) Field Updates on the State of Lawlessness and Proliferation of Weapons

It is a new output, which the Democratic Development Unit started to issue to highlight the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons in the OPT, which escalated in 2006. Writing these updates rely on information gathered by the Field Work Unit. In 2006, PCHR issued 191 of these updates, all of which are available on PCHR's web page.

## 3) Updates on Elections

In the context of the campaign organized by PCHR to monitor the Palestinian parliamentary elections, jointly with some other NGOs, the Democratic Development Unit issued updates documenting violations of the rules of elections. In 2006, PCHR issued 22 of these updates, all of which are available on PCHR's web page.

## 4) Field Updates on the State of the Gaza Strip Border Crossings

In light of the unprecedented closure measures imposed by IOF on the Gaza Strip, the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights started to issue field updates documenting the state of the Gaza Strip border crossings. In 2006, PCHR issued 5 of these updates, all of which are available on PCHR's web page.

## 5) Al-Mentar

It is PCHR's monthly newsletter, covers PCHR's activities and includes reports and interviews on human rights issues. In 2006, PCHR issued 12 volumes of the newsletter.

## 6) Reports, Studies and Other Publications

Publication	Kind	Number	Language
Annual Report 2005	Annual report	1	Arabic and English
Palestinian Legislative Council: 10 Years of Absent Accountability (an analytical study of the performance of the Palestinian Legislative Council from 1996 to 2006)	Study	1	Arabic
The Israeli Policy of Extra-Judicial Executions: State-Sponsored Terrorism	Series report	1	Arabic
Palestinian Parliamentary Elections (25 January 2006): Conclusions of Observation of Polling and the Counting of Votes – Gaza Strip	Report	1	Arabic and English

Housing of Victims of Violations of the Right to Appropriate Housing: A Study on New Housing Communities Established for Families Whose Houses Were Destroyed by IOF in the Gaza Strip	Study	1	Arabic
Palestinian Parliamentary Elections 2006: Conclusions of Observation of the Election Campaigning	Report	1	Arabic
Deprived for Freedom: Report on: Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli Occupation Jails (Published on the Occasion of Palestinian Prisoners Day)	Report	1	Arabic and English
Reprisals against Civilians: Report on Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) violations against Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip for the period from the Palestinian paramilitary operation on 25 June 2006 till 31 July 2006	Report	1	Arabic and English
Israeli Manipulation of Legal Tools: Special Report on Israeli Measures Aiming to Legalize the Continued Detention of Prisoners from the Gaza Strip Despite the End of Military Rule	Report	1	Arabic and English
Illusions of Withdrawal: Report on Israeli Violations of Human Rights in the Gaza Strip One Year Following the Implementation of the Disengagement Plan	Report	1	Arabic and English
Confirm to Kill: IOF Killings of Children during the al-Aqsa Intifada	Report	1	English
Death Penalty: Between Human Rights Instruments and Palestinian Laws	Research paper	1	Arabic
One Year Following the Implementation of the Agreement on Border Crossings: Report on the Impacts of the Agreement on the Palestinian Civilian Population in the Gaza Strip (25 November 2005 – 24 November 2006)	Report	1	Arabic

Closure Update: Report on the Israeli Closure of the Gaza Strip	Series report	3	Arabic
Poverty in the Gaza Strip (May 2005)	Series report	1	Arabic and English
Weekly Report on Israeli Human Rights Violations in the OPT	Series report	50	Arabic and English
The Decision to Stop International Aid to the Palestinian National Authority	Position paper	1	Arabic and English
Memorandum Concerning the Executive Bill of the Public Meetings Law (12) of 1998	Memorandum	1	Arabic
Death Penalty under the Palestinian National Authority	Position paper	1	Arabic and English
Execution for Alleged Collaboration	Position paper	1	Arabic and English
Death Penalty under the Palestinian National Authority	Leaflet	1	Arabic

## PCHR's Web Site (www.pchrgaza.org)

PCHR realizes and appreciates the increasing importance of information technology in our contemporary world. PCHR increasingly depends on its website as a means of disseminating human rights information. PCHR updates its web site daily with publications and information on its activities and events on the ground. The material on the website is available in both Arabic and English. PCHR also distributes its publications via e-mail; at least 5,300 of those who register their email addresses with us receive PCHR's publications via e-mail.

- In 2006, PCHR's web site received 297,915 hits with an average of 24,826 visits monthly and 828 visits daily.
- The number of pages seen by visitors in 2006 was 908,977, with an average of 75,784 pages per month, or 2,525 daily.

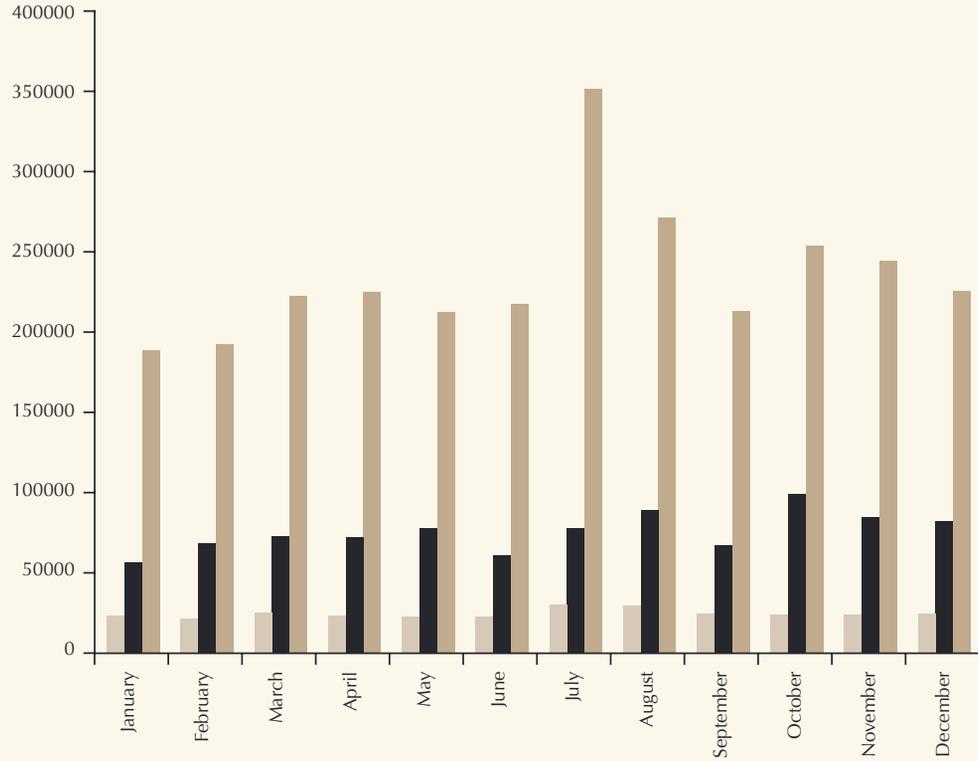
Visits to PCHR's  
Web Site in 2006

Month	Number of Visits	Number of Pages Seen	Access
January	23,678	56,723	188,443
February	21,813	68,434	192,463
March	25,488	73,091	222,487
April	23,462	71,983	224,746
May	22,652	77,972	212,271
June	22,709	60,797	217,256
July	30,286	77,565	351,392
August	29,740	89,274	271,080
September	24,940	67,052	213,206
October	24,048	98,957	254,056

November	24,245	84,584	244,585
December	24,854	82,545	225,419
<b>Total</b>	<b>297,915</b>	<b>908,977</b>	<b>2,817,404</b>

Diagram of Visits to PCHR's Website in 2006

- Access
- Pages Seen
- Visits



## The Library

PCHR's specialized library has Arabic and English references and periodicals that focuses with issues such as international law, human rights, domestic laws, democracy and the Palestinian cause. By the end of 2006, the number of books in the library had been 3,955 (2,320 Arabic ones and 1,635 English ones). The number of periodicals had been 1,008 (313 in Arabic and 695 in English). PCHR's library serve all segments of the public, especially, university students and researchers.