

Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

The Centre is an independent Palestinian human rights organization based in Gaza City. It is an affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists-Geneva, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, a recipient of the 1996 French Republic Award on Human Rights. The Centre was established in 1995 by a group of Palestinian lawyers and human rights activists in order to:

- * Protect human rights and promote the rule of law in accordance with international standards.
- * Create and develop democratic institutions and an active civil society, while promoting democratic culture within Palestinian society.
- * Support all the efforts aimed at enabling the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights in regard to self-determination and independence in accordance with international Law and UN resolutions.

The work of the Centre is conducted through documentation and investigation of human rights violations, provision of legal aid and counseling for both individuals and groups, and preparation of research articles relevant to such issues as the human rights situation and the rule of law. The Centre also provides comments on Palestinian Draft Laws and urges the adoption of legislation that incorporates international human rights standards and basic democratic principles. To achieve its goals the Centre has recruited a committed staff of well-known human rights lawyers and activists.

The Philosophy of the Centre's Work

The Centre determined after a thorough legal assessment of the peace accords signed by the PLO and the Israeli government that the occupation would continue both physically and legally. According to these agreements Israel has redeployed its forces inside the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, while Israeli settlements and military installations maintain their presence in Palestinian territory. The major legal aspects of the Israeli occupation remain in place. Israeli military orders that safeguard Israeli control over the Palestinian people and their land remain valid in accordance with the peace agreement. The Israeli military court is still functioning and to this day thousands of Palestinians languish in Israeli prisons. The essential elements of the Palestinian issue remain unresolved -- the right to self-determination, the right to an independent Palestinian state with its capital in Jerusalem, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and the right to remove illegal Israeli settlements from the Occupied Territories. All of these constitute basic unfulfilled rights of the Palestinian people. In light of this wide-ranging disregard for Palestinian rights, the Centre concludes it must continue its work to protect Palestinian human rights from ongoing violations by the Israeli government and courts.

The peace accords and the major political changes resulting from the agreement, including the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority in part of the Occupied Territories, has led to a vital and active role for the Centre in protecting civil and political rights and in promoting the development of democratic institutions, an active civil society, and a democratic legal system in Palestine.

Work Units of the Centre

The Centre is composed of specialised working units which carry out their activities in an autonomous but integrated manner.

*** Field Work Unit**

The field work is considered the basic activity of the Centre. Well-trained field workers located in different areas of the Gaza Strip obtain accurate and documented legal information on human rights violations in the Gaza Strip. They gather information in the field from victims and witnesses of human rights violations. The information is received by the co-ordinator of the unit and other researchers to verify accuracy. Through the field workers' presence in the field the Centre has been able to maintain close contacts with the community. In this way, the community is able to influence the work of the Centre and the Centre is able to meet the community's interests and demands.

*** Legal Unit**

This unit is composed primarily of a team of lawyers who give free legal aid and counselling to individuals. The unit also carries out legal intervention with concerned bodies and makes legal representations before the courts. It involves broad principles of human rights that affect not just the individual before the court but the community. Furthermore, the unit attempts to support the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law.

*** Democratic Development Unit**

This unit specialises in the promotion of democracy and the promotion of civil society and the rule of law. The unit's team carries out research and organises workshops and seminars to discuss issues on human rights and democracy. The unit's team also prepares comments on draft laws prepared by the Palestinian Authority in an effort to influence the decision-making process and the adoption of democratic laws. The unit has been also involved in providing training on human rights and democracy for youth groups.

*** Economic and Social Rights Unit**

This unit seeks to ensure the importance of economic and social rights through research and study. Such work is particularly important because it tends to be neglected, to some extent, by other human rights organisations. To achieve its goals the unit conducts studies, workshops, and seminars that focus attention on economic and social rights in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The unit seeks to develop recommendations and standards for each of these rights to be fulfilled in the Palestinian situation. Moreover, the unit reviews and assesses the legislation and draft laws pertaining to these rights adopted by the Palestinian Authority in an effort to secure legislation that is in harmony with international standards. The unit further seeks to provide an informative training base for governmental and non-governmental personnel who are empowered to set plans and implement programs and policies relevant to these rights. The goal of such training is to help bring economic and social rights into alignment with the standards accepted internationally and to ensure the maximum degree of implementation of these rights.

*** Woman Rights Unit**

This Unit was established as a pilot project in May of 1997 for one year, renewable upon assessment of its accomplishments. The initial project was established after a thorough and comprehensive study of the conditions of Palestinian women and the work of women's institutions in the Gaza Strip. The Unit aims to provide legal aid for women and women's organisations. Intervention on behalf of women in *Shari'a* courts is included in its mandate. The Unit further aims to raise awareness of women's rights established by international human rights conventions and to raise the awareness of Palestinian women in regard to their rights under local law. Finally, the Unit is carrying out studies on Palestinian women and the law, while supporting the amendment of local laws inconsistent with women's rights.

*** The Library**

The Centre has established a specialised legal library in subjects related to local and international law, human rights, and democracy. The library includes books and periodicals in both Arabic and English and includes all Palestinian laws and Israeli military orders. Documents pertaining to laws of neighbouring Arab countries are also available. Furthermore, the library includes a variety of books and periodicals detailing the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli conflict. The library is open for the free use of researchers, academics, and students.

*** Funding of the Centre**

The Centre is funded by the generous contributions of a number of international non-governmental organizations in the fields of human rights, democracy, and social justice and a number of Governments which has friendly relationships with the Palestinian people. The funding organizations include:

1. The Swedish International Commission of Jurists - Sweden
2. Ford Foundation - U.S.A
3. NOVIB - Holland
4. Open Society Fund - U.S.A
5. Christian Aid - U.K
6. CAW Social Justice Fund - Canada
7. Dan Church Aid - Denmark
8. Grassroots International - U.S.A
9. European Commission
10. Royal Danish Representative Office
11. Representative Office of Norway
12. Ireland Aid – The Official Overseas Development Assistance Programme of the Irish Government

Board of Trustees

Dr. Anis Qassem
Dr. Hanan Ashrawi
Dr. Ibrahim Abu Loghud (deceased)
Dr. Muhammed Juda
Dr. Khalil Sheqaqi

Administrative Board

Raji Sourani
Jaber Weshah
Iyad Alami
Hamdi Shaqqura

Director General

Raji Sourani

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights is an independent legal body dedicated to the protection of human rights, the promotion of the rule of law, and the upholding of democratic principles in the Occupied Territories. Most of the Centre's activities and interests concentrate on the Gaza Strip due to the restriction on movement between the West Bank and Gaza Strip imposed by the Israeli government and its military apparatus.

Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

Gaza City: 29 Omar El Mukhtar Street, Near Amal Hotel, PO Box 1328

Tel/Fax (972) 8 2824-776 / (972) 82825-893

Khan Yunis Branch: El Amal Street, Branch of Jamal Abdul-Nasser Street, near the College of Education

Tel/Fax: (972) 8 2061-025/ (972) 8 2061-035

Jabalya Branch: Jabalya Refugee Camp, Opposite to Timraz Fuel Station

Tel/Fax: (972) 8 2454-150/ (972) 8 2454-160

E-mail: pchr@pchrgaza.org

Webpage: www.pchrgaza.org

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights is an independent legal agency dedicated to protecting and promoting human rights, respect for the rule of law, and democratic principles in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Established in April 1995 by a group of Palestinian lawyers and human rights activists in the Gaza Strip, the Centre enjoys Consultative Status with the ECOSOC of the United Nations, the Centre is an affiliate of the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists, a member of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, and partner to the Paris-based Federation Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme. The Centre is a 1996 recipient of the Republic of France's Human Rights Award, "Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite."

International Commission of Jurists

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), headquartered in Geneva, is a non-governmental organisation in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe and the OAU. Founded in 1952, its task is to defend the Rule of Law throughout the world and to work towards the full observance of the provisions in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is composed of 30 distinguished jurists from around the globe and has 75 national sections and affiliated organisations.

Federation Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme

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

Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network

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

Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

ANNUAL REPORT

2001

NARRATIVE AND

FINANCIAL REPORTS

1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2001

Consultative Status with the ECOSOC of the United Nations

Affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists - Geneva

Member of:

The International Federation for Human Rights - Paris

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network - Copenhagen

THIS REPORT	4
PART 1 :HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE OPT	5
SUMMARY	6
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY	11
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PNA	12
(1) ISRAELI VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS	14
EXCESSIVE USE OF FORCE AND EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLING BY ISRAELI OCCUPATION FORCES DURING THIS INTIFADA	14
<i>Shooting at Palestinian Civilians during Clashes</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Effects on Palestinian Children</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Shooting at Palestinian Civilians at Israeli Military Roadblocks and Checkpoints</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Assassination Policy</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Shelling of Houses and Civilian Facilities</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Shelling of Palestinian Police Stations</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Encroachment into Palestinian National Authority Controlled Areas</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Attacks on Palestinian Medical Personnel</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Attacks on Journalists</i>	<i>24</i>
LAND LEVELING AND DEMOLITION OF HOUSES AND CIVILIAN FACILITIES.....	26
SETTLEMENT ACTIVITIES AND SETTLER PRACTICES UNDER FULL PROTECTION OF ISRAELI OCCUPATION FORCES IN THE OPT	28
<i>Settler Attacks against Palestinian Civilians and Property</i>	<i>30</i>
ARRESTS OF PALESTINIANS AND TREATMENT OF PALESTINIANS IN CUSTODY	31
<i>Administrative Detention</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Continued Torture and Ill-Treatment of Palestinian Prisoners</i>	<i>33</i>
COLLECTIVE PUNISHMENT: ONGOING POLICY OF SIEGE, CLOSURE, AND RESTRICTIONS ON FREE MOVEMENT	35
<i>Deaths at Israeli Military Roadblocks</i>	<i>37</i>
(2) VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY THE PNA	38
ILLEGAL ARRESTS BY PALESTINIAN SECURITY SERVICES	38
<i>Torture and Ill-Treatment of Detainees</i>	<i>39</i>
CONTINUED OPERATION OF STATE SECURITY COURTS.....	41
<i>Death Penalty</i>	<i>41</i>
CONTINUED INTERFERENCE IN THE WORK OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.....	44
VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO FREE ASSEMBLY	44
RESTRICTIONS ON THE RIGHT TO FREE EXPRESSION	46
CLOSURE OF CIVILIAN INSTITUTIONS AND OFFICES OF POLITICAL PARTIES	47
MISUSE OF WEAPONS.....	47
PALESTINIAN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL	48
PART 2 :PCHR’S ACTIVITIES IN 2001.....	50
INTRODUCTION.....	51
(1) PCHR’S ACTIVITIES AT THE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS	52
CAMPAIGN TO SECURE <i>DE JURE</i> APPLICATION OF THE FOURTH GENEVA CONVENTION IN THE OPT .	53
<i>The Obligation to ‘Ensure Respect’: A Call for the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to Ensure Israel’s Respect for the Convention</i>	<i>54</i>
<i>Parallel NGO Conference on the Fourth Geneva Convention</i>	<i>54</i>
<i>PCHR’s Press Releases on the Fourth Geneva Convention</i>	<i>55</i>
WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION XENOPHOBIA, AND RELATED INTOLERANCE	56
<i>Durban Evaluation Meeting, Malaga, 1- 3 October 2001.....</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Meeting with UK Solidarity Groups</i>	<i>58</i>
INTERVENTIONS WITH UN BODIES	59
<i>UN Commission on Human Rights.....</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>UN High Commissioner for Human Rights</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>UN Committee against Torture</i>	<i>62</i>

<i>UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories</i>	63
ASSISTANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL INQUIRY MISSIONS	63
<i>Inquiry Mission of the National Lawyers Guild</i>	64
<i>Inquiry Mission of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers</i>	64
POPULAR CAMPAIGN FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE	64
PARTICIPATION IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS	65
<i>Conference of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)</i>	65
<i>Amman Prep Com for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR)</i>	65
<i>20th Conference of the Union of Arab Lawyers</i>	66
<i>First International Conference against the Death Penalty</i>	66
<i>Meeting at the Arab Institute for Human Rights</i>	66
<i>Preparatory Workshop for WCAR</i>	66
<i>Conference of the International Commission of Jurists</i>	66
<i>Symposium of the Euro-Mediterranean Network for Human Rights on the MEDA Program</i> ..	67
<i>Conference of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers</i>	67
<i>Meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Network for Human Rights</i>	67
MEETINGS IN GAZA WITH POLITICIANS, DIPLOMATS, UN REPRESENTATIVES AND OTHER	
INTERNATIONAL NGOS	67
RECEIVING VISITING DELEGATIONS	70
INTERVIEWS WITH LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA IN 2001	71
<i>Dan Church Aid Press Project</i>	71
PCHR PRESS RELEASES IN 2001	74
TRANSLATION	77
PCHR's WEB SITE (WWW.PCHRGAZA.ORG)	77
(2) ACTIVITIES OF PCHR'S UNITS IN 2001	78
FIELD WORK UNIT	78
LEGAL UNIT	78
<i>Work on Israeli Violations of Human Rights</i>	78
<i>Work on Human Rights Violations by the PNA</i>	82
<i>Participation in International and Local Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops</i>	85
<i>Reception of International Delegations</i>	85
<i>Contribution to Human Rights Training and Awareness</i>	86
<i>Research and Studies</i>	86
DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT (DDU)	86
<i>Press Releases</i>	86
<i>Weekly Reports</i>	86
<i>Studies and Reports</i>	87
<i>Al-Mentar – PCHR's Newsletter</i>	87
<i>Participation in Training Courses on Human Rights Awareness</i>	88
<i>Workshops</i>	88
<i>Reception of Visiting Delegations</i>	88
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS UNIT	88
<i>Studies and Reports</i>	88
<i>Field Work on Economic and Social Rights</i>	89
<i>Workshops and Activities Relevant to Raising Awareness of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights</i>	89
WOMEN'S UNIT	89
<i>Legal Aid Program for Women and Women's Organizations</i>	90
<i>Legal Awareness Program for Women</i>	91
<i>Studies and Reports</i>	92
<i>Other Activities</i>	93
TRAINING UNIT	93
<i>Training Courses on Democracy and Human Rights</i>	93
<i>Workshops</i>	94
<i>Involvement in Monitoring Human Rights Violations</i>	95
PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING SESSIONS TO DEVELOP PCHR STAFF'S EXPERTISE	95

PICTURES OF PCHR ACTIVITIES	97
PART 3 :FINANCIAL REPORT	100

This Report

PCHR's 2001 Annual Report contains three parts:

- **Part 1** provides a comprehensive picture of the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). It is divided into two sections. The first section covers human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians, while the second section is concerned with human rights violations perpetrated by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and its institutions.
- **Part 2** documents PCHR's activities and programs at the local, regional, and international levels, as well as the activities of the Centre's units.
- **Part 3** includes the financial report, which is prepared by a professional auditing institution.

PCHR hopes that this report will contribute to the struggle for human rights in OPT by providing a comprehensive picture of the human rights situation in the OPT from an independent legal perspective. It serves also as a guide for PCHR's future work. The publication of this report reflects PCHR's strong belief in the importance of transparency for a non-governmental, non-profit organization that provides free and independent services to the community.

PART 1

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE OPT

Summary

The year 2001 witnessed a deterioration of the human rights and humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) unprecedented since the beginning of the Israeli occupation in 1967. The unlimited and unconditional support of the US government together with the conspiracy of silence of the international community has allowed Israeli occupying forces to commit gross and systematic violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including war crimes, against Palestinian civilians with impunity. Most glaring has been the failure of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to fulfill their legal obligations to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the OPT. The failure of the international community to take steps to halt Israel's ongoing violations of human rights leaves PCHR deeply concerned that such practices have become normalized, and even acceptable. While Israel absolved itself of responsibility for investigating human rights violations by claiming that its activities in the OPT are in the context of a "state of war," the international community has also failed to take steps to ensure independent investigations of dozens of cases of willful killing of Palestinian civilians, including women and children, by Israeli occupying forces.

The current crisis, a product of the ongoing Israeli system of illegal colonial military occupation and settlement apartheid in the Gaza Strip and West Bank (including East Jerusalem), requires immediate and effective international intervention in order to end violations of international human rights and humanitarian law and to provide Palestinian civilians with the protections to which they are entitled under the Fourth Geneva Convention. Without intervention of the international community in the face of unlimited US support for Israel, the situation looks set only to deteriorate further, with a continuing escalation in violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including war crimes.

Events since September 2000 clearly demonstrate the inevitable consequences of sacrificing human rights for the sake of political expediency, a constant feature of the policies of several governments (most notably that of the US) throughout both the current crisis and the years of political negotiations. The unprecedented deterioration of the human rights situation in the OPT since the beginning of this Intifada is the outcome of interim agreements (commonly known as the Oslo accords) concluded between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). A central flaw of these agreements is their failure to incorporate respect for relevant international human rights and humanitarian law, especially the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949 (the Fourth Geneva Convention). This has allowed Israel to maintain its illegal belligerent military occupation of the OPT and expand settlements and settlement infrastructure while ostensibly negotiating a final peace agreement. In this context, PCHR has consistently warned against sacrificing international human rights and humanitarian law for the sake of "peace and security."

Despite the dramatic and unprecedented deterioration of the human rights and humanitarian situation, the international community largely failed in 2001 to take effective measures against racist practices and human rights violations perpetrated by

Israeli occupation forces and did not provide international protection for Palestinian civilians. The silence of the international community, especially the western democracies, has only contributed to a further deterioration of the situation in the OPT and encouraged Israel to continue to perpetrate violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including war crimes, against Palestinian civilians. This inaction was highlighted by the conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention in Geneva on 5 December 2001, which failed for the second time to introduce any concrete steps to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention and to provide protection for Palestinian civilians.¹ Before the Conference of High Contracting Parties, governments attending the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Forms of Intolerance (WCAR) in Durban in South Africa, from 31 August-7 September, also failed even to condemn Israel's policies. At the 57th Session of the Human Rights Commission in Spring 2001, EU states abstained from voting on a resolution at the Commission that condemned human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces in the OPT.

PCHR reiterates that no political arrangements can lead to a just peace unless they are based on respect for international human rights and humanitarian law. The peace process has now reached a deadlock, and the resulting massive deterioration in the human rights situation in the OPT. There are no indications that the situation will improve in the near future. In the meantime, Israel continues to expand and consolidate its system of settlement apartheid in the OPT and tighten its economic and social strangulation of 3 million Palestinians. The human rights situation will continue to deteriorate unless and until the international community, including the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, intervenes to put an end to war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian civilians.

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces escalated the excessive and indiscriminate use of force, as well as extra-judicial killings, in a manner unprecedented since 1967. In 2001, 487 Palestinians, including 93 children (19%), were killed and approximately 6000 were wounded by Israeli occupation forces. Israeli occupation forces used excessive, lethal force when no serious threats were posed to the lives of soldiers. In addition, 16 Palestinians were killed by Jewish settlers, often while firing at Palestinian civilians as they traveled in cars, worked on farms, or during raids on Palestinian communities.

The actions of Israeli occupation forces have had a major impact on Palestinian children since the beginning of the al-Aqsa Intifada in September 2000. In 2001, 93 Palestinian children under 18 were killed by Israeli soldiers and settlers. In addition, seven children were killed in incidents for which Israeli forces are suspected of responsibility. Five sick children also died after evacuation to hospital for emergency or regular treatment was obstructed for long periods at Israeli military roadblocks and checkpoints. Despite the decrease in protests and clashes at Israeli military fortifications, the number of child casualties remained high. Children were killed in

¹ The first conference of High Contracting Parties was held 15 July 1999, also boycotted by the US and Israel, convened for only 15 minutes and took no concrete steps to secure Israel's respect for the Convention, thus failing to seize a historical opportunity to support the enforcement of international humanitarian law.

Israeli shelling of Palestinians residential areas, during assassinations of Palestinian activists, by bombs planted by Israeli forces, and while playing near well-fortified Israeli military locations.

With full US support, Israel unleashed the full range of its conventional arsenal against areas populated by Palestinian civilians, including: warplanes, helicopter gunships, gunboats, tanks, and surface-to-surface missiles. For the first time since 1967, Israel used F-16 and F-15 fighter jets to attack Palestinian police stations, PNA institutions and infrastructure, and symbols of Palestinian sovereignty. Civilian facilities, including educational institutions, religious sites, airports, seaports, factories, television and radio stations, and hospitals were also targeted. In some areas, especially the Rafah and Khan Yunis refugee camps in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian residential areas continue to be subject to intense and indiscriminate shelling and shooting by Israeli forces on an almost daily basis. In 2001, 236 Palestinians were killed and hundreds more were wounded in Israeli shelling and bombardment.

The number of Palestinians killed at Israeli military roadblocks and checkpoints in the OPT also significantly increased. In 2001, dozens of Palestinian civilians were killed and injured by Israeli soldiers at military roadblocks and checkpoints erected between Palestinian areas to restrict the movement of Palestinians.

In 2001, the assassination policy formally adopted by the Israeli government against suspected Palestinian activists and leaders increased in both scale and scope. In 2001, Israeli occupation forces assassinated 43 Palestinian activists, killing 14 bystanders. In the majority of assassination attempts, Israeli occupation forces used combat helicopters without regard to the presence of innocent bystanders, especially children and women. The target group on the list of assassination by Israeli occupation forces was not limited to those suspected of carrying out, planning, or ordering attacks against Israeli targets, but also included political leaders of Palestinian parties. In two prominent incidents, Israeli forces assassinated Abu Ali Mustafa, the Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and prominent Hamas political activists Jamal Salim and Jamal Mansour. The policy of assassination escalated after 11 September; 20 Palestinian activists and four bystanders, including three children, were killed after that date.

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces invaded PNA-controlled areas with increasing frequency, killing Palestinian civilians, demolishing houses and civilian property, destroying security sites, and razing agricultural land. The most violent incursions targeted West Bank cities after the killing of right-wing Israeli Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi by members of the PFLP on 17 October in occupied East Jerusalem, apparently in retaliation for the assassination of PFLP Secretary General Abu Ali Mustafa on 27 August. After Ze'evi's death, Israeli occupation forces carried out large-scale military operations inside areas under the jurisdiction of the PNA. They indiscriminately shelled homes and civilian facilities, killing dozens of Palestinian civilians.

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces continued to raze large areas of Palestinian agricultural land and demolished hundreds of houses and dozens of civilian facilities.

According to PCHR's documentation, Israeli occupation forces razed 9544 dunums² of land in the Gaza Strip alone. They completely demolished 281 houses and partially demolished 51 more, and destroyed 27 factories and workshops in the Gaza Strip.

Israeli occupation forces maintained policies of collective punishment against the Palestinian people through a total siege and closure of the OPT. PNA President Yasser Arafat's movement has also been restricted since the beginning of December 2001. Israeli forces closed all international border crossings between the OPT and the outside world. They also closed all crossings between the OPT and Israel, restricting imports and exports and denying Palestinian laborers with jobs in Israel access to work. Movement of Palestinians between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was also completely prohibited. Israeli occupation forces further restricted movement of Palestinians within the West Bank and within the Gaza Strip. In this context, the West Bank has been segregated into dozens of isolated areas by Israeli military roadblocks and checkpoints. In particular, in Hebron, more than 30,000 Palestinian civilians have been placed under severe movement restrictions, including mass house arrest for weeks on end, for the benefit of 300 Jewish settlers living illegally in the city. Israeli forces also isolated Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank, denying residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip access to the city. Israeli occupation forces continue to segregate the Gaza Strip into three isolated areas through military roadblocks and checkpoints, restricting movement of persons and goods. The Israeli military also continues to impose strict sieges on the al-Mawasi area in Khan Yunis and the al-Sayafa area in Beit Lahia. The comprehensive siege and closure policy has crippled the Palestinian economy and severely disrupted the functioning of schools, hospitals, businesses, public services, and PNA institutions.

In 2001, Israeli forces continued to attack Palestinian and international journalists. Israeli soldiers opened fire on clearly identifiable journalists, injuring and killing several and damaging equipment. Israeli forces also denied journalists entry into particular areas in the OPT, preventing them from covering Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians. In 2001, PCHR documented 132 attacks on local and international journalists, including two killings. These cases included: shooting at journalists, sometimes causing injury; beating and humiliation; arrest and interrogation; destruction of media equipment; and shelling of media centers and institutions.

Also in 2001, Israeli attacks on Palestinian medical personnel continued despite the clear international legal prohibition on attacking clearly marked medical personnel. Israeli occupation forces killed 3 Palestinian medical personnel and injured many others. Additionally, dozens of ambulances were damaged or detained at Israeli military roadblocks. Israeli forces at military roadblocks and checkpoints also obstructed the evacuation of many Palestinian patients to hospitals. 27 patients died as a result of such obstructions.

Israeli occupation forces imposed a strict siege on Jerusalem, isolating it from the rest of the West Bank. They restricted access to the holy Islamic and Christian sites in the city. The Israeli government confiscated more Palestinian lands and annexed them to Jewish settlements surrounding the city. Israeli occupation forces also continued to

² One donum is equal to 1000 square meters.

demolish Palestinian houses on the pretext that the houses lacked building licenses, even though it is practically impossible for Palestinians to obtain such licenses.³ They also continued to confiscate identity cards of Palestinian residents of the city and expelled them to other areas of the West Bank. These measures, intended to “Judaize” Jerusalem, are effectively measures of ethnic cleansing designed to remove the Palestinian Muslim and Christian inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including war crimes, perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian civilians have disastrous impacts on every aspect of daily life in the OPT, including the promotion of democratization and institutionalization in Palestinian society. The total siege imposed on the OPT and the widespread destruction of Palestinian infrastructure obstructed economic, social and political development, resulting in further deterioration in economic and social conditions. The work of Palestinian governmental institutions, including the Palestinian Legislative Council and the judiciary, has been almost completely paralyzed due to the total siege imposed on the OPT.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) was responsible for a number of human rights violations in 2001 and also failed to move forward in the processes of democratization and institutionalization. The executive continued to marginalize the legislature and judiciary and made no efforts to secure the rule of law. Despite the heavy burdens imposed by continuing Israeli aggression, the PNA is still obligated to do all in its power to promote the separation of powers, the independence of the judiciary, the rule of law, and respect for human rights.

From the beginning of this Intifada through the first nine months of 2001, the PNA made no political arrests. However, under increasing pressure from Israel and the US, in the last quarter of the year Palestinian security services illegally arrested 250 individuals in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip for political reasons, without any charge or trial, in the last quarter of the year. Some detainees were subject to torture, or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Palestinian security services also arrested a number of Palestinians whom they accused of collaborating with Israeli security services. The number of such arrests notably increased in 2001 parallel with the increase in the number of attempted assassinations by Israel that were carried out with the assistance of Palestinian collaborators. Those detainees were often subject to torture during interrogation. In 2001, four detainees died in PNA custody, apparently as a result of torture.

In 2001, the PNA made no efforts to promote or secure the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law. It failed to approve the Law of the Judiciary, passed by the Palestinian Legislative Council in November 1998. The June 2000 Presidential decree forming a Higher Judiciary Council, criticized by PCHR and other human rights organizations as a means of bypassing the Law of the Judiciary, was not rescinded.

³According to LAW – the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment – Israeli occupation forces in 2001 demolished 49 houses in Jerusalem, rendering more than 400 Palestinians, mostly children, homeless.

Palestinian law enforcement officials continued to violate court decisions, particularly those relevant to the release of political prisoners. Such actions have negatively impacted not only the independence of the judiciary, but also Palestinian civil society as a whole.

Despite criticism by Palestinian and international human rights organizations, the State Security Courts continue to operate in PNA areas, in violation of minimum standards on the rights to a fair trial. These courts threaten public freedom, especially the right to free expression and peaceful assembly, and undermine the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law. In 2001, State Security Courts considered nine cases (eight security and one criminal). In these cases, the courts handed down 11 death sentences, one of which was carried out. In addition, one death sentence issued in 2000 was implemented in 2001. PCHR and other human rights organizations have continued to oppose the State Security Courts since their establishment and have advocated for allowing the civil judiciary to judge such cases.

In 2001, the PNA continued to impose restrictions on the rights to free expression and peaceful assembly. The police order issued by Gaza police chief Ghazi Jabali in February 2000, requiring prior permission for public meetings, remained in effect during 2001. The police order and the related Implementation Regulation of the Law of Public Meetings issued by President Arafat on 30 April 2000 were both strongly criticized by PCHR and other human rights organizations. The PNA and its security services generally did not prevent peaceful demonstrations and public meetings against killing, destruction, and assassinations by Israeli occupation forces. However, demonstrations organized to protest PNA policies, or to express their opposition to the official Palestinian position, were responded to with excessive force. A number of civilians were killed and dozens were injured in these incidents, especially during the last quarter of 2001. On 2 December, the PNA declared a state of emergency. It illegally arrested dozens of Palestinian citizens without warrants, charge, or trial and closed dozens of civilian Islamic institutions throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Throughout 2001, the Palestinian Legislative Council was unable to meet due to the total siege imposed by Israeli occupation forces on the OPT. These obstacles deepened the PLC's crisis and exacerbated its longstanding weakness vis-à-vis the Executive, leading to the Council's complete paralysis.

Recommendations to the International Community

1. PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to fulfill their legal obligations under Article 1 of the Convention to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the OPT. PCHR believes the time has long passed for the western democracies to end their conspiracy of silence and as High Contracting Parties to take effective and concrete measures to halt war crimes and other gross and systematic Israeli violations of the Convention, and to ensure that those

responsible for war crimes are brought to justice in accordance with the obligation under article 146.

2. PCHR calls upon the international community to immediately intervene and provide international protection for Palestinian civilians to prevent further Israeli violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention, including war crimes. Under the convention, Palestinian civilians in the OPT are considered protected persons and are thus entitled to basic minimum legal protections which, in light of Israel's 35-year failure to respect international humanitarian law, the international community should immediately provide.
3. PCHR urges the European Union to immediately activate Article 2 of the Euro-Israeli Association Agreement, which provides that Israel must respect human rights as a precondition for economic cooperation between EU states and Israel. In this context, PCHR further calls upon EU states to prohibit imports of goods produced in illegal Jewish settlements in the OPT.
4. PCHR appreciates the efforts of global civil society, including human rights organizations, bar associations, unions, and solidarity groups, and urges them to continue their role in pressuring world governments to secure Israel's respect for human rights in the OPT and to end its attacks on Palestinians civilians and their property.
5. PCHR emphasizes the importance of initiatives by global civil society to provide popular protection to Palestinian civilians through dozens of international delegations to the OPT. PCHR calls for the continuation of such initiatives.
6. PCHR calls upon the international community, including governments and NGOs, to support the arrest and prosecution of those responsible for war crimes before international courts, in accordance with Article 146 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. PCHR's Fieldwork and Legal Units continue to document violations of international humanitarian law, including war crimes, against Palestinian civilians.
7. PCHR reiterates that any political settlement not based on international law, in particular international human rights and humanitarian law, can not lead to a peaceful and just solution of the Palestinian question. Rather, such an arrangement can only lead to further suffering and instability in the region, as has been clear since the Madrid Conference was convened over 10 years ago.

Recommendations to the PNA

PCHR is aware of the impact of Israeli attacks, including the widespread destruction of PNA institutions, on the performance of the PNA. However, PCHR believes that the PNA's responsibility to uphold human rights and establish a system of governance

based on democracy, the separation of powers, and the rule of law, remains undiminished. To this end, the following steps are necessary:

1. The Executive should ratify the Basic Law, which organizes relations between the three branches of government, as well as between government institutions and individuals.
2. PCHR calls upon the PNA to hold parliamentary and local council elections, as a means of fulfilling the basic rights of citizens and a precondition for ensuring the legitimacy of the leadership as representative of the popular will.
3. PCHR emphasizes that promotion of the rule of law should be a priority and that the Executive should dutifully implement all laws.
4. PCHR calls for the Executive to ratify the Law of the Independence of the Judiciary and to respect court decisions.
5. PCHR calls upon the PNA to resist external pressure to violate human rights. External pressure has been a major cause of human rights violations perpetrated by the PNA, especially political arrests, since its establishment.
6. PCHR calls upon the PNA to end illegal arrests and to follow legal procedures in all arrests.
7. PCHR reiterates its call for the PNA to immediately abolish the State Security Courts, as they fail to reach the minimum standards for a fair trials, and to abolish the death penalty, which violates the right to life.
8. PCHR calls upon the Executive and PNA security services to respect the office of the Attorney General. In this context, PCHR considers the appointment of an attorney general for State Security Courts as an attempt to undermine the authority of the Attorney General.

(1) Israeli Violations of Human Rights

Excessive Use of Force and Extra-Judicial Killing by Israeli Occupation Forces During this Intifada

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces escalated both the excessive and indiscriminate use of force as well as extra-judicial killing in a manner unprecedented since 1967. These actions came as part of the disproportionate response of Israeli occupation forces to incidents that have taken place in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) since September 2000 in what has come to be known as the “al-Aqsa Intifada.” In 2001, 487 Palestinians, including 379 civilians (of whom 93 were children), were killed and approximately 6000 were wounded – dozens of whom were permanently handicapped – by Israeli occupation forces and Jewish settlers. In addition, 32 Palestinians were killed in incidents in which Israeli involvement is suspected, and 27 died due to the obstructed access to emergency or regular medical treatment at Israeli military roadblocks.

Dozens of Palestinian civilians were killed when Israeli occupation forces opened fire on demonstrations without having resorted to less lethal means to disperse protesters, even though no serious threats were posed to the lives of Israeli soldiers, who were often positioned in heavily fortified locations. Dozens of Palestinian civilians were killed when Israeli tanks, fighter jets, combat helicopters and gunboats shelled Palestinian residential areas. Palestinians were also killed at Israeli military roadblocks erected in or near Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps, without those victims having posed any threat to the lives of Israeli soldiers. In addition, 16 Palestinians were killed by Jewish settlers living illegally in the OPT⁴; settlers were allowed, and even encouraged to form armed militias for “self defense” on roads. Settlers often fired at Palestinian civilians traveling in cars and working on farms, and also launched raids on Palestinian villages.

During 2001, 108 Palestinian policemen were killed when Israeli occupation forces raided Palestinian security posts by land, sea, and air, despite no hostile acts against Israeli targets having been carried out from these sites. After attacks by armed Palestinian groups against Israeli targets in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and inside Israel, Israeli fighter jets, combat helicopters, gunboats, and tanks attacked Palestinian security sites. In addition, a number of Palestinian policemen were killed by Israeli occupation forces in clashes while in civilian clothes. Others were killed in exchanges of fire while defending, in accordance with the legal duties as a civilian police force, Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps against incursions by Israeli forces; in other incidents, Palestinian policemen died in willful killings while at their posts.⁵ Under the Fourth Geneva Convention, PNA security personnel are considered non-combatants and thus protected persons unless and for such time as they are directly engaged in hostile attacks against Israeli targets.

Israeli occupation forces exploited the circumstances that followed the attacks in the United States on 11 September, intensifying their campaign against the Palestinian

⁴ For more details, see the section on practices of Jewish settlers, p. 30.

⁵ On 14 May, Israeli occupation forces killed five Palestinian security men while on duty at a roadblock in Bitounia. No clashes were reported in the area at the time.

people. After that date, 227 Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces, about half the total number of Palestinians killed in 2001.

In 2001, the policy of assassination continued to widen in scale and scope. Israeli occupation forces used helicopter gunships to target suspected Palestinian activists, as well as remote-controlled or booby-trapped explosives. Nearly a quarter of those killed in assassination operations were innocent bystanders, including children and women. In 2001, Israeli occupation forces assassinated 43 Palestinian activists and injured 14 others. In those operations, 14 bystanders were killed and 57 injured. Israeli occupation forces carried out a total of 44 assassination attempts. The target group was not limited to those suspected of carrying out, planning, or ordering attacks against Israeli targets, but also included political leaders of Palestinian parties. Assassinations, which are a form of extra-judicial execution, escalated after 11 September; 24 Palestinians, including 20 targeted persons, were killed after that date.

The number of Palestinian victims of Israeli invasions of Palestinian areas by Israeli occupation forces increased. The most violent incursions targeted cities and refugee camps in and around Bethlehem, Ramallah, al-Bireh, Jenin, Tulkarm and Qalqilya after the killing of right-wing Israeli Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi by members of the PFLP on 17 October, in retaliation for the assassination of the Secretary General of the PFLP Abu Ali Mustafa on 27 August. After Ze'evi's killing, Israeli occupation forces carried out large-scale military operations inside areas under full control of the Palestinian National Authority, shelling Palestinian houses and civilian facilities. Many Palestinians were killed both inside their houses and while confronting the invading Israeli forces. During those operations, Israeli occupation forces assassinated a number of Palestinians whom they accused of having been involved in attacks against Israeli targets. A number of Palestinian policemen were also killed while at their posts for no apparent reason.

The number of Palestinians killed at Israeli military roadblocks and checkpoints in the Gaza Strip significantly increased. In 2001, 17 Palestinians were killed and dozens were injured by Israeli occupation soldiers at military roadblocks and checkpoints erected between Palestinian areas to restrict the movement of Palestinians.

Also in 2001, Israeli attacks on Palestinian medical personnel continued, despite their being clearly marked with medical insignia. Attacks on medical personnel, who are protected by the solely humanitarian nature of their work, are strictly forbidden under international humanitarian law. Israeli occupation forces killed 3 Palestinian medical personnel and injured several others during 2001. Additionally, dozens of ambulances were damaged or restricted at Israeli military roadblocks.

Attacks on journalists of local and international press agencies by Israeli occupation forces significantly increased. In this context, two Palestinian journalists were killed by Israeli occupation forces while interviewing Hamas figures in Nablus in July. In addition, 43 journalists were injured, while 28 were beaten or humiliated by Israeli occupation forces. Israeli also forces shelled a number of press facilities, causing severe damage.

Shooting at Palestinian Civilians during Clashes

Israeli soldiers frequently shot at Palestinian civilians without any threat having been posed to their lives. Israel soldiers often fired at the upper part of the body with live ammunition, without resorting to less lethal means. The high number of Palestinians killed or wounded by Israeli occupation forces in 2001 indicates that Israeli soldiers were given full rein to shoot at Palestinian civilians. Israeli occupation forces rarely investigate such incidents. In their responses to PCHR's complaints regarding the killing of Palestinian civilians, the Israeli military attorney general and the state's lawyers claim that such killings were in the context of a "state of war."

The case of Jadallah al-Ja'bari, 55, from Hebron is one example. Two Israeli soldiers in the center of Hebron were filmed firing at al-Ja'bari's leg, blowing it off as he cried for help. As with the case of 12-year-old Mohammed al-Durrah in the first days of the Intifada, al-Ja'bari's killing was broadcast on television, prompting worldwide criticism that forced the Israeli government to initiate an investigation. Israeli soldiers claimed that they suspected al-Ja'bari of being a suicide bomber, but the photos of the incident refute this.⁶ Another case is the killing of Shaker Faisal Hassouna, 23, from Hebron, on 12 January. Five Israeli soldiers appeared on television channels throughout the world dragging Hassouna's body at least 100m after having shot him dead from a very short distance. These incidents, documented on videotape, are only a few of the hundreds of cases of deaths resulting from either excessive use of force or willful killings by Israeli occupying forces since the start of the al-Aqsa Intifada.

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces used a new kind of gas against Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip. The "black gas," as it was called by Palestinians, reportedly had a pleasant smell and sweet taste. Its affects included headaches, nausea, suffocation, difficulties in breathing, pains in the chest and the abdomen, coughing, spasms, agitation, skin lesions, and vomiting. Palestinian medics could do nothing other than give gas spasm analgesic medicines to those affected. The gas was first used in Khan Yunis refugee camp in the Gaza Strip from 12-20 February. Around 240 Palestinians suffered from the inhalation of this gas. This gas has yet to be identified.

Effects on Palestinian Children

In 2001, actions of Israeli occupation forces continued to have an enormous effect on Palestinian children, especially in terms of casualties. Despite the decrease in civilian protests and clashes near Israeli fortifications and the increase in military confrontations between the Israeli forces and Palestinian militants, 93 Palestinian children under age 18 were killed by Israeli forces and Jewish settlers during 2001. In addition, seven children were killed in incidents for which Israeli forces are suspected of responsibility. Five sick children also died as a result of the obstruction of their evacuation to hospital for emergency or regular treatment at Israeli military roadblocks and checkpoints.

⁶Israeli occupation forces rarely investigate cases related to the killing of Palestinians, and such inquiries are kept secret. Most often, the Israeli Minister of Defense receives the results of such investigations personally and does not share them publicly. The accused are either absolve of responsibility or subject to lenient disciplinary actions, such as reprimands or transfers.

Some children were killed by Israeli shelling of Palestinians residential areas,⁷ some were shot dead by Israeli forces during clashes, some were killed during assassinations of Palestinian activists,⁸ and others were killed at Israeli military roadblocks.⁹ In one widely reported incident, five Palestinian children in Khan Yunis, aged 6-14, were killed on 22 November by a booby-trapped explosive while on their way to school. Israeli forces later admitted that they had planted the bomb to ambush Palestinian militants who they claimed often fired at an Israeli military base in the area.¹⁰ In another incident, three Palestinian children were killed by flechette tanks shells fired by Israeli occupation forces on 30 December. In this case, the Israeli forces kept the bodies for three days, arousing suspicions that they sought to remove, distort, or destroy forensic evidence. Israeli forces claimed that the three children were attempting to penetrate “Elli Sinai” settlement in the northern Gaza Strip. Several claims, later retracted, were made regarding the incident. A full, independent investigation has yet to be conducted into this case.¹¹

Shooting at Palestinian Civilians at Israeli Military Roadblocks and Checkpoints

In addition to crippling the economy, restricting access to medical care, and disrupting social life, the network of Israeli military roadblocks and checkpoints across the OPT also exposes large parts of the Palestinian civilian population to the risks of encountering heavily armed Israeli soldiers operating in a climate of impunity for human rights violations. Degrading treatment and harassment are routine, and

⁷ For example, on 7 May, 4-month-old Iman Mohammed Hijju, from Deir al-Balah, was killed by shrapnel from an artillery shell fired by Israeli forces at Palestinian houses in Khan Yunis refugee camp.

⁸ For example, on 31 July, Bilal and Ashraf Khader, 8 and 5 respectively, from Al-Judaida village in Jenin, were killed while passing near a building in Nablus that was attacked by an Israeli combat helicopter in an assassination targeting Palestinian activists. Six other Palestinians were also killed.

⁹ For example, on 9 February, 15-year-old Ahmed ‘Abdel-Raziq Abu Houli, from Deir al-Balah, was shot dead by Israeli soldiers at a military roadblock south of Deir al-Balah, while on his way home.

¹⁰ On 24 November, an Israeli military spokesman stated that an initial investigation concluded that Israeli forces planted the bomb in the area, from where Palestinian gunmen used to fire at bases near “Gani Tal” settlement, but results of the investigation were not released. PCHR sent an appeal to high-level UN officials stressing the need for a thorough international investigation of all willful killings of Palestinian children in the OPT since 29 September 2000, as well as for immediate international protection for Palestinian civilians in the OPT. The appeal was sent to: Olara Otunnu, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict; Terje Roed-Larsen, United Nations Special Coordinator for the OPT; and John Dugard, UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in the OPT.

¹¹ PCHR has continued to follow up the case internationally and within Israel. PCHR coordinated with the Public Committee against Torture in Israel (PCATI) and Physicians for Human Rights. Following a request by Israeli Knesset Member Tamar Jabotinsky, the Israeli parliamentary foreign affairs and defence committee held a session on 23 January 2002 to address this case. Representatives of PCATI and Physicians for Human Rights attended the session. In his statement before the committee, the Israeli military commander of the northern Gaza Strip revealed new information which supports the conclusion that the children were willfully killed using flechette weapons (shells that disperse dart-like shrapnel over a wide conical area several hundred meters in length). The Israeli military representative also produced video footage before the committee showing that the victims were positioned at a significant distance from the Israeli military position. For further details, see PCHR’s press release 11/2002 (30 January 2002).

soldiers have used lethal force at checkpoints on numerous occasions without any apparent justification. In 2001, dozens of Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli occupation forces at military roadblocks, many in apparent willful killings.¹² In many cases, Israeli soldiers at military roadblocks fired at Palestinian civilian cars that accidentally failed to obey traffic signals. Israeli occupation forces also used roadblocks and checkpoints to ambush suspected Palestinian activists.¹³ Palestinian civilians crossing military roadblocks and checkpoints on foot were also fired upon.¹⁴

Assassination Policy

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces continued to pursue a declared policy of assassination, targeting Palestinians whom they consider as “Intifada activists.” Israeli forces carried out 44 assassination operations, in which 57 Palestinians (43 targeted persons and 14 bystanders), including 5 children, were killed and 71 (14 targeted persons and 57 bystanders), were injured. Israeli forces carried out an additional 11 failed assassination attempts, in which 12 targeted persons were injured and 3 were unharmed.

The target list was not limited to those suspected of carrying out, planning, or ordering attacks against Israeli targets, but also included political leaders of Palestinian parties. On 31 July, Israeli Apache helicopter gunships fired rockets at the offices of the Palestinian Center for Studies and Media in Nablus, killing 8 Palestinians, including two prominent political leaders of Hamas, Jamal Mansour, 41, and Jamal Salim, 41. On 27 August, an Israeli Apache helicopter gunship fired rockets at the office of the Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine Mustafa al-Zabri (Abu Ali Mustafa) in Ramallah. Al-Zabri was killed and a number of people were injured.

In 2001, many explosions occurred in buildings, stores and cars, where Palestinian activists were present. Israeli occupation forces are suspected of having been involved in many of these incidents. In 19 explosions, 32 Palestinians, including two children, were killed. On 30 April, a heavy explosion occurred in a house adjacent to PCHR’s offices in Gaza. Three Palestinian civilians were killed. The house was destroyed and PCHR’s offices and nearby houses were damaged. On 30 July, a large explosion occurred in a store in Wadi al-Far’a in Jenin, killing six Palestinian activists. On 19 August, an explosion occurred a house in Rafah killed a Palestinian

¹²For example, on 11 September, Israeli soldiers in an observation tower in the vicinity of “Kfar Darom” settlement, east of Deir al-Balah in the Gaza strip, fired at a Palestinian car traveling to Khan Yunis. A Palestinian civilian was killed and another was injured. On 12 September, a Palestinian civilian traveling by car was killed by Israeli soldiers at a military roadblock south of Deir al-Balah.

¹³For example, on 13 August, an Israeli undercover unit shot dead Nasser Ismail Zeidia, 22 from Qalandya refugee camp north of Jerusalem, in an ambush at a military roadblock on the Ramallah-Jerusalem road. Israeli soldiers fired at Zeidia while he crossing the roadblock in his car, injuring him. Then, a special Israeli unit gave chase and killed him. The Israeli military spokesman admitted that the Israeli forces assassinated Zeidia for his alleged participation in the killing of an Israeli in Ramallah.

¹⁴For example, on 7 January, Israeli occupation forces at Al-Shuhada’ junction, south of Gaza City, shot dead a Palestinian civilian while on his way home near the junction.

activist and two of his children. On 28 September, an explosion in a residential area in Hebron killed an Islamic Jihad activist.

Israel's admitted responsibility for the killing of five children in Khan Yunis by a booby-trapped explosive on 22 November raised suspicions of the involvement of Israeli forces in many explosions in which Palestinian activists were killed.¹⁵

On 21 June, the Israeli government decided to resume assassinations of Palestinian activists, despite a cease-fire declared on 13 June. From that date up to the end of the year, the Israeli government carried out over 34 assassination operations, killing 36 targeted Palestinians and 14 civilian bystanders.

The Israeli government openly claims responsibility for these "liquidations" and that such acts are part of a policy of "self-defense." Israeli President Moshe Katsav described such operations as "self-defense operations against those who plan or commit acts against Israeli targets."¹⁶

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced in a special statement published in *al-Quds* on 14 May that "Israel declares its responsibility for some operations and keeps silent on others." Sharon added in an interview on Israeli television on 2 July that Israeli occupation forces had committed extra-judicial killings of Palestinian activists in Tulkarm, Nablus, and Jenin and would not hesitate in the future to kill whoever it suspected of terrorism if it deemed it in the interests of the state of Israel.

Two days later, the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Aharanoth* reported that Israeli occupation forces had produced a list of 26 Palestinians whose killings had been approved by the government, including members of Fateh, PFLP, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad.

The circumstances and conditions in which some assassination operations were committed by Israeli occupation forces refute Israeli claims that these operations are undertaken in "self-defense." For example, on 23 July, Israeli commandos killed Mustafa Yassin, 26, from Jenin, in front of his wife and child after Israeli forces released him from their custody two days earlier. Evidence also indicates that Israeli occupation forces shot him and left him injured until he died, without providing any medical care or allowing his wife to do so.

Israeli occupation forces claimed that they were forced to intensify assassination attempts since Palestinian activists escaped to areas under full control of the Palestinian National Authority and thus were difficult to arrest. Contrary to such claims, Israeli forces arrested dozens of Palestinians whom they claimed were engaged in activities against Israel, at military roadblocks and checkpoints and during incursions into PNA-controlled areas.

The circumstances of other incidents confirm that the Israeli government is indiscriminate as to the "collateral damage" of such assassination operations. Nearly 20% of those killed in assassination operations in 2001 were people other than the

¹⁵For further details, see p. 17 of this report.

¹⁶*Al-Quds*, 3 July 2001.

intended targets. Israeli occupation forces have not hesitated to use missiles against civilian residential buildings. For example in the case of Jamal Mansour and Jamal Salim, 6 bystanders, including two children, were also killed. Two Palestinian children were also killed in an assassination attempt that targeted an activist in Hebron in December.

Shelling of Houses and Civilian Facilities

Throughout 2001, Israeli occupation forces indiscriminately shelled Palestinian residential areas and civilian facilities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In particular, Rafah and Khan Yunis refugee camps in the Gaza Strip were shelled by Israeli forces on an almost daily basis. Dozens of Palestinian houses in the two refugee camps were destroyed, rendering hundreds of Palestinian civilians homeless. Hundreds of other houses were damaged and many residents have been forced to relocate due to the high risk of being shot.

As a result Israeli shelling in 2001, 236 Palestinians were killed and hundreds were injured. On 7 May, 4-month-old Iman Mohammed Hijju, from Deir al-Balah refugee camp, was killed by shrapnel from an Israeli artillery shell; her mother and grandmother were also injured. On 2 March, 9-year-old Ubai Mohammed Darraj from al-Bireh was killed when an artillery shell fired by Israeli forces hit his family's house.

As part of the excessive use of force, Israeli occupation forces used flechette shells (shells whose explosion spray dart-like shrapnel over a conical area approximately 300m long and 90m wide) against Palestinian civilians. According to *Jane's Defence*, flechette shells are anti-personnel weapons designed for use against concentrations of soldiers in the battlefield; they lack precision and are completely inappropriate in civilian areas. The use of indiscriminate weapons, such as flechette tank shells, with the knowledge that such an attack will cause excessive loss of life, injury or damage to civilians and civilian objects is a grave breach and a war crime under international humanitarian law.

Israeli forces used this kind of weapon against Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip, killing 10 and injuring dozens. On 2 March, Mustafa al-Ramlawi, 42, mentally handicapped from al-Boreij refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, was killed by a shell of this kind near al-Shuhada' junction south of Gaza City. On 10 March, Ziad 'Ayyad, 27, from Gaza, was killed the same way while farming in al-Mentar area east of Gaza City.

Israeli forces also used these shells against Palestinian houses. On 9 June, three Palestinian women from the al-Malalha family were killed when four shells fired by the Israeli forces hit their tent at night. Two other civilians were also injured.¹⁷ On

¹⁷ According to an Israeli report, the Israeli army initiated investigation into the case. The investigation concluded that the killing of the three women resulted from a mistake by an Israeli tank crew, resulting in the shell exploding 1.5km away from the intended target. It also claimed that the crew did not follow open-fire regulations, as the officer in the tank ordered the shooting without having consulted the district commander. PCHR has not received any reports that any measures have been taken against those responsible.

30 April, the Israeli forces shelled Khan Yunis refugee camp at night using such shells, causing a number of injuries among Palestinian civilians. On 30 December, three Palestinian children, aged 15-17, were killed by flechettes fired by an Israeli tank from a distance of approximately 600m north of Beit Lahia.

Palestinian civilian facilities were targeted by Israeli shelling throughout the year. Dozens of Palestinian educational institutions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were shelled by Israeli occupation forces. Some of these institutions were severely damaged, disrupting educational activities. Some schools were forced to close to avoid casualties among school children from continued Israeli shelling. For example, an elementary school near “Kfar Darom” settlement, east of Deir al-Balah was closed and its pupils were transferred to another school. On 18 January, the campus of the College of Education, approximately 600m north of al-Suhada’ junction south of Gaza City, was severely damaged in shelling by Israeli forces. On 22 February, the Industrial School in Deir al-Balah was shelled and severely damaged. In the West Bank, Khadouri College in Tulkarm and the Curriculum Center in al-Bireh were damaged by repeated Israeli shelling. One student, Riham Nabil Abu al-Ward, 10, from Jenin, was killed when Israeli forces bombarded her school on 11 October.

Palestinian hospitals and medical centers were not immune to continued Israeli attacks, in violation of international humanitarian law. For example, Israeli forces shelled ‘Aalia Hospital in Hebron on 30 August, causing severe damage. Patients were evacuated to another hospital in the city.

Israeli forces also shelled religious sites and places of worship. On 30 August, Israeli forces shelled a mosque in Hebron, causing severe damage. In September, a monastery in Bethlehem was attacked by the Israeli forces. Four elderly women died following intense trauma inflicted by this attack. Israeli forces also shelled a monastery in Bethlehem, injuring a nun.

Dozens of Palestinian factories and economic establishments were subjected to Israeli shelling. Many of them were severely damaged, causing additional losses to the Palestinian economy.

Intensive shelling of PNA institutions caused severe damage to nearby ancient monuments and historical sites. On 10 September, Israeli fighter jets attacked the headquarters of Fatah Movement in Ramallah. The headquarters and the adjacent Ramallah Museum were severely damaged.

Israeli forces also shelled offices of Palestinian political parties, especially the headquarters of Fatah Movement in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, causing casualties among Palestinian civilians and damaging nearby houses.

Shelling of Palestinian Police Stations

Throughout 2001, Israeli forces used tanks, warplanes, and gunboats against Palestinian police stations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Some security buildings were destroyed and others were severely damaged, and dozens of Palestinians were killed or injured. Police and other Palestinian security personnel

and facilities are civilians and civilian objects with protected status under the Fourth Geneva Convention until and only for such time as they are engaged in hostile acts against Israeli targets. Continuing deliberate targeting of police facilities and members has severely impaired their ability to perform their duties

Israeli forces repeatedly shelled Palestinian police stations after Palestinian attacks on Israeli targets in the OPT and inside Israel. On 18 May, Israeli F-16 fighter jets attacked Palestinian targets in Gaza, Ramallah, and Nablus. On the same day, they attacked Nablus Central Prison in a failed attempt to assassinate Mahmoud Abu Hanoud, a Hamas activist detained inside.¹⁸ The prison was destroyed and 11 Palestinian policemen were killed.

A number of civilian bystanders were killed or injured when Israeli occupation forces shelled Palestinian security sites. For example, on 4 December, Israeli F-16 fighter jets attacked Palestinian security sites in Gaza City, while students were on their way home from school. Two Palestinians, including one student, were killed and 150 schoolchildren were injured. Palestinian houses adjacent to security sites that were shelled by the Israeli forces were severely damaged. Also on 4 December, more than 60 Palestinian houses in Beit Lahia were damaged when Israeli F-16 fighter jets bombarded a site of the Palestinian Presidential Guard (Force 17) north of Gaza City.

President Arafat was not immune to Israeli attacks. Israeli occupation forces destroyed two of his helicopters. On 3 December, they destroyed the runway of Gaza International Airport, thereby obstructing his movement.

Encroachment into Palestinian National Authority Controlled Areas

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces often made incursions into areas under the full control of the PNA. The Israeli government claiming that this policy was aimed at dismantling “terrorist cells” responsible for attacks inside Israel. However, the repeated invasions caused further deterioration of the situation on the ground.

Israeli forces invaded Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps, under the cover of intensive shelling that targeted Palestinian houses and civilian facilities with increasing frequency, ignoring international calls to stop such operations. Many Palestinians were killed both inside their houses and while confronting the invading Israeli forces. A number of Palestinian policemen were also killed at their posts in incidents in which they posed no threat to the lives of Israeli soldiers.

Israeli occupation forces exploited the circumstances that followed the attacks in the United States on 11 September and intensified their campaign against the Palestinian people, moving into PNA-controlled areas and killing dozens of Palestinian civilians. For example, on 12 September, Israeli forces invaded the West Bank city of Jenin, temporarily reoccupying it. They carried out an assassination attempt which resulted in the killing of five Palestinians, including two brothers and their 14-year-old sister.

¹⁸Abu Hanoud was released together with other Palestinian political prisoners due to frequent Israeli shelling of Palestinian police stations and jails. On 23 November, he was assassinated by Israeli occupation forces.

The most violent incursions targeted Palestinian cities, villages, and refugee camps in the West Bank after the killing of the right-wing Israeli Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi by members of the PFLP on 17 October. After Ze'evi's killing, Israeli occupation forces carried out large-scale military operations inside areas under full control of the PNA, shelling Palestinian houses and civilian facilities. Many Palestinians were killed. For example, on 24 October, Israeli occupation forces invaded Beit Rima village, northwest of Ramallah and shot dead five Palestinians in a willful killing while imposing a strict siege on the village.

Attacks on Palestinian Medical Personnel

Palestinian medical personnel, vehicles, and facilities came under frequent attack by Israeli occupation forces. The use of force by Israeli occupation forces was indiscriminate and Palestinian medical personnel were often fired upon by Israeli forces despite being clearly marked with distinctive insignia.

The total siege imposed on the OPT impeded the work of Palestinian medical personnel, which is strictly humanitarian in nature. Israeli military roadblocks often prevented ambulances from reaching the wounded or from evacuating the sick to hospital. During 2001, 27 patients died as a result of obstructed access to medical care by Israeli military checkpoints.

On several occasions, Israeli forces denied medical personnel access to those wounded in armed clashes, in violation of international humanitarian law. For example, on 6 November, Israeli occupation forces prevented medical personnel from the Palestine Red Crescent Society from providing medical assistance to three Palestinians injured in an armed clash with these forces near Tel village, south of Nablus. The three men bled to death.

During 2001, three Palestinian medical personnel were killed while carrying out their humanitarian duties. On 10 April, Wa'el Ahmed Khweiter, 28, a physician from al-Zaytoun neighborhood in Gaza working for the Palestinian Marine Police, was killed when Israeli occupation forces shelled a police station in Gaza. On 30 August, Mousa Safi Qudeihat, 50, a physician from Kharas village in Hebron, was killed when Israeli forces shelled the city. On 15 September, Yahia Nasser al-Sayyah, a paramedic from Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip, was killed during Israeli shelling of Bethlehem.

The Fourth Geneva Convention provides protection for medical personnel and facilities in time of war. Articles 14 through 23 stipulate that hospital safety zones should be established to protect wounded, sick, and aged persons from the effects of war. They also prohibit attacks on civilian hospitals. According to Article 20 of the Convention, "persons regularly and solely engaged in the operation and administration of civilian hospitals, including the personnel engaged in the search for, removal and transporting of and caring for wounded and sick civilians, the infirm and maternity cases, shall be respected and protected." Article 23 of the Convention requires "the free passage of all consignments of medical and hospital stores and objects necessary for religious worship intended only for civilians."

Attacks on Journalists

Israeli occupation forces continued to attempt to silence the press by preventing members of the media from carrying out their duties. Israeli forces deliberately targeted clearly identifiable journalists, killing and injuring several and damaging equipment. The Israeli forces also denied journalists entry into particular areas in the OPT, preventing them from covering Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians.

In an attempt to restrict the work of Palestinian and Arab journalists in the OPT, Israeli occupation authorities decided to cancel official press cards held by dozens of Palestinian and Arab journalists, accusing them of bias and subjectivity in covering incidents in the OPT. In this context, Israeli sources stated that the Israeli Government Press Office would prepare “a black list” naming journalists whose press cards were to be cancelled. The Director of the Israeli Government Press Office stated that “those journalists must decide whether they are neutral or tools to serve the Palestinian Authority.” “If they boycott official Israeli departments, then there is no reason to be concerned about them or offer them help,” he added.

In 2001, PCHR documented 132 attacks on local and international journalists. These included cases of: shooting at journalists, sometimes causing injury; beating and humiliation; unlawful arrest and interrogation; destruction of media equipment; and shelling of media facilities and institutions.

On 31 July, Israeli combat helicopters fired missiles at the offices of the Palestinian Center for Studies and Media, located in a residential building in Nablus. Eight Palestinians, including two journalists, were killed. Mohammed al-Bishawi, 27, a photographer of *al-Hayat al-Jadida* daily local newspaper and *al-Haq* Magazine, and ‘Othman Ibrahim ‘Abdel-Qader al-Qatanani, 24 of Nablus Press Office and the Kuwaiti KONA press agency, were killed while they were interviewing Jamal Mansour and Jamal Salim, prominent political leaders of Hamas. In addition, Ahmed Abu Shallal, from the International Solidarity Institute for Human Rights, was seriously injured.

In 2001, PCHR documented 43 cases of injury to journalists from Israeli gunfire. For example, on 20 April, Israeli occupation forces at the border with Egypt to the south of Rafah opened fire on a camera crew from the Abu Dhabi satellite channel. Abu Dhabi correspondent Leila Ahmed ‘Abdullah ‘Oudeh, 30, was wounded by a live bullet in the right leg. According to PCHR’s investigation, ‘Oudeh was near Salah al-Din gate on the border, covering destruction caused by Israeli bulldozers in the area. The area was completely quiet when the staff started to work. Israeli journalists were also attacked by Israeli occupation forces. For example, on 1 March, Israeli occupation forces fired at Amira Hass, correspondent for the Israeli newspaper *Ha’aretz*, while she was on her way to al-Mentar area in Gaza to visit a family whose house had been shelled by the Israeli forces. Hass was not hurt.

PCHR also documented 26 cases of shooting at journalists without causing injury.

In 2001, PCHR documented 22 cases of arrest and interrogation of journalists. For example, on 3 January, Israeli occupation forces denied the entry of Palestinian newspapers published in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, into the Gaza Strip. On

17 March, Israeli soldiers at a military roadblock at the southern entrance to Jerusalem detained Firas Tannina, correspondent of *al-Ayyam*. Tannina was interrogated for two hours, and 22 of his photographs were confiscated. On 1 April, Israeli occupation forces issued a military order declaring the Old City of Hebron and other areas under their control to be closed military areas. They prohibited the entry of international and local journalists into these areas, apparently in efforts to hide violations by Israeli soldiers and Jewish settlers against Palestinian civilians in the city.

PCHR documented 28 cases of beating and humiliation of journalists. For example, on 13 August, Israeli occupation soldiers, positioned at Qalandya military roadblock, severely beat an Egyptian television team. ‘Abdel-Nasser ‘Abdoun was injured in the abdomen and his colleague Tariq ‘Abdel-Jaber was filmed being slapped by an Israeli soldier. On 31 July, Israeli soldiers at Qalandya military roadblock, attacked two journalists. ‘Awadh Mohammed ‘Awadh, 30, a photographer for Agence France Presse, was prevented by an Israeli soldier from taking photographs at an Israeli military roadblock southeast of Qalandya Airport, north of Jerusalem. When the journalist asserted his right to take photographs, the Israeli soldier pushed him, shouted at him, and detained him at the roadblock. Tariq ‘Abdel-Jaber, a correspondent for Egyptian television, arrived asked the soldiers why ‘Awadh was being detained; the soldiers ordered him to leave the area. When ‘Abdel-Jaber refused, an Israeli soldier shouted at him, pushed him, and demanded his press card. Upon learning from the card that ‘Abdel-Jaber was Egyptian, the soldier insulted Egypt and its president, Hosni Mubarak.

PCHR documented nine cases of shelling of media centers and institutions. On 12 July, al-Marah radio station and al-Nawras television channel in Hebron were shelled by Israeli occupation forces. Broadcasting equipment of the two media institutions was severely damaged. On 16 July, Israeli tanks shelled the offices of Majd television, destroying its wiring, damaging its antennae, and rendering the main broadcasting unit inoperable. Losses were estimated at \$US 25,000. On the same day and for the second time in less than one week, Israeli occupation forces shelled al-Marah radio station and al-Nawras television in Hebron, causing severe damage. The shelling took place when Israeli tanks invaded Hebron while firing indiscriminately. In December, Israeli forces used explosives to destroy the offices of the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation in Ramallah.¹⁹

Israeli occupation forces also attacked international journalists. On 19 July, four journalists were fired at by Israeli occupation forces. The journalists were: Chris Den Hond, a Belgian reporter working for Kurdish Medya TV; Mereille Court, a freelance French journalist; Mazen Da’na, a cameraman of Reuters press agency; and Na’el Shioukhi, a correspondent and cameraman of Reuters press agency.

Israeli practices against journalists violate relevant international instruments. Article 19 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* of 1966 provides that “everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include

¹⁹Just before the time of this writing, Israeli occupation forces destroyed two buildings used by the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) in Ramallah and Gaza. On 19 January 2002, Israeli occupation forces invaded Um Al-Sharayet neighborhood in Ramallah and destroyed a five-story building of the PBC. On 21 January 2002, Israeli occupation forces invaded Al-Shojaeya neighborhood in Gaza and destroyed the three-story building of the PBC.

freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.”

Article 79 of the First Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions stipulates that “journalists engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered as civilians ... They shall be protected as such under the Conventions and this protocol, provided that they take no action adversely affecting their status as civilians...”²⁰.

Land Leveling and Demolition of Houses and Civilian Facilities

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces carried out mass demolitions of Palestinian homes and razed large tracts of agricultural land, mostly in the Gaza Strip. According to PCHR’s documentation, land leveling and house and civilian facility demolition carried out by Israeli occupation forces in the Gaza Strip²¹ mainly took place in the following areas:

- Near bypass roads reserved exclusively for Israeli occupation forces and Israeli settlers, which divide the Gaza Strip into several fragments. These include: “Kissufim” road between Salah al-Din Street (the main north-south axis of the Gaza Strip) in al-Qarara area;²² al-Mawasi road between Salah al-Din Street and the “Gush Qatif” settlement bloc; and the bypass road between “Netzarim” settlement, south of Gaza City, and Israel.
- Near Jewish settlements, especially “Kfar Darom” (outside Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza strip) and “Netzarim” (outside Gaza city)
- Border areas, such as the areas adjacent to the Egyptian border, along the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel.
- Near Israeli military locations that overlook Palestinian communities.

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces razed 9544 dunums, including 8524 dunums (89.3%) of agricultural land, and about 1020 dunums (10.7%) of wooded land.²³ These figures do not include houses and civilian and agricultural facilities established outside these areas, which were also demolished and swept. Israeli occupation forces destroyed hundreds of wells, water pumps, irrigation networks, agricultural stores, and greenhouses. They also demolished dozens of bird and animal farms and agricultural tools. The following table details agricultural losses inflicted by Israeli occupation forces in the Gaza Strip and the areas in 2001:²⁴

²⁰For more details on this subjects, see PCHR’s “Silencing the Press,” a series of reports on attacks by Israeli occupation forces against journalists.

²¹It was difficult to obtain full information about such actions in the West Bank.

²²Israeli occupation forces are building a bridge connecting the “Gush Qatif” settlement bloc with Israel, via Kissufim crossing. For this purpose, large areas of Palestinian agricultural land were confiscated after they were razed.

²³From 29 September 2000 up to the end of the year, Israeli occupation forces razed 4698 dunums, of which 3777 dunums (80.4%) of which were agricultural, and about 921 dunums (19.6%) wooded. For more details, see PCHR’s Annual Report 2000 and other reports on land leveling and house and civilian facility demolition in the Gaza Strip.

²⁴This table does not include other losses, which were difficult to enumerate, such as irrigation networks, beehives, fences, etc.

Kind of loss	Rafah	Khan Yunis	Middle Area	Gaza	Northern Area	Total
Dunums of leveled land	801	1942	566	1121	5114	9544
Dunums of wooded land	25	---	---	---	995	1020
Agricultural pools	6	10	3	2	5	26
Wells	---	14	4	18	27	63
Water pumps and motors	7	15	8	5	21	56
Electric generators	---	2	---	1	2	5
Sprinklers	2	5	2	---	9	18
Greenhouses	22	30	51	28	156	287
Agricultural stores	11	9	10	9	34	73
Bird farms	7	2	2	9	10	30
Animal farms	5	1	1	3	6	16
Tractors	1	---	---	----	2	3

Land leveling by Israeli occupation forces was often accompanied by the demolition of houses and civilian facilities in the affected areas. In 2001, Israeli bulldozers completely demolished 281 houses completely and left 51 partially destroyed and uninhabitable. Hundreds of Palestinian families were rendered homeless. These figures do not include the houses that were destroyed or damaged as a result of Israeli shelling of Palestinian residential areas in the Gaza Strip. In addition, Israeli occupation forces demolished 27 Palestinian factories and workshops in the Gaza Strip.

In most cases, demolition and razing was carried out at night by Israeli forces reinforced with tanks and bulldozers and calling on residents to evacuate using a loudspeaker. Fearing for their safety, civilians are forced to leave, abandoning their property and possessions. Land is razed and houses are often demolished in the presence of their owners. These actions mainly target areas adjacent to Israeli settlements or military bases, especially in Rafah and Khan Yunis refugee camps, which witnessed several mass house demolitions throughout 2001. House demolitions during 2001 took place without any judicial process. The UN Committee Against Torture ruled in November 2001 that Israel's house demolition policy may constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in violation of the Convention Against Torture.

During incursions into PNA-controlled areas, Israeli occupation forces have razed land and demolished houses and civilian facilities, sometimes more than 1km into PNA areas. They have also seized a number of Palestinian homes, transforming them into military locations, confining residents to specific rooms, and preventing them from leaving their houses.

Land leveling and demolition of houses and civilian facilities have flattened areas along the border with Israel, on both sides of bypass roads and near Israeli settlements and military locations, hundreds of meters wide. Israeli occupation forces established new military locations and bypass roads on confiscated land. For example, they established a new settlement road between Salah al-Din Street and “Morag” settlement, north of Rafah, on a tract of Palestinian land seized earlier. They also started construction on a new settlement road between Salah al-Din Street and the “Gush Qatif” settlement block on a confiscated tract of Palestinian land, south of Deir al-Balah, and another road to the south of al-Mentar crossing, east of Gaza.

Palestinians are often denied access to the razed areas of land. Israeli occupation forces fired at Palestinians who tried to reach or work on such areas, killing 13, including 6 mentally handicapped individuals. Palestinians walking along bypass roads are routinely fired upon by Israeli snipers.

These actions violate international humanitarian law. Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention provides that “any destruction of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or other public authorities, or social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations.” Article 147 of the Convention considers “extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly” as a grave breach, i.e. a war crime.

Land leveling and property destruction carried out by Israeli occupation forces also constitute collective punishment, which is prohibited by Article 33 of the Convention: “No protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or of terrorism are prohibited.”

These actions also violate the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Article 1 of the Covenant states that “in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,” and Article 5 deprives any state, group, or person of the right “to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights or freedoms recognized herein ...”

Settlement Activities and Settler Practices under Full Protection of Israeli Occupation Forces in the OPT

Since 1967, Israel has sought to colonize the West Bank (including east Jerusalem) and Gaza strip through a process of land confiscation, resource expropriation, and demographic engineering. Israel has established hundreds of Jewish settler colonies and bypass roads in the OPT, disrupting the territorial contiguity of Palestinian areas; Israel has also illegally transferred over 400,000 settlers into the OPT, providing generous economic and other incentives and arms. In this context, Israeli occupation forces have unlawfully destroyed thousands of dunums of Palestinian land and hundreds of Palestinian homes and property in the OPT. Such extensive destruction, carried out wantonly and unlawfully, is a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and a war crime. Israel did not abandon the policy of settlement and land

confiscation after signing the Oslo Accords with the PLO in 1993; rather, settlement construction has accelerated.²⁵

Israeli settlement activities violate international humanitarian law, especially 49(6) of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which stipulates that “the Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.” Any measures by the Occupying Power that may change the permanent status of the territory it occupies are prohibited even while negotiations are pending. Officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross have referred to settlements as war crimes.²⁶ Furthermore, settlements are explicitly considered war crimes under the First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions, many of the provisions of which have entered into customary international law. PCHR recognises that settlements and settlement infrastructure are a major source of tension in the region and the principle manifestation of Israel’s apartheid regime in the OPT.

Successive Israeli governments have considered settlements as a means of tightening their hold on the OPT and have competed in escalating settlement activities and land confiscation. Although the Barak government (July 1999-February 2001) declared its intention to halt settlement activities in the OPT and to dismantle some settlements, settlement activities escalated in that period on an unprecedented scale.²⁷

After the election of the leader of the rightist Likud party leader Ariel Sharon as Prime Minister in January 2001, Israeli settlement activities continued to expand. Between January and 3 December 2001, the Sharon government established 28 settlement outposts in the OPT. Settlement outposts are usually built 200-700m away from existing settlements, either upon a decision by the Israeli government or the initiative of settlers themselves with the approval, or complicity, of the government. Settlers often establish settlement outposts on areas where settlers are attacked by Palestinian militants. Initially, they are established as “consolation tents”²⁸ before becoming permanent settlements. At the beginning of December 2001, the Israeli Ministry of Housing unveiled a plan to establish a number of settlements that would absorb 6,000 settlers. In the same month, the Finance Committee of the Knesset

²⁵According to a report by the Israeli Peace Now, three new settlements were established in the OPT between September 1993 and December 2000. These settlements are: “Lapid,” “Kiryat Sefer” and “Menora.” The number of settlers in the OPT was 115,700, which increased to 176,973 by the middle of 1999. Between 1993 and 1997, Israeli occupation forces established many bypass roads, which were 157.2km long. According to another report by Peace Now published on 16 October 2001, the number of housing units in settlements was 32,750 in 1993. Approximately 20,371 new housing units were added to Jewish settlements in the OPT between 1993 and the first quarter of 2001, an increase of 62%. Peace Now’s statistics do not include settlers in annexed east Jerusalem. The number of settlers in east Jerusalem increased from 20,000 to approximately 180,000 from 1993-2000.

²⁶On 17 May 2001, the head of the ICRC delegation to Israel and the OPT referred to settlements as a war crime. For more details, see *Ha’aretz*, 18 May 2001.

²⁷In 1999, the Barak government declared its intention to dismantle 42 settlements outposts that were established in the West Bank between 1996 and 1999. However, only four outposts were dismantled. Besides, the Israeli government allocated budgets to establish four new settlements in the West Bank and invited bids for the establishment of new housing units in existing settlements in the OPT.

²⁸During the al-Aqsa Intifada, “consolation tents” came out as a phenomenon that characterized initial reactions of settlers towards the killing of settlers by armed Palestinians. The tents often were used to express demands for retaliation against Palestinians rejections of negotiations.

approved the allocation of 44 million NIS (approximately \$US 10.5 million) to establish four bypass roads for settlers in the West Bank. The Israeli Ministry of Transportation also allocated 16 million NIS (approximately \$US 4 million) for lighting crossroads in the Jordan Valley in the West Bank to ensure the “security and safety” of settlers while traveling at night.²⁹

Settler Attacks against Palestinian Civilians and Property

Settler violence against Palestinian civilians and property is a major characteristic of the relationship between settlers and Palestinians. Many settlers believe that that settlement in the OPT is a national and religious obligation that justifies forcibly taking land from the Palestinian population. Accordingly, some settlers do not hesitate to use violence against Palestinians, aimed ultimately at forcing them to give up their land. Settler violence against Palestinians includes shooting, beating, raiding houses and property, razing agricultural land, burning crops, and blocking roads. These practices often take place in the presence of Israeli soldiers, who not only abstain from intervening to prevent such practices, but also participate in attacks and provide protection for settlers. Settlers are rarely prosecuted for attacks against Palestinians, and in cases where settlers have been prosecuted, sentencing has generally been lenient.³⁰

In 2001, settler attacks against Palestinian civilians and property continued. Such attacks included shootings, running down civilians with vehicles, beatings (often with sharp tools), razing agricultural land, burning crops, and raiding villages and residential areas. In 2001, settlers killed 16 Palestinians and injured dozens of others. Attacks are often initiated by settlers without any threat posed to their safety. Israeli soldiers have consistently failed to intervene to stop such attacks.³¹

²⁹ Peace Now, 4 October 2001 and *Al-Quds*, 3 December 2001.

³⁰ For instance, a group of settlers called “Halhul Cell” carried out a number of armed attacks on Palestinians, killing and injuring some. On 11 April, the group fired at a Palestinian vehicle near Hebron. They also attacked a vehicle near “Rimunim” settlement and another one near “Ma’ale Adumim” settlement, killing a Palestinian. In July 2001, a group of settlers called “the Committee for Road Safety” claimed responsibility for an armed attack on a Palestinian car near Ethna village in Hebron, in which three Palestinian civilians, including a 2-month-old infant, were killed. The circumstances of the attack indicate that it could not have succeeded without the protection and logistical support of other parties, and the tacit approval of Israeli forces. According to the Israeli newspaper *Ha’aretz*, Israeli authorities identified the attackers, but did not take any measure against them. For more details, see *Ha’aretz* on 22 July 2001.

³¹ On 1 February, a settler ran over Khaldia Ahmed Mohammed Saqer, 50, from Al-Mawasi area in Khan Yunis, seriously injuring her. On 3 March, a settler shot dead 25-year-old Ahmed Hassan ‘Allan, from Qariout village near Nablus. On 7 May, settlers fired at a number of Palestinian schoolchildren in Taqqou’ village, east of Bethlehem, injuring two. On 10 June, Jamil Qassem Mohammed al-Turk, 47, from Kufor Al-Dik in Salfit, was beaten to death by settlers, while working in a farm inside Israel. On 19 June, Fatema ‘Oleyan Abu Farwa, 71, from Qalqilya, was killed when a settler ran over her while she was crossing the road towards her house. On 28 November, Ibrahim Mousa Yousef Hanani, 80, was killed when a settler ran over him. On 15 January, dozens of settlers from “Gush Qatif” settlement bloc attacked Al-Mawasi area in Khan Yunis which is under Israeli military control. According to eyewitnesses, settlers attacked the area at approximately 12:30, under the protection of Israeli occupation forces. They attacked Palestinian civilian facilities, houses, and agricultural land. Eyewitnesses added that settlers shot at Palestinian houses, set fire to three houses and some greenhouses, and destroyed irrigation networks on agricultural land. They also set fire to some restaurants and cafés on the seashore. Israeli occupation forces only intervened to put an end

Arrests of Palestinians and Treatment of Palestinians in custody

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces arrested many Palestinians and transferred them to jails and prison camps inside Israel in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. As in the past, Israeli occupation forces arrested Palestinians in areas under their control, at military roadblocks and checkpoints at the entrances of Palestinian cities, villages, and refugee camps, at international border crossings and Gaza International Airport, or at crossings between the OPT and Israel. After the outbreak of the Intifada, Israeli occupation forces have adopted new means to arrest Palestinians, including arrest campaigns carried out during invasions of PNA-controlled areas. Undercover Israeli units also infiltrated PNA-controlled areas and kidnapped wanted Palestinians. In 2001, Israeli occupation forces also arrested dozens of Palestinian fishermen while fishing off the Gaza coast.³²

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2001, Israeli occupation forces arrested approximately 1500 Palestinians, increasing the number of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and prison camps by the end of the year to more than 3000, including 200 under the age of 18 and 13 females. The number of Palestinian prisoners from the Gaza Strip was approximately 125. In 2000, the number of Palestinian prisoners was approximately 2000.³³

The transfer of Palestinians from the OPT to Israel violates multiple provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Article 49(1) stipulates that "Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power ... are prohibited, regardless of their motive." Moreover, according to Article 76(1), "Protected persons accused of offences shall be detained in the occupied country, and if convicted they shall serve their sentences therein." The unlawful deportation, transfer, or confinement of a protected person is a grave breach under Article 147 and thus a war crime.

Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and prison camps are regularly subjected to ill-treatment during detention, in violation of international human rights and

to the attack two hours later. By then, settlers had already terrified Palestinian residents and caused massive destruction. On 28 March, more than 100 Jewish settlers and Israeli soldiers moved into al-Karantina area in the West Bank, and entered up to approximately 350m inside areas under full control of the PNA. Settlers, under full protection of Israeli forces, attacked Palestinian houses, throwing stones and incendiary materials at them, and breaking their windows with iron bars. They also attacked a number of Palestinian cars in the area, and set fire to nine of them, two of which belong to Hebron Municipality. In the afternoon, Jewish settlers set fire to a part of the headquarters of the Palestinian Ministry of Religious Endowments, located near "Avraham Avino" settlement, causing severe damage to its furniture. On 19 June, a number of settlers set fire to Palestinian land to southwest of the road leading to "Ennab" settlement established on land of the Palestinian villages of Ramin, Beit Lied, and 'Anabta near Tulkarm. Fire affected lands of the three villages. Approximately 2,500 donums of Palestinian agricultural land planted with olives, almonds and figs were burnt. According to eyewitnesses, Israeli forces were present in the affected areas, but did not intervene to stop the attack. They even prevented Palestinian civilians from putting out fire and fired at them.

³²For example, on 10 October, Israeli marine forces arrested 11 Palestinian fishermen from different areas in the Gaza Strip while fishing. On 25 November, they arrested two Palestinian fishermen while fishing in Deir al-Balah.

³³This number does not include Palestinians laborers arrested inside Israel for the lack of work permits.

humanitarian law. Israeli jailers have used tear gas, sound bombs and sticks against prisoners.³⁴ Palestinian prisoners are deprived of many of their basic human rights, including freedom of expression and worship, and regular access to lawyers and family. When this Intifada began, Israeli occupation forces cancelled the family visitation program organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross. In 2001, the program was resumed, but only sporadically. The Israeli authorities allowed family visitation on 239 days during 2001. From April 2001, new restrictions were introduced, limiting the number of visitors to five (three adults and two children) from the immediate family of the prisoners.³⁵ The following table shows the number of days of allowance and prevention of family visits in 2001:

Period of allowance	Number of days	Period of prevention	Number of days
12 Feb. – 1 June	109	1 Jan. – 12 Feb.	42
9 July – 12 July	3	1 June – 9 July	38
25 July – 9 Sept.	46	12 July – 25 July	13
12 Sept. – 1 Oct.	19	9 – 12 Sept.	3
17 Oct. – 3 Dec.	48	1 – 17 Oct.	16
17 – 31 Dec.	14	3 – 17 Dec.	14
Total	239		126

Families of Palestinian prisoners have also been subjected to degrading and humiliating treatment during their visits to prisoners in Israeli jails. PCHR has received reports of relatives subjected to insults, provocation, and even beatings by jailers. PCHR has also received reports of humiliating intimate physical searches.³⁶

³⁴ On 28 December, a number of Israeli jailers raided detention centers in Be'r al-Saba' prison, where hundreds of Palestinians are detained. They claimed that a prisoner delivered a sermon during Friday prayers that incited violence. They used tear gas, hot water and police dogs against the prisoners. Two Palestinian prisoners were injured. For more details, see *al-Ayyam*, 30 December 2001.

³⁵ See the announcement of the International Committee of the Red Cross in *al-Ayyam* on 27 January 2001, and the press release of the ICRC in Gaza on 10 May 2001.

³⁶ On 30 May, PCHR submitted two complaints to the Israeli military legal advisor regarding inappropriate searches of two Palestinian women while on their way back from a visit to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. In her affidavit to PCHR, 'Aa'asha Mohammed Bahar, 60, from al-Bureij refugee camp, said that on 17 May she went to visit her son jailed in Nafha Prison in Israel. When she was on her way back to the Gaza Strip, Israeli occupation forces at Beit Hanoun (Erez) Crossing in the northern Gaza Strip, obstructed their passage for 45 minutes. Two Israeli female soldiers forced them to take their clothes off and then checked them. They were detained in a room for three hours for no apparent reason. In his response to the complaints, the legal advisor stated that those measures were not odd.

In a statement to the Israeli daily *Yediot Ahronoth*, an Israeli soldier who served in Megiddo Prison discussed the treatment of Palestinian prisoners' families, especially children and women, by Israeli jailers. The soldier stated: "women and children were forced to stand in a long line before the entrance of the jail. They and their belongings were thoroughly checked in an inhuman, degrading manner. Even sensitive parts of the body were not excluded from checking." She added that sometimes, she "felt that they (the Israelis) were Nazis and that she was a beast" due to the humiliating measures the families were subjected to. In regard to the suffering of children during visits, she asserted that "children who came to visit their fathers in prison do not get a wonderful childlike experience – checking the sensitive parts of the body would not make any woman or child happy." For more details, see *al-Quds*, 17 March 2001.

Administrative Detention

Administrative detention has been used by Israeli occupation forces to arrest Palestinians without warrant, charge, or trial. In a clear violation of human rights, the detainee is barred from his right to a fair trial, from knowing what he is accused of, and from his right to adequate legal representation. Palestinian can be placed in administrative detention without charge or trial for indefinitely renewable periods of six months.

Under the Fourth Geneva Convention, this kind of arrest must not be used as a means of punishment, but only in exceptional cases as a last resort “for imperative reasons of security” (Article 78). The arrest orders are issued by Israeli district military commanders in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This excludes East Jerusalem (and other areas where Israel claims sovereignty), where the orders are issued by the Israeli Defense Minister. In many cases, administrative detention orders are issued against Palestinian detainees at the end of their prison sentences. In 2001, Israeli occupation forces placed 19 Palestinians in administrative detention, and renewed the detentions of three other Palestinians;³⁷ one case was reported from the Gaza Strip.³⁸

Continued Torture and Ill-Treatment of Palestinian Prisoners

In 2001, the Israeli General Security Service (GSS – also known as Shaback or Shin Bet) continued to use methods of physical and psychological pressure against Palestinian prisoners, including painful shackling, *shabeh*,³⁹ long periods of incommunicado detention, sleep deprivation, denial of medical care, use of collaborators to obtain confessions, beatings, and insults.⁴⁰ These practices violate the

³⁷On 4 January, Hassan Khader Eshtayeh, from Salem village near Nablus, was placed into administrative detention for an indefinitely renewable period of six months. He was arrested on 1 December 2000 and was subjected to a 34-day interrogation. It was the third time in two years that Eshtayeh was held in administrative detention. In February, ‘Emad Saftawi, from Gaza, was put into administrative detention after he had been interrogated for political activities in the pre-Oslo period. On 26 September, Walid Khaled Harb, 27, from Eskaka village in Salfit, a field worker for International Solidarity for Human Rights, was put into administrative detention. Harb was arrested on 30 July. He was interrogated for his activities in the al-Aqsa Intifada.

³⁸The case of ‘Emad Saftawi mentioned above.

³⁹A common torture practice, *shabeh* often involves forcing detainees to sit on an extremely small stool with one’s hands shackled behind the back in an excruciating position for long periods of time.

⁴⁰In 2001, many Palestinians were subjected to torture during interrogation by the GSS. On 27 January, Mohammed Mohammed al-Ghoul, 51, from Gaza, was arrested at Rafah Border Crossing while attempting to cross back into the Gaza Strip after receiving medical care in Egypt for chronic heart disease. He was prevented from seeing his lawyer for seven days and underwent interrogation for months. Immediately upon his arrest, he informed his interrogators of his illness, from which he had suffered for 4 years. Despite notifying the interrogators of his disease and its seriousness, al-Ghoul was subjected throughout his period of interrogation to methods of physical and psychological pressure, including *shabeh*, sleep deprivation, isolation for long periods, pressure

UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The continued use of methods of torture by GSS interrogators confirms that the Israeli Supreme Court ruling in 1999 did not constitute a definite legal prohibition on the use of torture by GSS interrogators against Palestinian prisoners. Furthermore, PCHR noticed an increase in the use of torture by GSS interrogators against Palestinian prisoners after the Israeli Supreme Court ruling. In 2001, PCHR pursued cases of 80 Palestinian prisoners who were denied access to lawyers. GSS interrogators also resorted to collaborators to pressure Palestinian prisoners to make confessions.

On 23 November, the UN Committee against Torture issued its conclusions and recommendations on the torture and other ill treatment by the Israeli government of Palestinian prisoners. The Committee expressed concern that the Israeli government failed to promulgate legislation prohibiting torture, and stated that the 1999 Israeli Supreme Court decision on torture not only fails to constitute a definite prohibition on torture, but also permits the use of some methods, such as sleep deprivation, under the justification of “defense of necessity.” The Committee reaffirmed that there continued to be reports of torture by GSS interrogators against Palestinian prisoners after the Israeli Supreme Court decision. Moreover, the Committee reminded Israel that torture cannot be justified under any circumstances. The Committee also reaffirmed its concerns that the Israeli use of administrative detention was in violation of the provisions of the Convention.

In November, the GSS submitted a bill to the Knesset giving more authority to GSS interrogators to use physical and psychological pressure against Palestinian prisoners, including the same methods prohibited by the 1999 Israeli Supreme Court, such as *shabeh*, sleep deprivation, and loud music. In his explanation for submitting the bill before the Parliamentary Committee for Defense and Foreign Affairs on 26 November, GSS head Avi Dichter characterized the bill as a response to the exceptional circumstances of the current Intifada, and the increase in Palestinian attacks on Israeli targets. According to Dichter, the GSS is obliged to make efforts to

from collaborators to confess, threats of severe beatings, and insults. He was eventually released on 5 June following a court decision that there was insufficient evidence to detain him on any charge.

On 4 January, Bassam Mousa Saber Hassan, 27, from Beit Hanoun, Gaza, was arrested at Gaza International Airport as he was returning home from the lesser pilgrimage (*‘Omra*) in Saudi Arabia. He was subjected to interrogation for a period of 47 days. During this period, he was subjected to methods of torture, such as sleep deprivation, *shabeh*, loud music, painful handcuffing, pouring cold water on his body, sitting for prolonged periods on small chairs, long periods of isolation, beatings, and the use to collaborators to pressure him to make a confession. He was sentenced on 11 September 2001 to 22 months’ imprisonment.

On 29 January, Nasser Mas’oud ‘Ayyad, from Gaza, a member of the Palestinian Presidential Guard (Force 17), was arrested near the “Netzarim” settlement south of Gaza City. He was beaten during the initial hours of his interrogation before being transferred to Ashkelon prison in Israel. Upon his arrival at prison, he was told by his interrogators that they had received permission to use “physical pressure” on him. During his first week of detention, ‘Ayyad was not permitted to sleep and was allowed out of his cell for ten minutes only each day. During his detention, he was repeatedly beaten about the face and pressure was applied to the chains on his hands and legs; he was also tied to a small chair, held in a chokehold and subjected to violent shaking. During his second week of detention, ‘Ayyad was forced to stand for an entire night while a hot, bright light was shone in his face from a close distance. ‘Ayyad was repeatedly denied access to legal counsel until 12 March.

prevent possible Palestinian attacks against Israeli targets and that it was impossible to do so effectively under the 1999 Israeli Supreme Court decision.⁴¹

The proposed bill, however, actually relied on the 1999 Supreme Court decision, which allows the Israeli government to promulgate legislation to permit the use of torture against Palestinian prisoners.⁴² PCHR expressed concern in 1999 that this decision would pave the way for the legalization of torture of Palestinian prisoners. PCHR's concerns could soon be realized by this new legislation, which is expected to be approved in 2002.

Collective Punishment: Ongoing Policy of Siege, Closure, and Restrictions on Free Movement

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces continued its policies of collective punishment against Palestinian civilians through its total siege and closure in the OPT.⁴³ The siege and closure policy operates on three levels:

- *External closure.* The closure of all crossings between the OPT and Israel, including the prohibition of movement between the Gaza Strip and West Bank, and the isolation of Jerusalem from the West Bank. One of the main effects of external closure is the disemployment of thousands of Palestinian laborers who were employed in Israel.
- *International closure.* The closure of crossing points between the OPT and Egypt and Jordan. This has made international travel for Palestinians extremely difficult and also disrupted international trade.
- *Internal closure.* A network of dozens of Israeli military roadblocks and checkpoints, as well as roads exclusively for Israelis, has fragmented the West Bank and Gaza Strip into isolated areas. The Oslo accords legitimized Israeli military control over approximately 42.5% of the total area of the Gaza Strip and more than 75% of the total area of the West Bank; the territorial contiguity of the rest of this area, although under PNA control, is severely and regularly disrupted.

Israeli occupation forces claim that the unprecedented siege imposed on the OPT was needed to prevent attacks inside Israel. However, the total siege did not appear to improve the security situation in Israel, as attacks inside Israel notably increased. Rather, the policy of closure appears to serve as a form of collective punishment against Palestinian civilians, violating their economic, social, cultural and civil rights.

Since the beginning of 2001, Israeli occupation forces have closed all international border crossings between the OPT and the outside world. They have closed al-Karama Border Crossing between the West Bank and Jordan, nominally reopening it for short periods and for limited working hours only.⁴⁴ In the Gaza Strip, Israeli

⁴¹ *Ha'aretz*, 26 November 2001.

⁴² "If the state wishes to enable ... interrogators to utilise physical means in interrogations, it must seek the enactment of legislation for this purpose," Israeli Supreme Court decision on torture, para 37.

⁴³ For more details on the impacts of the total closure imposed on the Gaza Strip by Israeli occupation forces, see PCHR's *Closure Update*.

⁴⁴ PCHR follows up the impacts of closure imposed on the OPT in general, but it mainly focuses on the Gaza Strip. The closure imposed on the Gaza Strip thus receives much of PCHR's attention.

occupation forces totally closed Rafah Border Crossing with Egypt for more than 85 days in 2001. The crossing was also partially closed for an additional 280 days, during which a severely reduced Palestinian staff was allowed to work at the crossing. Since 16 October, Israeli occupation forces have denied entry to Palestinian staff to the offices at the crossing. As a result of these measures, thousands of Palestinian travelers often were forced to spend nights at the Egyptian side of the crossing while awaiting entry into the Gaza Strip. Many Palestinian from the Gaza Strip were also prevented from traveling abroad for the purposes of education, medical treatment, trade, or family visitation.

Gaza International Airport has been closed by Israeli occupying forces since 14 February and was the object of several deliberate attacks by the Israeli military, rendering it unusable by Israeli forces.

Israeli occupation forces have restricted movement between the OPT and Israel. In this context, they closed Beit Hanoun (Erez) Crossing, the only travel crossing between the Gaza Strip and Israel, denying thousands of Palestinian laborers to their work places inside Israel. A number of laborers were allowed to go to their work places on only 47 days during the year.

Israeli forces have also prohibited movement between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip through the complete closure of the “Safe Passage” between the two areas. As a result, hundreds of Gazan students studying at universities in the West Bank have been denied access to their universities or have been stranded away from home; patients from the Gaza Strip have not been allowed to receive medical care at hospitals in the West Bank or Israel; Palestinian prisoners have been regularly denied the right to receive lawyers or family visits; and Muslims and Christians have been denied access to the holy sites in Jerusalem and Bethlehem.⁴⁵ In 2001, members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) from the Gaza Strip were prevented from attending sessions in the West Bank and vice versa, despite holding Class “B” VIP travel permits.

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces continued to restrict and obstruct Palestinian commercial transactions. Sofa Commercial Crossing, east of Rafah, between the Gaza Strip and Israel, was completely closed for 313 days and partially closed for 25 days. Al-Mentar (Karni) Commercial Crossing, east of Gaza City, between the Gaza Strip and Israel, was completely closed for 25 days and partially closed for 340 days.

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces also restricted movement of Palestinians *within* the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The West Bank was cut into dozens of isolated areas by Israeli military roadblocks and checkpoints, disrupting all aspects of economic and social life. Israeli forces also restricted movement of Palestinian cars through military roadblocks and checkpoints, forcing Palestinian civilians to resort to secondary roads or cross checkpoints on foot. Israeli forces isolated Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank, preventing residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip from praying in the al-Aqsa Mosque, visiting their relatives, and receiving medical care in the city.

⁴⁵In this context, the Israeli government restricted movement of PNA President Yasser Arafat. He has been forced to remain in Ramallah and was prevented from attending Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem.

Israeli occupation forces divided the Gaza Strip into three isolated areas, using military roadblocks, checkpoints, and bypass roads. These roadblocks and checkpoints were often closed, prohibiting any Palestinian movement between areas of the Gaza Strip. Israeli occupation forces were extensively deployed along Salah al-Din Street (the main north-south axis of the Gaza Strip) and completely closed some branch roads adjacent to Jewish settlements.

Israeli occupation forces continued to impose a strict siege on al-Mawasi area in the west of Khan Yunis and Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip. They closed six branch roads connecting the area with farms on the seashore. Palestinian civilians living in the area, numbering 5000, are subjected to onerous and humiliating measures by Israeli occupation forces at the two checkpoints that separate the area from Khan Yunis and Rafah. They are forced to cross these roadblocks and checkpoints on foot; even ambulances are not allowed to pass through the checkpoints. Movement through the checkpoints is restricted to limited hours of the day.

The gradual tightening of siege and closure measures as a prelude to isolating and confiscating Palestinian land is most obvious in the al-Sayafa area in the northern Gaza strip. On 22 June, Israeli occupation forces imposed a strict siege on al-Sayafa, which is between the “Dogit” and “Elli Sinai” settlements near Beit Lahia. On 5 July, Israeli occupation forces established an electronic gate northwest of “Dogit” settlement, to be the sole entrance to the area, in a way similar to procedures applied in al-Mawasi area. They also established observation towers near the two settlements. Starting on 8 July, residents of the area were allowed to move only under strict procedures and for limited periods during the day. All residents of the area had to be checked at the electronic gate. Cars are denied entry into the area and people are forced to move on foot. Since 2 October, Israeli occupation forces have imposed a strict siege on the area, which is home to approximately 35 families.

Deaths at Israeli Military Roadblocks

In 2001, 27 Palestinians died after Israeli forces at military roadblocks obstructed their access to hospitals for regular or emergency treatment. Israeli forces very often denied the passage of ambulances evacuating patients to hospital for hours, causing further deterioration to patients’ health conditions. Sometimes, ambulances were forced to resort to secondary roads on their way to hospitals, incurring serious delays. Israeli forces at Rafah Border Crossing also obstructed the passage of Palestinian patients who received medical treatment abroad, causing further deterioration of their health conditions and some deaths.

(2) Violations of Human Rights by the PNA

Despite the heavy burdens imposed on the PNA by ongoing Israeli occupation and aggression, PCHR affirms that the PNA must assume its responsibility to preserve the rule of law, democracy, and human rights in areas under its jurisdiction, in order to realize the aspirations of the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights as part of the struggle to establish an independent and democratic Palestinian state.

Illegal Arrests by Palestinian Security Services

After releasing the majority of political prisoners at the beginning of this Intifada, Palestinian security services recommenced political arrests during the last quarter of 2001, detaining a number of people without charge or trial, in violation of Palestinian and international human rights laws. Throughout the year, the PNA carried out “security” arrests of alleged collaborators.

In 2001, Palestinian security services waged several campaigns of political arrests targeting members and supporters of Islamic and nationalist groups which oppose the Oslo agreements, such as Hamas, the Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). These arrest campaigns took place mostly in the last quarter of 2001. Most security agencies, such as the civil police, the General Intelligence Service, and the Preventive Security Service, participated in these operations. Many of these arrests were carried out after 2 December, following the PNA declaration of a state of emergency. The number of Palestinians arrested by Palestinian security services for political reasons in 2001 was 250 (130 from the Gaza Strip and 120 from the West Bank).

Most arrest campaigns were carried out in response to Israeli and international (especially US) pressure on the PNA, which significantly increased in the last quarter of 2001.⁴⁶ Arrests are generally carried out at night, in house raids or while detainees are in public places. Some security officers are masked while carrying out arrests. In some cases, relatives of wanted persons were arrested in order to pressure those wanted to surrender.

Most political arrests were carried out without warrants from the Attorney General’s office and were thus unlawful. The detainees were also denied access to the judiciary for official renewal or extension of their periods of detention. In addition, detainees were denied the right to adequate defense and a fair trial. In some cases, individuals remained in detention despite orders from the Palestinian High Court of Justice, the

⁴⁶For example, on 17 October, in response to the assassination of its Secretary General Mustafa al-Zabri (Abu ‘Ali Mustafa), the PFLP killed the Israeli Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze’evi in a hotel in occupied east Jerusalem. Israel and the US administration demanded that the PNA arrest and prosecute those responsible for the killing of Ze’evi. Palestinian security services then carried out waves of arrests without charge of PFLP leaders, members, and supporters in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

In the last two months of 2001, after several attacks by Hamas and Islamic Jihad inside Israel, Palestinian security services arrested a number of leaders, members, and supporters of the two organizations. They also held the spiritual leader of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, under house arrest.

highest judiciary body in the PNA, for their immediate release. This in itself undermines the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, and international human rights standards.

Despite its awareness of the intense pressure exerted on the PNA, PCHR affirms that the PNA must resist any external pressure that may lead it to take measures that endanger basic human rights as part of its duty to uphold the rule of law. PCHR reminds the international community of its moral responsibility to support the PNA in resisting such pressure to violate human rights in the areas under its control.

In 2001, the PNA arrested several citizens on “security” grounds, i.e. suspicion of collaborating with foreign security services, especially Israel. In 2001, the number of people arrested on this basis increased as a result of efforts made by Israeli security services since the outbreak of this Intifada to recruit Palestinian collaborators to obtain information about Palestinian activists. It was evident that a number of assassinations by Israeli forces were carried out with intelligence or assistance supplied by Palestinian informers.

Torture and Ill-Treatment of Detainees

In 2001, Palestinian security services subjected Palestinian detainees, particularly those arrested on security grounds, to torture and ill-treatment. Political detainees were not subject to torture. In 2001, PCHR received several testimonies from released prisoners affirming they had been tortured during interrogation by Palestinian security services. Among the torture methods mentioned in the testimonies were beatings with batons or plastic wires, hitting with the open hand, verbal assaults, and isolation.⁴⁷

In 2001, four Palestinian detainees died in PNA prisons and detention centers. In addition, a fifth Palestinian was shot dead by PNA security officers who claimed that he was attempting to escape from prison.⁴⁸ PCHR expresses its concern that those detainees were subjected to torture by their interrogators. In one of those cases, PCHR received a copy of the autopsy report of a detainee which asserted that he was subjected to various forms of physical abuse whilst in custody.⁴⁹ Despite the PNA’s declared intention to investigate these cases, PCHR has received no information to

⁴⁷For example, in his testimony to PCHR on 6 April, a citizen from Jabalya said that he was arrested by the Palestinian Preventive Security Service on 4 February on accusations of collaboration and was beaten and humiliated during interrogation. On 18 September 2001, a woman from Khan Yunis told PCHR lawyers that two members of the Palestinian General Intelligence Service arrested her on 1 June without a warrant. She was held in isolation, beaten, and humiliated during interrogation on security accusations. She asserted that her pregnant sister was arrested at the same time and had miscarried due to torture.

⁴⁸On 9 September, PNA security personnel shot dead Khaled Sa’di al-‘Akka, 24, from al-Zaytoun neighborhood in Gaza, with several live bullets in the head, the chest and the abdomen. Al-‘Akka was in the custody of the Preventive Security Service. He was sentenced to death for collaborating with Israeli intelligence. According to Palestinian security sources, al-‘Akka attempted to escape from a Preventive Security Service detention center in Gaza while being transferred to another location to avoid Israeli bombardment.

⁴⁹The case of Suleiman ‘Oweidh Mohammed Abu ‘Amra, mentioned below.

indicate that the PNA has conducted a full investigation into any of these cases, or proceeded in prosecuting those responsible for the deaths.

Following are details of the four cases of deaths in custody:

1. On 27 February, Salem Mahmoud Hussein al-Aqra', 30, from Qabalan village near Nablus, died at hospital five days after being transferred from interrogation. Al-Aqra' had been in the custody of the Palestinian Military Intelligence Service in Nablus since 6 February. His family was not allowed to visit him until his transfer to hospital on 22 February. According to eyewitnesses, there were bruises on his head, large blue marks on his back, and there were injuries on his wrists and ankles, strongly suggesting that al-Aqra' was tortured during his interrogation.
2. On 14 August, Suleiman 'Qweidh Mohammed Abu 'Amra, 38, from Deir al-Balah, died in a detention center used by the Palestinian Military Intelligence Service in Gaza. Abu 'Amra was arrested on 8 August and detained at an installation in Gaza City without being allowed to see his family. On 15 August, members of the family were summoned to the headquarters of the service in Gaza City, where they were informed that he had died from a heart attack during interrogation, and they were asked to retrieve his body from Shifa' Hospital in Gaza City. PCHR conveyed a request to the Palestinian Attorney General, asking him to initiate an investigation into the death of Abu 'Amra.
A PCHR lawyer, who saw the prisoner's body at Shifa' Hospital, stated that there were blue marks on Abu 'Amra's wrists, back, and legs. According to the autopsy report, death was caused by "several injuries in the body and sensitive parts, such as the abdomen and the scrotum, from repeated blows by solid objects." All of the wounds were recent and took place less than one week prior to death on 14 August.
3. On 8 October, 'Emad Mohammed Amin al-Bizra, 30, from Nablus, died in an interrogation center used by the Palestinian Preventive Security Service in Juneid Prison in Nablus. Al-Bizra was found hanging by a wire suspended from a water pipe. He was arrested on 4 October. According to PNA sources, he committed suicide. No autopsy was carried out, as the prisoner's family signed a release order before the Military Attorney.
4. On 21 October, the body of 'Alla' al-Din Hassan Mohammed Wahba, 41, from Khan Yunis was transferred in an ambulance to Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis. A Palestinian security source stated that "Wahba was detained on a security basis, and he was found dead at 13:30 on 20 October after having committed suicide." The source added that "there is clear evidence that he committed suicide after being faced with the confessions of his accomplices in a security case."

In an affidavit to PCHR, Wahba's brother, Dr. Gassan Hassan Wahba, 33, said that he had been able to see his brother's body on the afternoon of 20 October and that he had noticed "bruises and swelling in the hands, signs of a blow across the forehead, inflammation of the neck apparently

also resulting from a blow, and traces of a wire or a rope around the neck...” This suggested that Wahba might have been tortured during interrogation, leading to his death.

PCHR is deeply concerned about the use of torture by Palestinian security services in interrogation. PCHR calls upon the PNA to take all necessary steps to put an end to the use of torture and to initiate investigations into the torture cases that led to deaths and prosecute those found responsible.

Continued Operation of State Security Courts

Despite criticism by Palestinian and international human rights organizations, the State Security Courts continue to operate in PNA areas. The State Security Courts were established in February 1995 by order of PNA President Yasser Arafat. His decision was strongly opposed by human rights organizations, since security courts typically work in a manner that contradicts the basic principles of fair trial. PCHR has continued to call for the abolition of these courts and for allowing the civil judiciary to try such cases. The manner in which the State Security Courts operate also threatens public freedom, especially the right to free expression and peaceful assembly, and undermine the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law.

In 2000, these courts considered four cases (3 criminal and 1 security), in which four sentences to death were handed down.⁵⁰ In 2001, State Security Courts considered 10 cases (9 security and 1 criminal). In the security cases, the courts issued 10 death sentences and 3 sentences to life imprisonment. In the criminal case, the courts issued 1 sentence to death by firing squad. Also in 2001, State Security Courts considered many cases of drug trafficking, but no sentences were issued. Military courts did not convene in 2001.

Death Penalty

The application of the death penalty represents one of PCHR's greatest concerns and PCHR has advocated consistently for its abolition, as a violation of basic human rights, including the right to life, and the right not to be subject to torture or ill treatment. Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that “everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.” According to Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, “every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.” The same Article provides in its 6th paragraph that “nothing in this article shall be invoked to delay or to prevent the abolition of capital punishment.” The first paragraph of Article 1 of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights stipulates that “no one within the jurisdiction of a State Party to the present Protocol shall be executed” and that “each State Party shall take all necessary measures to abolish the death penalty within its jurisdiction.”

⁵⁰See PCHR's Annual Report 2000, p. 70.

Although the PNA has not attained the right to ratify international human rights instruments, PNA President Yasser Arafat has often asserted that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) will respect all internationally accepted human rights standards which incorporate them into Palestinian laws.

Despite repeated calls by PCHR and other elements of Palestinian civil society, Palestinian laws continue to provide for the death penalty for certain crimes. Several death penalties were issued by Palestinian courts in security and criminal cases during the year. Death penalty sentences are issued by State Security Courts and military courts and rely on laws that are no longer in effect, such as the 1979 Revolutionary Punishment Law of the PLO. Decisions taken by these courts cannot be appealed, and the death penalty is implemented upon ratification by the Palestinian President.

In 2001, the State Security Court issued 11 death sentences (10 for security reasons and 1 in a criminal case). It also sentenced 3 Palestinians to life imprisonment for security reasons. Two death sentences were implemented in 2001, one of which was handed down in 2000. The other death sentences are pending ratification by the Palestinian President. Following are the sentences issued by the State Security Courts in 2001:

1. On 11 January, the State Security Court in Gaza sentenced Majdi ‘Abdel-Raziq Makkawi, 27, to death by firing squad. He was convicted for providing Israeli security services with information that facilitated the killing of four Palestinians in Rafah: Jamal ‘Abdel-Raziq; ‘Awni Dhuheir; Sami Abu Laban; and Na’el al-Liddawi.⁵¹
2. On 13 January, the State Security Court in Bethlehem sentenced Mohammed Dheifallah al-Khatib, 28, and Hussam Humeid al-‘Assalini, 18, to death by firing squad. It also sentenced Hanna Nasser Salameh, 19, and Wajuh Mohammed Abu Zuneid, 19, to life imprisonment. The four were convicted for providing information to Israeli security services that facilitated the assassination of Hussein ‘Ebayyat.
3. On 13 January, ‘Allan Bani ‘Oudeh, from Tammoun village near Jenin, was executed by firing squad, following his conviction for providing Israeli security services with information leading to the assassination of a Hamas activist, Ibrahim Bani ‘Oudeh.⁵²
4. On 11 February, the State Security Court in Hebron sentenced Hassan Musallam, 53, a Palestinian security officer from al-Fawar refugee camp, to death by firing squad. He was convicted for collaborating with Israeli security services, providing them with information about Intifada activists, and firing a pistol at Israeli military locations upon an order by Israeli security services in order to provide Israeli forces with a pretext to shell Palestinian residential areas. A number of houses were damaged and dozens of civilians were injured in the incident.

⁵¹ Makkawi was executed by firing squad on 13 January.

⁵² ‘Allan Bani ‘Oudeh was sentenced by the Palestinian State Security Court on 7 December 2000 to death by firing squad.

5. On 29 May, the State Security Court in Gaza sentenced ‘Ezziddin Jamil al-‘Arabid to death by firing squad for the murder of Captain Nidal Nasser, 32, of the Palestinian National Security Forces, on 10 May.
6. On 8 July, the State Security Court in Nablus sentenced ‘Ali Walid Jaber, 21, from Nablus, to life imprisonment for providing Israeli security services with information on Intifada activists, information which reportedly led to the attack on the car of ‘Abdel-Karim ‘Oweis, a member of the Palestinian General Intelligence Service. In the attack, Mu’tassem al-Sabbagh, a Fatah activist, who was riding in the car, and a police officer, ‘Allam al-Jaloudi, who was present in the area, were killed and 20 bystanders were injured.
7. On 31 July, the State Security Court in Nablus sentenced Samer Abu Zeina, 21, Amjad Hafayzha, 28, and Hussein Abu al-‘Uyoun, 32, to death by firing squad. It also decided to confiscate their savings. The court also sentenced ‘Ali Mohammed ‘Abdel-Rahman Mahmoud, 17, to 15 years in prison. The four were convicted for treason and providing Israeli occupation forces with information that facilitated the assassination of Dr. Thabet Thabet, 40, Secretary General of Fatah Movement in Tulkarm, on 31 December 2000.
8. On 2 August, the State Security Court in Nablus sentenced ‘Ali Ahmed Abu ‘Eisha, 50, from al-‘Ein refugee camp, to death by firing squad for providing Israeli security services with information that facilitated the assassination of Salah Darwaza, a Hamas leader from Nablus, on 25 July.
9. On 8 August, the State Security Court in Nablus sentenced Munther Mohammed Subhi al-Hifnawi, 43, to death by firing squad for providing Israeli security services with information that facilitated the assassination of Mahmoud al-Madani, a member of the ‘Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, on 29 February.
10. On 12 August, the State Security Court in Gaza sentenced Khaled Sa’di al-‘Akka, 24, from al-Zaytoun neighborhood in Gaza, to death by firing squad. He was convicted for providing Israeli security services with information that facilitated the assassination of Mas’oud Husni ‘Ayyad.⁵³

PCHR is deeply concerned by the continued use of the death penalty. It reiterates its rejection of this practice, as it violates the right to life and other basic human rights.

⁵³On 9 September, PNA security officers killed al-‘Akka with several live bullets in the head, the chest and the abdomen. Al-‘Akka was in the custody of the Preventive Security Service. According to Palestinian security sources, al-‘Akka attempted to escape from a detention center used by the Preventive Security in Gaza, while being transferred to another location by Palestinian security services to avoid Israeli bombardment. For more details see the daily *al-Hayat al-Jadida*, 10 September 2001.

Continued Interference in the Work of the Attorney General

The office of the Attorney General is key in securing the rule of law and respect for citizens' rights. Since this position was established one and a half years ago, the Executive continues to challenge and undermine the authority of the office of the Attorney General.⁵⁴

On 1 November 1999, PNA President Arafat issued a decision to appoint Khalid al Qadrah as Attorney General for the State Security Courts, which were formed in February 1999. These courts continue to be strongly criticized by Palestinian human rights organizations, who argue that they lack the minimum internationally-recognised criteria for a fair trial and violate other basic human rights standards.

The Attorney General made no efforts to halt political arrests in 2001 by PNA security services conducted without warrants or charges, prompting criticism from Palestinian human rights organizations. Not only were these arrests conducted in an unlawful manner, but several orders from the Palestinian High Court to immediately release detainees were not also immediately implemented. The Attorney General also did not take any measures against those who ignored the courts' decisions, despite the fact that he is mandated by law to prosecute violators.

Furthermore, the Attorney General did not investigate complaints by citizens of violations by the Executive. In 2001, PCHR submitted 74 complaints to the Attorney General regarding violations of the law by the Executive or PNA security services. PCHR received only 8 responses.⁵⁵

Violation of the Right to Free Assembly

The Law of Public Meetings of 1998, approved by the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) and ratified by PNA Palestinian Yasser Arafat, was an important step towards the establishment of a democratic Palestinian state. It conforms with international human rights standards, which ensure the right to peaceful assembly. The Law gives citizens wide latitude to hold public meetings as a form of peaceful assembly. Article 3 of the law requires that the governor or the chief of police must be informed in writing before any public meeting, but that their permission is not required. Authorities cannot restrict public meetings, but can only regulate their duration or route on technical grounds; Article 4c provides that "without derogation from the right to hold meetings, the governor or chief of police may control the duration or route of the meetings in order to organize the traffic." As inferred from this article, the police are responsible only for traffic organization in order to protect the rights and freedoms of the others.

However, the PNA Executive undermined the law in several ways. On 29 February 2000, the Palestinian Chief of Police issued an order prohibiting all public meetings

⁵⁴ On 19 June 1999, the Palestinian President Yasser Arafat appointed Zuheir al Sourani as Attorney General. The position had been vacant since May 1998, after the former Attorney General Fayiz Abu Rahma resigned to protest the Executive's constant attempts to undermine his office.

⁵⁵ For more details on PCHR's appeals to the Attorney General in 2001, see p. 83 of this report.

held without his prior permission, in violation of the Law of Public Meetings and the right to peaceful assembly.

PCHR, in cooperation with NGOs and political parties, made efforts to abolish the police order. Lawyers Raji Sourani (Director of PCHR), and Younis al-Jaru brought the case before the Palestinian High Court of Justice, asking for clarification of the reasons for issuing the order, which was advertised in *al-Quds* newspaper on 29 February 2000. On 29 April 2000, the High Court of Justice suspended the order.

In response, on 30 April 2000, PNA President Arafat, in his capacity as Minister of Interior, issued the Implementation Regulation of the Law of Public Meetings. It restricted the right to free assembly, requiring organizers of public meetings to receive prior permission from the police.⁵⁶

According to PCHR's documentation PNA security services in 2001 did not prevent peaceful demonstrations, spontaneous or organized by political parties, against killing, destruction, and assassination by Israeli occupation forces. In most cases, these activities were organized without prior permission of the Chief of Police or informing relevant authorities. Dozens of peaceful demonstrations were organized by political factions in public places to protest Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians.

However, a number of demonstrations organized by political parties or student movements against PNA policy, especially in regard to political arrests of Islamic and nationalistic activists, or to express their opposition to official Palestinian positions, were responded to with excessive force. In certain incidents, demonstrations deteriorated into violence; demonstrators threw stones and empty bottles at policemen, set fire to police stations and cars, and attacked public and private properties.⁵⁷ Eleven citizens were killed and dozens, mostly children, were injured in these incidents.

Most of the cases in which Palestinian police confronted demonstrators took place in the last quarter of 2001. For example, on 8 October, dozens of students of the Islamic University in Gaza organized a peaceful demonstration protesting the US bombing of Afghanistan. The demonstrators were blocked by police while trying to reach the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). The demonstration soon degenerated into a riot. A number of demonstrators threw stones towards policemen, who used batons and tear gas to disperse them, while some policemen were seen firing into the air. Three citizens were killed and dozens, including school children, were injured. Additionally, more than 30 policemen were injured by stones. The demonstrators also burnt an official car and attacked some public properties, including the building of the Palestinian Civil Aviation Authority.

⁵⁶For further information on the police order and the Implementation Regulation, see PCHR's "the Rights to Free Expression and Peaceful Assembly: the Case of the Gaza Strip (1 January 1999-30 April 2000)," PCHR Series Study (23).

⁵⁷For example, after the 8 October protest, in which three citizens were killed by PNA policemen during clashes between university students and the police, dozens of citizens organized violent demonstrations and attacked public properties, including the building of the Palestinian Civil Aviation Authority, which was partially burnt. The incidents spread to Nusseirat and al-Boreij refugee camps in the middle of the Gaza Strip. A police station was attacked by demonstrators using Molotov cocktails. Later, the demonstrators moved into the station and completely burnt it.

In the most serious case in 2001, on 21 December, approximately 10000 citizens in Jabalya and Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza strip organized a demonstration after Friday prayers at the funeral procession of a boy killed by Palestinian police on the previous day. Several gunmen participated in the demonstration. Soon, the situation deteriorated, in light of tension among the demonstrators and nearby security men on high alert, some of whom took position on the roofs of nearby houses. Clashes erupted, leading to the deaths of six people, including several children, and the injury of dozens of citizens, including a number of security personnel.⁵⁸

PCHR expressed its deep concern over these bloody incidents, in which a number of citizens were killed and reaffirmed the importance of ensuring the right to free assembly and expression. PCHR called for the establishment of a neutral committee to thoroughly investigate the incidents and put forward recommendations to ensure that they are not repeated. PCHR also called for prosecution of those responsible for the eruption of these clashes or any abuses committed during them.

PCHR condemned the excessive use of force and firearms by whatever party and the failure of law enforcement officials to resort to less lethal means to disperse rioters.

PCHR expressed its deep concern also regarding the infiltration of armed militants among civilians in peaceful demonstrations and warned of the possibility that they would fire at policemen, posing a direct threat to the lives of unarmed civilians not participating in violent actions. At the same time, PCHR called upon PNA law enforcement bodies to exercise restraint in dealing with rioters even if there are militants, in order to prevent bloodshed and safeguard civilian life.

Restrictions on the Right to Free Expression

In 2001, the PNA maintained restrictions imposed on free expression, despite a slight improvement in this regard in the first nine months. Self-censorship and fear of arrest for expressing viewpoints critical of the PNA remained serious obstacles to promoting the right to free expression. Among the media, there was also self-censorship in covering violations of human rights perpetrated by the PNA.

In the last quarter of the year, the PNA adopted measures that violated the right to free expression and peaceful assembly. The PNA arrested many Palestinians for their political beliefs and affiliations in violation of internationally accepted human rights standards and the Palestinian Press Law of 1995. The PNA also closed a number of

⁵⁸The clashes began on 20 December, while Palestinian Military Intelligence Service personnel pursued an automobile apparently carrying several militants. The car escaped to Jabalya refugee camp, where the militants took shelter in a house after being fired at by Military Intelligence officers, leading to an exchange of fire between the two parties. Hundreds of Palestinian civilians arrived and threw stones at the security men. Mahmoud 'Abdel-Rahman al-Muqayad, 17, was killed and dozens were injured. On the following day, militants fired at some Palestinian police vehicles near Jabalya police station, prompting policemen to return fire. Five bystanders were injured. During the clashes, which continued until 02:00 on the following day, 25 people were injured by live bullets, a car of the Palestinian Preventive Security was burnt, and an armed group of Islamic Jihad activists attacked Beit Lahia police station, setting fire to a tent and a car.

Islamic media institutions. This campaign notably intensified after the state of emergency declared by President Arafat on 2 December.

On 19 March, Palestinian security services closed the office of the Qatar-based al-Jazeera Satellite Channel in Ramallah. Three security men verbally informed the correspondent of the channel in Palestine, Walid al-‘Emari of the decision without giving any reason.⁵⁹

On 15 December, the PNA closed *al-Resala* and *al-Esteqlal* newspapers, affiliated with Hamas and Islamic Jihad respectively, and other media and research institutions of the two organizations.

On 15 October, Palestinian police arrested ‘Alla’ Saftawi, Editor-in-Chief of *al-Esteqlal* newspaper in Gaza for writing an article in which he criticized the actions of the PNA during clashes that erupted at the Islamic University in Gaza on 8 October.⁶⁰

On 8 October, the Palestinian police prevented Zakaria Abu Harbid, a photographer from Ramatan media center, from covering clashes in al-Shati refugee camp in Gaza. They threatened to confiscate his camera and summoned him to a police station.

On 21 December, three security men attacked Saif al-Din Shahin, correspondent of al-Jazeera Satellite Channel, while he was near the network’s Gaza bureau.

On 29 May, an armed group detained three foreign journalists from the USA and UK in Rafah for several hours, apparently to pressure their governments to stop supporting Israel.

Closure of Civilian Institutions and Offices of Political Parties

In 2001, the PNA closed a number of Palestinian civilian institutions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In the last month of the year, the PNA escalated these measures under US and Israeli pressure. In this context, on 15 December, the PNA closed a number of Islamic charitable, research, and media institutions and offices of Islamic parties in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Those institutions were providing social, humanitarian, educational and health services.

Misuse of Weapons

In 2001, there was a notable increase in the misuse of weapons by Palestinian security services personnel, particularly while off duty, in wedding parties, or family quarrels. In a number of cases, civilians used weapons, killing and injuring a number of people. PCHR is deeply concerned about these incidents, which constitute a violation of the rights to life and personal security. It calls upon the PNA to take all necessary

⁵⁹The office was closed for several hours. It was reopened upon intervention by other parties and after the channel threatened not to cover the situation in the OPT.

⁶⁰On 8 October, bloody clashes erupted in Gaza between university students and the Palestinian police. Three Palestinians were killed and dozens were injured. The students were protesting the US military campaign against Afghanistan.

measures to end such incidents and to control the use of weapons by law enforcement officials.

The Gaza Strip witnessed 21 fatalities as a result of the misuse of weapons in 2001, compared to four cases in 2000.⁶¹ Three people were killed by off-duty policemen; two were killed in criminal cases and the third was killed in an alleged revenge attack.⁶² A child was shot dead in Rafah by a member of the Popular Resistance Committees who was also a security officer, when some residents tried to prevent gunmen from shooting at an Israeli military location at the Egyptian border. Five Palestinians, including a 10-year-old child, were killed when they played with weapons. In 2001, 12 people, including a 4-month-old infant, were killed in family quarrels in which firearms, stones, and bats were used. In one such incident, eight people were killed in Bani Suhaila in the east of Khan Yunis.⁶³ In another family feud in Gaza, three people were killed. A woman, Amal Rajab 'Eid, 23, from Jablaya, was killed by a live bullet fired by people celebrating a wedding.

In 2001, 69 citizens were injured due to the misuse of weapons; 63 were injured in family feuds, five were injured by security men during criminal incidents, and one was injured while playing with a firearm.

Palestinian Legislative Council

The fifth term of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) was the least effective since its election in 1996. During this term, Israeli occupation forces imposed a total siege on the OPT, severely disrupting the work of PNA institutions, including the PLC. PLC members from the Gaza Strip were denied access to sessions in the West Bank and vice versa, due to the closure. Movement of PLC members between neighboring Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps was also restricted. Consequently, the PLC committees failed to meet and were unable to continue with their agendas.

In 2001, PCHR continued to monitor the PLC's work. In December, it published a report evaluating of the fifth term of the PLC, between March 2000 and March 2001. The report concluded that the first six months of this term, March-September 2000, passed normally. The PLC carried out its activities related to legislation and review normally. Those months did not witness any change in the Executive's positions towards the PLC, continuing to neglect the PLC's decisions and laws. From September 2000 to March 2001, the PLC's crisis was further exacerbated by the repression of the al-Aqsa Intifada by Israeli occupation forces. In this context, the PLC was not able to hold any sessions with adequate quorum, thus bringing its

⁶¹In 2001, five Palestinians were killed in the West Bank as a result of the misuse of weapons.

⁶²On 16 January, Walid Khalil al-'Awadhi, 37, from Gaza, was killed by a member of the Presidential Guard (Force 17). On 10 May, Nidhal Fawzi Nasser, from Beit Hanoun, a member of the Military Intelligence, was killed by members of the Preventative Security Service on behalf of the al-'Arabid family in a feud-related attack.

⁶³On 27 July, two gunmen from the Abu Hassanein family shot dead Anwar al-Jurof, from Bani Suhaila, claiming that he had killed a member of their family in the first Intifada for collaborating with Israeli security services. Then, dozens of residents and security men besieged houses of the family and an exchange of fire took place between the two parties, resulting in seven deaths.

activities to a halt. The PLC attempted to produce quorum for its sessions through video conferencing, but this was mostly unsuccessful.

PCHR's report concluded that the PLC's fifth session was its most ineffective since its sessions were first interrupted by the total siege imposed by Israeli occupation forces on the OPT. These obstacles deepened the PLC's longstanding crisis and allowed the Executive to further marginalise it, causing complete paralysis of its activities. Consequently, PLC Members are currently individuals working on personal initiative, their actions irrelevant to the legislature. The situation has not changed in the sixth term, which opened in March 2001 and is due to end in March 2002, since Israeli occupation forces have maintained the total siege, and the Executive's policies vis-à-vis the PLC have not changed. Therefore, the first nine months of the sixth term, from March to December 2001, did not witness any development in the PLC's work.

PCHR is deeply concerned about the effective suspension of the Palestinian legislature. PCHR believes that legislative and democratic transformation in Palestine face an unprecedented challenge, requiring sincere efforts by officials and political parties to establish a democratic system based on pluralism and the rule of law, as a means of securing the legitimacy of the existing political system and holding deputies accountable.

PART 2

PCHR'S ACTIVITIES IN 2001

Introduction

In light of the ongoing Intifada and the expectation that the human rights situation in the OPT will continue deteriorate for the foreseeable future, PCHR has been forced to adapt its plans and programs for 2001 to meet the new challenges imposed by the ongoing escalation in Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights, including war crimes. PCHR focused on two strategic goals: increasing its activities at the international level in cooperation with local, regional, and international NGOs to end Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights, and increasing its activities at the local level by expanding services for victims of human rights violations.

At the same time, PCHR recognised that its work on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights could not be allowed to negatively affect its work on monitoring human rights violations perpetrated by the PNA and its security services, as well as providing legal assistance to victims of such violations. PCHR maintained its efforts to promote democratization, the rule of law, and respect for human rights despite the deteriorating conditions in the OPT.

To a considerable extent, PCHR adhered to its annual plan for 2001, which had been adopted after extensive discussion and evaluation. Most of the terms included in the plan, especially those relevant to the activities of PCHR's work units, were carried out. At the international level, PCHR carried out all the activities included in the plan, in addition to some activities not previously included. Most notably, the plan did not include activities regarding the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) in Durban, South Africa from 31 August to 7 September, but PCHR, in cooperation with LAW – the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment – and thousands of local, regional and international NGOs, participated in the conference. Although the campaign to urge the High Contracting Parties (HCPs) to the Fourth Geneva Convention to fulfill their legal obligation to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the OPT has been ongoing for several years, PCHR did not expect an HCP meeting in 2001. However, as soon as it was informed that a meeting of HCPs would be convened, PCHR, in cooperation with LAW, organized local and international activities to urge the HCPs to take effective steps to end Israeli violations of the Convention. Adaptation by the Centre to unexpected changes in the situation incurred additional work and financial burdens, forcing PCHR to make alterations to its 2001 budget.

(1) PCHR's Activities at the Regional and International Levels

In 2001, PCHR continued its regional and international activities to ensure respect for human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) and to support the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination, the establishment of a viable and independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, and the right of return of Palestinian refugees. PCHR's work in this regard involved participation in a number of international meetings and transmitting interventions to UN bodies regarding Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT. At the same time, PCHR continued to enhance its relationships with regional and international institutions. Within this context, the Centre received scores of international and regional delegations, both governmental and non-governmental. PCHR representatives met with local and international journalists to provide them with comprehensive briefings on the human rights situation in the OPT, as well as assistance in arranging field visits and interviews.

In 2001, most of PCHR's activities at the international level, in full cooperation and coordination with LAW – the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment – were focused on the campaign to urge the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949 (the Fourth Geneva Convention) to fulfill their legal and moral obligations to secure Israel's respect for the Convention in the OPT.

PCHR devoted much of its work in 2001 to preparations for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) and the NGO Forum held parallel to the conference in Durban, South Africa.

PCHR also maintained cooperation and coordination with many international organizations to pressure the European Union to activate Article 2 of the Euro-Israeli Association Agreement, which provides that Israel must respect human rights. PCHR also continued its efforts to secure international protection for Palestinian civilians in the OPT, especially in light of the unprecedented violations of human rights, including war crimes, perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces.

PCHR greatly appreciates efforts made by local, regional, and international civil society organizations and solidarity groups, which provided unlimited support in the face of the unprecedented deterioration in the human rights situation in the OPT. These organizations and committees raised their voices in the face of the unwillingness of governments to condemn and stop Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights in the OPT. Cooperation and coordination with local, regional and international civil society organizations and solidarity committees are of great importance to PCHR at all levels of its work.

In 2001, PCHR paid special attention to increased cooperation and coordination with Palestinian, Israeli, Arab and international human rights organizations. At the Palestinian level, PCHR strengthened its cooperation and coordination with LAW, Ad-Dameer Association for Human Rights, the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO), al-Haq Institution, and other NGOs in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including

Jerusalem. It also maintained cooperation and coordination with Israeli human rights organizations, including Physicians for Human Rights (Israel), Hamoked (Centre for the Defence of the Individual), the Public Committee against Torture, Bt'selem and Adalah.

At the pan-Arab level, PCHR strengthened its relations with dozens of Arab human rights organizations, mainly the Cairo Center for Human Rights Studies, the Union of Arab Lawyers, the Arab Center for the Independence of the Judiciary, the Arab Institute for Human Rights, the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, and the Arab Organization for Human Rights.

At the international level, PCHR maintained its cooperation with international bodies of which PCHR is a member:

- International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) in Geneva
- International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH)
- Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network

PCHR also strengthened its relations with dozens of international human rights organizations, solidarity committees with the Palestinian people and other NGOs, such as:

- Amnesty International;
- South African NGO Coalition (SANGOCO)
- International Association of Democratic Lawyers.

These relations contributed to the support and promotion of the human rights movement in Palestine, and PCHR's efforts to affect international public opinion and the policies of various states.

Campaign to Secure *de Jure* Application of the Fourth Geneva Convention in the OPT

In 2001, PCHR continued its efforts at the local, regional, and international levels to secure the *de jure* applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention in the OPT, continuing three years of work on this issue. PCHR made such efforts either singly or in full cooperation and coordination with LAW and other local, regional, and international NGOs, especially human rights organizations. The goal of such efforts was to raise awareness of the Convention, which is the basic legal instrument that should regulate Israel's behavior as an Occupying Power in the OPT, and to pressure the High Contracting Parties to the Convention to adopt measures aimed at securing the implementation of the Convention in the OPT. In all its activities and publications, PCHR included calls for the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to take effective measures to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the OPT.

The Obligation to ‘Ensure Respect’: A Call for the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to Ensure Israel’s Respect for the Convention

On 10 November, PCHR published an essay entitled “The Obligation to ‘Ensure Respect’: A Call for the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to Ensure Israel’s Respect for the Convention.” In the essay, PCHR called upon the High Contracting Parties to fulfill their responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention and ensure Israel’s respect for the Convention in the OPT. The document addressed Israeli violations of the Conventions, especially during this Intifada, including willful killing, torture, settlements, and house and civilian property destruction. It also highlighted the legal obligation of the High Contracting Parties under Article 1 to “ensure respect for the [Fourth Geneva Convention] in all circumstances.” The essay attempted to provide practical options the High Contracting Parties may consider to fulfill their legal obligation, including sanctions. PCHR called upon the High Contracting Parties to hold a conference no later than the end of 2001 to adopt steps to meet their obligation to ensure Israel’s respect for the Convention.

Parallel NGO Conference on the Fourth Geneva Convention

In the middle of November, the Swiss government, the depositary of the Convention, announced that a meeting of the High Contracting Parties had been called for 5 December to ensure Israel’s respect for the Convention in the OPT. PCHR, in full cooperation and coordination with LAW – the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment – and other local, regional and international NGOs, and with the support of the International Federation of Human Rights, immediately began organizing an international meeting of independent experts and civil society representatives to ensure that the voice of civil society would not be ignored by governments and to impress ever more strongly the urgent need of the High Contracting Parties to fulfill their legal and moral obligations to take concrete steps to ensure the implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention in the OPT. Approximately 100 invitations were sent out to a variety of individuals and organizations, including international law experts, human rights activists, solidarity groups, international NGOs, and the media. More than 30 responded and participated in the two-day conference on 4-5 December. The parallel conference produced a declaration providing measures that are both viable and immediately available to the High Contracting Parties to ensure Israel’s implementation of the Convention. The parallel declaration also included a reminder to the High Contracting Parties of their legal and moral obligations and called upon them to take immediate and concrete action to ensure Israel’s implementation of the Convention.

Regrettably, it soon became clear that the conference of the High Contracting Parties would again be subjugated to political interests; the declaration adopted at the conference included little more than a reaffirmation of the applicability of the Convention to the OPT. The text of the declaration, which had largely been agreed in advance and was adopted without a vote, included no clear concrete measures to be

taken by the High Contracting Parties. There was reference to a monitoring presence but this was conditioned on the agreement of both parties. Since Israel would never agree to such a presence, which would in any case be insufficient to effect any protection for Palestinian civilians in the OPT, this was a largely symbolic gesture.

The parallel declaration was finalized on the 5 December and a demonstration was then held outside the Palais des Nations in Geneva to raise public awareness of the High Contracting Parties meeting and to launch the parallel declaration. Several hundred people attended the demonstration. PCHR with LAW and FIDH then gave a press conference both in the Palais des Nations and to members of the local press. The parallel declaration was issued to all of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, including those who did not participate in the government meeting.

With media coverage all over Europe, the parallel conference was successful in raising public awareness of both the convening of the High Contracting Parties meeting, which had been held with as little public attention as possible, and of the urgent need for protection for Palestinian civilians from escalating violations of the Convention and international humanitarian law perpetrated by Israel. The parallel declaration has remained open for signatures by both individuals and organisations (on PCHR's website) and currently has more than 200 signatories.

PCHR asserts that the failure of the High Contracting Parties meeting to take crucial steps to ensure Israel's respect for the Fourth Geneva Convention must not undermine local, regional, and international efforts aimed at securing the *de jure* application of the Convention in the OPT. PCHR will continue its efforts at the local, regional and international levels to ensure the implementation of the Convention in the OPT. In light of the worsening situation in the OPT and the escalating violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention by Israel, the time has long passed for the international community to intervene and stop Israel's ongoing grave violations of the Convention.

PCHR's Press Releases on the Fourth Geneva Convention

In 2001, PCHR, either singly or jointly with LAW, issued a number of press releases on developments relevant to the Fourth Geneva Convention and the High Contracting Parties meeting on measures to ensure the implementation of the Convention in the OPT. On 10 November, PCHR and LAW issued a press release welcoming the announcement of the Swiss government, the depository of the Convention, of a meeting of the High Contracting Parties scheduled for 5 December to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the OPT. On 22 November, PCHR and LAW issued a press release in which they condemned what they called "the Geneva farce" and the draft declaration of the High Contracting Parties held in Geneva on 5 December. On 11 December, PCHR issued a press release on the declaration of the parallel conference of NGOs, which condemned the declaration of the High Contracting Parties and their failure to take effective measures to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the OPT.

World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance

The World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) was the site of a major achievement of PCHR's work at the international level. In 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution to hold the conference in Durban in South Africa from 31 August to 7 September 2001. All member states of the United Nations as well as representatives of thousands of NGOs participated in the conference, whose agenda included current aspects of racism, forms of and reasons for racism, victims of racism and apartheid, and other relevant issues.

In August, more than 3000 representatives of non-governmental organisations from around the world, including representatives of PCHR and LAW, met in Durban to participate in the NGO Forum of WCAR. The NGO Forum, which began on 28 August, was intended to provide a voice to victims of racism and all other forms of intolerance, and allow them an opportunity to tell the world about their own suffering in the language of their choice. The NGO Forum was to provide this opportunity in recognition of the difficulty of victims' voices being heard at a governmental conference.

PCHR's participation began during the early preparatory stages of the WCAR and NGO Forum processes. Its presence at the first Prep Com in Amman enabled PCHR to contribute to the processes which the NGO Forum would follow. Due to the situation on the ground in the OPT and the strict closures imposed on the Gaza Strip in particular, PCHR could not attend the second or third prep coms of the WCAR. However, PCHR's participation in the preparatory processes continued with the collaborative production of the Position Paper of Palestinian NGOs and other documents, including campaigning materials.

Recognising the opportunity which the NGO Forum presented to Palestinian NGOs, particularly in relation to the existing solidarity networks in South Africa, a joint group from LAW and PCHR arrived early in August to begin preparing the Palestinian NGO work at the Forum and to start what became an exhausting but rewarding programme of awareness-raising activities. In the two weeks before the start of the NGO Forum, PCHR participated in a variety of activities in cities across South Africa; a rally in Durban city hall, a demonstration in Cape Town attended by 30,000 people, television and radio interviews on both local and national networks, an interfaith service in Cape Town's Cathedral, meetings with local communities in Johannesburg and Cape Town, and meetings with heads of trade unions and political parties. These activities were largely coordinated by the local South African solidarity groups and also by members of SANGOCO, the South African Coalition of NGOs, who were responsible for the organization and management of the NGO Forum. These activities were extremely successful and demonstrated the overwhelming solidarity felt by the South African people with Palestinians and their ongoing suffering. This solidarity and support came not only from those who were already well-informed of the situation in the OPT and for Palestinians inside Israel, but also from other communities, including landless people. This support was undoubtedly one of the most memorable aspects of PCHR's participation in the NGO Forum and the WCAR.

In the week before the NGO Forum, PCHR and LAW made final preparations, including: renting an office in Durban, producing campaigning materials (including T-shirts and leaflets), printing and distribution of the NGO Position Paper, and establishing a daily bulletin containing updates on the events of the NGO Forum and the WCAR and the issues discussed.

The NGO Forum opened on 28 August and it was immediately clear that the Palestinian question would be one of the most controversial issues under discussion at the NGO Forum and the attention afforded to the Palestinian cause began to grow immediately. One of the main issues which arose during the course of the NGO Forum was that, although in the majority of cases, people expressed sympathy with the suffering of the Palestinian people, many remained unaware that the root cause of this suffering is and remains the racist practices perpetrated by the state of Israel both inside Israel and in the OPT against Palestinians; that what has permeated the attitude of successive Israeli governments since the creation of the state of Israel has been racist prejudice against Palestinians; and that the ongoing illegal colonial military occupation and settlement system is racist and a form of apartheid. PCHR and other Palestinian NGOs from the OPT and from inside Israel worked hard to provide the other participants of the Forum and government representatives attending the WCAR with sufficiently detailed and accurate information in various formats to recognize racism as the root cause of Palestinian suffering.

The final Declaration and Program of Action of the NGO Forum was adopted by an overwhelming majority vote of the participants of the Forum on 1 September. The declaration condemned various racist practices and other violations pursued by Israel against the Palestinians, and called for a variety of actions by Israel and the international community to bring an immediate halt to the ongoing Israeli violations of international law, including racist practices, and to ensure that those responsible for such violations be brought to justice. The adoption of the Declaration and Program of Action in their entirety by the NGO Forum in a fair and democratic process was the culmination of a great deal of hard work for all of the participants and the document represented the success of the Forum in achieving its aim of providing a platform for the victims of racism around the world to make their suffering known.

The WCAR governmental conference began on 31 August and, predictably, was overshadowed by narrow political interests. PCHR, with LAW and other Palestinian NGOs, remained throughout the government conference to try to ensure that the voices of victims of racism, including Palestinians, would be heard by the governments. PCHR and LAW lobbied government representatives from all over the world, providing the same information which had been distributed during the NGO Forum, requesting that they recognize the racism inherent in Israeli practices against Palestinians inside Israel and in the OPT. However, and perhaps predictably, these efforts failed to ensure that any language which condemned the Israeli practices against Palestinians as racist was included in the government text, as facilitators of the conference, particularly UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson, succumbed to US and Israeli pressure.

Durban Evaluation Meeting, Malaga, 1- 3 October 2001

In order to make an accurate appraisal of the participation of Palestinian NGOs in the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) and the NGO Forum, PCHR, with the logistical support of the Arab Cause Solidarity Committee (Malaga section), organized a post-Durban evaluation meeting at the beginning of October. The meeting was attended by representatives of the main Arab and Palestinian NGOs who participated in Durban (including LAW and the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies) and also by individuals from the Swedish International Commission of Jurists, the South African Social Forum, and European Solidarity groups.

The first day of the meeting focused on evaluating issues which arose during the Durban conference, including: relations with international NGOs, publications, terminology, and events both prior to and during the NGO Forum and governmental conference. The second day focused on future strategies and included discussion of a concept paper for an international solidarity movement. The idea of creating an international solidarity movement emerged during the NGO forum in Durban. PCHR and LAW believe that it is imperative to develop an international solidarity movement with Palestinian rights similar to the worldwide campaign for the rights of blacks in South Africa, which influenced world public opinion, in order to exert pressure to put an end to Israel's ongoing racist practices and other violations against Palestinians.

Meeting with UK Solidarity Groups

During PCHR's experiences in Durban, the concept of an international solidarity movement was developed with the goal of ending the illegal Israeli colonial military occupation, the ongoing *Nakba*, and the racist practices that are used to maintain the occupation. In order to facilitate this global movement, greater emphasis and closer relations would clearly have to be developed with both existing and new solidarity groups around the world. Therefore, PCHR and LAW contacted UK solidarity groups soon after Durban to request their comments on the basic concept of the movement and to discuss the possibility of a European solidarity meeting in which the concept could be taken further. UK solidarity groups were contacted early in the discussion for the international solidarity movement in response to the specific difficulties which Palestinian civil society and their supporters face in combating UK government policies, and UK public opinion. The UK has long been identified as a "problem" country and it was therefore important to bring our UK supporters into the discussion as early as possible to ensure that the movement can be as effective as possible.

UK solidarity groups, the Palestine Solidarity Campaign in particular, welcomed the idea with enthusiasm, and PCHR and LAW organised a meeting with them on 26 November. Invitations were also sent to other UK-based solidarity groups, including Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights, the Campaign for Palestinian Rights, and distinguished individuals based in the UK. The meeting was arranged in London jointly by PCHR and LAW and was attended by 25 people.

The meeting provided an opportunity to develop a thorough analysis of the work of Palestinian NGOs in Durban. The meeting discussed the concept paper on the creation of an international solidarity movement. The UK solidarity groups

welcomed the idea and were ready to develop future work on this issue. It was also a valuable opportunity to build on relations with solidarity groups and encourage the continuation of their work in the UK. The meeting was also a first step in introducing the movement to other European solidarity groups through the existing UK groups. PCHR's representatives, also took the opportunity whilst in the UK to participate in a number of awareness raising activities, and government lobbying.

Interventions with UN Bodies

Since its establishment in 1995, PCHR has devoted considerable efforts to working with human rights mechanisms and specialized international commissions, particularly those of the United Nations. PCHR provided these specialized bodies and commissions with oral and written statements on the human rights situation in the OPT. In 2000, PCHR was granted Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council. This achievement represented appreciation by international organizations, especially the Economic and Social Council, of PCHR's efforts in the field of human rights. In 2001, PCHR continued its efforts in this regard. It focused on the following:

UN Commission on Human Rights

The UN Commission on Human Rights is one of the most important UN bodies. It includes 53 state parties and holds annual six-week regular sessions in March and April. More than 3000 delegates of state parties and NGOs usually participate in these sessions. The Commission also holds special and exceptional sessions, upon agreement by the majority member states, to discuss urgent issues relevant to human rights in the world. In its sessions, the Commission often takes decisions calling upon certain states to abide by their legal obligations under international human rights conventions and covenants.

Due to its special status and worldwide importance, PCHR considers it necessary to be always in contact with the UN Commission on Human Rights. PCHR follows and participate in its sessions and submits written and oral interventions on the human rights situation in the OPT.

UN Human Rights Inquiry Mission

On 10 February, a special inquiry mission comprised of three independent international experts sent by the UN to investigate human rights violations perpetrated by the Israeli occupation forces in the OPT arrived in the region. PCHR welcomed the arrival of the UN human rights inquiry mission, asserting its willingness to provide the mission with all possible assistance and documentation to facilitate its work. PCHR believed that the mission would be able to carry out an objective, professional investigation of Israeli violations of human rights.

On 12 February, the mission met with a PCHR delegation composed of Director Raji Sourani, Legal Unit Coordinator Iyad Alami, and Democratic Development Unit Coordinator Hamdi Shaqqura. The PCHR delegation provided the mission with a comprehensive briefing on human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupation

forces between September 2000 and February 2001. They also addressed the background and reasons which led to the outbreak of clashes between Palestinian civilians and Israeli occupation forces. PCHR's delegation asserted that such clashes were the outcome of decades of repression of the Palestinian people by Israeli occupation forces and the failure of political negotiations to take any account of human rights.

PCHR's delegation also provided the mission with detailed files and documents on a number of killings, demonstrating the use of excessive force in cases where no threats were posed to the lives of Israeli soldiers. Some of these documents documented bombardment by combat helicopters, gunboats, and tanks which affected Palestinian civilians, residential neighborhoods, and civilian facilities. PCHR's delegation also provided the mission with comprehensive information on the razing of Palestinian agricultural land and the demolition of homes and property.

The 57th Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights

In the 57th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, held between 19 March and 27 April, PCHR delivered an oral intervention on the human rights situation in the OPT and the unprecedented violations of human rights by Israeli occupation forces. In his intervention, PCHR Director Raji Sourani asserted that Israeli practices against Palestinian civilians and their property in the OPT constituted war crimes punishable under international humanitarian law. He asserted that Israel had systematically violated international humanitarian law, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention, since it occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967. Mr. Sourani added that Israeli violations of human rights had escalated since the beginning of this Intifada and warned the international community that its silence regarding Israeli actions would have disastrous consequences.

UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian and Arab Territories

On 19 February 1993, during its 49th session, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights adopted decision number 2/1993, through which it approved the appointment of a Special Rapporteur with the following mandate:

1. To investigate Israeli violations according to the standards of international law and international humanitarian law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, in the Palestinian Territory occupied by Israel in 1967.
2. To receive correspondence and to hear witnesses where necessary according to its mandate.
3. To prepare a report for the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in its future sessions until the end of the Israeli occupation of the territory.

PCHR pays close attention to the work of the United Nations Special Rapporteur, and regularly provides him with comprehensive information regarding Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT. On 20 August, PCHR received Prof. John Dugard, the UN

Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian and Arab Territories, and his aide Darka Topali. The international envoy was welcomed by PCHR Director Raji Sourani and the board of directors, who briefed him on Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians and property in the OPT. PCHR also provided Dugard with information about Israeli violation of human rights, especially since the beginning of the Intifada in September 2000.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

The office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was established by UN General Assembly Resolution 141/48 on 7 January 1994. The High Commissioner is the official representative of UN human rights activities, under the auspices of the UN Secretary General. The Commissioner works under powers and resolutions of the UN General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the Commission on Human Rights. Among the goals of the Commissioner is to stop human rights violations and to ensure respect for human rights throughout the world. Due to the High Commissioner's important role in defending human rights, PCHR endeavors to remain in continuous contact with the Commissioner in order to keep the Commissioner informed of Israeli human rights violations in the OPT.

On 1 April, PCHR Director Raji Sourani met with Mrs. Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in her office in Geneva. Mr Sourani narrated recent developments that had taken place in the OPT since Mrs Robinson's visit in 2000. He emphasized the urgent need to provide immediate international protection for the Palestinian people, and to hold a conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention in order to secure Israel's *de jure* application of the Convention in the OPT. He emphasized that the main concern of the Palestinian people is to put an end to the ongoing and longstanding illegal Israeli occupation, and that they have the right to resist the occupation, with lawful means. He also condemned the conspiracy of silence, particularly by European states, towards crimes committed by Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian people, and the unlimited US support to Israel and its illegal policies.

Letter to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

On 1 August, PCHR Director Raji Sourani sent a letter to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson, in which he expressed his sincere disappointment in the statement which she gave at the Opening Session of the Third Preparatory Committee Meeting of the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) on 30 July. Mrs. Robinson argued at the meeting that discussions regarding Zionism as a form of racism were inappropriate at WCAR. In his letter, Mr Sourani said that political interests had no place at the Conference. He added that Zionism as a racist doctrine is not a problem of the past, rather is an ongoing obstacle to the creation of an egalitarian, tolerant, and peaceful society in Israel as well as in the OPT. Finally, Mr Sourani expressed hope that the High Commissioner would continue to utilize her influence and her position to ensure that all variations of racism and intolerance would be addressed without regard to politics.

UN Committee against Torture

The UN Committee against Torture is the UN body mandated to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of victims of violations by State Parties of the provisions of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.⁶⁴ The Committee against Torture was established according to Article 17 of the Convention. It consists of ten experts of high moral standing and recognized competence in the field of human rights. They are elected by secret ballot from a list of persons nominated by State Parties at biennial meetings of State Parties convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Committee convened its first meeting in April 1998, and since then has met on several occasions. It has carried out many activities to stop the use of torture throughout the world, especially in the territory of State Parties to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

The UN Torture Committee reviewed Israel's Third Periodic Report on 19-20 November as required under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to which Israel is a State Party. As an NGO with Special Consultative Status to ECOSOC, PCHR is entitled to make direct written submissions to UN treaty bodies. PCHR therefore submitted a report on torture by Israeli officials to the Committee. The report detailed various violations of the Convention, including torture in detention, including in cases of administrative and incommunicado detention, using case examples. The report also called upon the Committee to recognise the continuing closure and house demolition policies carried out by Israeli occupation forces as violations of Article 16 of the Convention.

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), which sponsored PCHR's attendance at the session, scheduled a briefing for Committee members with representatives of Palestinian NGOs in Geneva on the morning prior to the first session of the Committee's review of Israel's report. PCHR's representative gave a verbal presentation, along with representatives from Amnesty International, LAW, PCATI, B'tselem, and the Organisation Mondiale Contre la Torture (OMCT). The briefing was well-attended by the Committee members and was an excellent opportunity for the Palestinian NGOs to present their research verbally and to make clear to the Committee members the main points that they wished the Committee to consider during their evaluation of Israel's report.

Throughout the Committee's review, it was clear that the Committee had taken on board much of the information given both in the Briefing session and in the written reports of NGOs, including those submitted by PCHR. The Committee made clear their concerns regarding the continued prevalence of torture in Israeli detention facilities, and their concerns regarding administrative and incommunicado detention. Specific mention was also made by the Committee regarding their concerns at the failure of the State party to make adequate provision for compensation and reparation for torture and ill-treatment, as noted from PCHR's report. The Committee requested confirmation from Israel's representatives regarding accusations of torture and ill treatment based on information received by the Committee from PCHR and other

⁶⁴On 10 December 1984 the Convention was opened for signature, ratification and accession. On 26 June 1987, the Convention entered into force after it had been ratified or acceded to by 58 States.

NGOs. Whilst there was a significant amount of information provided by NGOs based in the West Bank and inside Israel, PCHR's report and verbal briefing ensured that the Committee received accurate and updated information specifically on the prevalence and specific circumstances of torture and ill treatment by members of the Israeli security services of Palestinians from and in the Gaza Strip. It was also important that PCHR, as an independent legal aid agency, was able to provide information regarding recent and current cases of torture or ill-treatment in which PCHR has or is acting.

The Committee's review of Israel's report and their conclusions were particularly encouraging from the perspective of Palestinian NGOs; the Committee took their concerns seriously and utilized the information provided by PCHR and others in both their questioning and in their Concluding Observations. One significant success of this cooperative NGO participation was the conclusion by the Committee that Israel's policies of house demolition and closure in the OPT may in certain circumstances constitute a violation of Article 16 of the Convention (ill treatment). This was an unprecedented ruling by the Committee on these issues.

UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

On 26 July, a PCHR delegation testified before the United Nations Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. The Special Committee opened its session in Cairo on 25 July and gathered testimonies regarding human rights violations in the Occupied Territories. The Special Committee moved to Jordan and Syria on 28 July.

The PCHR delegation, comprised of Hamdi Shaqqura, Coordinator of the Democratic Development Unit, and Iyad Alami, Coordinator of the Legal Unit, devoted their intervention to the unprecedented escalation in human rights violations and war crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian civilians, especially since the outbreak of the Palestinian Intifada in September 2000. Shaqqura highlighted the excessive use of force by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian civilians. The PCHR delegation reiterated PCHR's calls for immediate international intervention to provide protection for Palestinian civilians, and to support the *de jure* application of the Fourth Geneva Convention in the OPT.

Israel refuses to receive the Committee and does not allow its members to carry out their mission in the Occupied Territories.

Assistance for International Inquiry Missions

PCHR has repeatedly called upon the international community and bodies, especially the United Nations, to send inquiry missions to investigate serious violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces in the OPT. In 2001, PCHR cooperated with international NGOs and provided assistance for a number of inquiry missions sent to the OPT.

Inquiry Mission of the National Lawyers Guild

In its annual meeting in Boston in November 2000, the National Lawyers Guild decided to send a fact-finding mission to Israel and the OPT during January 2001. The mission focused on the use of US-made weapons by Israel in the OPT in violation of international humanitarian law and US law. On 21 January, the mission met with PCHR's director. Upon a request from the National Lawyers Guild, PCHR organized a work program in the Gaza Strip on 22 January. The mission met with Dr. 'Abdel-Rahman Abu al-Nasser, Head of the Palestinian Bar Association; Major General 'Abdel-Razzaq al-Majayda, Head of the General Security in the Palestinian National Authority; Dr. Haidar 'Abdel-Shafi, Head of the Palestine Red Crescent Society in the Gaza Strip and Commissioner-General of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights; Zuhair Sourani, the PNA Attorney General; and representatives of the Palestinian Ministry of Health. The mission also visited the southern Gaza Strip and met with a number of victims of Israeli violations of human rights. The mission issued a comprehensive report entitled "The al-Aqsa Intifada and Israel's Apartheid: The US Military and Economic Role in the Violation of Palestinian Human Rights." The report concluded that most of the weapons used by Israel in violating Palestinian human rights were manufactured in the United States or financed by the US government, and that Israeli military and police personnel had consistently used excessive force against the Palestinian population in violation of the United Nations Code of Conduct of Law Enforcement Officials and the Fourth Geneva Convention.⁶⁵

Inquiry Mission of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers

On 13 and 14 October, PCHR received a mission of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) to investigate the human rights situation in the OPT. PCHR provided the mission with information on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights and organized a work program for the mission in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip the mission met with Palestinian officials and representatives of Palestinian human rights organizations and NGOs. They also visited Rafah and Khan Yunis and met with victims of Israeli human rights violations.

Popular Campaign for the Protection of the Palestinian People

Since the beginning of this Intifada and the escalation of human rights violations by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinians civilians, voices at both the official and public level have emerged, calling for the immediate deployment of independent international protection for the Palestinian people. However, world governments did not pay attention to these voices, and all efforts to urge the international community to immediately intervene and provide protection for the Palestinian people failed due to opposition from political interests. In 2001, the "Popular Campaign for the Protection of the Palestinian People" emerged as a response to international silence and official collusion with Israeli practices in the OPT. PCHR played an important role in organizing this campaign, in cooperation and coordination with other NGOs in the OPT, including LAW. Two committees were established, one in the West Bank

⁶⁵To see the complete report, refer to www.pchrgaza.org/library.htm

headed by Dr. Mustafa Barghouthi, President of the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees, and the other in the Gaza Strip headed by Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR. A plan and program were designed to receive delegations from around the world demonstrating solidarity with the Palestinian people. The goals of the campaign include:

1. Reporting on Israeli practices against Palestinian civilians to the international community;
2. Urging solidarity groups to play a role in revealing facts about Israeli practices that are punishable by international humanitarian law;
3. Sending a message to the Israeli government that Israeli practices against the Palestinian people violate international humanitarian law, are against the will of peoples around the world, and pave the way for Israel's isolation; and
4. Raising the voices of peoples over the voices of governments colluding with Israeli practices against Palestinian civilians in order to pressure governments to change their positions and take effective measures to ensure Israel's complete withdrawal from the OPT.

Participation in Other International Conferences and Meetings

In 2001, PCHR received invitations to participate in other international and regional activities other than those mentioned above. The current situation in the OPT impeded PCHR's participation in most of these activities, either because of restrictions imposed by Israeli occupation forces on free movement or the work priorities at PCHR, which necessitated the presence of all staff. However, PCHR was able to participate in the following activities:

Conference of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

From 8-12 January, the general assembly of the International Federation for Human Rights convened its triennial conference in Morocco. Due to the total siege imposed on the Palestinian people and difficulties PCHR's representatives faced in traveling, PCHR Director Raji Sourani made an intervention by telephone. The current Intifada and the escalation of human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian civilians in the OPT were among the main issues discussed at the conference. The conference elected Sidiki Kaba of Senegal as president of FIDH, and Raji Sourani as vice president. On 24 and 25 March, Mr Sourani participated in the meetings of the international office of FIDH in Paris, but was unable to participate in following meetings due to the total siege and the deterioration of the human rights situation in the OPT.

Amman Prep Com for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR)

From 5-8 February, PCHR participated in the first Prep Com in Amman, under the theme of "from Jerusalem to Durban to Eliminate Racism." The meeting was organized by the Arab Organization for Human Rights (Jordan office). PCHR was represented by Raji Sourani, Director, and Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director. Sourani

made an intervention entitled “International Protection is an Urgent Legal Necessity for the Palestinian People.”

20th Conference of the Union of Arab Lawyers

The conference was convened from 20-24 March in Beirut under the title “Support for the Intifada of the Palestinian People.” PCHR Director Raji Sourani made an intervention in a workshop on the role of Arab NGOs in facing regional changes and supporting pan-Arab human rights causes. Mr Sourani also submitted a working paper at a seminar organized by the Palestine Committee of the Union of Arab Lawyers, entitled “Means of Implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 in the OPT, including Jerusalem.”

First International Conference against the Death Penalty

PCHR Director Raji Sourani participated in the First International Conference against the Death Penalty convened in Strasbourg, France, upon an invitation by Ensemble Contre la Peine de Mort (ECPM) in Strasbourg, France.

Meeting at the Arab Institute for Human Rights

As part of the 11th training course of the Arab Institute for Human Rights in Tunisia, PCHR Director Raji Sourani was invited to make an intervention entitled “International Protection for Palestinians” in a meeting on 11 July, in which all participants in the course and human rights experts and activists attended.

Preparatory Workshop for WCAR

On 28-29 July, PCHR participated in a regional workshop of Arab youth in Manama, Bahrain, in preparation for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban,⁶⁶ upon an invitation by the Bahraini Association for Human Rights in cooperation with the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. PCHR was represented by Nafez al-Khaldi and Ghadir al-‘Emari of the Democratic Development Unit.

Conference of the International Commission of Jurists

As an affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists, PCHR participated in the commission’s conference in Geneva on 10-14 September. PCHR was represented by Raji Sourani, Director, and Iyad Alami, Coordinator of the Legal Unit.

⁶⁶For further details about the conference and PCHR’s activities in this regard, see pp. 56-57 of this report.

Symposium of the Euro-Mediterranean Network for Human Rights on the MEDA Program

From 5-7 November, the Euro-Mediterranean Network for Human Rights held a symposium entitled “MEDA Program: Effects of Economic Aid Provided by EU for Mediterranean Partners on Human Rights.” PCHR was represented at the symposium by Hamdi Shakkura, Coordinator of the Democratic Development Unit, who headed a session devoted to a discussion of human rights in economic development programs.

Conference of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers

On 24-25 November, PCHR Director Raji Sourani participated in the Conference of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers in Paris. The conference was held the title “Protection of the Palestinian People: The International Law and Peace.”

Meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Network for Human Rights

This meeting was held in Geneva on 2-3 December. Members of the Euro-Mediterranean Network for Human Rights, including PCHR, attended the meeting, which was devoted to a discussion of the Euro-Mediterranean Network for Human Rights’ policies on Palestine in light of the international inquiry commission established by the UN High Commission on Human Rights on 19 October 2000 to investigate Israeli human rights violations in the OPT. The meeting also addressed international initiatives and actions concerning Palestine. PCHR Director Raji Sourani made an intervention on the role of international human rights organizations.

Meetings in Gaza with Politicians, Diplomats, UN Representatives and other International NGOs

In 2001, PCHR received many visitors, including politicians, United Nations representatives, and officials from international NGOs. In those meetings, the human rights situation in the OPT and PCHR’s ongoing efforts and services to the victims of human rights were discussed. PCHR consistent call to all its international guests to is to ensure that upon their return to their home country, they make efforts to influence world public opinion and government policies in order to gain support for Palestinian human rights.

Prominent Visitors to PCHR in 2001

Name of visitor and institution	Date of visit
Andro Thomas, Harvard University	9 January
Elizabeth Hodgkin – Amnesty International	10 January
Care Soderberem – Director of Amnesty International Swedish Section	
David Holley – Military Advisor, Amnesty International	

Kershtin Grebacka and Era Zillen – Kvinna Till Kvinna Hient Jan Faber – Interchurch Peace Council Torgier Larsen – Representative Office of Norway to the Palestinian National Authority	14 January
Yves Callinec – Head of Mission, Médecins Sans Frontières	16 January
William Roebuck – US Embassy Robin Keeley – British Consul General	18 January
Zeina Mogarebel – Humanitarian Officer, European Commission Gabriella Trudi – European Commission Technical Assistant Yakushige Yoshihiro Yoshi – Palestine Forum, Japan	21 January
Dr. Amin Mekki Medani and Joanna Oyediran – Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Gaza	23 January
Denis Pietton, French Consul General	24 January
Peggy Hutchim & Walter Schenck – Global Board of Global Ministries of United Methodist Church	27 January
Hidehito Okochi, Secretary General, Shincho Shigeta, Representative, and Mika Edaki International Cooperation Network of Buddhist Volunteers (AYUS)	30 January
Ray Williamson, National Council of Churches in Australia	1 February
Peter Bouchaet and Clarisa Bencomo, Human Rights Watch	5 February
Latifa Tayah – CIMADE Thoger Berg Nielsen, Police Advisor, UNSCO A meeting with Head of the South African Communist Party at the Palestinian Legislative Council Moroccan Ambassador to the Palestinian National Authority	11 February
UN Mission of Commission of Inquiry to the OPT Per Stadig and Eva Buntsson, Swedish ICJ	12 February
John Logan, Area Coordinator, Christian Aid	19 February
Yacov Aissa Claude, Coordinator, Peace Lines Consul General of Sweden Jan Bjerninger, Assistant Director General, and Christina Regnell, Desk Officer, Asia Department, SIDA	20 February
Geir Peterson, the Representative Office of Norway to the Palestinian National Authority	21 February
A mission of Amnesty International Suad Dajani, Grassroots International	24 February
Jayd Davies, Political Assistant of the British Consul General Rob Luke, the British Foreign Ministry	27 February
Dr. Arild – Norwegian Institute	13 March
A meeting with European Consuls	14 March
Susan Hener – South Africa Representative Office	17 March
Sue Turrell and Roger Riddell, Christian Aid	20 March
Elizabeth Hodgkin – Amnesty International	22 March
Karin Roxman – Political Adviser to the European Union Special Representative to the Middle East peace process	4 April

Samuel J. Cahnman, Attorney at Law	5 April
Hani Megally – Human Rights Watch	12 April
Kristine Hass – German Representative Office	18 April
David Green – Director General, The British Council	19 April
A German parliamentary delegation	26 April
Kaj Stendorf – Police Advisor, UNSCO	30 April
Elizabeth Ellison – Swedish Christian Study Centre	3 May
Fateh Azzam – Ford Foundation	7 May
William Robert– US Embassy	9 May
Mari Morth – Kvinna till Kvinna	10 May
Margoth Sonnebo – DIAKONIA Regional Middle East Office	
Sarah Humphrey – Director, PATH, USA	16 May
David Neunuebr – Americans for Justice for Palestinians, USA	17 May
Denis Pietton – French Consul General, Jerusalem	19 May
Antonis Rigas – Médecins Sans Frontières	20 May
Karin Roxman – Political Adviser to the European Union Special Representative to the Middle East Peace Process	
Christian F. Jouret – European Union	
Patrick Lamentini – Méditerranée & Moyen Orient, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs	23 May
A meeting with an inquiry commission of the European Parliament at the office of Dr. Ziad Abu Amru	5 June
Andrew Gilmour – Chief, Regional Unit and Marwan Kafarna, UNSCO	11 June
Dr. Ann M. Lesch – Professor of political science, Center for Arab and Islamic Studies, Villanova University	14 June
Kristine Instadt – Norwegian Representative Office	18 June
Eliane Hammarskjöld – Consulate General of Sweden	20 June
Dr. Anik Tonto and Pierre Fux – the Swiss Embassy	20 June
Elizabeth Hodgkin – Amnesty International	6 July
Malene Mikkelsen – Dan Church Aid	7 July
Defense for Children International	10 July
A French church delegation	
Oliviere Debouis –ICRC	11 July
William Robak –US Embassy	18 July
Spanish Consul General, Jerusalem	19 July
Regis Savoie – Director of ICRC in Gaza	
Donatella Rovera – Human Rights Watch	21 July
Charles Pilai & Zeenat Adam – SANGOCO	22 July
John Nwende – Christian Aid	24 July
Ann Mckmalain – Legal Advisor, UNSCO	
Ron Megert – Head of Netherlands Representative Office	31 July
Denis Pieton – Consul General of France	
Kristine Nakhla – French Consulate	
Julia Storm – European Commission	4 August
Geoffrey Adams – British Consul General in Jerusalem	7 August
James Arnon – British Political Consul	

Eva Raabyemajle –Danish Representative Office Maizoue Olivier – Médecins Sans Frontières	8 August
Plissomean Gazon –France Palestine Solidarité	16 August
Erik Ackerman – Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO)	17 August
John Dugard – UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian and Arab Territories	20 August
Nicholas Haun – Human Rights Watch	4 September
Leila Mousa – World University Service Franz Josef Saar – World University Service, Palestine, Cooperation Office Germany – Palestine	13 September
Elizabeth Hodgkin – Amnesty International	16 September
Munir Parker – South African journalist Ann Kristin Brunborg – Field Coordinator, UNAIS	18 September
Rainer Zimmer-Winnel – Chair, German Palestinian Association	4 October
Dr. Toine Van Teeffelen – United Civilians for Peace Fons Stribosuh – Professor of Law, Netherlands	9 October
Per Stadig – Swedish ICJ	11 October
A meeting with Mrs. Polfler, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg at UNRWA	23 October
William Robac – Political Attaché, US Embassy	24 October
Agneta Johanssen – Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	27 October
Father Dick Cederl, USA	3 November
Andrew Whittaker – Her Majesty’s Consul (Political), British Consulate General	6 November
Lilliane Peter, Quakers	11 November
Ken Ellis – Christian Aid	13 November
Karin Roxman – Political Adviser to the European Union Special Representative to the Middle East peace process	17 November
Sue Turrell and William Bell – Christian Aid	8 December
Othman Hussan – First Technical Advisor, Office of the UN High Commissioner Office for Human Rights in Gaza	23 December

Receiving Visiting Delegations

In 2001, PCHR received a number of visiting international delegations to the OPT. PCHR presented its visitors with comprehensive overview of the human rights situation in the OPT.

Visiting Delegations in 2001

Date	Delegation from	Number of participants
8 January	US Fellowship of Reconciliation	6
9 January	National Lawyers Guild (USA)	7
22 January	Global Exchange (San Francisco) and International Lawyers Guild	12
25 January	European Parliament	8

11 February	Menonite Church of the USA and Canada	6
12 February	Menonite Central Committee	27
22 February	Dan Church Aid	14
25 February	Sabeel USA	10
26 February	Welsh churches	5
13 March	Quakers	12
15 March	Catholic Relief Services	
21 March	English and Irish churches	4
23 April	American Palestinian delegation	12
10 May	Australian organizations	5
	A delegation of Canadian churches	5
26 May	Lawyers and judges from Norway	8
19 June	Solidarité Active avec la Palestiniens	
21 June	Catholic Church Relief	10
8 July	Médecins Sans Frontières – Greece	5
9 July	Resource Center for Non-violence	17
31 July	Volunteers and officials of Salaam Children of Olive Tree	10
4 August	Volunteers of Salaam Children of Olive Tree	3
12 October	International Lawyers Guild (headed by Secretary General Benusz Szmuller)	3
18 November	French-Palestinian Solidarity Committee	5
30 November	Campagne Internationale pour la Protection du Peuple Palestinien	25
26 December	Grassroots International Protection for the Palestinian People (GIPP)	

Interviews with Local and International Media in 2001

In 2001, the director and staff of PCHR continued to meet journalists and representatives of local and international media. In addition, PCHR circulated its press releases and reports to hundreds of local and international media institutions. PCHR has continued to provide assistance and information to journalists, including in their field tours.

Dan Church Aid Press Project

Dan Church Aid funded and implemented a special project that included on-month visits by Danish journalists to the Gaza Strip to report about the situation. The project began in autumn 2001 and provided opportunity for some journalists of various Danish media sectors (television channels, newspapers, radio stations and photographers) to visit the Gaza Strip and report about the situation. Such visits were coordinated by PCHR, whose staff provided assistance for journalists, accompanied them in their field tours and organized meetings for them with victims, families and civil society organizations.

In this context, PCHR provided assistance for dozens of international journalists:

Date	Names of Journalists and Media Organizations
10 January	Markus Bernath, Derstandard, Austria
13 January	Sarah Chayes, National Public Radio (USA)
15 January	Palestine Radio
16 January	Lars Gunnar, Swedish Radio Mike Hornbrook, CBC, Canada
17 January	Didier Francois, <i>Libération</i> , France
18 January	Philip Reeves, <i>The Independent</i> (UK) Caroline Camil, Sweden
21 January	Bassam al-Rayes, Palestine Satellite Channel
23 January	Jari Alenius, ILTA Sanomat, Finland
1 February	Molly Moor, <i>The Washington Post</i> (USA) Scott Macleod, <i>Time Magazine</i> (USA)
3 February	Daisouki Morakami, Sanki Newspaper, Japan
8 February	Nadine, Radio France
10 February	Palestine Satellite Channel Monte Carlo Radio, Paris Giorggio Michele, Maniffito, Italy
11 February	René Backmann, <i>Le Nouvel Observateur</i> (France) Girard Renaud, <i>Le Figaro</i> (France) Retam Kareem, MBC, London
14 February	Palestine Satellite Channel
15 February	Jennifer Ludden, National Public Radio (USA) Alison Weir, Marine Scope Newspaper (USA)
16 February	Palestine Television Channel
17 February	<i>The Washington Post</i> , USA
18 February	Palestine Radio
19 February	Ron Wurzer, Staff Photographer, <i>The Seattle Times</i> (USA)
26 February	Roula Khalaf, Middle East Editor, <i>Financial Times</i> (UK) Annette Grossbongardt, <i>Der Spiegel</i> (Germany) Krafft Raphael, France Culture Radio Jerome Sessini, Boomerang Press (France)
3 March	Ole Sippel, senior foreign correspondent, Danish Broadcasting Corporation
20 March	Deborah Horan, <i>Houston Chronicle</i> (USA)
21 March	Alan Philips, <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> (UK)
5 April	Di Tatham, Producer, TVE International, London Fayed Abu Shammala, BBC Arabic
7 April	Christopher Shively, International Editor, <i>Houston Chronicle</i> (USA) Deborah Horan, <i>Houston Chronicle</i> (USA) Martin Saint, <i>Le Point</i>
26 April	Perdereau Claude, photographer, Every Palestine & France-Palestine Oakestube
29 April	Ricardo Alexandre Sousa, RDP, Portuguese National Radio
16 May	Suzanne Goldenberg, <i>The Guardian</i> (UK)

17 May	Joris Luyendijh, NRC
19 May	Caroline Fasseau
21 May	Rophoel Karfft, French Public Radio
22 May	Daniel Williams, <i>The Washington Post</i> (USA)
27 May	Bourrns Nathalie, Radio France Internationale
3 June	Kimbacher Hors, reporter, ORT Australian TV
12 June	Patrick Levaigue, <i>Le Figaro</i>
18 June	Christopher Hedges, <i>The New York Times</i> (USA)
25 June	Stephon Franklin, <i>The Chicago Tribune</i> (USA) Alan Philips, <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> (UK)
30 June	Alexandra Schwartzard, <i>Libération</i> (France)
3 July	Telephone interview with Arab News Network (ANN) – London
4 July	Interview with BBC
10 July	Charles Radin and Charles Sennott, <i>The Boston Globe</i> (USA)
2 August	Malbrenot George, Radio France International Joris Luyendijh, Middle East correspondent – NOS TV
5 August	Interview with BBC
8 August	Interview with the Austrian Television
12 August	Kylie Morris, BBC Radio
13 August	Catherine Hours, AFP
19 August	Mohammed As'ad al-Dahesh, Tunisia Television Sudarsan Raghavan, Africa Bureau Chief, Knight-Ridder (USA)
5 September	Interview with Palestine Satellite Channel
8 September	Interview with Sharjah Television (UAE)
10 September	Harcle Erlandso, Swedish Radio Taher al-Nouno, <i>al-Quds</i>
18 September	Inge Gunther, daily newspaper in Germany Barbara Surk, Middle East correspondent, Delo Newspaper (Slovenia) Doris Bulau, German Radio
25 September	Michael Zielenziger, Tokyo Bureau Chief, Knight Ridder Newspapers (USA) Takeshi Minami, Journalist, Jiji Press (Japan)
27 September	Interview with Palestine Satellite Channel Hassan al-Kashef, Ministry of Information
10 October	Thomas Saehl, Danish Broadcasting Corporation
11 October	<i>Los Angeles Times</i> and <i>Chicago Tribune</i> (USA) Riham 'Abdel-Karim, MBC TV
31 October	Peter Speetiers, Dutch Journalist <i>Financial Times Magazine</i> & <i>The Independent</i> (UK)
5 November	Canadian Radio
6 November	<i>Le Monde</i> (France)
8 November	Matt Spetalnick, Reuters
12 November	Luis Lema, <i>Le Temps</i> Alexandra Schwartzard – <i>Libération</i>
13 November	Barbara Plett, Reporter, BBC Jakob Nielsen, <i>Politiken</i> (Denmark)
14 November	Suzane Neil, German journalist

6 December	A telephone interview with Cape Town Radio (South Africa)
8 December	EGI Shingo, Asahi Shimbun (Japan)
12 December	Stuart Tanner, BBC
22 December	Doi Toshikuni, Japanese journalist
23 December	Paris Cilles, <i>Le Monde</i> (France)
24 December	Guan Kesturen, Photographer
26 December	Patrizia Viglino, Journalist & Photographer (Italy)
27 December	Ned Parker, Agence France Press (AFP)

PCHR Press Releases in 2001

PCHR regularly issues press releases providing detailed and timely information regarding specific incidents of human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces or the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), and also relevant events in the international arena. These press releases are widely distributed locally, regionally, and internationally.

In 2001, PCHR issued 65 press releases, most of which (72.3%) were devoted to human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian civilians, whereas the rest (27.7%) were devoted to issues relevant to human rights violations perpetrated by the PNA and its security services and other issues for which the PNA was not directly responsible. The following table classifies PCHR's press releases in 2001:

Issue	Number	Percentage
Israeli violations	47	72.3%
Palestinian violations	18	27.7%
Total	65	100%

The following table summarizes PCHR's press releases on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights:

Date	Subject	Notes
15 January	Settlements	An attack by settlers on Palestinian civilian and their property in Khan Yunis
12 February	al-Aqsa Intifada	PCHR's meeting with the UN human rights inquiry mission
13 February	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of five Palestinians by Israeli forces
19 February	Israeli judiciary	Israeli Supreme Court legalizes and encourages killing of Palestinian civilians
3 March	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of Palestinian civilians by Israeli forces
15 March	Torture	A complaint by PCHR on torture of Nasser 'Ayyad, detained by Israeli forces
31 March	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of 6 Palestinian civilians by Israeli forces
2 April	al-Aqsa Intifada	An assassination of a Palestinian in Rafah by Israeli forces
10 April	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of a medic in Israeli shelling of Gaza

11 April	al-Aqsa Intifada	Demolition of 30 houses in Khan Yunis and killing of 4 Palestinians by Israeli forces
15 April	al-Aqsa Intifada	Demolition of dozens of houses and shops in Rafah by Israeli forces
17 April	Prisoners in Israeli jails	Continuing arrests of Palestinians by Israeli forces
17 April	al-Aqsa Intifada	Incursion into Beit Hanoun and shelling of the Gaza Strip by Israeli forces
24 April	Prisoners in Israeli jails	Continuing arrests of Palestinians by Israeli forces
24 April	Israeli practices	PCHR obtains a decision by Israeli Supreme Court to stop establishment of a settlement road south of Deir al-Balah
7 May	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of a Palestinian infant in Israeli shelling of Khan Yunis
12 May	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of Palestinians in Israeli assassination attempts, shelling and shooting
14 May	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of 5 Palestinian security men by Israeli forces
15 May	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of Palestinian civilians by Israeli forces
15 May	al-Aqsa Intifada	Willful shooting at Palestinian civilians by Israeli forces
19 May	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of 11 Palestinian security men in raid by Israeli F-16 fighter jets
22 May	Prisoners in Israeli jails	Meeting with ICRC advisor on conditions of detention of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails
10 June	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of Palestinian civilians by Israeli forces
23 June	al-Aqsa Intifada	Demolition of 22 houses in Rafah and south of Gaza by Israeli forces
26 June	Torture	A call for pressuring Israel to stop torturing Palestinian prisoners
10 July	al-Aqsa Intifada	Demolition of more than 30 houses in Rafah and Shu'fat by Israeli forces
12 August	Israeli practices	Seizure of Orient House by Israeli forces
20 August	al-Aqsa Intifada	Meeting with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian and Arab Territories on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights
26 August	al-Aqsa Intifada	Shelling of Palestinian cities and the killing of a child by Israeli forces
27 August	al-Aqsa Intifada	Assassination of PFLP Secretary General
28 August	al-Aqsa Intifada	Demolition of 15 houses in Rafah by Israeli forces
1 September	al-Aqsa Intifada	Assassination of a Palestinian security official
9 September	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of a Palestinian child by Israeli forces
26 September	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of a Palestinian boy in Israeli shelling
29 September	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of Palestinian civilians by Israeli forces
3 October	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of 6 Palestinians in Israeli incursion into Beit Lahia

23 October	Israeli practices	Seizure of full control over Rafah Border Crossing by Israeli forces
24 October	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of 10 Palestinians in Beit Rima village by Israeli forces
10 November	al-Aqsa Intifada	Condemnation of US disregard of international humanitarian law in light of continuing Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights
11 November	al-Aqsa Intifada	A call for the implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention
22 November	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of 5 Palestinian children in a suspicious explosion in Khan Yunis
24 November	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of 5 Palestinians by Israeli forces
24 November	Israeli practices	Welcoming conclusions of the UN Committee against Torture on the Israeli policies of house demolition and closure
27 November	al-Aqsa Intifada	Appeal to senior UN officials to investigate killing of Palestinian children by Israeli forces
4 December	al-Aqsa Intifada	Bombardment of Gaza and killing of two Palestinians by Israeli forces
11 December	al-Aqsa Intifada	Appeal to senior UN officials to condemn Israeli violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention after deaths of two Palestinian children in assassination attempt
15 December	al-Aqsa Intifada	Killing of 13 Palestinians and demolition of more than 50 houses by Israeli forces

The following table summarizes PCHR's press releases on violations of human rights by the PNA:

Date	Subject	Notes
13 January	State security	Executions of two Palestinians by the PNA
1 March	Death of a detainee	Call for investigation into death of suspect
15 August	Death of a detainee	Death of detainee in custody of Military Intelligence Service
16 August	Death of a detainee	Call to prosecute those responsible for death of detainee
19 September	Right to education	Call for the PNA to free poor students from school fees
8 October	Shooting	Killing of 3 Palestinians as a result of excessive use of force in dispersing demonstrations
20 October	Political arrests	Call for the release of all political prisoners
22 October	Death of a detainee	Call for investigation into the death of a detainee
7 November	Political arrests	Decision by Palestinian High Court of Justice to release 2 political detainees
10 November	Political arrests	Continued detention of 2 political detainees despite High Court order to release them

16 November	Political arrests	Welcoming the release of political detainees
19 November	Obstruction of lawyers' work	Prevention of a visit by PCHR lawyers to political detainees
24 November	Political arrests	Decision by Palestinian High Court of Justice to release 9 political detainees
27 November	Political arrests	Continued detention of political detainees despite High Court order to release them
1 December	Political arrests	Decision by Palestinian High Court of Justice to release 7 political detainees
2 December	Political arrests	Decision by Palestinian High Court of Justice to release 5 political detainees
6 December	Shooting	Call for investigation into regrettable incidents in Gaza
22 December	Shooting	Killing of 7 Palestinians in clashes

Translation

Nearly all of PCHR's publications are translated into English by a specialized translator, under the supervision of the coordinator of the Democratic Development Unit and with assistance of international staff. These publications are widely circulated.

PCHR's Web Site (www.pchrgaza.org)

PCHR's website is one of the main means of disseminating information on human rights. Over the past two years, PCHR was able to construct an easy-to-use, and comprehensive website. In 2001, PCHR's website received an average of 7500 visits per month, or approximately 250 visits daily. In September, when the WCAR was convened, the number of visits was 1350, at an average of 248 visits daily. The number of pages viewed was 650000 pages, at an average of 54016 pages monthly and 1800 pages daily. The total access to PCHR's web site was 661000, at an average of 1830 daily.

(2) Activities of PCHR's Units in 2001

Field Work Unit

The information gathered by the Field Work Unit forms the basis of much of PCHR's work. Its staff collects information regarding violations of Palestinian human rights by both Israeli occupation forces and the PNA. Through cooperation and coordination with human rights organization in the West Bank, especially LAW – the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment – the unit is able to provide precise data about human rights violations throughout the OPT. In 2001, PCHR and LAW continued to share information about human rights violations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The unit classifies the information it collects and prepares detailed files and tables which are used by PCHR in its reports, studies, and other activities and to provide local and international human rights organizations, media, and journalists with information they need in regard to the human rights situation in the OPT.

In addition, the unit's field workers play an important role in briefing visiting international delegations, inquiry commissions, representatives of international human rights organizations, and foreign reporters and journalists on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights and they accompany them on tours of affected areas. They also play a major role in communication between PCHR and the local community, urging victims of human rights violations to complain about such violations and seek legal aid when necessary.

In 2001, the unit was increasingly involved in preparing press releases and PCHR's weekly reports on human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces. In November, the unit took the responsibility of writing the weekly reports. Up to the end of 2001, the unit wrote 11 weekly reports.

Legal Unit

Work on Israeli Violations of Human Rights

The unit carried out nearly all duties listed in the 2001 work plan.

1) Legal Aid for Victims of Human Rights Violations

In 2001, Israeli occupation forces escalated violations against Palestinian civilians, including killings, shelling of civilian facilities, mass house demolitions, and destruction of agricultural land. The unit mainly focused its work on following up complaints of Palestinian civilian victims of human rights violations carried out by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip. In 2001, the Legal Unit received 553 complaints relevant to abuses by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip, whose subjects included:

- Land leveling and property destruction
- Shelling
- Killing or injuries of civilians

The unit also continued to follow up similar complaints from 2000. Its lawyers followed up these cases from PCHR's headquarters in Gaza City and its branches in Khan Yunis and Jabalya and sent numerous complaints to the Israeli military legal advisor. The unit received responses to a number of these complaints, in which the Israeli authorities sought to deny legal responsibility for physical and material damage resulting from their actions.⁶⁷

The following table shows the numbers and categories of complaints received by the Legal Unit in 2001:

Subject	Gaza office	Khan Yunis office	Jabalya office	Total
Land leveling and property destruction	105	204	75	384
Shelling of property	11	119	9	139
Killings and injuries	5	22	3	30
Total	121	345	87	553

The following table shows details of complaints, mechanism of following up complaints, and Israeli responses:

Subject	Number of complaints	Complaints sent to	Israeli response	Notes
Land leveling and property destruction	384	Legal advisor, military attorney general, compensation officer	Negative responses to 264 complaints and no response to the rest	Denial of responsibility by Israeli forces
Shelling of property	139	Legal advisor, military attorney general, compensation officer	Negative responses to 69 complaints and no response to the rest	Denial of responsibility by Israeli forces
Killings and injuries	30	Legal advisor, military attorney general, compensation officer	Negative responses to 10 complaints and no response to the rest	Denial of responsibility by Israeli forces
Total	553		343 negative responses	

⁶⁷The unit received only one positive response, in a case related to the burning of a Palestinian truck at Sofa Crossing between the Gaza Strip and Israel, east of Rafah, in 2000. Israeli forces agreed to pay compensation in 2001.

2) Legal Aid for Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli Jails

The number of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails increased to 3000 by the end of 2001, due to large numbers of arrests by Israeli occupation forces throughout this Intifada. In 2001, the Legal Unit followed 176 new cases of prisoners and cases of 23 prisoners from 2000, compared to 87 cases in 1999 and 72 cases in 2000.

The following table shows numbers of cases of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails pursued by the unit at PCHR's offices in 2001:

Category	Gaza office	Khan Yunis office	Jabalya office	Total
New cases in 2001	82	63	31	176
Cases from 2000	7	10	6	23
Total	89	73	37	199

Legal aid provided for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails in 2001 included:

- Determination of the location of detention of 169 prisoners.
- Arranging 196 attorney visits to prisoners (sometimes prisoners were visited more than once); 80 prisoners were denied prisoner visits.
- Representing 115 prisoners before Israeli courts.
- Seventy-six prisoners were released, including 31 released at the end of their sentences, 44 released without any charge, and one released after an Israeli court found him innocent.

3) Legal Aid in Respect to the Right to Free Movement

In 2001, the unit provided legal aid for Palestinians whom Israeli occupation forces prevented from traveling abroad and pursued cases in which families or individuals were prevented from visiting Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails during periods when family visitation was allowed. In 2001, the unit followed up 40 cases relevant to freedom of movement. In all of these cases, PCHR lawyers submitted complaints to the Israeli military legal advisor, receiving a variety of responses.

The following table shows cases relevant to the right to free movement followed by the Legal Unit from PCHR's three offices:

	Gaza office	Khan Yunis office	Jabalya office	Total
Number of cases	36	0	4	40

The following table shows responses received by the unit regarding the right of free movement:

	Positive	Negative	Under consideration	Total
Number of cases	16	4	20	40

4) Other Complaints by Palestinians Regarding Israeli Practices

In 2001, the unit followed up 18 complaints by Palestinians in regard to miscellaneous Israeli practices, detailed in the following table:

Complaint	Number	Sent to:	Response	Notes
Retrieval of bodies of Palestinians killed by Israeli forces	5	Israeli military legal advisor	1 positive, 3 negative, 1 no response	Will not be released “until Intifada is stopped”
Investigation into the deaths of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails	2	Israeli military legal advisor	1 positive, 1 under consideration	Reports on police investigation and autopsy were received in one case
Disappearance of Palestinians inside Israel	2	Israeli government (through Hamoked)	2 negative	Missing persons not found
Compensation	3	Israeli military compensation officer, then to courts	1 positive, 2 negative	Under consideration
Degrading treatment and humiliating checking at Beit Hanoun (Erez) Crossing	2	Israeli military legal advisor	2 negative	Legal advisor claimed measures were appropriate
Confiscation of fishing boats and equipment	2	Israeli military legal advisor	2 positive	Boats and equipment returned
Shooting at fishing boats	1	Complaint not sent	---	File kept for lack of documentation
Belongings of released prisoners	1	Israeli military legal advisor	1 positive	Belongings were sent back to released prisoner

5) Appeals to Israeli Supreme Court Regarding Land Confiscation and Leveling

During 2001, the Legal Unit appealed on four cases before the Israeli Supreme Court, through Israeli lawyers. The first case concerned the razing of land and the establishment of a settlement road by Israeli occupation forces south of Khan Yunis. The Court handed down a decision to temporarily stop work on the road. In the second case, the Legal Unit obtained an agreement not to affect a cemetery and mosque on a tract of Palestinian land that had been razed. The third case concerned the placement of mobile homes by settlers on a razed tract of Palestinian land. The case was investigated and the Court found the behavior of settlers illegal and ordered the land evacuated. In the fourth case, the unit's appeal was rejected.

6) Assistance in the Provisions of Medical Treatment

PCHR provides assistance in securing adequate medical treatment for poor Palestinian patients through cooperation with Physicians for Human Rights/Israel. In 2001, 9 patients from the Gaza Strip benefited from this service, 8 of whom received medical treatment at Israeli hospital and clinics, while the ninth case was still followed up by the unit.

Work on Human Rights Violations by the PNA

The unit provides Palestinians with legal consultation and intervention with concerned parties, including governmental institutions and the judiciary. In 2001, 220 clients received legal consultation relevant to civil and criminal cases and measures taken by PNA ministries, and 120 clients requested the unit to represent their cases before concerned parties.

1) Detainees in Palestinian Jails

In 2001, the unit followed up cases of 81 Palestinians from the Gaza Strip arrested by Palestinian security services. It followed 58 cases from the Gaza office, 6 cases from the Khan Yunis office, and 17 cases from the Jabalya office. The following table shows legal aid provided by PCHR in these cases:

Subject	Number	Mechanisms	Results	Notes
Asking for explanation of arrest and demanding release of detainees	81	Submitted 74 requests to Attorney General; other detainees were released	Negative	8 responses received
Determining location of detention	81	Contacts, messages, and visits	Positive except for messages	Locations of detention determined

Representation of detainees before courts	40	Summons before the High Court of Justice	Positive	Court ordered the release of 30 detainees, 22 of whom actually released; rest remained in custody
Non-implementation of High Court decisions	11	Requests to the Attorney General	No response	Three detainees were released among those mentioned above
Deterioration of detainees' health conditions	2	Four requests to the Attorney General	Positive	Two detainees were released
Visits to detainees	90	PCHR lawyers visited detainees upon coordination with prison administration	Positive	All visits took place at Gaza Central Prison before 19 November, when the Police Chief prohibited such visits

2) Other Complaints Received by the Unit

In 2001, the unit received 34 complaints on various issues, intervening with relevant official parties. The following table shows details of these complaints:

Relevant party	Number of complaints	Response			Notes
		Positive	Negative	No response	
Attorney General	13	3	5	5	Violation of legal orders, attacks by security men, deaths in custody, medical malpractice

Ministry of Health	6	4	1	1	Forming committees to investigate medical malpractice, paying compensation, and forming medical quality control committees
Ministry of Housing	3	---	2	1	Providing housing for families and facilitating payment for public land
General Personnel Council	2	---	2	---	Appointment of employees and non-payment of salaries
Criminal Investigation Bureau	1	1	---	---	
Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs	1	1	---	---	Due payments
Ministry of Education	1	---	1	---	Transferring students from UNRWA schools to public schools
UNRWA	6	5	1	---	UNRWA employees arrested by police and medical negligence
Gaza Electricity Company	1	1	---	---	Temporary subscriptions
Total	34	15	12	7	

3) Other Complaints before the Judiciary

In 2001, the unit followed up five cases before the judiciary detailed in the following table:

Court	Number of cases	Subject	Results
Magisterial Court	1	Compensation for death of a child in a car accident	Under consideration since 1999
Central Court	1	Due payments for employees of an NGO	Positive

High Court of Justice	3	Removal of names of lawyers by the Bar Association from the roll of practicing lawyers	Under consideration
Total	5		

Participation in International and Local Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops

- The unit, in cooperation with the Palestinian Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs, organized a seminar on torture in Israeli jails, held in the headquarters of the ministry in Gaza City on 25 June. The seminar was held on the occasion of the International Day against Torture.
- The unit participated in a meeting with the Palestinian Minister of Prisoners' Affairs on 19 May.

Reception of International Delegations

The unit provided assistance for four international delegations that visited the OPT in 2001. All of these delegations were interested in Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians during this Intifada.

- The unit prepared a program for the visit of a delegation from the National Lawyers Guild to investigate Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians during this Intifada. The unit coordinator accompanied the delegates during meetings with Palestinian officials on 23 January.⁶⁸
- The unit prepared a program for the visit of a delegation of Amnesty International on 24-25 May. The delegation investigated Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians during this Intifada. The unit coordinator accompanied the delegates during their tours and provided them with information on Israeli violations of human rights.
- The unit prepared a program for the visit of a delegation from Human Rights Watch. Unit staff accompanied the delegates during their tours to gather information on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights on 21 July.
- The unit prepared a program for the visit of a delegation of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers to investigate the kinds of weapons used by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian civilians. Staff of the unit accompanied the delegates in their meetings with the Attorney General, officials of the Ministries of Justice and Health, and officers of PNA security services on 13-14 October.⁶⁹

⁶⁸For further details about this delegation, see p. 64 of this report.

⁶⁹For further details about this delegation, see p. 64 of this report.

Contribution to Human Rights Training and Awareness

In 2001, members of the Legal Unit delivered a series of legal lectures in courses organized by the Training Unit of PCHR. It also absorbed two training lawyers in a program aimed at developing their skills in human rights issues.

Research and Studies

The unit did not carry out this part of its annual plan due to the lack of a legal researcher and the additional burden on the unit because of the increasing caseload.

Democratic Development Unit (DDU)

The 2001 annual plan of the Democratic Development Unit, part of PCHR's annual plan, took into consideration the rapidly evolving situation in the OPT during the al-Aqsa Intifada, an issue discussed inside the unit and in PCHR in general. The expectation that the OPT would continue to witness large-scale Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians prompted a decision to focus efforts of all units to the Israeli agenda, whilst maintaining work on the PNA agenda or efforts to support democratic transformation and the promotion of human rights and the rule of law. Because of the escalation in Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians in 2001, PCHR in general, and DDU in particular, did not carry out any specific campaigns calling for presidential and parliamentary elections, despite the fact that the current legal term ended in May 1999. PCHR considers that appropriate conditions for local council elections simply did not exist due to escalating attacks by Israeli occupying forces.

Adaptation to the new developments in the OPT was clear in the DDU's 2001 plan. The Unit was involved in activities that were not part of its original mandate while continuing its work on democracy. The DDU was able to carry out the majority of its planned activities in 2001.

Press Releases

The DDU prepared many of the press releases issued by PCHR in 2001, most of which concerned Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians. The other press releases prepared by the DDU covered violations of human rights by the PNA, such as the implementation of death penalties, deaths of detainees in Palestinian jails, excessive use of force during demonstrations, and political arrests.

Weekly Reports

The DDU participated in preparing most of the weekly reports on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights in the OPT issued by PCHR in 2001. The DDU also provided necessary technical assistance for the Field Work Unit to start prepare the weekly reports with less assistance from the DDU.

Studies and Reports

Much of the DDU's activities in 2001 were devoted to reports on various subjects incorporated in the annual plan, whilst maintaining flexibility to the changing situation in the OPT. For example, a report on the right to free expression and peaceful assembly in the period May 2000-May 2001 was not issued as PNA violations in this regard notably decreased in the first three quarters of 2001. This issue was however covered in the annual report prepared by the DDU on the human rights situation in the OPT. The DDU also issued two reports (assassinations and extra-judicial killings) that were not included in the annual plan. The DDU had intended to prepare a report on Israeli violations against Palestinian children, but since the Women's Unit was working on a similar report, the DDU only provided assistance for this report, which was published in early 2002. Following are the reports prepared by DDU in 2001:

- Fourth periodical report on land leveling and house and civilian facility demolition in the Gaza Strip, 19 December 2000-15 January 2001 (published 25 January).
- Fifth periodical report on land leveling and house and civilian facility demolition in the Gaza Strip, 16 January-14 February 2001 (published 20 February).
- Second periodical report on Israeli attacks on journalists, 21 November 2000-20 February 2001 (published 1 March).
- Report on assassinations and extra-judicial killings committed by Israeli occupation forces 29 September 2000-28 April 2001.
- Third periodical report on Israeli attacks on journalists, 21 February-29 April 2001 (published 12 May)
- Fourth periodical report on Israeli attacks on journalists, 30 April-29 June 2001 (published 1 July).
- Fifth periodical report on Israeli attacks on journalists, 30 June-29 August 2001 (published 1 September).
- Report on assassinations and extra-judicial killings committed by Israeli occupation forces 29 September 2000-28 September 2001.
- Comprehensive report on land leveling and house and civilian facility demolition in the Gaza Strip in the first year of al-Aqsa Intifada (published October 2001).
- Evaluation of the Palestinian Legislative Council's performance, March 2000-March 2001 (published December 2001).

Al-Mentar – PCHR's Newsletter

The DDU began publication of this Arabic-language monthly newsletter during the last quarter of 2000 as a means of building stronger links between PCHR and the local community. *Al-Mentar* covers not only PCHR's activities, but also seeks to raise awareness of human rights in general. In 2001, 12 issues of *al-Mentar* were published.

Participation in Training Courses on Human Rights Awareness

In 2001, the DDU participated in all courses organized by PCHR's Training Unit aimed at raising awareness of human rights and democracy. Unit coordinator Hamdi Shaqqura participated in training a group of NGO employees on the importance and wording of press releases. The lecture was held at the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights in Gaza on 22 April.

Workshops

Due to the current situation in the al-Aqsa Intifada and the increasing burdens on the unit, the DDU was able to organize only one workshop in 2001, devoted to the impact of the total siege imposed on the OPT by Israeli forces on the work of the Palestinian Legislative Council. Public figures, PLC members, and representatives of NGOs and political parties in the southern Gaza Strip participated in the workshop, which was held in PCHR's Khan Yunis office on 23 August.

Reception of Visiting Delegations

In 2001, DDU participated in the reception of several visiting delegations and briefed them on the human rights situation in the OPT.

Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights Unit

In 2001, the unit carried out all duties included in its annual plan, and prepared some reports not included in the plan, in response to the developments of during this Intifada.

Studies and Reports

- A study on the rights of the handicapped in the Gaza Strip (published in February).
- A study on the right to development (published in May).
- A report on Israeli violations against Palestinian medical personnel (not included in the annual plan, published in April).
- A report on poverty in the Gaza Strip (published in May).
- A report on Israeli violations of the rights of Palestinian laborers in the Gaza Strip in the first year of the Intifada.
- 18 updates on the impacts of the Israeli closure imposed on the Gaza Strip.
- A report on Israeli violations of the right to education in the Gaza Strip, not yet published.
- A report on the concepts of human right in the new Palestinian school curricula and a critique of the curriculum of the 6th grade, not yet published.
- A number of press releases on issues relevant to economic, social and cultural rights.

- The unit is due to finish a comprehensive study on economic and social rights in the Gaza Strip in February 2002.

Field Work on Economic and Social Rights

In addition to the information received from the Field Work Unit, the unit's researchers carried out numerous visits to obtain information necessary for studies and reports on economic, social, and cultural rights. They visited institutions and conducted interviews regarding violations of economic, social, and cultural rights.

Workshops and Activities Relevant to Raising Awareness of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

On 20 June, the unit, in cooperation with the National Work Commission, organized a workshop on the role of NGOs and official institutions in facing human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces. The workshop was held in PCHR's Khan Yunis office. More than 45 representatives of NGOs and official institutions which provide services for victims of Israeli violations, participated in the workshop.

In 2001, researchers of the unit gave several lectures on issues relevant to economic, social, and cultural rights in workshops organized by NGOs and official institutions. Following are the most significant workshops and lectures:

- On 3 April, researcher Maysoun Mushref participated in a workshop on mechanisms for confronting the problem of unemployment in Palestinian society, organized in Khan Yunis by the Development Studies Program of Bir Zeit University.
- On 30 April, researcher Bassam Abu Hashish submitted a working paper and participated in a workshop on the impact of Israeli violations during the current Intifada and the needs of the handicapped.
- In June, Bassam Abu Hashish delivered a series of lectures on the rights of the handicapped at Atafaluna Society for Deaf Children, upon an invitation from World Vision.
- On 7 November, unit coordinator Khalil Shahin and Bassam Abu Hashish participated in a workshop on the rights of the handicapped in the Gaza Strip organized by societies of the handicapped in the Gaza Strip. Shahin submitted a working paper on the Law of the Handicapped of 1999 and its conformity with international human rights standards.
- Unit coordinator Khalil Shahin participated in a training program sponsored by the Ad-Dameer Association for Human Rights, and delivered two lectures on economic, social, and cultural rights.

Women's Unit

In 2001, the unit carried out all duties included in its annual plan, and prepared some additional reports not included in the plan, in response to developments during the current Intifada.

Legal Aid Program for Women and Women's Organizations

This program seeks to provide legal assistance for women and women's organizations, including:

1. Legal consultation
2. Representing women in the *Sharia* Courts (cases of family law)
3. Legal assistance for jailed women
4. Legal assistance for women's organizations.

In 2001, the number of cases pursued by the unit increased by 53%. The unit provided legal aid for women in civil courts and also began work in PCHR's offices in Khan Yunis and Jabalya.

During 2001, the unit handled 304 cases, including legal consultation (56 cases) and representing women before *Sharia* courts (204 cases) and before civil courts (44 cases). The increase in the number of cases pursued by the unit was due to several factors:

- Ongoing and increasing coordination between the unit and *Sharia* courts.
- Activation of the legal aid program in the southern and northern Gaza Strip.
- Successful awareness-raising of PCHR's specific services for women and women's rights.
- The lack of other sources of free legal aid of this kind in the Gaza Strip.

The following table demonstrates work pursued by the Women's Unit over the past several years.

Number of Court Cases Pursued by the Unit in 1998-2001

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001
Number of cases	110	172	162	248

Types of *Sharia* Cases Pursued by the Unit in 2001

Case Type	Number
Alimony	89
Rights to household property	65
Access rights to children	8
Separation	19
Obedience	1
Custody rights	20
Payment for childcare	1
Payment for childbirth	1
Total	204

Types of Cases Pursued by the Unit before Civil Courts in 2001

Case Type	Number
Procedural cases	33
Rights cases	5
Judicial notifications	6
Total	44

Legal Awareness Program for Women

In 2001, the Women's Unit cooperated with women's institutions in the Gaza Strip to organize 27 lectures and workshops on the rights of women and children during the al-Aqsa Intifada. Most of these lectures and workshops were held in the southern Gaza Strip.

Lectures Organized by the Unit in Co-ordination with Women's institutions in 2001

Date	Subject	Place	Institution
18 January	Violations of children's rights	Khan Yunis	Arab Liberation Front
22 January	Violations of children's rights	'Abasan	Women's Struggle Bloc
25 January	Violations of children's rights	Khuza'a	Women's Struggle Bloc
3 February	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)	Khuza'a	Women's Union
5 February	CEDAW	'Abasan	Muslim Women's Society
19 March	CEDAW	Khan Yunis	Vocational Training Center
5 April	Violations of children's rights	Khan Yunis	Shorouq and Amal Club
9 April	Marriage in the personal affairs law	Khan Yunis	Vocational Training Center
12 April	The personal affairs law	Khan Yunis	Social Development Center
16 April	Divorce and personal affairs law	Khan Yunis	Vocational Training Center
23 April	Custody and lineage	Khan Yunis	Vocational Training Center
24 April	Women in international human rights instruments	Khan Yunis	Social Development Center
16 June	Right to play	Khan Yunis	al-Hanan Benevolent Association for Mother and Child

23 June	Right to adequate housing	Khan Yunis	al-Hanan Benevolent Association for Mother and Child
26 June	Right to life	Khan Yunis	al-Hanan Benevolent Association for Mother and Child
18 October	Rights of children under Palestinian law	Khan Yunis	al-Hanan Benevolent Association for Mother and Child
25 October	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Khan Yunis	al-Hanan Benevolent Association for Mother and Child

The unit, in coordination with the Union of Women for Social Work, also organized a series of lectures on the effects of this Intifada on women and children during the period 10 June-5 July:

Date	Lecture
10 June	Effects of the Intifada on economic conditions
17 June	Psychological conditions of mothers of victims
18 June	Effects of the Intifada on health conditions of women
24 June	Effects of the Intifada on non-curricular activities of children
1 July	Role of women's organizations in the Intifada
2 July	Means of adaptation to the current situation

The Women's Unit also organized four workshops of women's rights, shown in the following table:

Date	Subject	Place
15 February	The law of personal affairs	PCHR's Khan Yunis office
3 May	The rights of working women	PCHR's Khan Yunis office
14 June	The status of Palestinian children	PCHR's Khan Yunis office
11 July	Problems of legal cases at the <i>Sharia</i> ' Courts	PCHR's Jabalya office

Studies and Reports

1. As part of its mission to raise awareness of women's rights, the unit publishes a series of booklets entitled "the Legal Guide for Women." In 2001, the unit issued the fourth booklet in the series, entitled "the Legal Guide for Women to *Sharia*' Courts."
2. The unit prepared a report on Israeli violations against Palestinian children during the current Intifada entitled "They Have No Mercy on Their Childhood." The final version of the report was produced in cooperation with the DDU and was published in early 2002.

Other Activities

1. On 30 April, unit lawyer Hanan Matar participated in “Confused Letters,” a program on Palestine Television Channel.
2. On 21 May, unit researcher Majida Shehada submitted a working paper on the Convention on the Rights of the Child at a workshop in Bani Suhaila School in Khan Yunis.
3. On 16 July, unit coordinator Muna Shawa participated in a workshop on the Palestinian law of the child, organized by UNICEF and the Legislation Department of the PNA.
4. Since October, the unit also participates in a committee formed to review the law of personal affairs, comprised of the Palestinian Women’s Union, women’s legal organizations, and political parties.

Training Unit

The unit resumed its training activities in the field of human rights and democracy in May 2001. The unit had suspended its training activities at the beginning of the year due to the situation in the OPT, including the internal siege imposed by Israeli occupation forces. PCHR’s administration decided to resume the unit’s training activities whenever possible.

Below are the unit’s significant activities in 2001:

Training Courses on Democracy and Human Rights

In 2001, the unit conducted several training courses in the field of human rights and democracy to raise public awareness of issues such as human rights concepts, international human rights instruments, democracy, pluralism, political activities, and separation of powers. These training courses target groups from different segments of society as a means of creating an effective cadre able to promote human rights norms. These courses are conducted according to modern training methods, using audio-visual means and specialised publications. PCHR’s publications are usually distributed at these courses to raise awareness of the human rights situation in the OPT. Courses are conducted in cooperation with the Legal Unit, Democratic Development Unit, Women’s Unit, and Field Work Unit. Local human rights activists and legal experts are also invited to contribute to these training courses. In 2001, PCHR organized six training courses, in which 157 trainees from different elements of society participated. Participants were awarded certificates upon the conclusion of each training course.

1. On 27 May PCHR organized a training course in its Khan Yunis office on human rights, democracy, and international humanitarian law for 27 members of political parties. The course lasted for four days.
2. From 8-17 July, PCHR organized a training course in Gaza City on human rights and democracy for 27 students from the Political Science

Department at al-Azhar University in Gaza. The course consisted of 18 training hours and focused on democracy, pluralism, separation of powers, international humanitarian law, the UN Convention against Torture, human rights documentation, the situation of human rights in the OPT, and the role of NGOs in promoting human rights.

3. From 9-19 July, PCHR organized a training course in its Khan Yunis office on human rights and democracy for 25 students from the Political Science Department at al-Azhar University in Gaza. The course consisted of 18 training hours and focused on democracy, pluralism, separation of powers, international humanitarian law, the UN Convention against Torture, human rights documentation, the situation of human rights in the OPT, and the role of NGOs in promoting human rights.
4. From 22-28 July, PCHR in Gaza City organized a training course on human rights and democracy for 28 students from the Political Science Department at al-Azhar University in Gaza. The course consisted of 18 training hours and focused on democracy, pluralism, separation of powers, international humanitarian law, the UN Convention against Torture, human rights documentation, the situation of human rights in the OPT, and the role of NGOs in promoting human rights.
5. From 15-22 October, PCHR organized a training course on human rights and democracy for 20 members of political parties in Gaza. The course consisted of 15 training hours.
6. From 15-22 October, PCHR in Gaza City organized a training course on human rights and democracy for 33 members the alumni Association of al-Azhar University. The course consisted of 33 training hours and focused on human rights standards, international humanitarian law, democracy, women's rights, and the role of NGOs in promoting human rights.

Workshops

In 2001, the Training Unit participated in a number of activities with NGOs in the Gaza Strip, especially with the purpose of training in and raising awareness of human rights, development, and democracy. The unit coordinator conducted several sessions involving the participation of trainees from different sectors of society.

1. On 20 June, the unit organized a workshop in PCHR's Khan Yunis branch on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights and the role of governmental and non-governmental organization in confronting them. The workshop focused on the situation in the OPT and the role of Palestinian society in protecting victims of Israeli violations of human rights. In conclusion, the participants proposed several recommendations aimed at promoting efforts to provide international protection for the Palestinian people and to develop services for victims of Israeli violations of human rights.

2. From 5-13 March, the unit coordinator delivered two lectures on the historical development of human rights and economic, social, and cultural rights in a training course organized by the Ad-Dameer Association for Human Rights, in which 25 trainees participated.
3. From 3-8 November, the unit coordinator delivered two lectures on economic, social, and cultural rights and the UN Convention against Torture in a training course organized by the Ad-Dameer Association for Human Rights, in which 25 trainees participated.
4. On 29 October, the unit coordinator delivered a lecture on the right to free expression in international human rights conventions in a training session for 22 members of the Handicapped Society in Khan Yunis.
5. On 1 November, the unit coordinator delivered a lecture on the role of NGOs in promoting human rights norms for 25 members of the Handicapped Society in Gaza.
6. On 5 November, the unit coordinator delivered a lecture on the role of NGOs in promoting human rights norms for 23 members of the Handicapped Society in Khan Yunis.
7. On 8 November, the unit coordinator delivered a lecture on civil education for 25 members of the Handicapped Society in Gaza.
8. On 12 November, the unit coordinator delivered a lecture on civil education for 25 members of the Handicapped Society in Khan Yunis.

Involvement in Monitoring Human Rights Violations

The coordinator of the Training Unit regularly contributed to field documentation of Israeli violations of human rights, accompanied visiting international delegations, and journalists, and participated in preparing press releases and reports issued by PCHR on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights.

Participation in Training Sessions to develop PCHR Staff's Expertise

As part of its ongoing efforts in staff development, PCHR sent a number of its staff from different units to participate in local, regional, and international training courses. In 2001, the number of staff participating in such courses decreased due to the current situation in the OPT and the pressure of work at PCHR. However, PCHR assisted some of its staff in joining the masters program on democracy sponsored by Bir Zeit University in the Gaza Strip. It hopes that the study will enhance their experience. In addition, the following PCHR staff members were able to participate in training courses:

1. From 30 June-16 July, Yousef Ibrahim of the Field Work Unit participated in a training session organized by the Arab Institute for Human Rights in Tunisia.
2. On 7 July, Nuha al-Farra and Fu'ad Tarazi of the Women's Unit participated in a seminar on gender organized by Panorama – the Center for Democracy and Community Development in Gaza.
3. From 28 August-4 September, Fua'd Tarazi of the Women's Unit participated in a training course on economic, social, and cultural rights organized by the Justice and Peace Program of the Middle East Council of Churches, held in Cyprus.

Pictures of PCHR Activities



Speakers during a workshop organised by the Women's Unit of PCHR in the Centre's Khan Yunis office, May 2001



Speakers during a workshop organised by the Women's Unit of PCHR in the Centre's Jabalya office, July 2001



Graduates of a PCHR training course on democracy and human rights



A protester in a demonstration co-organised by PCHR during the WCAR NGO Parallel Forum, 31 August – 7 September 2001



An Italian delegation demonstrates in a protest organised by PCHR near al-Tuffah checkpoint in Khan Yunis, 26 December 2001



French civil society delegates confront Israeli soldiers in al-Sayafa area during a field tour organised by PCHR in Beit Lahiya, December 2001.

PART 3

FINANCIAL REPORT

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2001

TOGETHER WITH INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT



Independent Auditors' Report

To the Board of Directors
Palestinian Centre for Human Rights
Gaza

We have audited the accompanying statement of financial position of the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), a not-for-profit organization registered in Gaza, as at December 31, 2001 and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of PCHR's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. The financial statements for 2000, which are presented for comparative purpose, were audited by other auditors whose report, dated January 16, 2001, was unqualified.

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, as at December 31, 2001 and the results of its activities and cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with International Accounting Standards.

Our audit was made for the purpose of forming an opinion on PCHR's basic financial statements referred to above taken as a whole. The supplemental financial data in the form of comparison between actual and budgeted expenses for the year ended December 31, 2001 are presented on page seven as an additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements. The actual expenses have been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in our audit of the basic financial statements and, in our opinion, are fairly stated in all material respects in relation to PCHR's basic financial statements taken as a whole.

Arthur Andersen


Hilal Salah

Gaza
January 15, 2002

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2001

(Currency: U.S. Dollar)

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash on hand and at banks	3	633,539	81,454
Contributions receivable	4	240,121	275,794
Other current assets	5	59,792	21,790
Total current assets		933,452	379,038
Property and equipment, net	6	182,314	238,742
Total assets		<u>1,115,766</u>	<u>617,780</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS			
Current liabilities	7	<u>30,559</u>	<u>60,801</u>
Net assets			
Unrestricted		182,198	349,082
Temporarily restricted		903,009	207,897
Total net assets		<u>1,085,207</u>	<u>556,979</u>
Total liabilities and net assets		<u>1,115,766</u>	<u>617,780</u>

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001

(Currency: U.S. Dollar)

		2001		2000
	Notes	Unrestricted	Temporarily restricted	Total
Revenues				
Donors' contributions	9	449,288	1,193,360	1,642,648
Other revenues		15,919		15,919
Net assets released from restriction	10	498,248	(498,248)	-
Total revenues		963,455	695,112	1,658,567
Expenses				
Programs	11	842,731	-	842,731
Administrative and general	11	287,608	-	287,608
Total expenses		1,130,339	-	1,130,339
Changes in net assets (deficit)		(166,884)	695,112	528,228
Net assets, beginning of year		349,082	207,897	556,979
Net assets, end of year		182,198	903,009	1,085,207

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001

(Currency: U.S. Dollar)

	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>
Cash flows from operating activities		
Changes in net assets	528,228	(263,805)
Adjustment to reconcile changes in net assets to net cash flows from operating activities:		
Depreciation	63,572	57,109
Decrease (increase) in contributions receivable	35,673	(45,667)
(Increase) decrease in other current assets	(38,002)	2,069
(Decrease) increase in current liabilities	<u>(30,242)</u>	<u>45,681</u>
Net cash flows from operating activities	<u>559,229</u>	<u>(204,613)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of property and equipment	<u>(7,144)</u>	<u>(93,679)</u>
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(7,144)</u>	<u>(93,679)</u>
Net increase (decrease) in cash	552,085	(289,292)
Cash, beginning of year	<u>81,454</u>	<u>379,746</u>
Cash, end of year	<u><u>633,539</u></u>	<u><u>81,454</u></u>

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DECEMBER 31, 2001

(Currency: U.S. Dollar)

1. PCHR and its Activities

Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) was established on April 1, 1995 and formally registered in Gaza as of August 10, 1995 as a not-for-profit organization by a group of lawyers and human rights activists for protecting human rights and promoting the rule of law in accordance with international standards. In addition, PCHR goals are to develop democratic institutions and an active civil society, while promoting democratic culture within the Palestinian society. PCHR has, in addition to its main office in Gaza city, offices in Jabalias and Khan Younis. The average number of employees in PCHR was 37 and 34 in 2001 and 2000.

PCHR activities include monitoring, investigating and documenting human rights violations and extending the necessary consultation services to individuals and groups through conducting necessary research in human rights agreements and international law.

Further, PCHR units are: fieldwork, legal aid, woman, social, economic library, training and democratic development, which are supported by administrative and general staff.

The financial statements were authorized for issue by PCHR Board of Directors in their meeting held on January 31, 2002 in Gaza.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

- Basis of Presentation

The financial statements of PCHR are prepared in accordance with International Accounting Standards, with specific guidance from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants' Not-for-Profit Organizations Audit and Accounting Guide.

- General

Net assets, revenues, expenses, gains and losses are classified based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Accordingly, net assets and changes therein are classified as either unrestricted or temporarily restricted.

Temporarily restricted net assets are those whose use by PCHR has been limited by donors to a specific time period or purpose. Unrestricted net assets are those whose use by PCHR is not subject to donor-imposed stipulations.

- Donors' Contributions

Donors' contributions and unconditional pledges to give cash and other assets to PCHR are reported at the fair value at the date the pledge is received. Conditional pledges to give and indications of intentions to give are reported at fair value at the date the contribution is received. Unconditional pledge to give is a pledge that depends only on passage of time or demand by the pledgee. Conditional pledge to give is a pledge to give that depends on the occurrence of specified future events. The contributions are reported as either temporarily or permanently restricted revenue if they are received with donor stipulation that limits the use of the donated assets. When the donor restriction expires, that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished, temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified as unrestricted net assets and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

- Property and Equipment

Property and equipment are stated at cost on the date of acquisition or, gifts or donated items are valued at fair market value at the date of donation. Depreciation is computed on a straight-line method using the following depreciation rates.

	<u>%</u>
Furniture and fixtures	10
Office equipment	15
Computers, software and printers	25
Motor vehicles	15
Library books	10

- Foreign Currency

PCHR reporting currency is the United States Dollar (U.S. \$). Transactions, which are denominated in other currencies during the year, are recorded using the exchange rates in effect at the time of each transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in other currencies are translated to U.S. \$ using exchange rates prevailing at the reporting date. Gains or losses arising from exchange rate differences are reflected in the statement of activities.

Foreign currency exchange rates against U.S. Dollar as at the balance sheet date were as follows -

	<u>U.S. \$</u>	
	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>
One Euro	0.885	0.865
One New Israeli Shekel	0.229	0.24

3. Cash on Hand and at Banks

	2001	2000
Cash on hand	875	900
Bank current accounts	32,664	80,554
Time deposit at bank *	600,000	-
	<u>633,539</u>	<u>81,454</u>

* This amount is restricted to the program financed by the Ford Foundation grant (See Note 9).

4. Contributions Receivable

	2001	2000
European Union through Birzeit University's Institute of Law	123,664	-
Grassroots International - USA	-	27,627
NOVIB	70,281	181,346
Dan Church Aid	-	66,821
Development Cooperation Division - Department of Ireland Foreign Affairs	38,976	-
Kvinna Till Kvinna	7,200	-
	<u>240,121</u>	<u>275,794</u>

5. Other Current Assets

	2001	2000
Prepaid rent	17,602	19,587
Due from employees	30,250	2,203
Interest receivable	11,048	-
Sundry	892	-
	<u>59,792</u>	<u>21,790</u>

6. Property and Equipment

Components of property and equipment as at December 31, 2001 and movement during the year follow.

	Balance, January 1, 2001	Additions	Disposal	Balance, December 31, 2001
Costs:				
Furniture and fixtures	83,774	676	-	84,450
Office equipment	143,215	2,414	-	145,629
Computers, software and printers	95,387	1,273	-	96,660
Motor vehicle	35,000	-	-	35,000
Library books	43,825	2,781	-	46,606
	<u>401,201</u>	<u>7,144</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>408,345</u>
Accumulated depreciation:				
Furniture and fixtures	23,417	8,395	-	31,812
Office equipment	57,558	21,598	-	79,156
Computers, software and printers	54,796	23,834	-	78,630
Motor vehicle	10,686	5,236	-	15,922
Library books	16,002	4,509	-	20,511
	<u>162,459</u>	<u>63,572</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>226,031</u>
Net book value	<u>238,742</u>			<u>182,314</u>

7. Current Liabilities

	2001	2000
Accrued professional fee	20,879	5,000
Accrued fax and telephone expense	5,195	7,124
Accrued payroll tax	2,117	8,550
Due to pension fund	-	31,255
Others	2,368	8,872
	<u>30,559</u>	<u>60,801</u>

8. Employees' Indemnity

Provision for employees' end of service benefits is calculated in accordance with Labor law prevailing in Palestine. In addition, the PCHR has established a saving fund for its employees. The monthly contribution by the employee and the employer is set at 7% and 14% respectively of the basic salary.

PHCR maintains separate accounting records for both the provision for employees indemnity and the saving fund, with a special bank account. The balance of this bank account as at December 31, 2001 and 2000 was, receptively, U.S. \$ 328,708 and U.S. \$ 233,514.

9. Donors' Contributions

Donors' contributions during 2001 and 2000 were as follow:

	2001			2000
	Unrestricted Contributions	Restricted Contributions	Total	Total
Swedish ICJ - Sweden *	143,704	-	143,704	115,009
Ford Foundation - USA **	40,000	750,000	790,000	150,000
European Union through Birzeit University's Institute of Law	-	201,945	201,945	-
NOVIB - Holland	76,428	23,514	99,942	334,203
Kvinna Till Kvinna	-	21,200	21,200	-
Representative Office of PA Norway *	60,821	-	60,821	50,000
Christian Aid - UK	36,835	35,079	71,914	2,420
Grassroots International - USA	41,500	-	41,500	27,627
Open Society Institute	50,000	-	50,000	-
Development Cooperation Division - Department of Ireland Foreign Affairs	-	116,928	116,928	-
Dan Church Aid - Denmark	-	22,928	22,928	1,200
Arab Cause Solidarity Committee - Spain	-	6,179	6,179	5,815
Australian Aid	-	-	-	33,165
Spanish Consulate	-	5,477	5,477	-
Institute of International Education	-	7,137	7,137	-
Other donors	-	2,973	2,973	288
	<u>449,288</u>	<u>1,193,360</u>	<u>1,642,648</u>	<u>719,727</u>

* The unrestricted contributions balance include U.S. \$ 108,230 received during December 2001 from Swedish ICJ (U.S. \$ 47,409) and the Representative Office of PA-Norway (U.S. \$ 60,821) to cover part of PCHR deficit of the year 2001.

** On June 4, 2001, an agreement was signed between PCHR and Ford Foundation, under which Ford Foundation agrees to grant PCHR an amount of U.S. \$ 750,000, to finance PCHR program of legal advocacy, and defense and promotion of human rights in Gaza for five years starting 2001, U.S. \$ 150,000 for each year.

10. Net Assets Released from Restrictions

This item represents the total expenditures incurred by PCHR in satisfying the purpose of certain restricted contributions during the year.

11. Programs and General and Management Expenses

	2001			2000
	Programs	Management & General	Total	Total
Salaries and related expenses	451,221	238,930	690,151	632,562
Publications and printings	55,211	-	55,211	51,517
Depreciation	54,036	9,536	63,572	57,109
Hosting seminars, conferences and workshops	56,282	-	56,282	30,305
Professional fees	76,827	4,043	80,870	43,801
Fax, phone and postage	38,730	6,835	45,565	44,353
Hospitality	5,980	1,055	7,035	7,048
Rent	25,713	4,537	30,250	26,036
International cooperation -travel and meetings	3,250	-	3,250	12,583
Staff training development	3,557	-	3,557	11,017
Transportation	13,607	3,403	17,010	12,219
Attending conferences and seminars	25,822	2,869	28,691	18,787
Stationery and supplies	2,351	415	2,766	15,669
Utilities	4,955	874	5,829	5,775
Bank charges	462	82	544	1,265
Motor vehicle expenses	2,006	501	2,507	1,217
Maintenance	13,529	2,387	15,916	11,827
Magazine subscription and internet	4,240	471	4,711	6,532
Exchange loss	-	9,003	9,003	-
Miscellaneous	4,952	2,667	7,619	7,487
	<u>842,731</u>	<u>287,608</u>	<u>1,130,339</u>	<u>997,109</u>

12. Concentration of Risk in Geographic Area

PCHR is carrying out all of its activities in Palestine. The political and economical destabilization in the area increases the risk of carrying out business and could adversely affect PCHR's performance.

Additional Information

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

SUPPLEMENTAL FINANCIAL DATA TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS ACTUAL AND BUDGETED EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001

(Currency: U.S. Dollar)

The following is a comparison between actual and budgeted expenses, and additions to fixed assets for the year ended December 31, 2001. Certain budgeted expenses were grouped to confirm with the financial statements presentation.

	Actual	Budget	Variances
Salaries and related expenses	690,151	834,763	144,612
Publications and printings	55,211	61,050	5,839
Hosting seminars, conferences and workshops	56,282	23,100	(33,182)
Professional fees	80,870	41,800	(39,070)
Fax, phone, communication and postage	45,565	39,600	(5,965)
Hospitality	7,035	6,600	(435)
Rent	30,250	26,700	(3,550)
International cooperation -travel and meetings	3,250	19,800	16,550
Staff training and development	3,557	10,000	6,443
Transportation	17,010	11,220	(5,790)
Conferences and seminars	28,691	26,400	(2,291)
Stationary and supplies	2,766	3,850	1,084
Utilities	5,829	8,030	2,201
Bank charges	544	-	(544)
Motor vehicle expenses	2,507	2,200	(307)
Maintenance	15,916	10,635	(5,281)
Magazine subscription and internet	4,711	9,759	5,048
Miscellaneous	7,619	5,896	(1,723)
	1,057,764	1,141,403	83,639
Exchange loss	9,003	-	(9,003)
Depreciation - unbudgeted, non cash item	63,572	-	63,572
	1,130,339	1,141,403	11,064
Fixed assets additions	7,144	44,000	36,856
	1,137,483	1,185,403	47,920