

PALESTINIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2002

HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

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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

Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

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Member of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network – Copenhagen

Qadada Building
P.O.Box 1328
29 Omar Al Mukhtar Street
Gaza City
Gaza Strip

Tel/Fax: (+) 972 8 2824776
(+) 972 8 2825893
(+) 972 8 2823725

E-mail : pchr@pchrgaza.org

Webpage : www.pchrgaza.org

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Introduction

PCHR has published annual reports for several years. PCHR hopes that this report will contribute to the struggle for human rights by providing a comprehensive picture of the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. It also hopes that relevant parties will follow the recommendations mentioned in this report, especially those recommendations which are directed to the international community and the Palestinian Authority. This report serves as a guide for PCHR's future work and also reflects PCHR's strong belief in the importance of transparency for a non-governmental, non-profit organization that provides free services to the community. It should also serve as a call for victims of human rights violations to refer to the center for help at any time.

PCHR's 2002 Annual Report contains three parts:

- **Part One** provides a comprehensive picture of the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories in 2002. It is divided into two sections: The first section covers war crimes and violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, while the second section is concerned with human rights violations perpetrated by the Palestinian Authority and obstacles in the path towards democratic reform.
- **Part Two** documents all PCHR's activities, including specific activities in each unit in 2002.
- **Part Three** includes PCHR's 2002 financial report, which is prepared by an independent professional auditing institution.

PART ONE

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

- **Summary**
- **Recommendations**
- **Israeli violations of human rights and international humanitarian law**
- **Palestinian violations of human rights and obstruction of democratic reform**

Summary

"We should strike on Palestinians very painfully, and cause them losses and casualties to make them feel the high price."

The Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, 5 March 2002

This statement reflects the dire situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and clearly describes illegal military actions perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinians according to instructions by the Israeli political establishment. It also explains the unprecedented escalation of violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians and their property in 2002. Regrettably, these illegal Israeli military actions are afforded legal coverage by the Israeli Supreme Court, the highest judicial body in Israel.

This report details the human rights situation in the OPTs and focuses on specific themes relating to patterns of human rights violations perpetrated by the Israeli military in the OPTs. The report also includes PCHR's recommendations to the international community and the Palestinian Authority. The report does not include recommendations to Israel and its occupying forces, rather it identifies recommendations to the international community, specifically the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to take immediate and effective action to ensure Israel's respect of the Convention in the OPTs and halt war crimes and grave breaches perpetrated by the Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians. PCHR expresses its dismay at the conspiracy of silence practiced by governments around the world towards ongoing Israeli war crimes, and the consistent failure to take any effective steps to stop or investigate such crimes, or provide protection for the Palestinian people. PCHR asserts that the silence of European governments and the seemingly unconditional US political support for Israel provides impunity and serves to encourage Israel and its occupying forces to continue to violate the basic human rights of Palestinian civilians, including the perpetration of war crimes.

The report explains that according to documentation collated by PCHR, the Israeli occupying forces have consistently used excessive, disproportionate and indiscriminate force in circumstances where no direct and immediate threat was posed to the lives of Israeli soldiers or settler. This ongoing disregard for the principles of proportionality and distinction has resulted in increasing numbers of civilian casualties and widespread destruction of civilian property. Israel has unleashed the full range of its conventional arsenal in the OPTs, including F16 fighter jets, helicopter gunships, gunboats, tanks and surface-to-surface missiles. Targets have often been located in densely populated civilian areas, further increasing casualties among Palestinian civilians and destruction to civilian property.

The report details how in 2002, Israeli occupying forces invaded all the major Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps under the control of the Palestinian Authority. The Israeli military continued to invade Palestinian-controlled areas in the Gaza Strip with increasing frequency throughout 2002. During these large-scale military operations, Israeli occupying forces killed and injured large numbers of

Palestinian civilians and caused widespread destruction to civilian property. According to the report, in 2002, 1016 Palestinians and three internationals were killed by the Israeli occupying forces. This number includes 178 children - 22.6% of the total number of civilians killed who were not actively engaged in hostilities at the time of their death (758). The number of civilians killed by Israeli occupying forces in 2002, who were not actively engaged in hostilities at the time of their death increased by 107% in comparison to 2001 (379). The number of children killed by Israeli occupying forces in 2002 increased by 91% in comparison with to 2001, when 93 children were killed. These figures reflect the persistent escalation in the excessive use of lethal force in comparison with 2001.

In 2002, 119 Palestinians were killed in 57 assassination attempts committed by Israeli occupying forces; a policy that is openly and officially adopted by the Israeli government. Among the victims, there were 46 bystanders, including 23 children. In addition, 209 Palestinians were injured, including 199 bystanders, of which 19 were children.

Israeli attacks on Palestinian medical personnel have also continued despite the clear international prohibition on such attacks. In 2002, Israeli occupying forces killed 5 medical personnel who were carrying out their duties to provide humanitarian assistance to the sick and wounded. Israeli occupying forces regularly denied access to medical services, including emergency assistance. Access was also regularly denied or delayed for representatives of humanitarian organizations, including the ICRC, to the wounded to provide them with relief.

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces deliberately targeted clearly identified journalists working for local and international news agencies, in an attempt to prevent media coverage of Israeli military activities. Israeli forces killed 3 journalists, including an Italian, in the West Bank and injured 27 others. These Israeli attacks were conducted in the context of a policy that aims to hide the truth of violations of fundamental human rights by the Israeli military, including war crimes. Israeli occupying forces also denied entry to hundreds of members of solidarity groups who came to express solidarity with the Palestinian people, as well as to staff of non-governmental organizations and aid agencies.

Israeli occupying forces also attacked international institutions and staff of the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations. On 22 November 2002, Israeli occupying forces shot dead Iain Hook, 54, a British citizen and an UNRWA official.

The Annual Report for 2002 also highlights the escalation of Israeli settlement activities. In 2002, new settlements were established and existing settlements and settlement infrastructure continued to expand. Increasing amounts of land was confiscated from Palestinians for the purposes of expansion of settlements and settlement infrastructure, including roads. Settler attacks against Palestinian civilians and property continued. In 2002, settlers killed seven Palestinian civilians and injured dozens of others. The total number of Palestinian civilians killed by settlers since the beginning of the current Intifada in September 2000 increased to 35, including 9 children.

Israeli occupying forces continued to raze Palestinian agricultural land and demolish Palestinian homes and other property .In 2002, Israeli occupation forces razed 2,924 donums of agricultural land .From the beginning of the current Intifada in September 2000 to 31 December 2002, Israeli occupying forces razed 17,166 donums of land. These actions have decreased the area of agricultural land in the Gaza Strip by 10%. Israeli occupying forces also destroyed hundreds of wells, water pumps, irrigation networks, greenhouses and animal and bird farms.

Land leveling by Israeli occupying forces was often accompanied by the demolition of houses and civilian facilities in the affected areas. In 2002, Israeli occupying forces totally demolished 370 houses in the Gaza Strip, rendering 469 Palestinian families comprised of 3,287 people homeless. Most of the actions of house demolition took place in Rafah along the Egyptian border, where the Israeli occupying forces demolished 240 houses (66% of the houses that were demolished in the Gaza Strip).

The report also highlights the retaliatory campaign pursued by the Israeli occupying forces against the families of Palestinians who Israel alleges carried out, planned or facilitated attacks against Israeli targets .In this context, according to PCHR's documentation, in 2002, Israeli occupying forces demolished 137 Palestinian houses, including 24 houses in the Gaza Strip, owned by the families of alleged Palestinian activists .

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces resumed a policy of deportation and transfer of Palestinians, in a form of both individual and collective punishment, implemented in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. In May 2002, an Israeli-Palestinian deal was concluded, under which 39 Palestinians who had sought shelter in the Church of the Nativity during clashes with the Israeli military, were unlawfully deported or transferred. According to the deal, 13 were deported abroad and 26 were transferred to the Gaza Strip. In a second unlawful transfer, on 4 September 2002, Israeli occupying forces transferred Kifah and Intissar 'Ajouri, the brother and sister of an alleged Palestinian activist, from their home in 'Askar refugee camp in Nablus to the Gaza Strip.

Throughout 2002 the Israeli occupying forces continued to impose a policy of closure and curfew on Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps. They erected new permanent and temporary roadblocks and checkpoints on main and secondary Palestinians road, isolating Palestinian towns and villages from one another. While Jewish settlers continue to move freely inside the OPTs, Israeli occupying forces have transformed Palestinian communities into isolated areas that lack geographical contiguity, denying Palestinians their right to free movement. The policy of closure and restrictions on free movement has had a disastrous impacts on Palestinian economic, social and political life. The Palestinian economy has largely been crippled and a prolonged humanitarian crisis has resulted in many areas. This closure and curfew policy of the Israeli military has effectively compounded a system of apartheid segregation in the OPTs.

Also in 2002, the Israeli occupying forces waged large-scale campaigns of arrests and detention unprecedented since the signing of the Interim Agreement and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in May 1994. Accurate numbers of

Palestinians arrested by Israeli occupying forces in 2002 are not available, but human rights organizations estimated the total number at more than 11,000, of which more than 8500, including 300 children and 53 women, were still in custody by the end of the year. Israeli occupying forces have arrested and detained many Palestinian and transferred them to jails and detention centers inside Israel in violation of the prohibition on transfer of protected persons outside of the occupied territory. In addition, Palestinians have been subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment during detention. PCHR is particularly alarmed at reports that a number of Palestinians were killed by Israeli occupying forces after having been detained.

The activities of the Israeli occupying forces and other security services were justified by claims of combating "terrorism". However, the security situation inside Israel has not improved; rather it has witnessed an unprecedented deterioration. PCHR asserts that the activities of the Israeli occupying forces in the OPTs do not serve to improve Israel's security; rather they serve to increase the suffering of the Palestinian people in a form of collective punishment.

Ongoing violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including war crimes, perpetrated by the Israeli occupying forces have had a disastrous impact on every aspect of daily life in the OPTs. The Palestinian Authority and its civil and security institutions have been largely paralyzed due to Israeli military operations. During the Israeli military invasions of Palestinian Authority controlled areas, many Palestinian Authority civil institutions were destroyed, damaged or ransacked. Israeli occupying forces repeatedly imposed curfews on several areas and restricted movement. The military imposed a siege on the Palestinian presidential compound in Ramallah, restricting the activities of the Palestinian Authority, its President and other elected political leaders.

With respect to the Palestinian Authority, the report asserts that steps towards reforms taken by the Palestinian Authority, especially with regard to the judiciary and justice, were disappointing, and violations of human rights and the rule of law continued. In 2002, the Palestinian Authority passed two relevant laws; the Judicial Authority Law and the Basic Law. Nevertheless, the Palestinian Authority took a number of steps that violate the spirit and word of the two laws. This raises questions as to the commitment of the leadership to the reform process. With regard to the judiciary and justice, developments included the appointment of a new Higher Judicial Council and a new Attorney-General.

The Higher Judiciary Council was formed by a presidential decree issued on 1 June 2000 before the approval of the Judicial Authority Law, which organizes the formation and powers of this council. The law provided that a Higher Judiciary Council was to be established one month after publishing the law in the official gazette, which means no later than 18 June 2002. However, on 28 June 2002, the Palestinian president issued a decree maintaining the previous council until 18 June 2003.

On 26 December 2002, the Palestinian President issued a decree appointing a new Attorney-General. The decree to appoint the new Attorney-General is unconstitutional as he was not nominated by the Higher Judicial Council as required

in law. PCHR notes the merging of the State Security Prosecution Office with the general Civilian Prosecution Office, but reiterates its call for the total abolishment of the State Security Prosecution Office and its courts. The appointment of an Attorney-General of the State Security Courts in November 1999 by the Palestinian Authority was subject to widespread criticism. PCHR has always asserted that the Courts are a serious setback to the authority of the Civil Prosecution Office, usurping its power and duties and providing a real obstacle to achieving the rule of law. The State Security Courts continue to function although they are in breach of both the Basic Law and the Judicial Authority Law.

Sentences issued by these courts cannot be appealed, including death sentences. In 2002, death sentences issued by the State Security Courts and military courts significantly increased in comparison with preceding years. In 2002, 17 individuals were sentenced to death by firing squad, including 15 sentences that were issued by the State Security Courts and two by Palestinian military courts. Three of these sentences were implemented.

The State Security Courts constitute a major obstacle to the independence of the judiciary and institutional reform in the Palestinian Authority. These courts routinely violate fundamental human rights, including the right to fair trial before an independent and impartial court and to appeal against sentences at a higher judicial body. PCHR asserts that if the Palestinian Authority is seriously committed to institutional reform, especially in the judiciary, it must abolish the state security courts.

In addition to the institutional failure in the Palestinian judicial system, in 2002, the Palestinian Authority and law enforcement services continued to perpetrate violations of fundamental human rights. Arbitrary arrests and detentions continued. In 2002, the Palestinian Authority waged a series of political arrests, in response to US and Israeli pressure. These arrests and detentions were unlawful, as they failed to follow appropriate legal procedures, including the issuance of a charge against the defendant. Many detainees remained in custody in spite of rulings issued by the Palestinian High Court of Justice to release them on grounds that their arrest and detention had been unlawful.

The Palestinian police and other security services also continued to violate the basic right to life, including killings for criminal or security reasons (collaboration with Israeli security services), to conduct unlawful arrests and detentions and torture and other forms of ill treatment of detainees. In 2002, a detainee died as a result of torture while in the custody of Palestinian police in Gaza city.

In 2002, the Palestinian Authority also continued to violate the right to free expression. Journalists and media institutions were subject to attacks by Palestinian security services. PCHR is also concerned at the apparent participation of groups other than the Palestinian Authority, in attacks on journalists.

In 2002, ten Palestinians – nine civilians and a policeman – were killed as a result of the excessive use of lethal force by Palestinian security services during demonstrations and peaceful assemblies. There were also reports of the excessive or disproportionate use of firearms during arrests.

In 2002, 17 Palestinians were killed by eight explosions believed to have been caused by the storage of explosives or handling of explosives in residential areas. Some of the explosions occurred in mysterious circumstances where it was not possible to attribute responsibility. These explosions often resulted in casualties among those not connected with the explosives .

In 2002, more than 40 Palestinians were killed by unidentified individuals or members of Palestinian armed groups for being suspected of collaborating with Israel. PCHR does not have any information that the Palestinian Attorney General has conducted full and fair investigations into these killings, or has prosecuted those found responsible. In two separate incidents, four Palestinians were killed by gunmen who broke into Palestinian courts and opened fire on defendants during their trials. PCHR reiterates its position that collaborators must be held accountable in accordance with the rule of law and a commitment to appropriate legal procedures and international human right standards.

Finally, the report discusses the sixth term of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). The sixth term was the longest of the PLC, as it lasted for approximately 18 months, from March 2001 to September 2002. Although the popular authorization for the PLC officially ended with the end of the interim period in May 1999, the PLC has continued to carry out its duties upon presidential decrees. There are still two vacant positions in the PLC, following the resignation of one member and the death of another. As a result of the extensive Israeli military activities and closures, parliamentary life has been severely disrupted; the PLC failed to hold any regular sessions and its committees were not able to meet. The PLC was thus forced to hold separate, parallel meetings in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip through the medium of video conference. In addition, the Israeli occupying forces took arbitrary measures against some PLC members, including Marwan Barghouti, who has been detained by the Israeli forces since 15 April 2002.

Since its establishment in 1996, the PLC has played a very limited role in monitoring the performance of the Executive. The PLC's crisis regarding its monitoring duties further deteriorated in the sixth term. However, PCHR notes increased efforts by the PLC during the extended period of the sixth term to carry out its roles of monitoring more effectively.

Specifically, in the extended period of the sixth term, some serious efforts were made by the PLC to make changes in its relations with the Executive and restructuring them on the basis of transparency and accountability. The PLC called for reforms in the Palestinian Authority in accordance with the Palestinian conception of reforms. It also called for holding parliamentary and presidential elections, threatening of no confidence vote against the government. The government was forced to resign, and the Palestinian President formed a provisional government, pending elections in December 2002.

PCHR has consistently called for immediate parliamentary and local authorities 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. However, PCHR believes that it is impossible to hold free and impartial elections that reflect the Palestinian popular due to ongoing Israeli military activities and closures.

Recommendations

Following are PCHR's recommendations to the international community and the Palestinian Authority. PCHR believes that Israeli occupying forces will not take any recommendations into consideration, and does not expect that Israel will respect its legal obligations under the international law. PCHR hopes that the international community will take PCHR's recommendations into consideration and take effective steps to enforce the international law. PCHR also hopes that the Palestinian Authority to work towards realizing these recommendations in the context of its responsibilities.

Recommendations to the International Community

1.PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to fulfill their legal and moral obligations under article 1 of the Convention to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. PCHR believes the conspiracy of silence practiced by the international community has encouraged Israel to act as a state above law and continue to violate international human rights and humanitarian law.

2.PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to convene a conference to take effective steps to ensure Israel's respect of the Convention in the OPTs and to provide immediate protection for Palestinian civilians.

3.PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to comply with its legal obligations detailed in article 146 of the Convention to search for and prosecute those responsible for grave breaches, namely war crimes.

4.PCHR welcomes the establishment of the International Criminal Court as a significant step in the work towards accountability and justice. PCHR calls upon the international community to ensure that Israel ratifies the Rome Statute, thereby enabling the prosecution of Israel nationals found to be responsible for the perpetrations of war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

5.PCHR calls upon the European Union to activate article 2 of the Euro-Israel Association Agreement, which provides that Israel must respect human rights as a precondition for economic cooperation between the EU states and Israel. PCHR further calls upon the EU states to prohibit import of goods produced in illegal Israeli settlements in the OPTs.

6.PCHR appreciates the efforts of international civil society, including human rights organizations, bar associations, unions and solidarity groups, and urges them to continue their role in pressuring their governments to secure Israel's respect for human rights in the OPTs and to end its attacks on Palestinian civilians, which escalated in an unprecedented manner in 2002.

7.In recognition of ICRC as the guardian of the Fourth Geneva Convention, PCHR calls upon the ICRC to increase its staff and activities in the OPTs .

8.PCHR emphasizes the importance of initiatives by international solidarity movement to provide humanitarian assistance to Palestinian civilians, including forming human shields to stop Israeli operations of house demolition and land leveling, and monitoring the human rights situation in the OPTs. PCHR calls for the continuation of visits to the OPTs to observe and then report on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights as part of the international campaign to reveal those violations.

9.PCHR reiterates that any political settlement not based on international human rights law and humanitarian law cannot lead to a peaceful and just solution of the Palestinian question. Rather, such an arrangement can only lead to further suffering and instability in the region. Any peace agreement or process must be based on respect for international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law.

Recommendations to the Palestinian Authority

Despite the Israeli wide scale military campaign against the Occupied Palestinian Territories in 2002, including the widespread destruction of Palestinian Authority institutions, the Palestinian Authority'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. PCHR calls upon the Palestinian Authority to instigate real reforms that meet the needs of the Palestinian society and serve its goals to end the occupation and establish an independent state based on the principles of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights .
2. PCHR calls for parliamentary and local authority elections as soon as possible, 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. However, PCHR notes that such elections are not possible due to the current ongoing Israeli military activities, particularly closures and curfews
3. PCHR asserts that the current Higher Judiciary Council is unconstitutional, and demands reform of the council in accordance with the Judicial Authority Law of 2002 and the appointment of a new council head, to replace the current head who is over 70 years old, and thereby in contradiction with the provisions of this legislation.
4. PCHR calls for the cancellation of the presidential decree appointing a new Attorney-General and demands that the Attorney-General be nominated by the Higher Judiciary Council, in accordance with the law.
5. PCHR calls for the abolition of the position of the state security attorney general and the immediate abolition of the state security courts.
6. PCHR calls for the abolition of the death penalty.

7. PCHR calls upon the Palestinian Authority to subject prisons and detention centers to judicial monitoring and ensure that no one is illegally detained .
8. PCHR calls upon the Palestinian Authority to conduct full and fair investigations into allegations of torture and ill treatment in detention, including death in detention, and to bring to justice those found responsible .
9. PCHR calls upon the Palestinian Authority to end illegal arrests and arbitrary detentions and to conform to international standards on arrests and detentions .
10. PCHR calls upon the security services of the Palestinian Authority to implement the rulings of the Palestinian courts, including in respect of the release of detainees held unlawfully.
11. PCHR calls upon the Palestinian Authority to institute reforms in the security services, providing clear definitions of their powers and organization of their work in the framework of the rule of law, to control the misuse of weapons and to investigate all cases of use of lethal force against civilians by law enforcement officials, ensuring that those responsible be brought to justice.

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Section 1

Israeli Violations of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law

- 1. Excessive Use of Force**
- 2. Settlement Activities and Settler Attacks against Palestinian Civilians and Property**
- 3. Land Leveling and Demolition of Houses and Civilian Facilities**
- 4. Demolition of Houses as a Means of Punishment**
- 5. Renewal of the Policy of Deportation**
- 6. Punishment of a People: Ongoing Policy of Total Closure and Restrictions on Free Movement**
- 7. Arrests of Palestinians and Treatment of Palestinians in Custody**
- 8. Misleading Israeli Investigation Committees**

This section gives a comprehensive picture of Israeli violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. PCHR's mandate and scope of work is based on international humanitarian law, specifically the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, and international human rights law.

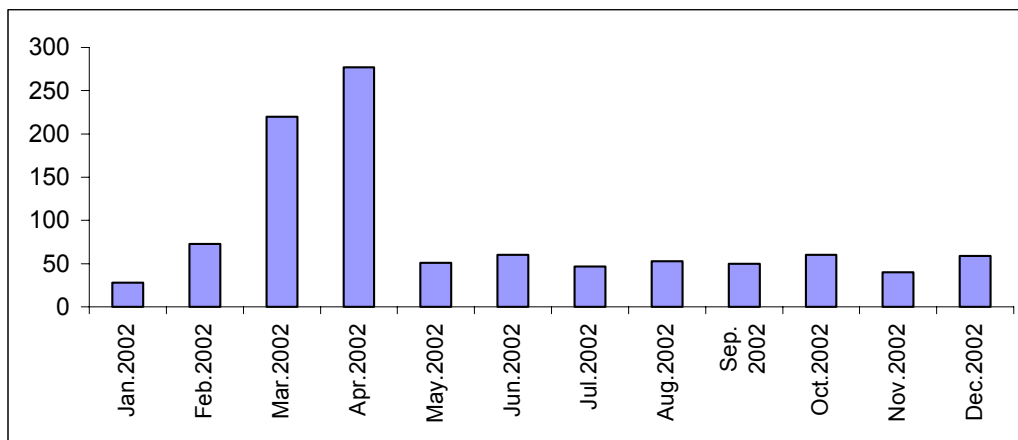
1) Excessive Use of Force, Killings and other Violations of the Right to Life

In 2002, 1016 Palestinians and three foreigners¹ were killed by Israeli occupying forces. Among the victims were 785 civilians not actively engaged in hostilities at the time of their death (77% of the total number of the victims), including 178 children under 18 (approximately 22.6% of the victims) and 75 women (10% of the victims). In addition, thousands of Palestinians, including 1181 in the Gaza Strip, were wounded and dozens rendered permanently disabled.

These numbers reflect an escalation in the use of lethal force by Israeli occupying forces. Israeli occupying forces used excessive force against Palestinian civilians without any consideration for the principles of proportionality and discrimination. According to PCHR's documentation, 487 Palestinians, 379 of whom were civilians (78% of the total deaths), including 93 children (24.5%), were killed by Israeli occupying forces and settlers.

In 2002, 234 Palestinian policemen and resistance members were killed by Israeli occupying forces as a result of aerial, surface and naval bombardment and invasions into Palestinian areas, in contrast to 108 policemen killed in 2001.

Diagram (1): Monthly distribution of Palestinians killed by Israeli occupying forces in 2002

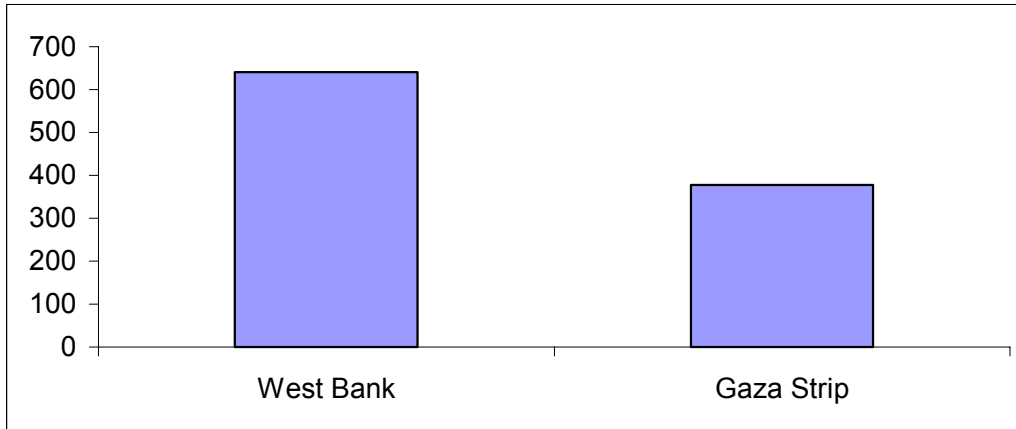


By looking at the monthly distribution of Palestinians killed by Israeli occupying forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 2002, one can notice the great increase in the number of victims in March and April, in which 497 Palestinians were killed

¹ In 2002, Israeli occupying forces killed three foreigners in the West Bank and Gaza Strip: an Italian journalist, a British UNRWA official and an Egyptian citizen.

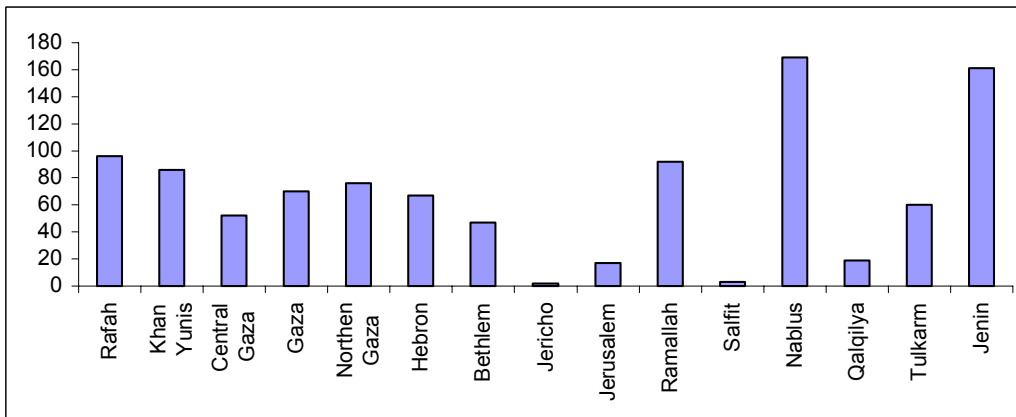
(49% of the total deaths in 2002), in comparison to the average number of 51 deaths throughout the rest of the year. This sharp increase can be attributed to the Israeli full-scale aggression against the West Bank, which began at the beginning of March and was completed with the “Operation Defensive Shield” which began at the end of March and continued into April. Israeli occupying forces imposed a comprehensive siege on Palestinian communities in the West Bank, and launched full-scale aggression against all aspects of Palestinian daily life.

Diagram (2): Geographical distribution of Palestinians killed in 2002



It can be observed from diagram (2) that 1019 persons - all Palestinians, except for three foreigners - were killed by Israeli occupying forces and settlers in 2002. 641 of the victims (63%) were killed in the West Bank, 378 (37%) were killed in the Gaza Strip.

Diagram (3): Geographical distribution of Palestinians killed in 2002 (by district)



It is evident from diagram (3) that no Palestinian district was immune to Israeli attacks in 2002. It can be also noticed that the highest numbers of fatalities were in Nablus and Jenin, where 330 persons (32.4%) were killed by Israeli forces. The high numbers of fatalities in these two districts can be attributed to the Israeli assaults on the two areas during the “Operation Defensive Shield,” when Israeli forces killed

many Palestinians and destroyed many houses, resulting in dozens of deaths among Palestinian civilians.

Diagram (4): Causes of Palestinian deaths in 2002, resulting from Israeli actions

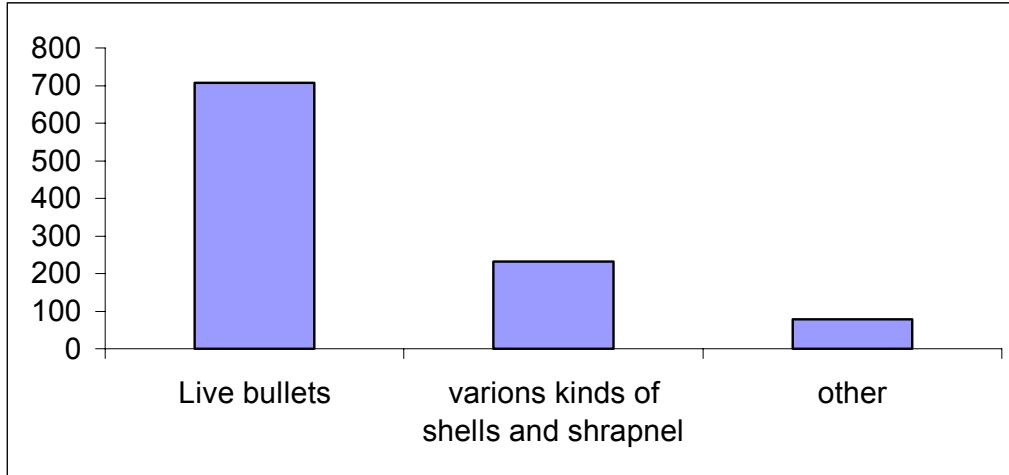


Diagram (4) shows that 708 persons (69.4% of the victims) were killed by live bullets fired by Israeli occupying forces in 2002, while 232 persons (22.7% of the victims) were killed by shrapnel from missiles and shells launched by Israeli warplanes, gunboats and tanks, indicating that Israeli occupying forces employed all kinds of weapons against Palestinian civilians. In addition, 79 persons (7.7%) were killed in other circumstances, such as being run down by tanks or military vehicles, following beatings, inhaling tear gas or killed in explosions.

Diagram (5): Distribution of fatalities caused by live bullets

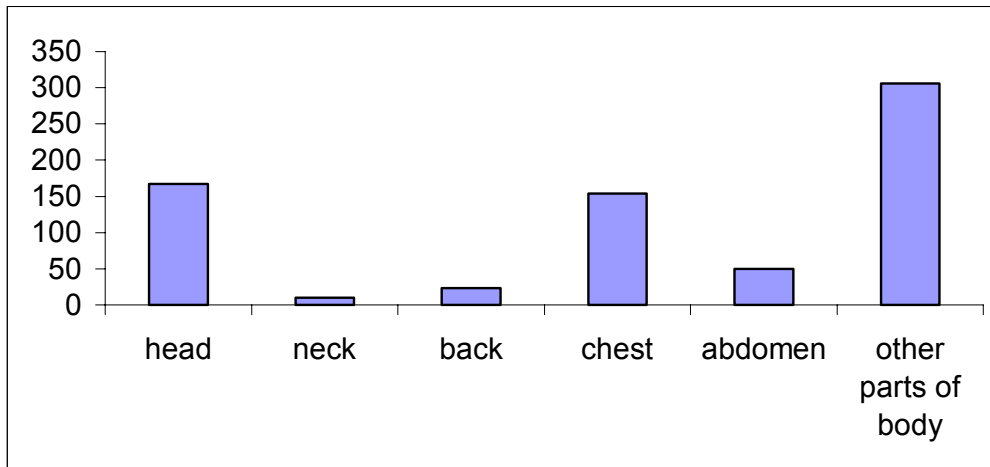


Diagram (5) shows that 708 persons were killed by live bullets fired by Israeli occupying forces in 2002, including 402 persons (57%) who were shot in the upper part of the body: 198 (28%) shot in the head or the neck and 204 persons (29%) were shot in the chest and the abdomen. 306 persons (43%) were shot in other parts of the body. The high number of those shot in the upper part of the body indicates that

Israeli occupying forces used excessive force to cause many fatalities among Palestinian civilians.

Effects on Palestinian Children

In 2002, actions of Israeli occupying forces continued to have an enormous effect on Palestinian children, especially in terms of casualties. The number of Palestinian children killed or wounded by Israeli occupying forces significantly increased, which proves the employment of lethal force and non-compliance with the principles of proportionality and discrimination. Some children were killed during the wide-scale incursions conducted by Israeli occupying forces into Palestinian areas, some were shot dead by Israeli forces when they threw stones at fortified military locations and tanks that seized control over Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps, and others were killed during assassinations of Palestinian activists in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In 2002, 178 Palestinian children under age 18 (23% of the civilian victims) were killed by Israeli occupying forces and settlers.² In addition, approximately 440 children were wounded in the Gaza Strip alone. In 2001, 487 Palestinians, including 379 civilians, 93 of whom were children under age 18 (24%), were killed by Israeli occupying forces and settlers.

Extra-Judicial Assassinations

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces continued to pursue a declared policy of the assassination of Palestinians, officially adopted by the Israeli government. Israeli occupying forces carried out 57 assassination operations, in which 119 Palestinians³ (73 targeted persons and 46 bystanders), including 23 children, 5 women and 2 old people were killed. In addition, 209 Palestinians (10 targeted persons and 199 bystanders), including 19 children were injured. These numbers mark an escalation in the policy of assassination in 2002 in comparison with 2001. According to PCHR's documentation, in 2001, Israeli occupying forces carried out 44 assassination operations, in which 57 Palestinians (43 targeted persons and 14 bystanders, including 5 children) were killed, 71 others (14 targeted persons and 57 bystanders) were injured.

A total of 110 assassination operations were carried out by Israeli occupying forces from 29 September 2000 to the end of December 2002, in which 192 Palestinians (123 targeted persons and 69 bystanders), including 28 children, 7 women and 8 old people were killed. In addition, 24 targeted Palestinians and 256 bystanders were injured.

Accordingly, 36% of the Palestinians (40.5% of whom were children) killed and 91.5% of the Palestinians injured in assassination operations committed by Israeli occupying between 29 September 2000 and 31 December 2002 were non-targeted

² Three killings were committed by settlers, while a fourth one was committed by Israeli police in Jerusalem.

³ In addition, a Palestinian who was injured in an assassination attempt in 2001 succumbed to his injury in 2002.

individuals. This is further evidence of the Israeli occupying forces' disregard for the lives of Palestinian civilians.

In 2002, there was a qualitative escalation in assassination attempts by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinians and the Israeli occupying forces employed F-16 fighter jets in assassination attempts. In 2002, Israeli occupying forces used F-16 fighter jets in two assassination attempts in densely populated areas in the Gaza Strip. On 14 July 2002, Israeli F-16 fighter jets launched two missiles at an uninhabited house owned by 'Abdul Rahman 'Abdul Wahab. The first missile went astray and fell onto a neighboring tract of agricultural land. The second missile directly hit the property, destroying parts of the second and ground floors. According to 'Abdul Wahab, his 24 year old son Yousef (who is wanted by Israeli occupying forces) was in the house with four of his friends. They were all able to escape when the first missile hit the tract of agricultural land. On 22 July 2002, an Israeli F-16 fighter jet launched a 1-ton missile at the house of Sheikh Salah Shehada, an alleged Hamas activist. The missile directly hit the house which was located in the densely populated area of Al Daraj in Gaza City. The house was totally destroyed, and 16 Palestinian civilians, including 8 children, the youngest of whom was only 2 months old, were killed. In addition, 77 civilians were injured. Eleven houses were destroyed and 32 others were damaged.

The Israeli government openly claimed responsibility for these assassinations. The Israeli Attorney General Eliakim Rubenstein asserted that "selective liquidations must be the last resort, when all efforts to arrest wanted persons fail."⁴ Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon agreed with his defense minister to "intensify actions against terrorism, including actions which target those who carried out, planned and facilitated attacks."⁵ After a Palestinian activist, Eyad Sawalha, was assassinated by Israeli occupying forces, the Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz congratulated "the Israeli forces which carried out the operation."⁶

Shelling of Palestinian Towns, Villages and Refuge Camps

Throughout 2002, Israeli occupying forces shelled Palestinian civilian and security facilities, using various kinds of weapons. They employed F-16 fighter jets to shell Palestinian civilian and security facilities in densely populated areas, resulting in casualties among Palestinian civilians.⁷ Furthermore, Israeli gunboats also shelled Palestinian security facilities in the Gaza Strip, Israeli occupying forces shelled Palestinian areas using surface-to-surface missiles and tanks and continued to use flechette anti-personnel shells, which are prohibited for use against civilian populations.

The Israeli shelling caused widespread destruction in Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps, as hundreds of houses and civilian and security facilities were destroyed. In 2002, 264 Palestinians were killed and hundreds others were injured by the Israeli shelling. During the so-called "Defensive Shield Operation" in March and April 2002, hundreds of Palestinians were killed by Israeli occupying forces,

⁴ The Arabic website of the Israeli daily *Yedioth Ahronoth*, (www.arabynet.com), 29 December 2002

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid, 9 November 2002

⁷ For instance, see top of this page on the shelling of al-Daraj neighborhood in Gaza City.

including dozens who were killed by shelling, especially in Jenin refugee camp and the old town of Nablus. These two areas were attacked by Israeli combat helicopters and warplanes, which rendered hundreds of Palestinian houses destroyed, and dozens of Palestinians were killed under the ruins.⁸ In the Gaza Strip, Rafah and Khan Yunis refugee camps were shelled by Israeli occupying forces on an almost daily basis. During a wide incursion into the southern Gaza Strip town of Khan Yunis and its refugee camp, 15 Palestinians, including 6 children, were killed when Israeli combat helicopters shelled the street in which they were located.⁹

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces shelled and destroyed more security facilities of the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Dozens of Palestinian security men were killed or injured.¹⁰ During the so-called "Defensive Shield Operation," Israeli occupying forces shelled and destroyed all Palestinian security compounds in the West Bank towns, killing and injuring dozens of Palestinian security men. Israeli forces also attacked Palestinian prisons.

The Use of Flechette Shells

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces continued to use flechette tank shells - designed to be used in conventional warfare to cause maximum casualties - against Palestinian civilians suspected of carrying out resistance activities against Israeli forces. The use of flechette shells in 2002 left Palestinians dead and injured dozens of others. All of the victims were civilians not engaged in hostilities at the time of their death, who posed no threat to the lives of the Israeli soldiers. On 18 February 2002, Israeli occupying forces fired 7 artillery shells at Palestinian tin houses in the Gizan al-Najjar area in the south of Khan Yunis. An artillery shell hit the house of Sami El-Bahaisa, where he lived with his two wives and five children. His daughter Muna, 10, and his wife Miriam 'Awad El-Bahaisa, 36, were killed by shrapnel throughout the body. Other members of the family were injured. According to medical sources at Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis, where all victims were evacuated, Israeli forces used flechette shells against the victims. On 28 August 2002, Israeli occupying forces in military locations next to "Netzarim" settlement, south of Gaza City, fired an artillery

⁸During this attack, the house of 'Omar Ahmed al-Sho'abi, 85, in al-Qarioun neighborhood in the old town of Nablus was shelled for days by Israeli warplanes, and then leveled by Israeli military bulldozers. Eight members of the family were killed: the father, his two daughters, his son, his daughter-in-law and his 3 grandsons. When the curfew imposed on the city by Israeli forces was lifted, relatives found two survivors under the ruins: 'Abdullah al-Sho'abi, 65, and his wife Shams, 55. The wife who was suffering from a chronic disease was injured.

⁹On 6 October 2002, Israeli occupying forces, supported by helicopters moved into Khan Yunis and its refugee camp. In al-Amal neighborhood, Israeli occupying forces were deployed near the family home of a Palestinian who is allegedly wanted by Israel. When his mother, Rahima Hassan 'Ali Salama, 50, heard Israeli soldiers in the area, she opened the door fearing that Israeli soldiers may break into the house, but Israeli soldiers shouted at her and she shut the door. Immediately, Israeli soldiers opened fire at the door, killing her. Another Palestinian civilian, 'Abdul Fattah 'Ali Suleiman al-Sallout, 40, was killed by a heavy caliber bullet in the chest fired by an Israeli combat helicopter while he was in his home. In the same area, an Israeli combat helicopter fired a missile at four Palestinian civilians from the Abu al-Khair family while they were on the roof of their house. The four were wounded, one of whom was in a serious condition. An Israeli combat helicopter fired a missile at some Palestinians who gathered on a branch road to watch the Israeli incursion. 12 Palestinians were killed and 11 others were injured.

¹⁰On 25 June 2002, 4 Palestinian policemen were killed and 7 others were injured when Israeli warplanes attacked the main security compound of the Palestinian Authority in Hebron.

shell at six Palestinian civilians who were in a shed on their agricultural land in Sheikh ‘Ejlin area, approximately 250m away. The flechette shell killed three:

1. Ashraf ‘Othman al-Hajin, 23;
2. Nihad ‘Othman al-Hajin, 17; and
3. Mohammed Samir al-Hajin, 41.

Soon after, Rowaida Ibrahim al-Hajin, 41, left the shed, carrying her 3-year-old child Sa’id to see what had happened. Immediately, Israeli soldiers opened fire at her, wounding her with several live bullets throughout the body, and wounding her child with shrapnel. She bled to death. Palestinians ambulances came to the area, but Israeli forces fired at them and prevented them from evacuating the victims.¹¹

Encroachment into Palestinian Authority Controlled Areas

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces conducted regular incursions into areas under full control of the Palestinian Authority. Such incursions have taken place since the beginning of the Palestinian Intifada in September 2000, but in the last two years Israeli occupying forces escalated such activities and eventually seized direct control over most Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps. During these operations, many Palestinians were killed and hundreds of houses and other civilian property and infrastructure were destroyed.

In a wide-scale onslaught against the West Bank, Israeli occupying forces invaded and seized complete control over towns, villages and refugee camps. At the end of March 2002, Israeli forces launched an operation, dubbed “Operation Defensive Shield.” During this operation, Israeli occupying forces killed many Palestinians and destroyed hundreds of Palestinian houses and other civilian facilities, including historic sites, which represent an important part of the Palestinian heritage. They also destroyed the infrastructures of towns, including governmental, cultural, social and political offices and institutions, police stations, prisons, factories, workshops, cars, electricity, water and communications networks.

Palestinian health, educational, social, cultural and political institutions were not immune to Israel’s aggressive practices, as hospitals and schools were searched and partially destroyed and all educational institutions were closed. Israeli occupying forces also damaged Palestinian records, when they broke into the offices of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. They also attacked Palestinian banks, including Cairo-Amman Bank in Ramallah, which was partially destroyed by Israeli tanks. Israeli forces also broke into and damaged Khalil al-Sakakini Cultural Center in Ramallah.

During this aggressive campaign, Israeli occupying forces imposed a total siege and curfew on Palestinian areas in the West Bank, and denied entry of humanitarian

¹¹ PCHR and Physicians for Human Rights petitioned the Israeli Supreme Court on 21 October 2002, demanding the Israeli occupying forces be prohibited from using flechette shells against Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip. The petition is still under consideration. In its response, the Israeli state prosecution claimed that the use of flechette shells is "an important element in the Israeli Occupying Forces’ practical response to Palestinian terror acts in the Gaza Strip, as there has been no other alternative."

assistance, medical supplies and basic needs, such as food and fuel. They even prevented the burial of the dead. Some of these bodies remained in streets and houses for several days as no one was able to remove or bury them.

Jenin refugee camp and the old town of Nablus were subjected to the most violent practices of the so-called "Operation Defensive Shield." Israeli occupying forces sent large reinforcements into the two areas in an attempt to subjugate the population, as the army faced strong resistance by Palestinian gunmen who were defending the area. The two areas were subjected to intense Israeli shelling for days, which left dozens of Palestinians dead and hundreds of houses destroyed. Israeli bulldozers also demolished dozens of houses, whilst the inhabitants remained inside. During this campaign, Israeli forces imposed a curfew on the two areas and denied entry of medical and humanitarian assistance. They prevented Palestinians from searching for bodies of the dead under the ruins of houses, which caused health problems in the two areas. The case of the al-Shu'abi family of Nablus is evidence of the Israeli military aggression on the city. An Israeli military bulldozer demolished the family's house, whilst the family members remained inside. When the curfew imposed on the area was lifted, neighbors found the bodies of 8 members of the family under the ruins of the house, as well as an old man and his wife who were still alive, but badly injured, as they had been trapped under the ruins for over a week.¹²

Israeli military actions against Palestinian civilians have not succeeded in stopping Palestinian resistance or improving the Israeli security situation, as the Israeli government intended. After the conclusion of the Israeli military campaign, attacks in Israeli towns increased. Israeli occupying forces again launched a wide scale onslaught against West Bank towns in a campaign called "Operation Determined Path," during which they invaded all Palestinian West Bank towns, killing dozens and causing widespread destruction. No Palestinians in the West Bank were immune to the Israeli policy of collective punishment.

Using Palestinian Civilians as Human Shields in Military Operations

Israeli occupying forces have systematically used Palestinian civilians as human shields in their military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which constitutes a war crime under international humanitarian law. Since the beginning of the Palestinian Intifada in September 2000, human rights organizations have documented dozens of cases, in which Israeli forces forced Palestinian civilians to carry out tasks that posed threats to their lives, such as:

- 1) Removing suspicious objects from roads.
- 2) Walking in front of soldiers to shield them from gunfire.
- 3) Entering buildings raided by Israeli soldiers.

¹² Speaking from inside Jenin Refugee Camp, Amnesty International delegate Javier Zuniga said, "This is one of the worst scenes of devastation I have ever witnessed. It is almost impossible to conceive that what was once a town is now a lunar landscape." This statement appeared in a press release issued by Amnesty International on 17 April 2002, "Jenin Refugee Camp: Amnesty International calls for immediate international humanitarian assistance."

- 4) Standing inside houses that Israeli forces have turned into military positions, from which to fire at Palestinian targets.

The basic goal of these and similar measures is to try to ensure the safety of Israeli soldiers and by using Palestinian civilians.

It is clear that these measures are taken in accordance with high-ranking Israeli military orders. The Israeli military calls these measures "the neighbor procedure." On 5 May 2002, seven human rights organizations petitioned the Israeli High Court against this Israeli military policy. In its response, the Israeli general prosecution admitted the policy's existence and announced that the Israeli army had decided to discontinue the practice, so the High Court did not pass a decision and was satisfied by receiving the military order. However, the prosecution claimed it would allow the use of Palestinian civilians to help soldiers enter Palestinian homes, unless the commander in the field believes that "the civilian is liable to be injured." This military order was another means of continuing the use of Palestinian civilians as human shields. Nidal 'Abdul Ra'ouf Abu Muhsen, 19, from Tubas village in Jenin, was killed when he was used by Israeli soldiers as a human shield. On 14 August 2002, Israeli soldiers forced Abu Muhsen to wear a bullet proof suit and enter a house where Nasser Jarra, a Hamas activist wanted by Israeli occupying forces, was reportedly staying. It is not clear how Abu Muhsen was killed, but Israeli forces destroyed the house and Jarrar's body was found under the ruins, while Abu Muhsen was not immediately found. That evening, Israeli forces handed over his body to the Palestinians.

Despite its prohibition under international law, Israeli forces have nevertheless continued to use Palestinian civilians as human shields. PCHR and other human rights organizations have documented many related cases, supported by affidavits of victims. On 18 August 2002, following a petition filed by human rights organizations, the Israeli High Court issued a temporary injunction prohibiting Israeli forces from using this measure, however at the time of writing this report, on 21 January 2003, the Israeli Supreme Court cancelled this temporary injunction. The court gave the petitioners one month to explain how the new Israeli military instructions for the limited use of civilians violated international law. Again, the court has effectively legalized internationally prohibited actions perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces.

Using civilian persons as human shields in military operation is prohibited under the international humanitarian law. Article 28 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 provides that "the presence of a protected person may not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations." Article 51 of the Convention provides that "the Occupying Power may not compel protected persons to serve in its armed or auxiliary forces..." Article 147 of the Convention provides that "grave breaches shall be those involving any of the following acts, if committed against persons or property protected by the present Convention: ..., willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body ..."

Beating and Humiliation of Palestinians

Since the beginning of al-Aqsa Intifada, Israeli occupying forces have practiced policies of beating and humiliating Palestinians at military checkpoints and roadblocks throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In 2002, Israeli occupying forces escalated such practices. Israeli soldiers at military checkpoints and roadblocks forced some young Palestinian men to take off their clothes and remain in their underwear for long periods of time. The scene of a young Palestinian male who was forced to take off his clothes at Abu Houli military checkpoint, south of Deir al-Balah received television coverage. Recently, Israeli soldiers, especially in Hebron, adopted a barbaric style of humiliating Palestinians, especially young men. They began forcing Palestinians to choose a piece of paper, which determines the kind of punishment they receive; be it fracturing a hand or a leg, breaking windows of cars, tying hands and feet together, or other such methods aimed at humiliation.

On 30 December 2002, Israeli soldiers kidnapped a Palestinian civilian, 'Omran 'Abdul Ghani 'Omran Abu Hamdia, 18, from Hebron, and beat him to death. According to information available to PCHR, while Abu Hamdia was with some of his neighbors in front of his house, an Israeli military jeep arrived in the area. The jeep stopped and Israeli soldiers got out and checked the identity cards of the people in the area and ordered some of them to leave. They then ordered Hamdia into the jeep and took him to the south of the city. During the journey, the Israeli soldiers violently beat him and then pushed him out of the jeep onto the road, approximately 1500m away from his house. After he was taken away, his neighbors and others began to search for him and 15 minutes later found him on the road. They tried to rush him to hospital in a civilian vehicle, but he died on the way. According to medical sources, the victim was severely beaten and was bleeding from the nose, the ears and the mouth. There were also signs of beatings on his hands and head.

Attacks on Medical and Humanitarian Personnel and Denial of Assistance to Victims

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces escalated attacks on Palestinian and international medical and humanitarian personnel attempting to carry out their humanitarian missions. Such attacks included violations of the right to life by shooting at medical and humanitarian personnel and their vehicles. They also deliberately obstructed access to victims.

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces killed 5 Palestinian medical personnel and wounded dozens of others attempting to tend to the dead and wounded. Among the victims was an UNRWA official in Jenin, who was shot dead whilst trying to carry out his humanitarian mission. On 4 March 2002, Dr. Khalil Mahmoud Suleiman, 58, head of the Palestine Red Crescent Society Ambulance Station in Jenin was killed when the ambulance he was driving - while evacuating an injured young girl in the Jenin refugee camp - was directly hit by an Israeli tank shell. Six paramedics were also wounded. On 7 March 2002, an Israeli tank at the western entrance to Tulkarm opened fire at an UNRWA ambulance, which was traveling approximately 100m away. An ambulance officer, Kamal 'Abdul Rahman Salem, 35, from Tulkarm refugee camp, was killed by a heavy caliber bullet in the abdomen. On the same day,

Israeli occupying forces fired at a Palestinian ambulance, approximately 500m from its station, killing the driver, Ibrahim Mohammed Asa'ad, 38, of Nour Shams refugee camp, with a heavy caliber bullet in the head. A few minutes later, Israeli forces shot Dr. Nabhan Jallad, 51, head of Palestine Red Crescent Society Tulkarm ambulance station in the leg, inside the station. On 8 March 2003, Israeli gunboats and combat helicopters bombarded an outpost used by the Palestinian Naval Police in al-Sudaniyeh area, near Gaza City. The shelling lasted for two hours, killing four people, including a paramedic, Sa'id Yousef Shalayel, 26, from Jabalya, and wounding four, including a paramedic. On the same day, an Israeli tank shot dead the director of al-Yamama Hospital, Dr. Ahmed Nu'man 'Othman Subeih, 42, from Al-Kahder village in Bethlehem, at close range. Dr. Subeih had just exited the hospital after advanced coordination with Israeli authorities to bring in medicines and medical personnel.

The total siege imposed by Israeli occupying forces on the Occupied Palestinian Territories impeded the work of Palestinian medical personnel. Israeli military checkpoints and roadblocks often prevented ambulances from reaching the wounded or from evacuating the sick to hospitals. In 2002, 27 Palestinians died, including pregnant women, died as a direct result of obstructed access to medical care by Israeli occupying forces.

Israeli attacks on medical personnel and obstruction of their work caused further deterioration in the health conditions of the wounded, who were found in streets during frequent Israeli incursions into towns, villages and refugee camps throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Some of the wounded bled to death because Israeli occupying forces denied ambulances access to the affected areas. Israeli occupying forces also prevented ambulances from evacuating victims' bodies from streets in the West Bank, leaving them to decay, causing health problems. Israeli attacks on medical and humanitarian personnel peaked during the Israeli wide scale offensive on the West Bank towns in the period 29 March – 21 April 2002. There were reports that some wounded Palestinians bled to death because Israeli occupying forces denied them medical care. Bodies of the victims also decayed as Israeli occupying forces prevented medical personnel from evacuating them.

In 2002, Palestinian medical personnel were subject to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment by Israeli occupying forces at military checkpoints and roadblocks, in an attempt to obstruct their humanitarian work. Medical personnel were often arrested and detained by Israeli occupying forces.

Israeli occupying forces fired live bullets and tank shells at dozens of ambulances, especially during the Israeli wide scale offensive on the West Bank. Ambulances were deliberately destroyed by Israeli tanks and armored personnel carriers. An Israeli tank was shown on television destroying a Palestinian ambulance in Jenin.

In 2002, Palestinian medical institutions and facilities, including hospitals and clinics, were attacked by Israeli occupying forces. These facilities were not immune to the shelling that targeted Palestinian residential areas. Israeli occupying forces also raided and damaged some hospital and medical centers; an example of which occurred on 7 October 2002, when Israeli occupying forces opened fire at Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis. As a result of the indiscriminate shooting, which continued for some minutes, 4 Palestinian civilians inside the hospital, including 2 staff members, were wounded

and the buildings were severely damaged. Hospitals in the West Bank were raided by Israeli occupying forces, who claimed to be searching for allegedly wanted Palestinians. For example, an undercover unit of the Israeli occupying forces broke into Ramallah Hospital on 26 December 2002 and shot dead a hospital guard, Samer Khalil al-Shamali, 25, a policeman from al-Ama'ari refugee camp in Ramallah.

Attacks on Journalists

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces deliberately targeted clearly identifiable journalists working for local and international news agencies, in an attempt to prevent media coverage of Israeli military activities. Israeli forces killed 3 journalists, including 1 Italian, in the West Bank and injured 27 others. This brings the total number of journalists killed by Israeli occupying forces from September 2000 to the end of 2002 to 5 and 82 injured. On 13 March 2002, Israeli tanks in Qaddura refugee camp in Ramallah opened fire on a number of Palestinian and foreign journalists who were covering an Israeli incursion into Ramallah. An Italian freelance photographer, Raffaele Ciriello, who was on assignment for the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera*, was killed by several medium caliber bullets in the chest and the abdomen. On 11 July 2002, Israeli forces shot dead a journalist while he was filming Israeli military actions in Jenin. According to information available to PCHR, two tanks and an armored personnel carrier moved into Jenin and a group of Palestinian children began throwing stones at the Israeli military vehicles. Meanwhile a number of Palestinian journalists were filming this Israeli incursion into the town. Israeli soldiers on a tank soon opened fire on the journalists wounding 'Emad Subhi Abu Zahra, 30, director of al-Nakhil Office for Media and Press in Jenin, with a heavy caliber bullet in the right thigh that cut an artery. The following day, he succumbed to his wound. In addition, Sa'id Shawqi al-Dahla, 27, a photographer with the Palestinian News Agency (Wafa), was wounded by a live bullet to the left leg. In another instance, Israeli forces shot dead a Palestinian journalist, on 22 September 2002. Thousands of Palestinian civilians came out of their houses throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and began a peaceful march expressing their solidarity with President Arafat, who was under military siege. Israeli forces opened fire on the marchers, without first resorting to the less lethal crowd control equipment available to them. 4 Palestinian civilians, including a journalist, 'Essam Mithqal Hamza al-Talawi, 30, a journalist of *Sawt Falastin* (Voice of Palestine) radio station, from Bitounia, were shot dead.

While these killings reflect the disproportional and excessive use of force by Israeli occupying forces, they are also part of a series of Israeli attacks that aim to hide the facts about the crimes perpetrated against Palestinians. Israeli occupying forces very often closed areas and denied journalists access to areas where these forces were carrying out military operations. In 2002, PCHR documented 210 attacks on local and international journalists. These included cases of shooting at journalists resulting in injury, shooting at journalists without causing injury, beating and humiliating journalists, arrest and interrogation, destruction of and raids on media centers and institutions, and denial of access to certain areas for media coverage.

2) Settlement Activities and Settler Attacks against Palestinian Civilians and Property

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

Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

Jewish settlements established by Israel and its occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territories constitute a major threat to Palestinian civilians. Large areas of Palestinian lands have been confiscated for the sake of establishing settlements and bypass roads that have transformed Palestinian communities into isolated cantons that lack geographical contiguity. It is shocking that Israel proceeds with this war crime before the eyes of the world, without effective intervention by the international community and the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. According to the Convention, the High Contracting Parties undertake to respect and ensure respect for the Convention in all circumstances, therefore they are required to fulfill this obligation and ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Settlement is not simply the confiscation and development of land- it also requires settlers to physically inhabit the area. Settlers are an integral part of this war crime and are often armed and trained by the Israeli army and also many settlements have their own militias or cooperate with the Israeli military.

Since 1967, successive Israeli governments have supported settlement activities and provided all financial, legal and administrative facilitations to encourage the Jewish population to live in settlements. Israel has confiscated large areas of Palestinian land and devoted them to settlement projects. Nearly 400,000 settlers live in settlements established throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territories and approximately half are concentrated in settlements surrounding Jerusalem. The number of settlers in the Gaza Strip is estimated at 5,000, while the remaining settlers live in dozens of settlements throughout the West Bank. Israel has created a new system of apartheid in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, under which Jewish settlers enjoy privileges, care and protection while the Palestinian population are oppressed and strangled.¹³ Settlements control large areas of Palestinian land, a small portion of which is devoted for settlement building.¹⁴ Most of these areas serve as buffer zones surrounding settlements or are used to establish bypass roads and future expansion. Palestinian civilians whose lands are confiscated for the establishment of settlements are subject to oppression by Israeli occupying forces and settlers to be forced to leave their lands.

¹³ "Now a curfew has been imposed on 150,000 Palestinians in order to permit several thousands Jews to hold festivities... The Palestinian children cannot go to school, but the settlers can go out for a hike." Yossi Sarid, head of the opposition in the Israeli parliament (Knesset), used these words to describe a scene of apartheid in an article published in the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*, in which he criticized the settlers' practices in the OPT, and those who permit such practices, including the attorney general. See Yossi Sarid, *"Greater Sodom and Its Daughters,"* Ha'aretz, 9 October 2002.

¹⁴ According to a recent study published by an Israeli human rights organization, settlements were established on 1.7% of the area of the West Bank, but they control 41.9% of this area. See B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, *"Land Grab: Israel's Settlement Policy in the West Bank,"* May 2002.

For example, Palestinian civilians living in al-Mawasi area in the southern Gaza Strip and al-Sayafa area in the northern Gaza Strip are isolated from the rest of the Gaza Strip. Their movement is restricted by Israeli occupying forces, which established special gates at the entrances of the two areas to control the movement of Palestinian residents to and from Al Mawasi and Al Sayafa.¹⁵

In 2002, Israel, its occupying forces and settlers established new settlements and expanded existing ones, confiscating more Palestinian land for the sake of settlement expansion and the establishment of bypass roads.¹⁶ Endeavors of the former (resigned) Israeli Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer to dismantle a number of settlement outposts because they are "illegal"¹⁷ are misleading and aim at driving the attention away from settlement expansion. According to international law, all settlements are illegal and must be dismantled. The scenes that appeared on television screens that showed Israeli forces forcing settlers to remove some of those outposts were deceiving and did not reflect a real intention to dismantle even those so-called "illegal outposts" in Ben-Eliezer's rhetoric.¹⁸ In November 2002, Ben-Eliezer

¹⁵ In 2002, PCHR documented dozens of cases in which Palestinian civilians were prevented from going back to their homes in al-Mawasi area. Palestinian civilians living in the area can only exit for reasons pertaining to their basic needs, such as medical care, as Israeli occupying forces have restricted their movement. Israeli occupying forces have often totally closed off the area. They often prevented people of certain ages from moving to and from the area. In a case documented by PCHR, Israeli occupying forces prevented a number of pregnant women from going back to their homes in the area after they had travelled to hospitals for childbirth. For more details on living conditions in al-Mawasi area, see PCHR's *Closure Update*, a report on the closure imposed by Israeli occupying forces on the Gaza Strip, and *Bitter Life: A Report on Israeli Violations in the Yellow Areas*. The updates and reports can be seen on PCHR's web page (www.pchrgaza.org).

¹⁶ According to an aerial survey conducted by Israeli Peace Now in March 2002, 34 new settlement sites had been established in the West Bank since the election of Ariel Sharon in February 2001. Most of the new settlement sites are 700 meters or more from existing settlements, and some are as far as more than 2000 meters distant. The survey did not count military, quasi-military sites, or temporary memorial sites. Using the term 'outposts' for expanded settlement sites is a misnomer. These 'outposts' are, for all intents and purposes, new settlements since they have an independent infrastructure and control new terrain. Another aerial survey conducted by Peace Now showed that 9 new settlement sites were established in the West Bank. On 3 September 2002, Peace Now issued a press release stating that 8 new settlements were established in August 2002. On 25 September 2002, settlers established a new settlement called "Rehalim," which included 14 housing units, near Nablus (See the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*, 25 September 2002). After a tour of the new settlements organized by Peace Now on 2 September 2002, in which a number of members of the Israeli Knesset participated, a member from the leftist Meretz Party stated that "it can be said that this year is one of the best years for settlements" (sourced from the Arabic web page of the Israeli daily *Yediot Aharonot*, 3 September 2002).

¹⁷ The term "illegal" is not based on the international legal standards, rather it is used to describe settlement outposts that were established without the approval of the Israeli government. However, those outposts would not have been established unless the Israeli political and military establishments had approved them. The number of those outposts has sharply increased since 1998, when the then Israeli Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon encouraged settlers to seize as much land as possible before handing them over to the Palestinians.

¹⁸ On Sunday, 30 June 2002, upon an order by the Israeli Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, units of the Israeli army and police dismantled a number of settlement outposts. The number and nature of those outposts were unclear, as Israeli military sources stated that 11 settlement outposts, two of which were inhabited, were dismantled, while sources of settlers stated that an empty trailer was removed from a site near "Talmor" settlement near Ramallah and four mobile homes were removed from two sites near "Beit Hagai" and "Pnai Hever" settlements, south of Hebron. The Settlement Council in the West Bank stated that most of the outposts that were dismantled were illusory (*Ha'aretz*, 1 July 2002). Zvi Hendel, a member of the Knesset known for his support for settlement, stated that "all the outposts that were dismantled were different and only some of them were

resigned and Shaul Mofaz succeeded as Israeli Defense Minister. Mofaz, who had served as the Chief of Staff and who is accused of committing war crimes against Palestinian civilians, ordered to reconsider his ministry's policy concerning the issue of illegal settlement outposts to find a way to legitimize them.¹⁹ This fact can be reversed by the measure taken by Israeli occupying forces on 19 December 2002, which, upon an order by Mofaz, evacuated dozens of settlers from a newly established settlement outpost in Hebron. The outpost, called "Gibori Hebron," was established by settlers in November 2002 on a road linking "Kiryat Arba" settlement and the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, an area where Palestinian gunmen shot dead 12 Israeli soldiers. Mofaz claimed that the outpost was evacuated because it was established on land owned by a Palestinian.

In 2002 and since the beginning of al-Aqsa Intifada, Israeli occupying forces launched attacks against Palestinian communities from inside settlements. Israeli troops, reinforced with heavy military vehicles, are deployed in and around settlements throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Israeli forces have moved settlements to encroach into Palestinian areas, destroy houses and property and assassinate Palestinians. Settlers have also participated in these attacks. Israeli forces very often launched surface-to-surface missiles from settlements at Palestinian civilians and security targets. Fortified Israeli military locations in and around settlements have also shelled Palestinian targets.

Settler Attacks on Palestinian Civilians and Property

In 2002, settler attacks against Palestinian civilians and property continued. Such attacks included shootings, running down civilians with vehicles and destroying agricultural land. In 2002, settlers killed seven Palestinian civilians and injured dozens of others. This brings the number of Palestinian civilians killed by settlers to 35, including 9 children, since the beginning of the Intifada in September 2000.

On 31 January 2002, a number of Palestinian boys from Ussarin village adjacent to a bypass road, south of Nablus, threw stones at settlers' cars. A settler then got out of his car and fired at 16-year-old Lu'ai Ahmed Mousa 'Udeili, at point blank range. 'Udeili was killed by a live bullet in the head.²⁰ On 2 April 2002, a number of settlers opened fire at a Palestinian truck that was traveling from Ramallah to Jenin. 'Alaa'

considered possible future settlements." Hendel added in an interview with the Israeli television channel 7: "I hope that the price we are paying will be limited to illusory outposts" (Ha'aretz, 2 July 2002). On 9 October 2002, 4 uninhabited settlement outposts were dismantled. On 17 October 2002, the Israeli army started removing some mobile homes in an inhabited settlement outpost called "Havat Gelad" near Nablus. During the removal, which was resumed on 19 October 2002, clashes erupted between the Israeli army and police on one side and settlers on the other side and the removal stopped. By November 2002, the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon resigned as his coalition with the Labor Party had collapsed, so the Israeli Defense Minister gave up office before completing the dismantlement of the more than 100 settlement outposts that were considered 'illegal'.

¹⁹ The Israeli daily *Yediot Aharonot* reported on its Arabic web page on 28 November 2002 that "the Ministry of Defense considers legal steps to grant legitimacy to dozens of settlement outposts that have been established in recent months."

²⁰ See PCHR's Weekly Report that covers the period 31 January – 6 February 2002. This report and other reports can be viewed at PCHR's web site: www.pchrgaza.org.

Hatem Fayez 'Abdul Hai, 19, from Deir Abu Dha'if village, northwest of Jenin, was killed by a live bullet in the head.²¹ On 21 June 2002, armed settlers attacked Burin village, south of Nablus, breaking doors and windows of houses. A settler fired at 'Othman Edris 'Abdul Hamid Shehada, 23, killing him with a live bullet in the heart.

On 26-28 July 2002, armed settlers waged a series of assaults against Palestinian civilians in the part of Hebron under full control of Israeli occupying forces.²² The settlers attacked Palestinian civilians and their houses in the old town and other areas in the centre of the city. On 28 July 2002, a number of Jewish settlers attacked Palestinian houses in the old town of Hebron. They fired at Palestinian civilians and set fire to a number of houses and damaged their contents. A Palestinian girl, Nivin Mousa Jamjum, 14, was shot dead by a live bullet in the right eye. On the previous day, 27 July 2002, a number of settlers from "Kiryat Arba" settlement, southeast of Hebron, launched a series of attacks on the southern areas in Hebron, using firearms and sharp tools. They fired at 9-year-old Fawaz Radwan Edris, wounding him seriously with a live bullet in the head, while he was playing near his house. On the same day, a settler stabbed 7-year-old Ahmed Mohammed al-Natsha in the back, while settlers attacked the house of al-Natsha's family.

On 29 July 2002, 'Ata Mahmoud Ibrahim Nemer, 68, from al-Jeib village, northwest of occupied Jerusalem, succumbed to an injury he sustained on 21 July 2002, when a settler vehicle ran him over. On 26 August 2002, a settler who was driving a garbage vehicle ran over 6-year-old Jihad Mousa Mohammed al-'Athra, from Yatta village south of Hebron, killing him.

On 17 September 2002, a bomb, apparently planted by extremist settlers, exploded in an elementary school in Zeif village, south of Hebron at approximately 10:00. Approximately 400 students were having classes at school when the explosion occurred; 9 students were injured. Israeli occupying forces arrived at the school and after searching, 2 other bombs were discovered and deactivated by Israeli occupying forces.²³

On 6 October 2002, while a number of Palestinian farmers from 'Aqraba village were cultivating olives in their agricultural land in the northeast of their village, they were surprised by a number of settlers who opened fire, wounding Hani Yousef Bani Murra, 26, with a live bullet in the right thigh. As the settlers continued to fire, the farmers were not able to evacuate Murra to hospital for two hours. He was later taken to a medical center in the village, but he succumbed to his wound. Fadi Fadhel Bani Murra, 26, was also wounded in the attack by a live bullet in the right elbow.

²¹ In a phone call with Israeli journalists, a Jewish group that called itself "Tears of Widows and Orphans" claimed responsibility for this attack. See the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*, 2 April 2002.

²² For detailed information about these assaults, see PCHR's *Weekly Report* that covers the period 25-31 July 2002.

²³ For more details, see PCHR's *Weekly Report* that covers the period 12-18 September 2002.

These practices often take place in the presence of Israeli occupying forces, who not only abstain from intervening to prevent such practices, but during such incidents have participated in attacks and provided protection for settlers.²⁴

3) Land Leveling and Demolition of Houses and Civilian Facilities

These policies are an integral part of the settlement programme. Israeli occupying forces have razed large areas of Palestinian agricultural land and destroyed many Palestinian civilian facilities, especially near settlements and bypass roads. In 2002, Israeli occupying forces razed more areas of Palestinian agricultural land and demolished more houses and civilian facilities. According to PCHR's documentation, in the Gaza Strip land leveling and house and civilian facility demolition carried out by Israeli occupying forces mainly took place in the following areas:

- Near bypass roads reserved exclusively for Israeli occupying forces and Israeli settlers.
- Near Israeli settlements and the roads leading to them.
- The border areas, such as the areas adjacent to the Egyptian border and along the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel.

In 2002, Israeli occupation forces razed 2,924 donums of agricultural land. Since the beginning of the Intifada in September 2000 through to 31 December 2002, Israeli occupying forces razed 17,166 donums of land, including 1,941 donums (11%) of wooded land. Approximately 10% of the total area of agricultural land in the Gaza Strip (approximately 156,720 donums according to Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture estimations) has been leveled. In addition, Israeli occupying forces destroyed hundreds of wells, water pumps, irrigation networks, agricultural stores and greenhouses (the cost of an average greenhouse is approximately US\$1000). They also demolished dozens of bird and animal farms and agricultural tools. The losses of the Palestinian agricultural sector during the Intifada is estimated at millions of US dollars.

²⁴ For instance, concerning the settler attacks against Palestinian civilians and property in Hebron on 26-28 July 2002, an Israeli female soldier stated to B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories: "I saw a group of settlers, including adults, women and children, raiding Palestinian houses and destroying everything. They destroyed walls surrounding houses, flowerpots and cars. I saw one soldier on duty in the area. He was standing near a house that was raided by settlers and did not intervene. Soon, four soldiers arrived, but they also did not try to stop settlers."

In the context of these attacks, at approximately 19:00 on 26 July 2002, a number of settlers attacked the house of Yousef Nu'man al-Sharbati in the part of Hebron under Israeli security control. They set fire to a room and destroyed contents of the house, service networks and water tanks. Then, they seized control over the house, under full protection of Israeli occupying forces and police. Later, Israeli forces took the family of al-Sharbati out of the house, allegedly to protect them from settlers who seized the house. Despite attempts by the family to remain in the house, Israeli police used force to drive them out of the house, instead of expelling the settlers.

In the settler attacks against Burin village on 21 June 2002, according to eyewitnesses, Israeli forces did not intervene to stop these attacks. Rather they even prevented Palestinian civilians from defending themselves.

The following table details agricultural losses due to land leveling by Israeli occupying forces in the Gaza Strip in 2002:²⁵

Kind of loss	Rafah	Khan Yunis	Middle Area	Gaza	Northern Area	Total
Donums of leveled land	66	561	515	422	1360	2924
Agricultural pools	12	3	7	4	10	36
Irrigation networks	16	49	50	84	166	365
Greenhouses	6	18	25	---	72	121
Wells	4	6	12	10	29	61
Animal farms	45	---	---	---	19	64

Land leveling by Israeli occupying forces was often accompanied by the demolition of houses and civilian facilities in the affected areas. In 2002, Israeli occupying forces totally demolished 370 houses in the Gaza Strip,²⁶ rendering 469 Palestinian families (3287 people) homeless.²⁷ Most of the house demolitions took place in Rafah along the Egyptian border, as Israeli occupying forces demolished 240 houses (66% of the houses that were demolished in the Gaza Strip) to create a buffer zone along the border. In addition, Israeli occupying forces demolished 97 Palestinian factories and workshops. This number does not include the hundreds of workshops - reportedly used for manufacturing weapons - that were destroyed by Israeli warplanes and tanks.

4) Demolition of Houses as a Means of Punishment

As a means of retaliation and deterrent, Israeli occupying forces have demolished houses belonging to families of Palestinians who allegedly carried out, planned or facilitated attacks against Israeli targets. Israeli occupying forces have practiced this policy in violation of international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949. Israeli occupying forces do not provide evidence to support their claims of the involvement of Palestinians in attacks against Israeli targets.

From the beginning of al-Aqsa Intifada in September 2000 to 1 August 2002, Israeli occupying forces had demolished 20 houses belonging to alleged Palestinian resistance activists without media attention during incursions into Palestinian areas or

²⁵This table does not include other losses, which were difficult to enumerate, such as, beehives, fences, cars, etc.

²⁶This number does not include the houses that were demolished outside agricultural areas, and the houses belonging to families of Palestinians who allegedly carried out, planned or facilitated attacks against Israeli targets.

²⁷ According to information obtained from the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment (LAW), in 2002, Israeli occupying forces demolished 392 houses in the West Bank, in which around 2000 people lived, including 44 houses in Jerusalem that were demolished for not possessing licenses under the systematic Israeli policy aimed at the Judaization of the city.

special operations. This category of house demolitions was not made public until 1 August 2002, when the Israeli government declared the official adoption of the policy.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2002, Israeli occupying forces demolished 137 Palestinian houses, including 24 in the Gaza Strip, claiming that certain members of the families participated in carrying out, planning or facilitating attacks against Israeli targets in the Occupied Palestinian Territories or inside Israel. Those family members were wanted, detained or killed by Israeli occupying forces. Israeli occupying forces also demolished houses of Palestinian families alleged to have hosted Palestinian resistance activist. They also demolished houses of Palestinians who were alleged to have carried out attacks against Israeli targets during the first Palestinian Intifada (1987-1994).

This policy is fully supported by the Israeli political and judicial establishments. In a statement on the adoption of this policy, the former Israeli Defense Minister Benjamin Ben Eli'zer said in a weekly meeting of the Israeli cabinet: "Israel has escalated demolishing houses of those who were involved in suicide bombings as 17 houses have been demolished. We see initial results that prove this step as a means of deterrent."²⁸ In commenting on the decrease in attacks against Israeli targets in the OPT and Israel, Ben Eli'zer stated that "the relative quietness is the outcome of means of determent and life calculation by Palestinians." He added that "the number of those who attempt to carry out suicide bombings has decreased," attributing this to "Israel's use of various methods, such as house demolition and deportation."²⁹ The Israeli government's Judicial Advisor Eliakim Rubenstein approved "destroying houses of the families of those who carried out attacks against Israel," in his response to a request by the Israeli General Security Service to allow the expulsion of relatives of "suicide bombers" and the demolition of their houses to deter Palestinians who think of carrying out bombings.

This policy has been effectively granted legal cover by the Israeli High Court. On 6 August 2002, the Israeli High Court decided to allow Israeli occupying forces to demolish houses of Palestinian resistance activists, relying on article 119 of the 1945 Emergency Regulations (from the time of the British Mandate).³⁰

5) Renewal of the Policy of Deportation

Since 1967, Israeli occupying forces have used the policy of unlawful deportation or transfer of Palestinian civilians as a form of individual and collective punishment. The deportation or unlawful transfer of protected persons breaches international humanitarian law in a number of respects. Firstly, article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states, "Individual or mass forcible transfers as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their

²⁸ The Arabic web site of the Israeli daily *Yedioth Ahronoth* (www.arabynet.com), 11 August 2002.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 3 September 2002.

³⁰ Article 119 of the 1945 Emergency Regulations (from the time of the British Mandate) allows the military commander to demolish any house where any person or member of the household has not only had any weapon, gun or incendiary device, but also has helped anyone with any weapon, gun or incendiary device.

motive." The punishment of an individual or group for the actions of a relative is also a violation of article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, the prohibition on collective punishment and reprisal attacks, which provides: "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." Article 147 of the Convention defines the unlawful transfer of a protected person as a grave breach, namely a war crime, as further clarified by Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions. Article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that "no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile." Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides that "everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence." It further provides that "no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of the right to enter his own country."

During the years of occupation, Israeli occupying forces have arbitrarily deported hundreds of Palestinians without any charge. They have also deported dozens of Palestinians in the context of reprisals and as a form of collective punishment against relatives of Palestinian activists or those engaged in resistance. In 1992, Israeli occupying forces deported more than 400 Palestinian to south Lebanon in the largest such incident conducted by these forces since 1967.³¹

Since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, no cases of deportation had been recorded until 2002, when Israeli occupying forces resumed this policy.³² The policy was renewed by an Israeli-Palestinian deal in which 39 Palestinians sheltered in the Church of the Nativity were unlawfully deported or transferred in order to put an end of an almost 40-day Israeli siege. According to the deal, on Friday, 10 May 2002, all Palestinians sheltered in the Church of the Nativity were taken to an Israeli military base near Bethlehem to be interrogated by Israeli security officers. 13 of them were then taken to Ben Gurion Airport and flown in a British military plane to Cyprus where they would remain temporarily until an agreement was reached between the countries where they would eventually be deported. In addition, 26 Palestinians were taken in vehicles to the Gaza Strip and the over 60 other Palestinians and clerics within the Church were released to return home.

While many across the international political spectrum welcomed the deal and participated in its conclusion, PCHR was dismayed by such international involvement in what is essentially a grave breach of international humanitarian law. PCHR asserted that once again political considerations took primacy over international law,

³¹ On 16 December 1992, the Israeli government decided to deport 415 Palestinians to south Lebanon. The operation began in the evening of the same day, but was temporarily disrupted as a number of human rights organization appealed at the Israeli Supreme Court against the decision. In further evidence of its political nature and direct involvement in legalizing crimes committed by Israeli occupying forces, the court approved the governmental decision and the deportation was resumed on 17 December 1992.

³² This does not include the expulsion of Palestinians from Jerusalem through the confiscation of their blue identity cards, a measure that has been in effect since 1967. Through a series of administrative, legal and practical actions, Israel has sought to Judaize Jerusalem and expel its original inhabitants progressively. This operation can be seen as a form of transfer, but it will not be highlighted in this section as its goals are beyond the goals of deportation mentioned here.

at the expense of Palestinian civilians, protected under international humanitarian law.³³

The Israeli government resorted to their former policy of transferring relatives of alleged Palestinian activists, in a series of punitive measures which also includes the demolition of houses. Regrettably, the Israeli judiciary once again intervened to effectively legalize such internationally prohibited measures. On 1 August 2002, Israeli occupying forces ordered the transfer of three Palestinians from the West Bank to Gaza Strip: Intissar and Kifah 'Ajouri, from 'Askar refugee camp in Nablus, the sister and brother of 'Ali 'Ajouri who was assassinated by Israeli occupying forces on 5 August 2002, and whose family home was demolished on 18 July 2002; and 'Abdul Nasser 'Assida, the brother of Nasser al-Din 'Assida, who was allegedly wanted by Israeli occupying forces. The decision was not immediately implemented, as the three appealed. On Tuesday, 3 September 2002, the Israeli Supreme Court approved the transfer of Intissar and Kifah 'Ajouri, but cancelled the decision to transfer 'Assida.³⁴ The following day, Israeli occupying forces transferred Intissar and Kifah 'Ajouri to the Gaza Strip. The two were brought into "Netzarim" settlement, located south of Gaza City and were then transferred to an armored personnel carrier and transported to the Sheikh Ajleen area, an extremely dangerous part of Gaza. The two were found wandering by a local farmer and were brought to the PCHR in Gaza City. PCHR had been asked by their lawyers, Hamoked and Lea Tsemel, to assist them when they reached the Gaza Strip.³⁵ Intissar and Kifah 'Ajouri then requested that they be moved to the Gaza City headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross. At the time of writing, they are still in the Gaza Strip.

6) Punishment of a People: Ongoing Policy of Total Closure and Restrictions on Free Movement

The policy of total closure and siege is the most comprehensive measure of collective punishment adopted by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians. The siege and closure policy operates on a number of levels, including:

- The closure of international border crossings (Rafah Terminal with Egypt and al-Karama Terminal with Jordan), which has made international travel for Palestinians extremely difficult.
- The closure of crossings between the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel, including the prohibition of movement between the West Bank and Gaza Strip and between the OPT and Israel.

³³ See PCHR's press release of 11 May 2002.

³⁴ The Israeli Supreme Court ruled that Intisar and Kifah could be assigned residence under article 78 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and moved to the Gaza Strip. However, article 78 allows for assigned residence of protected persons only "*for imperative reasons of security.*" However, the Israeli military has not provided evidence that would satisfy this condition. In addition, this measure cannot be applied as a punishment, or collective measure. This is contrasted with statements and actions (demolitions of homes belonging to families of Palestinian activists) of Israeli officials that the transfers aim to punish and to deter others from carrying out attacks against Israeli targets.

³⁵ At the end of August 2002, Israeli occupying forces transferred Adib Thawabta from his place of residence in Beit Fajjar village in Hebron to the Gaza Strip, after the period of administrative detention, under which he had been placed, expired.

- The closure of Gaza International Airport and prohibition of travel through Israel's Ben Gurion Airport.
- The marine closure on the Gaza Strip.
- The erection of military checkpoints on all roads that link Palestinian communities with one another.
- The erection of military checkpoints between Palestinian towns and their suburbs.
- The blockade of roads and the excavation of trenches.
- The imposition of curfews on Palestinian communities.
- The construction of a fence that separates between the West Bank and Israel.

The policy of closure is a form of collective punishment prohibited by international humanitarian law, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949. Article 33 of the convention prohibits punishing protected persons for offences they have not personally committed. It also prohibits collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or terrorism. Israeli occupying forces have used the policy of closure as a measure of punishment, intimidation and retaliation against Palestinian civilians, through imposing curfews and closing main and branch roads, thus restricting movement of persons and goods. Furthermore, international human rights instruments ensure the right to free movement. Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides that "everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence" and "shall be free to leave any country, including his own." Israel is obliged to act in accordance with the requirements of the international human rights instruments of which Israel is a party.

The policy of closure and restrictions on free movement has had serious repercussions on Palestinian economic, social, cultural, political and civil rights. Palestinians have suffered from an economic crisis that has affected all economic sectors, including trade, industry, agriculture, labor, tourism, transportation, investment and development. The policy of closure violates the right to work, health, education and the right to an adequate standard of living. The policy of closure has affected every person in the OPT and has created a system of apartheid, through which Palestinians are isolated in cantons that lack geographical contiguity, and are deprived of their basic rights to free movement.

The policy of closure has significantly affected the right to education in the OPT. Thousands of Palestinian students and teachers have not been able to reach their schools due to the closure and the curfew imposed on Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps for long periods that amounted to 100 days in some areas such as Hebron and Nablus. In addition, university students have faced difficulties in attending classes due to restrictions at Israeli military checkpoints and the curfews imposed on Palestinian communities.

The policy of closure violates the right to health, especially in isolated areas and those subjected to curfews. In 2002, 57 Palestinians died as a result of Israeli occupying forces at military checkpoints obstructing their evacuation to hospitals.

Israeli occupying forces have imposed a comprehensive siege on the Gaza Strip. Since 29 September 2000, Israeli forces have closed all crossings between the Gaza

Strip and Israel, and often prevented importation and exportation to and from the Gaza Strip. They have also tightened their grip at border-crossings. They have completely closed the "Safe Passage" between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. They have also restricted travel at Rafah Terminal on the Palestinian-Egyptian border, which is often closed. When the terminal is open, Palestinians traveling through are subjected to humiliation by Israeli forces. Hundreds of Palestinians were forced to spend nights on the Egyptian side of the terminal while awaiting entry into the Gaza Strip under inhumane and degrading conditions. Israeli forces have interrogated and arrested many Palestinians traveling through the terminal. In addition, a number of Palestinian patients died due to the overcrowding at the terminal, and children, women and old people have suffered from health problems.

On 12 February 2002, Israeli occupying forces destroyed the remainders of the runway of Gaza International Airport. Israeli forces closed the airport at the beginning of the Intifada. Israeli occupying forces often imposed comprehensive and partial marine closures on the Gaza Strip, preventing fishing. When fishing was sometimes permitted, Israeli forces attacked Palestinian fishermen and their boats incurring large losses. A number of Palestinian fishermen were arrested and a number of boats were confiscated by the Israeli naval forces.

In a serious escalation, Israeli occupying forces have tightened the internal siege on the Gaza Strip. They have created Bantustans in the south, middle and north of the Gaza Strip, in a form of apartheid that has deprived thousands of Palestinians of their rights to free movement inside and outside their areas. Palestinians living in al-Mawasi area in the southern Gaza Strip, Abu al-'Ajin, Wadi al-Salqa and al-Mughraqa areas in the central Gaza Strip and al-Sayafa area in the north, which are surrounded by Israeli military areas, have been subjected to humiliation and suppression, encouraging migration and paving the way for annexation of more lands to the Israeli settlements.

Israeli occupying forces have further restricted movement inside the Gaza Strip. They have reinforced their presence on the main roads. They have portioned the Gaza Strip into three separated zones, through erecting military checkpoints on Salah al-Din Street, the only road linking areas of the Gaza Strip as Israeli forces had closed the coastal road from Deir al-Balah to Rafah, disrupting the daily life of Palestinians. Palestinian workers, public sector employees, UNRWA staff and university students have not been able to reach their places of work and universities. Israeli occupying forces have practiced cruel and degrading treatment against Palestinians waiting at Abu Houli and al-Matahen checkpoints, north of Khan Yunis, which constitute a major threat to the lives of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Palestinians were often forced to wait for long periods of time that sometimes exceeded 20 hours, during which they were deprived water, food and medical care. Israeli forces often checked Palestinians crossing these military checkpoints, forced dozens of them to take off most of their clothes, beat and insulted them and opened fire over their heads, in order to terrify them.

There are many accounts of cruel and degrading treatment and the practice of an apartheid policy against Palestinian civilians whilst on their way to work or educational institutions. In 2002, many lost 100-120 hours of their working time per month (an average of 4-5 hours per day) while traveling back and forth between the

north and south of the Gaza Strip. It is important to note that unimpeded travel from Rafah to Gaza City takes 40 minutes. Thousands of people were also forced to spend the night at al-Matahen and Abu Houli checkpoints, while waiting to be allowed to go to their work, education institutions or homes.

Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails have been regularly denied family visitation rights. The program of family visitation organized by the ICRC has been regularly canceled or curtailed by Israeli occupying authorities, which have also prevented lawyers from the Gaza Strip from visiting Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

Separation Wall: An Apartheid Wall

As part of its ongoing arbitrary measures to restrict movement of Palestinians in the West Bank and isolate them from the outside world, the Israeli occupying forces decided to construct a separation wall between the West Bank and Israel, similar to that between the Gaza Strip and Israel. Construction of the wall began in June 2002 (due for completion in June 2003) and consists of three parts: the northern section (120km); the Jerusalem section (54km); and the southern section (215km). The construction of the separation wall in the West Bank will expand Israeli territory to include at least 10% of the West Bank. It will also incorporate 57 Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, in which 300,000 settlers live. It will also illegally surround 400,000 Palestinians, whose fate is, as yet, unclear.

Israeli occupying forces claim that the construction of the separation wall aims at protecting Israel's security from Palestinians who infiltrate into Israeli territory, but the real goal of this apartheid wall is to collectively punish Palestinians, through restricting their movement and transforming their areas into Bantustans that can be easily controlled. Israeli occupying forces also seeks to illegally annex thousands of donums of Palestinian agricultural land to the Israeli territory and seize control over their water resources.

7) Arrests of Palestinians and Treatment of Palestinians in Custody

The issue of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails constitutes a major portion of Israeli violations of the international humanitarian law and international human rights instruments, particularly the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to which Israel is a State Party.³⁶ Israeli occupying forces have arrested many Palestinian and transferred them to jails and detention centers inside Israel in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949, and Palestinians have been subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment while being detained and interrogated. In 2002, Israeli occupying forces shot dead a number of Palestinians claiming that they attempted to escape upon arrest, and other Palestinians

³⁶ Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution in December 1984, and ratified by Israel in October 1986.

were killed in custody. Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and detention centers are routinely kept in conditions which fail to meet minimum international standards.

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces waged wide scale campaigns of arrests. Accurate numbers of Palestinians arrested by Israeli occupying forces in 2002 are not available, but human rights organizations estimate the number to be more than 11,000. At the end of 2002, more than 8500, including 300 children and 53 women, were still in custody. By the end of 2001, more than 3000 Palestinians, including 243 children and 13 women, were held in custody by Israeli occupying forces. In 2002, the majority of arrests took place in the West Bank. According to PCHR's documentation, 320 Palestinians from the Gaza Strip were arrested by Israeli occupying forces in 2002. Most of the arrests took place during Israeli invasions of Palestinian Authority controlled areas, especially in the West Bank, and limited incursions in some areas in the Gaza Strip. Other arrests took place in Palestinian villages under Israeli security control according to the Interim Agreement (Area B) and in occupied Jerusalem. Hundreds of Palestinians were also arrested at Israeli military checkpoints and roadblocks erected on roads and at entrances to Palestinian towns and villages; at border crossings with Egypt and Jordan; and at crossings into Israel or inside Israel. A number of Palestinian fishermen were also arrested by Israeli occupying forces in the Gaza Strip while fishing.

The largest campaigns of arrests took place during the Israeli full-scale offensive on the West Bank at the end of March 2002, during the so-called "Operation Defensive Shield," which began on 29 March and affected most towns in the West Bank. Israeli occupying forces arrested thousands of Palestinians, both civilians and policemen. Hundreds of them were detained and interrogated in public places, such as UNRWA schools, under inhumane and degrading conditions, such as being deprived of food. They were then transferred to detention centers in the West Bank, including Ofar and Biet Eil near Ramallah, Hawara near Nablus (which was later closed) and Etzion near Hebron. Israeli soldiers gave dozens of Palestinian civilians serial numbers, marked on their arms. Later, thousands of Palestinian detainees were transferred to the Ketziot prison camp in the Negev desert, which was reopened on 14 April 2002, to take in an increasing number of Palestinians detained under inhumane and degrading conditions.³⁷

According to PCHR's investigations, hundreds of Palestinians have been detained by Israeli occupying forces under inhumane conditions and deprived food. According to affidavits taken by PCHR from dozens of Palestinians who were released after being detained by Israeli occupying forces for some days, Palestinian detainees were

³⁷The Ketziot prison (also known as Ansar 3) was opened on 16 March 1988 to house the increasing numbers of Palestinians arrested during the first Intifada. At its peak, it was the largest prison in Israel, holding approximately 7,000 Palestinians, including 3,000 in administrative detention. At one time or another during its six years of operation, approximately 170,000 Palestinians were detained at the facility. The prison camp is administered by the Israeli army rather than the civil penal system. It consists of tents surrounded by barbed wire and watchtowers. Prisoners are confined with little or no protection from the harsh weather conditions of the Negev desert, including temperatures ranging from 54 degrees during the day to 0 degrees at night. In a number of cases, soldiers in watchtowers fired at prisoners, including Asad Jaber al-Shawa from Gaza City, who was shot and killed on 16 August 1988. The prison was closed in 1993.

routinely subjected to torture and cruel and degrading treatment while in custody. Israeli occupying forces deliberately humiliated them, deprived prisoners of food and held them for long hours under the rain after taking off their clothes and tying their hands and feet.

Military Order 1500

The Israeli military commander for the West Bank issued a military order (number 1500) on 5 April granting army officers wider scope to detain Palestinians for 18 days without charge, access to lawyers, or judicial review. This order violates the fundamental rights of detainees. According to Israeli claims, this order was issued to combat the "infrastructure of terror," to deter "terror attacks" and to protect Israeli forces. The Israeli Supreme Court rejected an appeal submitted by 4 human rights organizations, in which they demanded that the Palestinian detainees be allowed access to lawyers. The court accepted the State of Israel's position that regular procedures of detention do not apply to Israeli military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

In 2002, the number of Palestinian women and children detained in Israeli jails sharply increased. By the end of the year 68 Palestinian children and 53 women, including 8 below the age of 18, were still detained by Israeli occupying forces, under appalling conditions, including torture, beating, humiliation, incommunicado detention and deprivation of appropriate medical care.

Palestinian detainees are routinely subjected to insults and degrading treatment, including beatings. They are also denied their rights to appropriate medical care, healthy conditions and access to lawyers. Israeli occupying forces have continued to prevent Palestinian lawyers from the Gaza Strip from visiting Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails. In light of this, it is almost impossible to provide detainees with appropriate legal assistance. Representatives of the ICRC can visit detainees only 18 days after an arrest, instead of 14 days as per the previous agreement. The ICRC does not receive names of detainees in Israeli jails on a regular basis.

Palestinian detainees are also deprived of regular family visitation. When the families are allowed to visit the detainees through the ICRC, they often reported being subjected to degrading and humiliating treatment by Israeli forces, including insults, provocation and even beating by Israeli jailers. There have also been reports of humiliating intimate physical searches.

Killing Palestinians in Custody or during Attempts to Arrest Them

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces killed 9 Palestinians in custody. These killings took place during Israeli wide scale military operations in Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps, or during special operations carried out to arrest allegedly wanted Palestinians. During an incursion into Ramallah on 31 March 2002, Israeli occupying forces detained 17-year old Murad 'Awaisa. He and some neighbors were detained in an apartment in 'Awaisa's building, and were supervised by soldiers. Israeli soldiers took 'Awaisa to a separate room in the apartment. Detained neighbors heard sounds

of shooting 12 minutes later. Then, an Israeli soldier told the neighbors that 'Awaisa was dead. He was killed by two live bullets: one near his heart and one in the knee.

In another incident, on 12 August 2002, Israeli occupying forces, reinforced with heavy military vehicles and special units, moved into al-Yamun village, west of Jenin. They surrounded the house of Mohammed Hassan Fureihat and ordered through loudspeakers for the 13 residents to leave. They checked the family and their identity cards and the Israeli soldiers apprehended 1 of the family members, Ghazal Mohammed Hassan Fureihat, 21. The family heard sounds of dozens of live bullets and an Israeli soldier told the family that other Israeli soldiers shot their son dead. When Israeli occupying forces withdrew from the village, Fureihat's body was moved to hospital. According to medical sources, he was hit by six live bullets in the chest, the pelvis and the thighs. An Israeli military spokesman claimed that Israeli soldiers shot Fureihat when he attempted to escape.

Administrative Detention

Administrative detention has been used by Israeli occupying forces to arrest Palestinians without warrant, charge or trial. In a clear violation of human rights, the detainee is deprived of his or her right to a fair trial, from knowing what he or she is accused of, and his right to adequate legal representation. Thousands of Palestinians have been placed under administrative detention for various periods of time that sometimes exceeded 4 years. Administrative detention usually lasts for a renewable period of 3 or 6 months, but since February 1995, the period has been extended to one year. Administrative detention can continue *sine die*. The arrest orders are issued by Israeli district military commanders in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This excludes East Jerusalem, where the orders are issued by the Israeli Defense Minister, as in other Israeli cities.

In 2002, Israeli occupying forces escalated the use of administrative detention against Palestinians, as hundreds of Palestinians were placed under administrative detention. In 2002, Israeli occupying forces issued 3800 orders to place Palestinians under administrative detention. By the end of the year, 1500 Palestinians were still in custody under administrative detention by Israeli occupying forces, most of them arrested during the so-called "Operation Defensive Shield."³⁸ These detainees are subjected to degrading and humiliating treatment and are deprived of their basic human rights, including the right to receive adequate medical care. In this context, Israeli occupying forces denied access of around 55 Palestinian detainees in Ofar detention center near Ramallah to medical care. In the Gaza Strip, 11 Palestinians were placed under administrative detention by the Israeli military.

Continued Torture and Ill-Treatment of Palestinian Detainees

In 2002, the Israeli General Security Service (GSS – also known as Shabak) continued to use methods of physical and psychological pressure against Palestinian detainees,

³⁸ The periods of administrative detention of dozens were renewed.

including painful shackling, *shabeh*,³⁹ sleep deprivation, long periods of incommunicado detention, the use of collaborators to obtain confessions, beatings, insults and denial of medical care.⁴⁰ These practices violate articles 1 and 16 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which prohibit acts of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. The continued use of methods of torture by GSS interrogators confirms that the Israeli Supreme Court ruling on 6 September 1999 on the prevention of the use of methods of torture, did not constitute a definite legal prohibition on the use of torture by GSS interrogators against Palestinian detainees.

In 2002, lawyers were prevented from visiting some Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails. PCHR documented 78 cases, out of 367 cases it followed up in 2002, in which lawyers were not allowed to visit detainees. PCHR expressed its grave concern over the fate of these detainees, especially in light of the Israeli Supreme Court's refusal to allow them access to attorneys.

8) *Misleading Israeli Investigation Committees*

This report has provided evidence of the dangerous role played by the Israeli judiciary, including the Israeli Supreme Court, in effectively legalizing war crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinians. Israel does not investigate, in accordance with international standards on impartiality and thoroughness the thousands of crimes committed by its occupying forces and settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and has refused permission to neutral international committees to conduct such investigations. In the few cases when Israel conducted investigations into war crimes its forces committed against Palestinian civilians, it rarely found members of the Israeli military, security services, or settlers responsible, or imposed appropriate sanctions on those responsible. Investigation committees are usually established upon an order by the Israeli Defense Minister and formed by senior Israeli military officers. For example, the former Israeli Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer ordered an investigation into the circumstances in which more than 13 Palestinian civilians were killed in Gaza, Tubas and Hebron in the period 28 August - 1 September 2002. The committee was comprised of senior Israeli military officers and headed by Major General Yitzhak Harel.

The investigation committee presented its findings to Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer who welcomed the conclusion that "Israeli soldiers followed correct

³⁹ A 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.

⁴⁰ PCHR has documented many cases in which GSS interrogators used methods of torture against Palestinian detainees. For example, on 29 March 2002, Israeli occupying forces arrested Farid Sa'id Isma'il al-Gharabli, from Gaza, while he was on his way back to the Gaza Strip through Rafah Terminal. He was taken to Asqalan (Ashkelon) prison, where he was subjected to torture during interrogation. He was forced to sit on a small chair with his hands shackled behind the back. He was insulted, humiliated and threatened with life in prison. This stage of interrogation had continued for 36 hours, during which he was deprived of sleeping and was even put in a 2 square meter cell. Al-Gharabli stated to PCHR that they put a collaborator in the cell, who annoyed him by continuous knocking on the door. Al-Gharabli had been interrogated for 24 days, during which he was subjected to physical and psychological pressure. He was put in a department designed for collaborators for 6 days to obtain his confession.

procedure." In the first two incidents, the committee claimed, "Israeli soldiers identified several suspects who had broken into a Jewish-owned plot of land." With regard to the incident of 31 August 2002 in which two Palestinian children were killed by Israeli occupying forces, along with other 3 Palestinians, the committee claimed that "the missile that struck the children had gone astray due to a technical fault." The first incident took place on 28 August 2002, when an Israeli tank fired flechette shells at a number of Palestinian civilians who were on their agricultural land near "Netzarim" settlement, killing a woman, her two sons and their cousin from the family of Abu al-Hajin. The second incident took place in Tubas, on 31 August 2002, when two Israeli combat helicopters fired three missiles at a civilian car in which 5 Palestinian civilians were traveling, in an attempt to assassinate two alleged Palestinian activists. One of the activists and two boys were killed, while the other activist was able to escape after he was seriously wounded. In addition, two children, who were playing near their houses, were also killed. The third incident took place on 1 September 2002, when Israeli occupying soldiers broke into a marble workshop in Bani Na'im village near Hebron, where five Palestinians were working. Shortly before the incident, 1 of the workers temporarily left the premises and Israeli soldiers then arrested the other 4 workers, took them to a nearby area and shot them dead.

In its response on 21 August 2002 to PCHR's complaint regarding the killing of three Palestinian children (Mohammed al-Madhoun, Ahmed Hassan and Mohammed Lubbad) near "Nissanit" settlement in the northern Gaza Strip at the end of 2001,⁴¹ the Israeli southern command military prosecution stated: "In response to your letter, we have sent you the autopsy reports and conclusions of the field inquiry, which were explained in our letter on 13 June 2002. The letter included our decision that there was no need to initiate a criminal investigation into the case. The evidence you are requesting today is the military investigation carried out by district commanders after the incident. According to article 539a of the Military Judiciary Law of 1955, items of the investigation are classified, so we cannot send them to you."

In another incident, on 10 May 2002, Israeli occupying forces shot 14-year-old 'Ezziddin al-Hilu, from al-Shojaeya neighborhood in Gaza City, and wounded two of his friends. According to PCHR's investigation and eyewitnesses testimonies, at approximately 16:00, 4 Palestinian children were playing on agricultural land, approximately 500m away from the eastern border of the Gaza Strip, east of Gaza City. Suddenly, an Israeli tank and a military jeep moved to the west. When they were approximately 200m away from the children, Israeli soldiers fired at the children for no apparent reason. The 4 children attempted to escape; 3 were wounded while the fourth child was able to escape. When ambulances came to evacuate the children to hospital, Israeli soldiers fired at them. An Israeli military spokesman claimed that "Israeli soldiers fired warning bullets in the air, but the suspects continued to move forward towards the soldiers, who fired at them fearing for their lives." He added that "Israeli soldiers fired warning bullets in the air when an ambulance came as it moved towards the soldiers not towards the wounded."

⁴¹ On 30 December 2001, an Israeli tank positioned in the vicinity of "Elli Sinai" settlement in the northern Gaza Strip fired 4 flechette shells at the three children from a distance of approximately 600m, killing them instantly. Israeli occupying forces detained their bodies for a few days. Signs of torture and beating by sharp tools appeared on the bodies. Israeli occupying forces claimed that the three children attempted to infiltrate into the aforementioned settlement, but later they admitted that the tank fired at the children and claimed that the children had two knives.

These accounts are a few examples of the way Israel investigates crimes committed by its occupying forces. Results of such investigations are often misleading or inappropriate and serve to encourage further violations. Field investigations into these incidents prove that Israeli occupying forces used excessive force in circumstances where no serious threats were posed to the lives of Israeli soldiers.

As PCHR does not believe that military investigation committees formed by Israeli occupying forces are impartial, independent or thorough, it calls for the establishment of a neutral and impartial international investigation committee to investigate war crimes committed by Israeli occupying forces. There is an increasing responsibility on the international community to search for, and bring to international justice Israeli war criminals, whether in accordance with international or domestic legislations. PCHR has always warned against continued international silence with regards to war crimes and grave breaches of international law perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces, which encourages Israel to continue to commit crimes against Palestinians.

Section 2

Palestinian Violations of Human Rights and Obstructions of Democratic Reform

- **The Judiciary and the System of Justice**
- **Continued Operation of State Security Courts**
- **Weak Performance of the Legislature**
- **Detention by the PA: Illegal Arrests and Torture**
- **Attacks on Journalists and Violations of the Right to Free Expression**
- **Excessive Use of Force by Law Enforcement Officials**
- **Misuse of Weapons**
- **Extra-Judicial Killing of Citizens for Alleged Collaboration with Israel**
- **Victims of Storing and Making Explosives in Residential Areas**

This section covers violations of human rights perpetrated by the Palestinian Authority and its relevant bodies. The evaluation in this section is based on international human rights law and Palestinian law. This section also evaluates the rule of law and the obstacles to democratic reform in Palestinian Authority controlled areas.

1) The Judiciary and the System of Justice

In 2002, the Palestinian Authority faced demands to make institutional reforms. Regrettably, the Palestinian Authority only responded to international pressure to introduce reforms, particularly from the United States, although there had been considerable domestic demands for reform since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority. There is a difference between the international perspective of reforms (particularly the United States' perspective), which gives a priority to security duties. However, the domestic demands are for real institutional reform that will lay the foundation for the establishment of an independent democratic Palestinian state based on the principles of the separation of authorities, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

In the context of reform, in the second half of 2002, the Palestinian Authority took a number of steps. On 25 June 2002, a Palestinian decree to reform the Palestinian cabinet was issued. It included appointing a new minister of finance and nominating a minister of interior, a position that had been assigned to the Palestinian President since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority. On 11 September 2002, President Arafat accepted the resignation of his cabinet after a session of the Palestinian Legislative Council, fearing of a vote of no confidence. On 29 October 2002, the Palestinian President formed a new cabinet that would remain in power until general elections, which were due to be held on 20 January 2003. However, it was decided later that such elections would be postponed *sine die*.⁴² Meanwhile, Chief of Palestinian Police Ghazi al-Jabali and a number of other officers were dismissed, and the command of the Preventive Security Service in the West Bank and Gaza Strip witnessed some changes.

Steps taken towards reform by the Palestinian Authority, especially with regard to the judiciary and justice, were disappointing, as violations of human rights and the absence of the rule of law continued. In 2002, the Palestinian Authority passed two relevant laws; namely the Judicial Authority Law⁴³ and the Basic Law.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the Palestinian Authority took a number of steps that violate the spirit and basis of these two laws. This raises questions as to whether the reforms were genuine or superficial. The commitment to reforms with regard to the judiciary and

⁴² Although it has persistently called for general elections, PCHR rejected holding elections under the current circumstances, which could not ensure a free and impartial electoral process. PCHR clearly declared that to hold such elections, Israeli occupying forces must stop their illegal military actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. PCHR also called for passing a new electoral law, replacing that of 1995.

⁴³ On 14 May 2002, Palestinian President Yasser ratified the Judicial Authority Law, which had been approved by the Palestinian Legislative Council in the third reading since 15 November 1998.

⁴⁴ On 7 July 2002, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat ratified the Basic Law, which is considered as the constitution of the interim period. The law was approved in its third reading by the Palestinian Legislative Council on 2 October 1997.

justice can be examined through two issues: the appointment of a new Higher Judicial Council and a new Attorney-General.

Formation of the Higher Judiciary Council

The Higher Judiciary Council was formed by a presidential decree issued on 1 June 2000 before the approval of the Judicial Authority Law, which organizes the formation and powers of this council. Surprisingly, the presidential decree provided that "the council will carry out its mandate, which is set out in the Judicial Authority Law," before this law was ratified by the Palestinian President, which means that the formation of the council was based on a draft law. PCHR believed it was important to form the Higher Judiciary Council and affirmed that this council must be formed after the ratification of the Judicial Authority Law. PCHR considered the presidential decree to be another example in a series of decisions to control the appointment of certain important positions, which would subject the judiciary to the influence of the executive.⁴⁵

On 14 May 2002, the Palestinian President ratified the Judicial Authority Law, which was published in the official gazette on 18 May 2002. Article 81 of the law provides that "a Higher Judiciary Council shall be established in one month after publishing the law in the official gazette," which meant no later than 18 June 2002.

However, the Palestinian Authority did not comply with this law. On 28 June 2002, the Palestinian President issued a decree, article 1 of which provides that "the existing Higher Judiciary Council established in accordance with Presidential Decree (29) of 2002, is a temporary council pursuant to Article 81 of the Judiciary Law (1) of 2002." The council, according to Article 2 of the Presidential Decree "shall be in a state of continuous convention and shall have the same authorities mentioned in Article 37 of the new law and for one year beginning on 18 June 2002." The implementation of the decree is an attempt to be consistent with the Judicial Authority Law and to avoid a non-committal timeframe for the establishment of the temporary Higher Judiciary Council.

The existing Higher Judiciary Council's term was extended by a Presidential Decree. The Council's formation and the age of its membership contradict the Judiciary Law. Regarding its formation, there is no deputy head of the Council and the Undersecretary for the Ministry of Justice's membership was given to his assistant, in violation of Article 37 of the Judiciary Law. With regards to the age of its members, a number of council judges are over 70 - the specified age of retirement (Article 34). The preamble of the Presidential Decree is apparently an attempt to justify this violation under the pretext of "the urgent need for judges who have long experience."

The existing Higher Judicial Council, which functions as per the presidential decree issued on 28 June 2002, is illegal, violates the Judicial Authority Law and constitutes an attempt to ensure executive influence over the judiciary.

⁴⁵ PCHR, Narrative and Financial Reports: 1 January – 31 December 2000, PCHR, 2001, p.p. 71-72.

Appointment of a New Attorney-General

On 26 December 2002, the Palestinian President issued a decree appointing Khalid al-Qidra as the new Attorney-General. This is the second time Mr. al-Qidra had been made Attorney-General. He was first appointed when the Palestinian Authority was established in 1994 and he remained in the position until his dismissal in 1996. No reasons were given for this dismissal. From November 1999, he had been Attorney-General for the State Security Courts' Prosecution Office. The latest presidential decree merged the State Security Prosecution Office with the general Civilian Prosecution Office.

The decree to appoint the new Attorney-General is unconstitutional as Mr. al-Qidra was not nominated by the High Judicial Council, in violation of article 98 of the Basic law and article 63 of the Judicial Authority Law. Therefore, the appointment is unlawful and goes against the letter and the spirit of both laws.⁴⁶

With regards to the merger of the State Security Prosecution Office with the general Civilian Prosecution Office, what is actually recommended and required is the total abolition of the State Security Prosecution Office and its courts (which were set up in February 1995). The appointment of Mr. al-Qidra as Attorney-General of the State Security Courts in November 1999 by the Palestinian Authority was subject to widespread criticism. PCHR has always asserted that the Courts are a serious setback to the authority of the Civil Prosecution Office, usurping its power and duties and providing a real obstacle to achieving the rule of law. The State Security Courts still exist and function, although they breach both the Basic Law and the Judicial Authority Law.

2) Continued Operation of State Security Courts

The State Security Courts constitute an obstacle to the efforts made to promote the independence of the judiciary and institutional reform in the Palestinian Authority. The operation of these courts routinely violate human rights, including the right to fair trial before an independent and impartial court and to appeal against sentences to a higher judicial body. Procedures followed in these courts contradict the principles of fair trials and appropriate legal procedures, as the trials are summary, the accused are not given sufficient time to prepare their defense and they are not offered the right to proper legal representation. Sentences issued by these courts cannot be appealed, including death sentences, which need presidential ratification before they are carried out.

The State Security Courts were established in February 1995, upon Presidential Decree 49 of 1995. This decision was strongly opposed by PCHR and other human rights organizations. Instead of abolishing these courts, the Palestinian President

⁴⁶ See PCHR's press release on 29 December 2002, "The Latest Presidential Decree Appointing the Palestinian Attorney-General is Unconstitutional."

decided in November 1999 to appoint an Attorney General for these courts, which has undermined the powers of the Attorney General in the Palestinian Authority.

PCHR is deeply concerned about the continued operation of the State Security Courts, and believes that their abolition is necessary if there is a real intention to make institutional reform in the Palestinian Authority, especially within the judiciary and the role of the civil judiciary. PCHR asserts that the operation of these courts contradicts the Judiciary Law and the Basic law approved by the Palestinian Authority in 2002.

Death Penalty

The Palestinian Authority laws that permit the death penalty - which violates the right to life and fails to deter crimes - is unlikely to be abolished in the near future. Several death penalties were issued by Palestinian courts in criminal or security (collaboration with Israeli security services) cases. These sentences cannot be appealed and they are implemented only upon ratification by the Palestinian President.

In 2002, death sentences issued by the State Security Courts and military courts significantly increased in comparison with preceding years. In 2002, these courts issued 17 sentences to death by firing squads, including 15 sentences that were issued by the State Security Courts and two that were issued by military courts.⁴⁷ These sentences were issued in 9 security cases (collaboration with Israeli occupying forces) and in 8 criminal cases. 3 of the sentences in criminal cases were implemented, while 1 person sentenced to death for security reasons was killed by members of the Palestinian Preventive Security Service claiming that he had attempted to escape. On 6 June 2002, Faisal Ahmed Abu Tailakh, 26, and Sa'id Librawi al-Najjar, 29, from Rafah, were executed by firing squad, following their conviction for raping and murdering Islam Mahmoud al-Khatib, 7, also from Rafah, only a day after the sentence was issued by the State Security Court. On 7 August 2002, Bashir Samih 'Abdul Latif, 21, from 'Atara village in Ramallah, was executed following his conviction for murdering Halima 'Abdullah Qatiri, 57, and Tamam 'Ali Qatiri, 60.

According to procedures followed by the State Security Courts and military courts, these 2 cases were summary executions and there was no opportunity for appeals. In a 3 hour session, the State Security Court sentenced Abu Tailakh and al-Najjar to death three days after they were arrested. The sentence was carried out on the following day. The case was considered by the State Security Court, even though the crimes committed fall under the authority of the civil judiciary. This sentence was issued by the State Security Court less than one month after PNA President Yasser Arafat ratified the Judicial Authority Law. The ruling indicates a lack of seriousness in the ratification, implementation and respect for the law.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ In 2001, 12 death sentences were handed down, two of which were implemented, while 5 sentenced persons were killed by unknown people and a sixth was killed by Palestinian security men who claimed that the victim had attempted to escape.

⁴⁸ See PCHR's press release on 6 June 2002; "State Security Court sentences two to death, undermining independence of civil judiciary

3) Weak Performance of the Legislature

The sixth term of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) continued in 2002. The sixth term was the longest of the PLC, as it lasted for approximately 18 months, from March 2001 to September 2002. The PLC was not able to open its seventh term in March 2002 due to the unprecedented Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people. The sixth term was a unique period in the PLC's history, as Israeli occupying forces waged wide-scale aggression against the Palestinian people, committing systematic violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. Since the beginning of al-Aqsa Intifada, Israeli occupying forces have denied PLC members the right to move between the West Bank and Gaza Strip to attend the PLC's sessions, and at times have even made internal movement within the West Bank and Gaza Strip impossible. As a result of these measures, parliamentary life was been disrupted, the PLC failed to hold any regular sessions and its committees were unable to hold meetings and were forced to hold separate, parallel meetings in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip via video conference.⁴⁹ In addition, Israeli occupying forces took arbitrary measures against some PLC member, including Marwan Barghouthi, who has been detained by Israeli forces since 15 April 2002.

As part of its activities to evaluate the performance of the PLC, PCHR published the fifth in a series of reports, which focused on the sixth and longest term, which extended for approximately 18 months. The report considered the sixth term to be the most difficult and complicated in the PLC's history. While, the PLC was able to pass a number of laws, it failed to make crucial changes in its relation with the executive. The report also noted that since its establishment in 1996, the PLC had played a limited role in monitoring and accounting the performance of the executive. The PLC's monitoring and accountability duties deteriorated further in the sixth term as Israeli occupying forces tightened the siege and closure imposed on the Occupied Palestinian Territories. However, the report highlighted the emergence of serious intentions by the PLC, especially during the extended period of the sixth term to carry out its monitoring and accountability roles effectively.

The report concluded that by the end of the first year of the sixth term, the PLC had become increasingly weak and irrelevant in the face of the intransigence of the executive. The PLC's weakness increased further as a result of the total siege and closure imposed by Israeli occupying forces on the Occupied Palestinian Territories since the beginning of al-Aqsa Intifada, and the failure of the PLC to develop effective tools to overcome such Israeli measures. In the extended period of the sixth term, some serious intentions appeared in the PLC to make changes in its relations with the executive- restructuring relations based on transparency and accountability.

⁴⁹ Video conferencing is a medium where individuals or groups can meet face-to-face in real time to interact. It requires computer software, a video camera and internet connection. The PLC resorted to this medium to overcome the Israeli comprehensive siege imposed on the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the prohibition of movement between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, the PLC was not able to continue to hold sessions using this medium due to the curfews imposed on various Palestinian areas.

The PLC and Issues of Reforms and Elections

In 2002, the issue of reforms within the Palestinian Authority was increasingly raised. The Palestinian President Yasser Arafat ratified the Basic Law and the Judicial Authority Law in light of the US-Israeli pressure on the Palestinian Authority to make reforms⁵⁰ in the Palestinian Authority institutions. The PLC called for PA reforms in accordance with the Palestinian notion of reforms. It also called for parliamentary and presidential elections, and the formation of a cabinet that consists of no more than 19 qualified ministers.

On 9 June 2002, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat issued Presidential Decree 4 of 1998 to reform the cabinet. The new cabinet formation included 22 ministers instead of 28, including 5 new ministers.

The new cabinet formation violated the Basic Law, approved by the PLC upon the third reading on 2 October 1997 and ratified by the Palestinian President on 28 May 2002, article 65 of which provides that "the cabinet shall include no more than 19 ministers."

The government was forced to resign, and the Palestinian President formed a provisional government, pending on elections in December 2002. The elections, which were supposed to be held in December 2002, were postponed sine die due to the Israeli aggressive measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which inevitably obstruct holding free and impartial elections.

4) Detention by the PA: Illegal Arrests and Torture

On Tuesday evening, 15 January 2002, units of Palestinian security services arrested Ahmed Sa'adat at the City Inn Hotel in Al-Bireh. Mr. Sa'adat was meeting with Brigadier General Tawfiq Tirawi, head of the Palestinian General Intelligence in the West Bank, upon General Tirawi's official request. The unit entered the hotel and took Mr. Sa'adat to an unknown destination. The arrest of Mr. Sa'adat, the highest-ranking politician arrested by the PA came in response to intense pressure from the United States and Israel. Israel claims that Mr. Sa'adat is responsible for the killing of the Israeli Minister of Tourism Rehavam Ze'evi on 17 October, in what the PFLP considered retaliation for the assassination of its late Secretary General, Abu Ali Mustafa, on 27 August.

Sa'adat was detained with 5 other Palestinians, whom Israel demands be handed over, without any charge and without a trial. 4 of the other Palestinians were convicted by a Palestinian military field court of killing the Israeli Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi in occupied Jerusalem in October 2001. The fifth detainee was Fu'ad al-

⁵⁰ A distinction must be made between the US-Israeli and the Palestinian concepts of reform. The US-Israeli concept of reform is centered upon restructuring and reproducing Palestinian security services in accordance with a specific plan guaranteeing that these services play the role of a guard for the Israeli "security interests." The Palestinian concept of reform is centered on restructuring the institutions of the Palestinian Authority in accordance with the principles of transparency, accountability, the rule of law and respect for the judiciary.

Shubaki, accused by Israel of involvement in the case of the Karine A ship.⁵¹ On 1 May 2002, Sa'adat and the other 5 detainees were transferred to Jericho Prison, upon a deal reached with US mediation.⁵²

On 5 May 2002, PCHR, represented by lawyers Raji Sourani and Iyad 'Alami, and lawyers 'Abdul Rahman Abu al-Nasser (Head of the Palestinian Bar Association), Younis al-Jaru and Rebhi Qatamesh, who represent Sa'adat, submitted a request to the Palestinian High Court of Justice, seeking his release. The lawyers stated that Sa'adat had not been interrogated by the Attorney General, had not been accused of any charge and had not appeared before the judiciary to detain him or extend his detention, in violation of legal procedures. They also asserted the necessity of adhering to the rule of law to ensure that citizens enjoy their rights and freedoms.

On 8 May 2002, the Palestinian General Intelligence Service, represented by the Attorney General, were given 8 days to explain reasons for the detention of Ahmed Sa'adat, Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). On 11 May 2002, the Attorney General submitted a reply, stating that the relevant party was called on to submit its response, and reserved the right to submit a detailed reply.

On 3 June 2002, the Palestinian High Court of Justice ordered the immediate release of Sa'adat. The court held a morning session in Gaza, in which the Attorney General submitted his response to the court, stating that Sa'adat had been detained by the General Intelligence pending an investigation concerning matters of "state security." The Attorney General also claimed that the case could only be dealt with by a court in Ramallah, where Sa'adat lives, not Gaza. Sa'adat's lawyers defended the competence of the High Court in Gaza in its dealings with the case, based both on legal precedents and the Judicial Authority Law. The lawyers also argued that the extraordinary and disruptive circumstances of Israeli incursions into PA-controlled areas in the Ramallah area made it necessary for the Gaza High Court to be able to look into the matter. Furthermore, the lawyers pointed out the illegality of Sa'adat's detention and noted that Sa'adat had not been charged with a crime or brought before a judge. Contrary to the claim by the Attorney General that Sa'adat was under investigation, Sa'adat's lawyers asserted that he was not being investigated for any crime and that PA security services had yet to transfer his case to the Attorney General.

The decision to release Sa'adat was the first real test of the PA's commitment to the Judiciary Law, ratified two weeks earlier.⁵³ The governments of the United States and Israel expressed their rejection of the decision, and exerted more pressure to prevent the implementation of the decision, in a step that undermined the independence of judiciary and brushed aside the new law. Unfortunately, the PA

⁵¹ On 14 January 2002, Israel declared that it had found a cargo of weapons on a ship called "Karine A." Israeli naval forces stopped the ship, approximately 500km away from Eilat seashore, south of Israel. Israel claimed that the ship was trying to smuggle the weapons to the Palestinian Authority, and accused Shubaki of responsibility. Later, the Palestinian Authority arrested Shubaki and detained him in the presidential compound in Ramallah.

⁵² In the implementation of the deal, Israeli occupying forces lifted the siege they had imposed on the Palestinian presidential compound in Ramallah, and Sa'adat and the other five detainees were put under US-British supervision in Jericho Prison.

⁵³ On 14 May 2002, the Palestinian President ratified the Judiciary Law, which was published in the PA official gazette.

surrendered to the pressure as its cabinet decided not to implement the High Court's decision, and Sa'adat remains in custody in Jericho Prison, in a flagrant violation of the decision.

Sa'adat's case explains much about the political arrests carried out by the PA. In 2002, the PA waged a series of political arrests targeting the Islamic and nationalist groups, as it has since 1994, in response to US and Israeli pressure. These arrests were unlawful, as they did not follow appropriate legal procedures and the detainees were not accused of any charge.

Although the number of political prisoners significantly decreased in 2002 – in fact since the beginning of the Intifada in September 2000 – is not an indication of the PA's commitment to appropriate legal procedures nor its compliance with relevant international standards, but rather it is a reflection of the current political situation. In 2002, Israeli occupying forces committed more war crimes in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. They bombarded civil and security establishments of the PA, including police stations and prisons. The Israeli actions have resulted in serious defects in the performance of the PA's civil and security establishments, so it has been difficult for security services to keep detainees.⁵⁴ In addition, the PA has been under public pressure to put an end to political arrests, especially in the wake of continuous Israeli war crimes.⁵⁵

Political arrests are part of the illegal practices of the police and other security services, including killings for criminal or security reasons (collaboration with Israeli security services), not following necessary legal procedures in arrests and torture. PCHR keeps the testimonies of some of the people who were tortured during interrogation.

A Detainee Dies by Torture

On 24 April 2002, Ayman Ghayad Hilles, 36, from al-Shojaeya neighborhood in Gaza, died while in the custody of Palestinian police in Gaza City. Hilles, married and the father of 9, was arrested by PA civil police in Jabalya on 23 April and transferred to the police station in al-Shajaeya. At approximately 01.30 on 24 April,

⁵⁴ A number of released prisoners said that they were detained in flats or were transferred to flats shortly after they had been arrested, as detention centers and prisons had been subject to regular Israeli shelling.

⁵⁵ On 22 January 2002, Palestinians demonstrated in front of Nablus Prison calling for the release of political prisoners, searching and prosecuting collaborators and executing those who were sentenced to death in the aftermath of an extra-judicial killing perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces, which left dead 4 members of Hamas in the city on the same day. Tensions escalated when some demonstrators threw stones towards the prison and policemen and attempted to break the prison doors. The police responded by firing sound bombs and live bullets in the air to disperse the demonstrators. They also released Nidal Abu Rous, brother of one those killed in the aforementioned assassination. The incidents resumed and the demonstrators called for the release of all political prisoners, throwing stones towards policemen and burning 3 police cars. Policemen opened fire killing 'Abdul Nasser Sawafta, 27, by a live bullet in the head and wounding 'Omar Bassem Tuffah, 23, by a live bullet in the back. Dozens of demonstrators suffered from tear gas inhalation and bruises.

his body was transferred to Shifa Hospital in Gaza City. The Attorney General initiated a probe into his death.

At the request of the family of the deceased, an autopsy was carried out at al-Shifa hospital. The autopsy was witnessed by a PCHR representative and members of the family. A preliminary examination revealed large bruises on the legs and hands of the deceased, as well as signs of blunt trauma to the head, suggesting that Hilles had been tortured.

A commission of inquiry, headed by Brigadier General Mahmoud 'Asfour was established by the police. 5 policemen confessed before the commission that they tied Hilles' hands with iron chains and blindfolded him and that they transferred him from his cell on the first floor of an interrogation cell on the second floor. There, the chains were tied to wire connected to the ceiling, while Hilles' back was bent in order to be easily controlled. He was interrogated for cases of robbery and the interrogators beat him on the lower body and extracted confessions by force. The beating was repeated to extract more confessions and throughout this process, interrogators would untie his hands and attempt to ease the pain they had inflicted, before another round of beatings began. The third time his legs were raised while his hands were tied with chains linked to the ceiling wire. Then, he was beaten. After a two-hour interrogation, Hilles was carried by policemen to the first floor and soon after was transferred to hospital where he was pronounced dead. On 6 May 2002, the Attorney General presented a bill of indictment to the court, unprecedented in Gaza, accusing 5 policemen of "unpremeditated killing." The court has not judged the case.

5) Attacks on Journalists and Violations of the Right to Free Expression

On Thursday, 5 December 2002, a number of masked gunmen broke into al-Jeel press office, administered by Mustafa al-Sawaf. They destroyed equipment and furniture in the office, which is on the first floor of an apartment block in al-Nasser neighborhood in Gaza City. The men proceeded to set fire to the office. Al-Sawaf stated that the masked men who attacked his office traveled in a jeep belonging to a security service. PCHR is concerned that the attack had political motivations relating to the clashes that have recently erupted between certain members of the Fatah and Hamas movements in the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood, which left dead a man and his 11-year-old child.⁵⁶

Approximately 5 weeks earlier, a number of reporters and cameramen of local and international news agencies were attacked by members of the Hamas movement, while they were reporting on an explosion that occurred in a house in Gaza. The attack took place when a number of journalists were reporting on an explosion which occurred in al-Sabra neighborhood in Gaza City on Thursday, 31 October 2002. Three members of 'Ezziddin al-Qassam Brigade, the military wing of Hamas, were killed apparently in the process of making bombs. The journalists who were attacked are:

1. Shams al-Din 'Abdul Rahman 'Oudetallah, a cameraman of *Reuters* news agency;

⁵⁶ For details on these clashes, see pages 58-59 of this report.

2. Khaled al-Ashqar, a cameraman of Palestine Television;
3. Najib Abu al-Jabin, a photographer of *Associated Press*;
4. 'Aadel Hana, a photographer of *Associated Press*; and
5. Ahmed Jadallah Salem, a cameraman of *Reuters* news agency.

In their testimonies to PCHR, these journalists said that a number of people, who were located at the scene of the explosion, beat them and damaged their cameras, while other people mounted roofs of houses and threw stones at them.

In the two aforementioned incidents, it is clear that attacks on journalists and violations of the right of free expression go beyond the relationship between the authority and individuals, as some parties other than Palestinian Authority security services were involved in perpetrating such violations. Regrettably, political differences are often reflected in attacks on journalists, press offices and media institutions. All parties are called upon to respect the freedom of press and not to involve journalists in any political differences or disputes.

6) Excessive Use of Force by Law Enforcement Officials

In 2002, 10 Palestinians – 9 civilians and a policeman – were killed as a result of the use of lethal force by Palestinian security services. The Palestinian Authority has not circulated clear instructions to law enforcement officials with regard to the use of force, including the use of firearms. It is unknown whether such instructions actually exist, so it is impossible to examine their conformity with relevant international standards. However, field information and evidence indicates that security men resorted to the use of firearms, especially when dispersing demonstrations or illegal assemblies. There were also reports on the use of fire arms when attempting to arrest some individuals, which had tragic results.

PCHR has significant concerns regarding the way Palestinian security officials deal with public order, particularly during demonstrations. Instead of using progressive force, such as beginning with the use of water hoses and other non-lethal means to disperse demonstrators, security officials resorted sometimes almost immediately, to the use of firearms causing casualties. Consequently, public anger increased further, resulting in further violence.

Some armed persons participated in the demonstrations and assemblies faced by security officials. Sometimes, those armed persons fired at security officials and centers, which raises concerns with regard to the rule of law and the safety and security of civilians.

In the past few years, the Palestinian Authority, represented by the Attorney General, has failed to conduct impartial and transparent investigations into the cases of shooting at demonstrators and no legal measures were taken against those responsible. Consequently, the door has been left wide open for revenge acts, which often result in tragic consequences.

The most serious incidents in this regard took place in Gaza City and Nusseirat refugee camp in the Gaza Strip in October, which left dead six Palestinian civilians

and caused dozens of injuries. On Monday morning, 7 October 2002, a number of gunmen kidnapped and killed Colonel Rajeh Abu Lehia, head of the Riot Control Unit of the Palestinian police, while he was on his way from his house to his work. The police accused a group from the Hamas movement of kidnapping and killing Abu Lehia. The accused were 'Emad 'Aqel, the brother of Yousef Mohammed 'Abdul Hadi Aqel who, with two others, were killed, when the Palestinian police dispersed demonstrations that were organized near al-Azhar University and the Islamic University in Gaza City on 8 October 2001. More than 90 were injured in the incident. Results of the investigation carried out by the police into the killing of the three civilians were not published,⁵⁷ but according to eyewitnesses, members of the riot control unit led by Colonel Abu Lehia fired at the demonstrators. 'Aqel's family did not receive condolences, thereby indicating their intention to revenge the death of their son. After Abu Lehia was killed, the family issued a statement claiming responsibility for the killing.

In a later development, at approximately 14:30, the police chased three gunmen in Palestine Square, a crowded area in the center of Gaza City. According to eyewitnesses, some citizens confronted the police to prevent them from arresting the gunmen, who were believed to be members of 'Ezziddin al-Qassam Brigade, the military wing of Hamas, who were able to escape. Also according to eyewitnesses, policemen opened fire, injuring a number of people. Chaos spread in the area and a number of demonstrators threw stones at police, who responded by opening fire. According to medical sources at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, about 20 people were evacuated to hospital, two of them died on the way to hospital:

1. Mohammed Fakhri Hijazi, 32, shot by a live bullet in the chest; and
 2. Mahmoud "Mohammed Farouq" al-Bournu, 31, shot by a live bullet in the back.
- Both were from al-Zaytoun neighborhood in Gaza City.

In the evening, clashes erupted between the police and a number of demonstrators who threw stones at a police station in Nusseirat refugee camp. PCHR documented that an exchange of fire took place between policemen and a number of gunmen. According to medical sources at al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir al-Balah, 16 people, including 4 policemen, were evacuated to hospital; two of them succumbed to their injuries:

1. Mohammed Abu Tu'eima, 21, shot by a live bullet in the head; and
2. Eissa Mousa al-Ahwal, 20, shot by a live bullet in the chest.

On 9 October 2002, Hazem Mahmoud Abu 'Obaid, 18, was pronounced dead from an injury he sustained in the incidents of Nusseirat refugee camp. He was shot by a live bullet in the kidneys. Soon, clashes erupted between the police and civilians in Nusseirat refugee camp. The clashes escalated after the funeral procession of Abu 'Obaid on 10 October. 'Abdullah Ahmed Abu Nar, 17, was seriously injured by a live

⁵⁷ As a legal representative of the family, PCHR had submitted requests to the Attorney General to initiate an investigation into the incidents and bring to justice those found responsible, but nothing was done in this regard. PCHR was informed by the Attorney General that a presidential committee was established to investigate the incidents, but conclusions of such investigations have not yet been published, and PCHR's request to obtain a copy of the President's decision with regard to the investigation committee and the results of investigation, if any, has not been met.

bullet in the head. He was evacuated to Shifa' Hospital in Gaza City, and from there he was transferred to an Israeli hospital, where he was pronounced dead on 11 October.

In another incident, on 11 October 2002, 6 civilians were injured in clashes with security forces in al-Sabra neighborhood. A verbal quarrel took place between members of a family and a patrol of the Palestinian Preventive Security, which later developed into clashes, as a number of civilians threw stones at the patrol and security officials responded by opening fire. Six civilians were injured.

On 22 January 2002, Palestinians demonstrated in front of Nablus Prison calling for the release of political prisoners, searching and prosecuting collaborators and executing those who were sentenced to death in the aftermath of an extra-judicial killing perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces, which left dead four members of Hamas in the city on the same day.⁵⁸ Tension escalated when some demonstrators threw stones towards the prison and policemen and attempted to break the prison's doors. The police responded by firing sound bombs and live bullets in the air to disperse the demonstrators. They also released Nidal Abu Rous, brother of one those killed in the aforementioned assassination. The incidents soon resumed and the demonstrators called for the release of all political prisoners. They threw stones towards policemen and burnt three police cars. Policemen opened fire and 'Abdul Nasser Sawafta, 27, was killed by a live bullet in the head, 'Omar Bassem Tuffah, 23, was wounded by a live bullet in the back, and dozens of demonstrators suffered from tear gas inhalation and bruises.

On 8 January 2002, 3 Palestinian citizens, including a 9-year-old child, were injured by live bullets fired by members of the Palestinian security services, while chasing a wanted Palestinian. At approximately 07:10, Palestinian security services vehicle stopped opposite an UNRWA clinic in Al-Shati refugee camp. Masked security men were inside the car. When a civilian car driven by a nurse on his way to his work passed by the area, security moved towards it. As soon as the security officers were close, they pointed their guns towards the car, but its driver was able to escape. The driver was able to escape to the UNRWA clinic while security officers continued to fire at him. Three civilians were injured:

1. Shaimaa' Kamal 'Akkila, 9, injured by a live bullet in the left leg while on her way to school;
2. Muna Sa'id al-Rantissi, 17, injured by a live bullet in the leg while on her way to school; and
3. Bassam al-Quttati, 27, a physician in the UNRWA clinic, injured by shrapnel in the neck.

The security men chased the driver into the clinic and tried to break its internal gate. However, citizens gathered outside the clinic and obstructed the arrest of the driver. The security men withdrew from the area 15 minutes later and the driver was able to escape.

⁵⁸ For more details on this extra-judicial assassinations, see PCHR's report "*Assassination of Palestinians... An Israeli Official Policy: 29 September 2001 – 30 April 2002.*"

Also in al-Shati refugee camp, on 3 February 2002, 7 members of the Palestinian Naval Force were injured when a bomb exploded in their jeep while they were chasing an armed group. A group, believed to be from Ezziddin al-Qassam Brigade, the military wing of the Hamas movement, did not obey orders of Naval Police officers to stop in an area located north of Gaza. Police officer chased the group to al-Shati refugee camp. According to eyewitnesses, an exchange of fire erupted between the two parties, while a bomb exploded in the police jeep. Circumstances of the explosion were not clear. 7 members of the Naval Police and two passing civilians were injured.

On 2 March 2002, Ra'ed Ibrahim 'Oliyan Eslayeh, a member of the Riot Control Unit in the Palestinian police, was on duty at a police roadblock opposite to the Open University in al-Qarara village, north of Khan Yunis. A special unit of police was on a mission to arrest a drug dealer at the roadblock. When the wanted car arrived, the unit stopped it to conduct a search, but it managed to escape. Eslayeh hurried towards the car and tried to fire at it to force the driver to stop. Other police officers who were behind him also fired at the car. Eslayeh was killed by a live bullet in the head.

On 9 July 2002, Hussam Zuhdi al-Hissi, 28, was killed by guards of the Palestinian Preventive Security prison in Gaza City. Al-Hissi was jailed after he was convicted of collaboration with Israeli occupying authorities. A Palestinian security source stated that al-Hissi, who was sentenced to death by the State Security Court on 10 April 2002, attempted to escape from the prison during its evacuation as a precautionary step against Israeli shelling. The same source states that al-Hissi snatched a pistol from a guard and fired at the guards, who then shot him dead. Additional information about the incident was not available, and it is not known whether it was investigated further.

On 19 July 2002, Fadhel Mohammed Hassan Yousef, 36, from al-Maghazi refugee camp, was killed by a live bullet that entered the left arm and settled in the chest, when police officers fired at the car he was driving. Yousef was accompanied by his brother 'Abdul Salam, 37, and Imam Ahmed Hijazi, 42, who had led the Friday prayers in a mosque in al-Maghazi, in which he criticized the PA. They were on their way to the Imam's house in al-Shojaeya neighborhood in Gaza City, when 3 police officers chased and fired at the car near al-Zahraa' town, south of Gaza City, killing Yousef. The three police officers were arrested and detained in a police station in the central Gaza Strip. Results of the investigation into the case were not revealed.

The Palestinian Authority and Attorney General are responsible for investigating all these cases and bringing to justice those found responsible. The failure to carry out this vital mission endangers the stability of Palestinian society, and is likely to lead some people to take the law into their own hands – allowing vigilante rule to take precedence over the rule of law and the government of institutions.

7) Misuse of Weapons

On Wednesday evening, 4 December 2002, a quarrel between members of the Fatah and Hamas movements resulted in the misuse of firearms, in disregard for the lives of innocent people. As a result 'Essam 'Atia Ghaben, 33, and his child 'Allam, 11, were killed by live bullets, when they left their house, which is located in the vicinity of the

incident, in Sheikh Radwan neighborhood in Gaza to buy provisions for *'Eid al-Futter* (an Islamic feast). They stopped to see what was going on. The father was shot by a live bullet in the neck and the child was shot by a live bullet in the heart. The family's preparations for the feast soon turned to tragedy as the father and his child paid with their lives for the misuse of weapons.

Four days later, Sunday, 8 December 2002, a quarrel erupted about differences of opinion about erasing and writing political slogans on walls in al-Shojaeya neighborhood in Gaza. Live ammunition and a hand grenade were used in the quarrel. Anwar Hassan Muheisen, 22, was killed by the explosion of the hand grenade, thrown by an unknown assailant. In addition, eight people were injured - 2 were in a serious condition. This is simply another example of a quarrel that erupted for political reasons and resulted in casualties.

On 15 December 2002, Nabil Khalil al-Dini, 42, from al-Boreij refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, was killed in a revenge attack. After his death, the al-Nadi family issued a statement in which they claimed responsibility for his death, accusing him of murdering Sa'id Mohammed al-Dini in 1992.

These incidents, which constitute a violation of the right to life, resulted from the proliferation of weapons in Palestinian society and their use in personal, family and political quarrels. Some incidents resulted from political differences; others were for revenge or criminal reasons. In other cases, people were killed or injured due to technical reasons resulting from the misuse of weapons. Some of those weapons belong to the Palestinian Authority and were used by members of security services, which led to a number of fatalities even among security personnel. In some cases, security personnel used weapons while off duty to resolve personal disputes.

PCHR is deeply concerned about the increasing number of victims of the misuse of weapons, as the Palestinian Authority has failed to take effective steps to face this phenomenon, especially to prevent the use of official weapons in personal quarrels, and to apply the law to security personnel. According to PCHR's documentation, in 2002, 42 Palestinians were killed and nearly 70 others were injured due to the misuse of weapons. This number does not include those killed for collaborating with Israel, as this subject is handled in another section of this report. While, Israeli occupying forces escalate their aggression, it raises great concerns that some Palestinians are killed by Palestinian weapons. These actions violate and disregard the right to life, threaten personal security and safety and may even lead to chaos. The Palestinian Authority, civil society and social groups are urged to take serious steps to put an end to such actions.⁵⁹

8) Extra-Judicial Killing of Citizens for Alleged Collaboration with Israel

"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."

Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

⁵⁹ PCHR has a list of victims of the misuse of weapons.

In 2002, more than 50 Palestinians were killed by unknown persons or members of Palestinian armed groups for being suspected of collaborating with Israel.⁶⁰ Most of these killings took place in the West Bank, whereas 3 cases were reported in the Gaza Strip. 3 women, including one 18-year-old, were among those who were killed on such grounds. Sometimes, Palestinian armed groups claimed responsibility for the killings, which have increased significantly since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1994.

These killings, which have become a phenomenon, are not separate from the general vista of the human rights situation in the OPT in light of the unprecedented escalation of Israeli illegal military actions. It is widely believed that some Palestinian who collaborate with Israel provide Israeli security service with information that enable them to commit crimes, especially extra-judicial assassinations against Palestinian activists and leaders. Persons who are suspected of collaborating with Israel do not receive clemency and the public demand their execution, especially when Israeli occupying forces commit crimes, in which collaborators are believed to be involved. In some cases, Palestinian security services arrested persons, claiming that they were involved in assassinations of Palestinian activists. Some individuals confessed such charges in interviews with the media.

The Palestinian Authority has not taken legal actions with regard to the killing of persons suspected of collaborating with Israel. PCHR does not have any reports that the Palestinian Attorney General has investigated these killings, nor has he sought to prosecute their perpetrators. In two separate incidents, four Palestinians were killed by gunmen who broke into courts and fired at detainees during their trials.⁶¹ In another incident, a person suspected of collaborating with Israel was shot dead by Palestinian security men claiming that he attempted to escape from jail.⁶²

PCHR strongly condemns these extra-judicial killings and calls upon the Palestinian Authority to investigate them in accordance with the rule of law. Tolerance of these killings completely undermines the rule of law and the judiciary. PCHR reiterates its position that collaborators must be pursued and brought to justice within the framework of the rule of law and commitment to appropriate legal procedures and international human rights standards. PCHR completely rejects the practice of individuals taking the law in their hands, granting themselves the right to pursue and kill those accused of collaboration.

⁶⁰ PCHR has a list of 32 victims, while obtained information on the other 18 from the media.

⁶¹ A number of gunmen broke into a session of the State Security Court in Jenin that was held to try three persons suspected of collaborating with Israel and killing Ussama Kumayel. The three killed were: 1) Khaled Rajeh Nasser, 21; 2) Jihad Mohammed Abu Khamira, 18; and 3) Mahmoud Ahmed Hunaiti, 39, all from Qabatya village. On 14 July 2002, a number of gunmen broke into a session of the State Security Court in Khan Yunis and shot dead 'Abdul Hai D'iab Sabbai, 42, from Rafah, who was being tried for charges of collaborating with Israel. For more details, see PCHR's press release on 15 July 2002.

⁶² On 9 July 2002, members of the Palestinian Preventive Security shot dead Hussam Zuhdi al-Hissi, 28, from Gaza, claiming that he attempted to escape from a detention center. Khaled al-'Akka, 24, from Gaza, was killed in similar circumstances on 9 September 2001.

9) Victims of Storing and Making Explosives in Residential Areas

In 2002, a number of Palestinians were killed by explosions resulting from the storage or manufacture of explosives in residential areas. Some of the explosions occurred in suspicious circumstances, when Israeli occupying forces were suspected of planning extra-judicial assassinations of Palestinian activists. Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence that some explosions occurred during the storage or manufacture of bombs. Armed Palestinian resistance groups were responsible for such cases and the explosions often resulted in fatalities among civilians.

In 2002, PCHR documented 8 such incidents in the Gaza Strip, which resulted in 17 dead and many injured. It is an act of negligence that bombs were stored or made in residential areas, sometimes even in houses, which caused civilian deaths (including children) and destruction. For instance, on 31 October 2002, a massive explosion occurred in a house in al-Sabra neighborhood in Gaza City, killed 5 people who were apparently making a bomb. In addition, 4 civilians were injured, including 2 residents of the house. A similar explosion occurred in a house in Beit Lahia on 13 September 2002. 3 people were killed and 5 civilians, including 2 women, were injured. On 9 June 2002, an explosion occurred in a house in a densely populated area in Jabalya refugee camp, killing 2 people, including a 17-year-old girl who lived in the house.

PCHR reiterates its call for members of the Palestinian resistance groups to take appropriate preemptive steps to ensure the safety of civilians. PCHR especially calls for an end to the storing or manufacture of explosives in residential areas. PCHR considers that such actions disregard the lives, safety and security of civilians.

PART 2

PCHR'S ACTIVITIES IN 2002

Introduction

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

- **Interventions with UN Bodies**
- **Participation in International and Regional Conferences and Meetings**
- **International Popular Solidarity Campaign with the Palestinian People**
- **Visiting International Delegations and Figures**
- **Interviews with Local and International Media in 2002**

(2) PCHR's Publications

- **Press Releases**
- **Reports, Studies and Other Publications**
- **PCHR's Web Site (www.pchrgaza.org)**

(3) Activities of PCHR's Units

- **Field Work Unit**
- **Legal Unit**
- **Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit**
- **Training Unit**
- **Women's Rights Unit**
- **Democracy Development Unit**

Introduction

In 2002, PCHR continued its activities under very complicated circumstances, in light of the ongoing escalation of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. These circumstances are part of the deterioration of the human rights situation since the beginning of al-Aqsa Intifada in September 2000. PCHR has often expressed its concern of a further deterioration in the situation and adapted its programs and activities to meet these challenges, which are expected to continue for several years.

In 2002, PCHR intensified its efforts at all levels to put an end to violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In comparison to 2001, 2002 saw an escalation of war crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians and property, which added new responsibilities to PCHR's work at the international level. It is important for PCHR to intensify its efforts to influence the positions of the international community, particularly the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, and remind them of their legal and moral obligations to effectively intervene to stop war crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces. PCHR has always asserted that the silence of High Contracting Parties encourages Israel and its occupying forces to continue to commit war crimes in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Despite the challenges posed by the new developments, PCHR has continued its activities in monitoring violations of human rights perpetrated by the Palestinian Authority and its services. PCHR's work is not limited to providing legal assistance to the victims, but also includes other activities to promote democratic reforms, to ensure the separation of authorities, the independence of the judiciary, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

The Bruno Kreisky Prize for Outstanding Achievements in the Area of Human Rights Granted to PCHR

In appreciation for its efforts, PCHR was granted the Bruno Kreisky Prize for Outstanding Achievements in the Area of Human Rights for 2002. It is one of the most prestigious awards granted to international organizations in the area of human rights and Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, received the award in a special ceremony in the Austrian capital, Vienna, on 27 September 2002. It was not the first time that PCHR had been granted an international award. In 1996, PCHR was granted the Human Rights Prize, known as "Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood" awarded by the Republic of France.

PCHR received a letter from the Bruno Kreisky Foundation, which informed that the international and independent jury of the Bruno Kreisky Prize for Outstanding Achievements in the Area of Human Rights unanimously decided to grant the award for 2002 jointly to PCHR and well-known Israeli journalist Amira Hass. Hass, a writer with the Israeli newspaper, Ha'aretz, has consistently defended human rights and specializes in writing and reporting on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. PCHR has enjoyed a close personal and professional relationship with

Hass for many years and the organization is particularly honored to have been awarded this prize jointly with her.

The Bruno Kreisky Foundation bears the name of the late Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky. Institutions and persons granted the award are selected by an international and independent jury and Amnesty International and the former South African President Nelson Mandela are among the previous winners. The Bruno Kreisky Foundation granted two human rights awards for 2002. The second award was granted to the former Archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Dr. Franz Konig, and Mrs. Ute Bock for their efforts in the area of human rights.

In a press release it issued on the occasion, PCHR stated that the organization greatly appreciated the award from the Bruno Kreisky Foundation and reaffirmed its commitment to the defense of human rights and to providing its services for victims of human rights violations, which have escalated in an unprecedented manner in the last two years. PCHR considered that this award not only supports PCHR's efforts in defending human rights, it also highlights the development of the human rights movement and the ongoing efforts of human rights defenders in Palestine.

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This part of the report highlights PCHR's activities in 2002. For technical reasons related to the production of this report, these activities are classified into three categories:

- (1) PCHR's Activities at the International and Regional Levels;
- (2) PCHR's Publications; and
- (3) Activities of PCHR's Units.

We have decided not to use a heading for PCHR's activities at the local level in addition to its activities at the international and regional activities, since all PCHR's activities have local implications, which will be evident in the activities of PCHR's units.

However, the three categories are integral and should be seen as one unit, as all activities are interrelated in relation to PCHR's work and goals and in their implementation. It is important to note that PCHR's activities could not be achieved without constructive cooperation among its bodies at all levels.

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

This part of the report covers PCHR's activities in 2002 at the international and regional activities, both independently and in cooperation with local, regional and international organizations, in the context of its efforts to ensure respect for Palestinian human rights and for international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. PCHR devotes many of its activities to urge the international community, especially the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, member states of the European Union and the United Nations, to effectively intervene to stop the unprecedented deterioration in the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories in light of the Israeli grave breaches of the Convention, including war crimes. PCHR's activities at the international level also include explaining the human rights situation and making efforts to bring Israeli war criminals to the international justice. PCHR often carries out these activities in cooperation and coordination with other local organizations.⁶³

PCHR also pays special attention to increased cooperation with local, regional and international organizations to exert pressure on the positions of effective international parties. PCHR greatly appreciates efforts made by civil society groups throughout the world, including human rights organizations, solidarity groups and thousands of activists, to put an end to the Israeli occupation and stop war crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians.

1) 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. In 2000, PCHR was granted Special Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council, which promoted PCHR's efforts at this level. In the past years, PCHR was able to provide these specialized bodies and commissions with oral and written statements on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In addition to its correspondence and meetings with the UN Special Rapporteurs and officials, PCHR submitted reports and written and oral interventions on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories on issues relevant to the mandates of these bodies. The meetings held by these bodies provide an opportunity for PCHR to attend lectures, give interviews with journalists and hold meetings with hundreds of human

⁶³ For example, see page 66 of this report in coordination with the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment (LAW) on interventions at the UN Commission on Human Rights, and other joint letters with LAW on other human rights violations. The most significant activity that reflected coordination with local organizations was the joint work of PCHR, Adalah - the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, and LAW to investigate war crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces in Jenin and other Palestinian towns. The three organizations prepared a report on the results of the investigation and submitted it to the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan on 29 May 2002.

rights activists and organizations. In 2002, PCHR continued its efforts in this regard as follows:

The 58th Session of the United Nations 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 an annual six-week regular session in Geneva in March and April. More than 3000 delegates of state parties and NGOs usually participate in these sessions.

PCHR participated actively in the 58th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights which was held in the period 18 March – 26 April 2002, through submitting written and oral interventions. PCHR, jointly with the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment (LAW) and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), submitted a written intervention on the questions of the violation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, while it, jointly with LAW, submitted five written interventions that focused on: torture and detention; disappearances and summary executions; collective punishment; racism and racial discrimination; and economic, social and cultural rights. The UN accredited the interventions as official documents and published them on its web site.

In its written intervention on the question of the violation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, submitted jointly with LAW and FIDH, PCHR pointed out the grave breaches and war crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces, including willful killing, extra-judicial assassinations, extensive destruction of property and attacks against medical personnel. In the intervention on economic, social and cultural rights, PCHR highlighted the closure policy, house demolition, violations of the right to health care through the obstruction of the work of medical personnel and the denial of access to regular and emergency health care. PCHR also highlighted the systematic violations of Palestinian economic, social and cultural rights, expressing its deep concerns about the policies of closure and house demolition as forms of collective punishment prohibited under international humanitarian law. In its intervention on civil and political rights, including disappearances and summary executions, PCHR highlighted extra-judicial assassinations, asserting that Israel continued its military escalation in the OPT through maintaining the policy of extra-judicial assassination despite wide international criticism, in addition to indiscriminate shelling and killings and arrests at military checkpoints and roadblocks. In its intervention on civil and political rights, including the question of torture and detention, PCHR pointed out the ill treatment of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, and asserted that Israeli interrogators continued to violate international legal standards on the prohibition of torture and other forms of ill treatment in their treatment or punishment of Palestinians in or from the OPT. In this regard, PCHR highlighted methods of torture, administrative detention, the increasing number of Palestinian prisoners and incommunicado detention. The intervention also discussed the transfer of Palestinian prisoners to detention facilities inside Israel in violation of international humanitarian law. In its intervention on racism and racial discrimination, PCHR condemned all forms of racial discrimination, and urged the international community

to take measures against Israeli similar to those imposed on Apartheid South Africa, in light of the systematic violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians.

PCHR delivered three oral interventions at the 58th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on 20 and 22 March and 2 April 2002, in which Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, and Victoria Metcalfe, Coordinator of PCHR's International Unit participated. Two of these interventions were delivered by PCHR singly, while the third was jointly delivered by PCHR with LAW. The interventions highlighted the questions of the right of people to self-determination, racism and racial discrimination and violation of human rights in the Occupied Arab Territories, including Palestine. PCHR discussed the right to self-determination as an internally accepted right and also provided a summary of its written intervention on racism and racial discrimination. In the joint intervention with LAW, PCHR discussed the human rights situation in the OPT and the increasing Israeli violations of human rights.

Through its interventions at the 58th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, PCHR called upon the Commission to adhere to international standards and called upon member States to put an end to war crimes and other systematic violations of international humanitarian law perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces in the OPT. It also called for the condemnation of willful and extra-judicial killings and demanded that Israel stop the destruction of property and lift the closure imposed on the OPT. PCHR emphasized the necessity of reiterating the illegitimacy of the Israeli occupation and called for an immediate Israeli withdrawal.

The Human Rights Committee

The Human Rights Committee was established in accordance with article 28 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It holds three meetings annually in Geneva and New York. On 13-15 October 2002, PCHR participated in a preparatory meeting of the Committee before reviewing Israel's second periodic report in March 2003.

The Coordinator of PCHR's International Unit, Victoria Metcalfe presented PCHR's report before the Committee, where she raised a number of points particularly relevant to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Israel continues to flout. In its report, PCHR discussed extra-judicial killing as a violation of the right to life and highlighted the Israeli use of flechette shells, house demolitions and unlawful transfer and deportation. The report also discussed the policy of closure imposed by Israel on the OPT, indicating that Israel did not change this policy, despite the recommendations from the Committee regarding the need to respect the Palestinians' right to free movement.

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child was established in accordance with article 43 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is the body that monitors how well States are meeting their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and is made up of 10 independent experts. Member States are required to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the Committee every five years. In addition to government reports, the Committee receives information on the human rights situation from other sources, including human rights organizations, NGOs, UN agencies and academic and media institutions. The Committee discusses the government reports with delegates of member States, relying on the information it gathers, and then gives recommendations.

Human rights organizations, including PCHR, initiated contacts with the Committee after Israel had submitted its report in February 2002, several years after the due date. During the meetings held on 10-14 June 2002, the Committee raised a number of questions, previously raised by human rights organizations, to be discussed with the Israeli delegate.

PCHR was among the human rights organizations that submitted comments on Israel's report to the Committee. In its briefing, PCHR discussed the unprecedented deterioration in the human rights situation in the OPT, indicating that not only has Israel, the Occupying Power and the State responsible as defined in article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, not accorded the special protections and care to children in the OPT, but the Israeli military has actually shown a total disregard for the lives of Palestinian children. PCHR indicated that violence, death and poverty had become the normalized framework of the life of children in the OPT. PCHR expressed its concern at the increasing numbers of children killed outside the context of fighting, in their homes, playing, in the streets, or walking to school.

PCHR's briefing gave detailed information on the children killed or injured by the Israeli military since the beginning of the current Intifada, pointing out that a number of cases investigated by the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights raise particular concerns regarding the safety and security of children in the Gaza Strip. In its analysis of the killings over the period of this Intifada, PCHR highlighted the increasing numbers of children in the Gaza Strip killed whilst conducting their normal daily activities in different contexts, including during house demolition operations, shelling and shooting at residential areas and assassinations. It also indicated the increasing levels of disproportionate and excessive force used by the Israeli military resulting in the deaths of children by multiple bullet wounds, tank shells, Flechette tank shells and air missiles, including one-ton missiles.

PCHR surveyed some of the violations of the rights of Palestinian children in the Gaza Strip, particularly the right to life and security, the right to health, the right to education and the right to an adequate standard of living. PCHR reported on the declared policy of assassinations pursued by the Israeli military against Palestinian activists, indicating that whilst this policy in itself is a serious violation of, among others, the right to life and the rights to a fair trial, the manner in which these

assassinations are conducted shows an increasing disregard for the lives of Palestinian civilians, particularly children.

PCHR wrote about the al-Daraj bombing case on 22 July 2002, which left dead 7 children, 5 of whom were from the same family, and injured 31 other children, who were sleeping in their homes located near the house targeted by the Israeli attack. PCHR pointed out the use of Flechette tanks shells in the Gaza Strip by the Israeli military in violation of article 51 (4) of the First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions. PCHR gave details about the deaths of three children from the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood in Gaza City on 30 December 2001, by Flechette tank shells fired by Israeli tanks positioned in the "Elli Sinai" settlement in the northern Gaza Strip, while they were walking home from visiting a friend in Beit Lahia.

In its briefing, PCHR drew the Committee's attention to the issue of impunity for the killing and injuring of Palestinian children, indicating that there is no evidence to suggest that the Israeli military has conducted thorough and impartial investigations into any of the cases of child killings and injuries, of which PCHR has submitted complaints.

On 2 October 2002, the Committee considered Israel's second periodic report. Committee experts discussed some points with the Israeli delegate, most of which were raised in the reports and interventions submitted by human rights organizations, including PCHR. However, there was no mention of the situation of Palestinian children in Israel's report, as Israel claims that the Convention of the Rights of the Child does not apply to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child concluded its thirty-first session on 4 October 2002. The Committee asserted that Israel is responsible for the implementation of the Convention in the OPT, expressing its concern at the lack of information of the situation of Palestinian children. In its concluding session, the Committee expressed its concerns about:

- Discrimination in the definition of Palestinian and Israeli children.
- Reports of Israel's inhumane, degrading and ill treatment of Palestinian children.
- The serious deterioration of health and health services, Palestinian children's access to education in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the bombing of civilian areas, extra-judicial killings, the disproportionate use of force by the Israeli military, the demolition of homes, the destruction of infrastructure, mobility restrictions and the daily humiliation of Palestinians.
- The impact of Israeli military actions on the rights of children in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including arrests detention and interrogation.

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

In Cairo on 24 June 2001, a PCHR delegation, comprised of Hamdi Shaqqura, Coordinator of the Democratic Development Unit and Iyad Alami, Coordinator of the Legal Unit, 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. Israel refuses to officially recognize the Committee.

PCHR's delegation devoted their intervention to the living conditions of the Palestinian population in the OPT and the impact of Israeli practices, such as the extensive destruction of Palestinian property and the unprecedented escalation in human rights violations and war crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian civilians. The delegation considered the past two years as a symbol of the absence of international will in dealing with Israel which employs its lethal arsenal against Palestinian civilians. In conclusion, the PCHR delegation called upon the United Nations to effectively move to stop violations of human rights by Israeli occupying forces in the OPT, and held it legally, morally and politically responsible for actions taken against the Palestinian people.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

This position was established upon UN General Assembly Resolution 141/48 on January 7, 1994. The High Commissioner for Human Rights is the official representative of the UN for human rights activities, under the auspices of the UN Secretary General. The Commissioner works within the framework and powers of resolutions of the UN General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the UN Commission on Human Rights. The Commissioner's most important goal is to stop human rights violations and to ensure respect for human rights throughout the world. Due to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights' important role in defending human rights, PCHR endeavors to remain in constant contact with the Commissioner in order to provide information regarding the Israeli human rights violations in the OPT.

In 2002, communication continued between PCHR and international officials, including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Through correspondence with officials, PCHR briefed them on the unprecedented escalation in illegal Israeli military actions particularly the policy of demolition of Palestinian houses, calling for an immediate intervention.

On 3 April 2002, PCHR sent a letter to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson urging her to visit the OPT to witness the situation on the ground in the aftermath of wide-scale Israeli aggression against Palestinian communities in the West Bank. On 15 April 2002, PCHR sent another letter to Mrs. Robinson after she cancelled a fact-finding visit to the OPT, due to Israel's refusal to receive the mission. PCHR expressed its disappointment at Mrs. Robinson's decision to cancel the visit, her failure to condemn Israel's decision to not receive or cooperate with the mission, and the failure to make any attempt to pursue the mission without Israeli permission.

In September 2002, Mrs. Mary Robinson ended her term as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello was chosen to succeed her in office. PCHR sent a letter to the new UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Sergio Vieira de Mello congratulating him on his appointment. PCHR

urged Mr. de Mello to play a more effective role in the issue of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, suggesting expanding activities to include specific duties of monitoring and reporting.

A Meeting with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva

On 20 December 2002, PCHR Director Raji Sourani met with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Sergio Vieira de Mello in his office in Geneva. Mr. Sourani discussed the Palestinian human rights situation and the systematic violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against protected Palestinian civilians. He criticized the US legal and political cover and protection for the occupying state, emphasizing the necessity to put an end to the conspiracy of silence practiced by official Europe, which is no less dangerous.

Mr. Sourani pointed out that the Western talks about reform in the Palestinian Authority avoided a discussion of the crucial issues: ending the Israeli occupation and realizing the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence. He asserted that it is impossible to make meaningful reform under the current political-security situation imposed by the Sharon government. He added that there can be no serious discussions on the independence of the judiciary and elections, while the President of the Palestinian Authority is under a siege and its executive and legislative institutions are paralyzed.

Mr. Sourani criticized the position of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention and their failure to meet their obligations to provide protection for Palestinian civilians from the Israeli occupation. He called an increase in the activities of the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and invited Mr. de Mello to visit the OPT to see the situation on the ground. Mr. Sourani asserted that Mr. de Mello's moral and legal voice is necessary to break the conspiracy of silence, warning that the Palestinian people require practical assistance, not further statements or resolutions, as these do little to protect them from the daily threat of death and the actions practiced against them daily.

The 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, which 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 Relevant to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949, in the Palestinian Territory occupied by Israel in 1967.
2. To receive correspondence and to hear witnesses where necessary according to his/her 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 provides him with comprehensive information regarding Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT. On 11 February 2002, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian and Arab Territories John Dugard visited the OPT to ascertain the human rights situation. PCHR received Mr. Dugard in its main offices in Gaza City, where PCHR's board of directors briefed him on the deterioration in the human rights situation in the OPT. PCHR raised a number of issues, including the killing of Palestinian children by Israeli occupying forces and torture in Israeli jails. PCHR emphasized the military nature of Israeli settlements established on Palestinian land, including attacks by settlers, under full protection of Israeli soldiers, on Palestinian civilians. The board of directors referred to the Special Rapporteur's first report (A/56/440) issued in October 2001 following his first mission to the region in August 2001, emphasizing the necessity to take into consideration that the occupation is the direct reason for continued violence between Palestinian civilians and Israeli occupying forces. PCHR asked the Special Rapporteur to clarify in his forthcoming report that the current situation is not an armed conflict, and that the worsening humanitarian crisis in the OPT as a direct consequence of the closures imposed by Israeli occupying forces.

2) Participation in International and Regional Conferences and Meetings

In addition to its interventions with UN bodies, in 2002, PCHR received many invitations to participate in other international and regional conferences and meetings. The current situation in the OPT impeded PCHR's participation in a number of these activities, either because of restrictions imposed by Israeli occupying 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:

Steps for Protection – Dublin

The Dublin Forum of Human Rights Defenders organized a summit on 17-19 January 2002, entitled "Steps for Protection." As representatives of PCHR were unable to travel to Dublin due to the total siege imposed by Israeli occupying forces on the OPT, PCHR's Director, Raji Sourani participated in the summit through a written intervention on behalf of PCHR. Mr. Sourani asserted that preventing his travel was simply another example of the Israeli practices against Palestinians. He highlighted the violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces in the OPT, including closure, house demolition and willful killing, and urged the international community to put an end to the conspiracy of silence, which provides Israel with impunity.

Conference on Terrorism and Human Rights – Cairo

The Conference on Terrorism and Human Rights was held in Cairo on 26-28 January 2002, in coordination with the Cairo Center for Human Rights Studies and the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network. A number of prominent international and regional human rights organizations and networks participated in the conference. PCHR, represented by Deputy Director Jaber Wishah, participated in the conference. Mr. Wishah submitted an intervention on terrorism and Palestinian human rights after the September 11 attack.

Bertrand Russel Forum – Brussels

On 31 January and 1 February 2002, Darryl Li, of PCHR's International Unit, participated in the Bertrand Russel Forum in Brussels, as PCHR's director was prevented from traveling by Israeli occupying forces.

Two Meetings in France

On 22 March 2002, Coordinator of the Training Unit Bassan al-Aqra' participated in an open meeting organized by civil society groups in Lyon in France. Al-Aqra' detailed the human rights situation in the OPT, and the destruction incurred to Palestinian national and civil institutions, the Palestinian economy and the peace process by Israeli occupying forces. At the end of the meeting, in which more than 300 French citizens participated, al-Aqra' answered questions raised by the attendants.

On 6 April 2002, Coordinator of the Training Unit Bassam al-Aqra' also participated in an open meeting organized by the Union of Palestinian Students in France, Palestine Forward and the Association of Maghrebi Workers in Lyon, France. Al-Aqra' detailed the human rights situation in the OPT and violations of Palestinian human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinian people. At the end of the meeting, in which more than 70 people participated, al-Aqra' answered questions raised by the attendants.

Conference of the Euro-Mediterranean Civil Forum

The Euro-Mediterranean Civil Forum organized a conference on human rights and democracy in the period 12-14 April 2002. As the Director of PCHR, Raji Sourani was unable to travel due to the total siege imposed by Israeli occupying forces on the OPT, he participated in the conference by telephone. Christina Roise, head of the Committee in Solidarity with the Arab Cause in Malaga, Spain also represented PCHR at the conference. The conference discussed issues of human rights and democracy, the September 11 attack and the Palestinian cause, and the effect anti-terrorism measures have had on states and human rights defenders.

A Meeting on Palestine – Geneva

On 23 and 24 March 2002, Deputy Director of PCHR Jaber Wishah, and Coordinator of the International Unit Victoria Metcalfe participated in a meeting organized by the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network in Geneva.

International Conference on International Criminal Court – Chicago

From 9-11 May 2002, the Arab Institute for the Independence of the Judiciary and Legal Profession, in cooperation with the Arab Institute for Human Rights held a conference entitled, "Permanent International Criminal Court: Problems and Suggestions" at De Paul University in Chicago in the United States. Darryl Li, of the International Unit, represented PCHR at the conference, in which 60 experts, diplomats and activists.

Participation in a Meeting of Members of the European Parliament – Brussels

On 20 June 2002, a group of European organizations convened a meeting with members of the European Parliament in its headquarters in Brussels. The World Church Council (Europe), the International Cooperation Organization for Development and Solidarity and the Coordination Committee of European NGOs on the Palestinian Cause participated in the meeting, which was supported by the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, the International Federation of Human Rights, organizations for the elimination of torture and the World Church Council.

PCHR was represented at the meeting by the Coordinator of the Democracy Development Unit Hamdi Shaqqura and the Coordinator of the Legal Unit Iyad Alami. Mr. Shaqqura delivered a speech in which he detailed grave breaches of international law, including war crimes, perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians in the OPT since the beginning of al-Aqsa Intifada. He called upon the European Union to intervene and put an end to such Israeli practices, and take the necessary steps to pressure Israel to respect human rights in the OPT.

Conference of the Union of Arab Lawyers in Solidarity with the Palestinian Cause – Cairo

This conference was organized by the Union of Arab Lawyers in Cairo on 6 and 7 August 2002 to highlight the issue of Palestinian prisoners and their suffering in Israeli jails. The conference included a legal workshop, in which dozens of Arab and foreign lawyers participated. The Director of PCHR, Raji Sourani submitted an intervention on the status of Palestinian lawyers and prisoners in the OPT, focusing on the restrictions imposed on the movement of lawyers, the Israeli judicial system, effects of the prohibition on visits to prisoners by their lawyers, the status of Palestinian prisoners, incommunicado detention, administrative detention, restrictions on visitation, health care, torture and the case of Marwan Barghouthi.

The 10th Intellectual Forum of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights – Cairo

On 26 and 27 August 2002, the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights in Cairo organized the 10th Intellectual Forum entitled "Towards Activation of the Egyptian Civil Society," in cooperation with the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network. The Director of PCHR submitted an intervention on the role and philosophy of Arab NGOs.

Meetings in Austria

During the period 25-30 September 2002, PCHR's Director Raji Sourani visited Vienna to receive the Bruno Kreisky Prize for Outstanding Achievements in the Area of Human Rights awarded to PCHR. Mr. Sourani held meetings with members of the Arab community and Speaker of the Austrian Parliament Dr. Hanis Fischer. Mr. Sourani briefed Fischer on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and human rights violations and war crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians.

On 30 September 2002, Mr. Sourani delivered a lecture entitled "The Struggle for Palestinian Human Rights" at the Bruno Kreisky Forum, where many Austrian and European academics, diplomats and politicians were present. He provided a comprehensive overview of Palestinian human rights. He criticized the destructive US role, which provided political and legal coverage for Israel, and the conspiracy of silence adopted by much of Europe, asserting that this puts Israel above international and humanitarian law despite the crimes the state continues to perpetrate against the Palestinian people.

Meetings in Europe

1) France

During the period 1-3 October 2002, the Director of PCHR Raji Sourani held meetings in France with French solidarity groups, in cooperation with the International Federation of Human Rights and Amnesty International in France. Mr. Sourani discussed the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, asserting that the Palestinian people appreciate the European solidarity movement and their efforts to bring attention to the plight of the Palestinian people.

Mr. Sourani held a meeting with the French Bar Association, in which he talked about the conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, and the Israeli decision taken in 1994 to prevent Palestinian lawyers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories from visiting or representing Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

Mr. Sourani also met with members of the French Assembly, directors of the Middle East Department and international cooperation in the French foreign ministry, the

head of the liberal block in the European Parliament, the director of the Mediterranean Department in the European Commission, the director of the Middle East Department in the Irish presidency of the European Parliament, the head of the Committee of Foreign Affairs in the European Parliament and the director of the office of Gaza and the West Bank in the European Commission.

2) Belgium

On 3 October 2002, PCHR's Director visited Belgium, where he held a number of meetings with the head of the international relations committee in the European Parliament and members of the Democratic Socialist Party and the Christian Democratic Party.

3) Ireland

In Ireland, from 3-7 October 2002, PCHR's Director Raji Sourani met with the director of Amnesty International in Ireland, the director of the Middle East Department and Irish Foreign Ministry's Legal Advisor.

4) United Kingdom

From 7-12 October 2002, Raji Sourani held some meetings in the United Kingdom. He met with members of the Arab community, in the presence of the Palestinian Ambassador 'Afif Safia, leading member of the Arab community Michelle 'Abdul Messiah, Judge Yujin Qatran, British activists in the field of human rights, Palestinian solidarity groups and academics. He also met with academics in the College of Middle East Studies in London, in the presence of the Dean Lin Welshman. In the House of Commons, Mr. Sourani met with some of its members, and provided a comprehensive overview of the Israeli policies of closure and the destruction of property as forms of collective punishment.

On 11 October 2002, upon an invitation by the Council for Promotion of Arab-British Understanding and the Palestinian Association in the United Kingdom, Mr. Sourani delivered a lecture at the Kofa Exhibition entitled "The Worst is Yet to Come." He provided an overview of the situation in the OPT, highlighting living conditions of Palestinian civilians and the impact of human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces on the lives of civilians.

The Francophone Summit – Lebanon

From 13-16 October 2002, the Director of PCHR Raji Sourani visited Lebanon, where he participated in the Francophone Summit, as the deputy director of the International Federation of Human Rights. Mr. Sourani also held meetings with other Palestinian human rights organizations.

International Exchange Workshop – Morocco

During the period 24-27 October 2002, the Coordinator of Democratic Development Unit Hamdi Shaqqura participated in the International Exchange Workshop in Morocco, which was organized by NOVIB in cooperation with the Union of

Moroccan Societies. Thirty of NOVIB's partner organizations in Asia and the Arab world participated in the workshop. The Coordinator of the Democratic Development Unit Hamdi Shaqqura represented PCHR in the workshop that was presided over by Geoffrey Salcald, the former director of the Middle East Department in NOVIB. The workshop discussed how to develop indicators to measure the work of human rights organizations.

Conference on the Promotion of Cooperation among Arab Civil Society Institutions – Cairo

From 31 October – 2 November 2002, upon a joint initiative by the Cairo Center for Human Rights Studies and Ittijah, a conference on the promotion of cooperation among Arab civil society institutions was convened in Cairo, entitled "Palestinians of 1948 Knock on the Doors of the Arab World."

The Deputy Director of PCHR Jaber Wishah submitted an intervention on the Palestinian civil society and the problems of reforms. Mr. Wishah talked about the uniqueness of Palestinian society and discussed the transition from revolution to democratic construction within Palestinian society, asserting that the current reforms were in response to external pressure, not to internal demands.

The intervention presented at the conference, in which 70 members of Arab civil society participated, asserted that Palestinians who remained in their homes after the 1948 war are part of the Palestinian people, and that incorporating them would promote the position that opposes normalization with Israel.

Two Lectures in Spain

The Director of PCHR, Raji Sourani visited Spain from 21-24 December, where he delivered two lectures: one at the Faculty of Law in Malaga University and the other was organized by al-Quds Committee in Solidarity with the Arab Cause. In the two lectures, Mr. Sourani provided an overview of the situation in the OPT, highlighting violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians.

3) International Popular Solidarity Campaign with the Palestinian People

Israeli occupying forces have committed grave breaches of international law, including war crimes against Palestinian civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories since the beginning of al-Aqsa Intifada – under US legal protection and political coverage for Israel and a conspiracy of silence practiced by European governments. To implement international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention, which provides protection for civilians persons, in 2001, the “International Popular Solidarity Campaign with the Palestinian People” emerged to counter the international silence and official collusion with Israeli practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. PCHR played an important role in organizing this campaign, in cooperation and coordination with other NGOs in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network.

Thousands of activists from several countries, including France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, USA, Switzerland and others, have participated in the campaign. Two committees were established, one in the West Bank 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 to coordinate the activities of the campaign. 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 the 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, which 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.

In 2002, PCHR continued to coordinate the activities of the campaign, through coordinating visits of campaign delegations to the OPT. PCHR received these delegations and PCHR staff accompanied them on field visits to witness the impact of violations of human rights and war crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians. In 2002, PCHR received 34 international delegations that included 600 activists from several countries, including France, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Holland, USA, Japan, the United Kingdom and Switzerland, who came to express solidarity with the Palestinian people. Some of these delegations represented a number of organizations which are active in the fields of human rights and peace, including the France-Palestine Association, the Association of Maghrebi Workers in France, United Civilians for Peace, Women in Black, Palestine 33, CCIPPP, the International Solidarity Movement, Global Exchange and others. These delegations visited areas in the Gaza Strip, which were subjected to destruction and damage by Israeli occupying forces. PCHR staff provided the delegations with comprehensive overviews of the situation in the OPT and human rights violations.

Following is a table of international Palestinian solidarity delegations hosted by PCHR in 2002:

No.	Date	Delegation	Number of participants
1.	1 January	Palestine 33 – France	7
2.	2 January	Italy	150
3.	3 January	France	27
4.	20 January	International Commission of Jurists – Sweden	5
5.	11 February	France	26

6.	13 February	Members of the Belgian Parliament, representatives of civil society groups and journalists – Belgium	
7.	19 February	The Association of Maghrebi Workers & The Jewish French Union for Peace – France	20
8.	28 February	The Committee in Solidarity with the Palestinian and Arab Cause in Andalusia – Spain	15
9.	2 March	United Civilians for Peace – Holland	
10.	6 March	Women In Black – Italy	12
11.	10 March	Palestine 33 – France	12
12.	31 March	France	30
13.	3 April	Palestinian-Belgian Association – Belgium	17
14.	24 April	CCIPPP – France	6
15.	5 May	Three members of the Swiss Parliament accompanied by Thobias Shnibli of Switzerland without Army – Switzerland	4
16.	10 May	France	14
17.	22 May	Belgium	6
18.	23 May	CCIPPP – France	14
19.	10 June	Japan	34
20.	27 June	France	25
21.	1 July	Switzerland and Spain	12
22.	2 July	Belgium	
23.	3 July	USA and UK	8
24.	3 July	Switzerland and Spain	7
25.	7 July	United Civilians for Peace – Holland	10
26.	9 July	Belgium	8
27.	18 July	International Solidarity Movement	10
28.	23 July	Spain and France	13
29.	24 July	Spain	8
30.	27 July	CCIPPP – France	9
31.	4 August	France and Spain	16
32.	25 August	Belgium and Japan	12
33.	28 October	France	18
34.	30 October	Palestine 33 – France	

4) Visiting International Delegations and Figures

In addition to its activities within the framework of the International Solidarity Campaign with the Palestinian People, PCHR receives many international delegations and figures, including politicians, diplomats, representatives of the United Nations and its bodies, journalists and representatives of media institutions. PCHR pays special attention to these activities, as part of its efforts is to provide the international community with a comprehensive overview and

explanation of the violations of human rights in the OPT. PCHR organizes visits for these delegations and figures throughout the Gaza Strip and allows them to meet with families of the victims, civil society groups and relevant official Palestinian parties.

Visitors to PCHR in 2002

Date	Visitors	Number of visitors
3 January	Jim Blackwell, Legal Advisor, ICRC	1
7 January	Nicholas Gibson – UNSCO (UN Special Coordinator’s Office)	1
3 January	- Milon Cothari, UN Special Rapporteur for Adequate Housing - Joseph Shakla, Regional Coordinator of the Middle East and North Africa, Habitat International Coalition – Housing and Land Committee	27
15 January	Caritas, Jerusalem	5
17 January	Peter Lundberg, Vice Consul, Consulate General of Sweden	1
26 January	Dr. David Ryall, Catholic Bishops’ Conference; and Msgr Peter Selton Enbach, General Sec. Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops	2
30 January	Nuns of Christian Aid	7
30 January	A delegation of the Secretariat General of Amnesty International	5
5 February	Elinor Hammarskjold, Swedish Consulate	1
6 February	Ted Lewis, Human Rights Director, Global Exchange of Human Rights Organization and a delegation of the organization	8
6 February	A US delegation of Fellowship of Reconciliation	8
10 February	John Dugard, Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories	1
10 February	Lucy Maire, Grassroots International in the Occupied Palestinian Territories	1
12 February	Ron Muyzert, Head of the Netherlands' Rep. Office to the PA; and Mark Singleton, Head of Development Cooperation Dept.	2
16 February	Nicole Adanino, Philip Fals and Anis Qandil, Enfants Refugies de Monde	3
18 February	Michael Folkner, Christian Aid	1
18 February	Swedish Christian Study Center	6
19 February	Date and Elly Mulder, United Civilians for Peace	2
21 February	Bo Goransson, Director General of SIDA; and representatives of the Swedish Consulate	

26 February	A delegation of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry comprised of: Vidar Helgesen, State Secretary Deputy Foreign Minister; Svein Saether, Director General/Human Rights Dep.; Guri Solberg, Senior Executive Officer; Kjersti Anderson, Advisor/ Minister's Secretariat; Geir O.Pedersen, Representative office of Norway to PA; Kristin Enstad, Senior Executive Officer/ Political Affairs; Kjell Storiokken, Deputy Director General/ NORAD; Rasmus Gedde-Dahl; Senior Executive officer/ NORAD; and Petter Bauck, Deputy Head- Representative office of Norway to PA	9
27 February	Andrew Whittaker, British Consulate	1
11 March	Manuel Salazar, Consul General; Pablo Sanz Lopez, Deputy Consul General; and Guillermo Caro, Coordinator General, Consulate General of Spain	3
12 March	Elizabeth Hodgkin and David Holley, Amnesty International	2
13 March	Maureen Lynch, Refugees International	1
13 March	Hanlie Booysen – Deputy Representative – South African Representative Office to PA	1
13 March	Dr. Othman Hassan, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Gaza	1
17 March	Petter Beocq, Norwegian Representative Office	1
19 March	Jim Blackwell, Legal Advisor, ICRC	1
20 March	American Physicians for Human Rights	
26 March	A delegation from the International Parliament of Writers, including: Nobel laureates (literature) Wole Soyinka (Nigeria, 1986), José Saramago (Portugal, 1998) and members of the International Parliament of Writers, including: Russell Banks (USA, head of the Parliament), Christian Salmon (France, Secretary of the Parliament), Breyten Breytenbach (South Africa), Bei Dao (China), and Vincenzo Consolo (Italy). A number of French artists and journalists accompanied the delegation, as is did Laila Shaheed, representative of the Palestine Liberation Organisation to France.	26
1 April	Stricker Emile, YWCA, YMCA, Switzerland	7
4 April	Middle East Peace Delegation: Angelyn Rudd, Carlat Wallace, Hekmat Saraj – JMCC, Sharon Wallace and Cindy Scheldorf	5

6 April	A delegation of the Norwegian Association of NGOs for Palestine	6
6 April	A delegation of the European Parliament	4
14 April	Petter Beocq, Norwegian Representative Office	1
14 April	A French delegation	3
15 April	Karin Roxman, Political Adviser to the European Union Special Representative Thomas Hammarberg, Secretary-General, The Olof Palme International Center	2
18 April	Mark Giersson, Netherlands Representative Office	1
20 April	Lucy Mair and Iain Guest, Grassroots International	
20 April	Olivia Holdsworth, Patrick O'Connor – Bar Human Rights Committee – UK	2
23 April	Uffe Gjerding, Stein Erik Horjen and Peter Lodberg – Dan Church Aid; and Sue Turrell, Christian Aid	4
23 April	A delegation of the Fellowship of Reconciliation	15
28 April	Kvinna Till Kvinna	2
30 April	Irine Khan and Elizabeth Hodgkin, Amnesty International	2
30 April	Petter Beocq, Norwegian Representative Office	1
30 April	A delegation of Union of Democratic Lawyers	
30 April	Alain Krivine, Roseltne Vachetta and Alima Boumedienne, French members of the European Parliament	3
9 May	David Holley, Amnesty International	1
20 May	Christian Legind and Josephine Obez, Dan Church Aid	2
27 May	Per Satdig and Anika Lindgren, Swedish ICJ	2
27 May	Dove Operation for Peace – Italy	4
29 May	Ann Lesch, consultant, Ford Foundation; US Director, Palestinian American Research Center	1
30 May	Bskb Sindbe, Director, Ruth Baarris and Ellen Marie Schlessler, Dan Church Aid	3
1 June	United Civilians for Peace, Holland	2
4 June	Dr. Othman Hassan, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Gaza	
5 June	French League of Human Rights Delegation & Members of FIDH	25
9 June	Jan Carter and Ann Brunborg, UNAIS	2
11 June	Peter Linderburg, Swedish Consulate	1
15 June	Elizabeth Hodgkin, Amnesty International	1
17 June	Birgitta Tazelaar and Mark Giersson, Netherlands Representative Office	2
20 June	Global Exchange	20
24 June	Americans Friends Service Committee	15
24 June	Quaker delegation, US	15
27 June	Christine Boeckmann and, Pax Christi Germany	2
1 July	Churches of Scotland	6

2 July	Takeshi Okubo, Head of the Japanese Representative Office	1
2 July	Jannie Kute and Munt Jan Faber, IKV –Hague	2
3 July	David Meklawi, Christian Aid	1
5 July	Michel Tubiana, President, Ligues des Droits de l’Homme	1
7 July	Steve Hibert, Canada Representative Office	1
10 July	A delegation of Pax Christi	10
11 July	Andreas Reinicke, Head of German Representative Office	1
11 July	Luis Lopez Guerra, Director, Instituto De Derecho Publico Comparado Steve Feher, Principal consultant, Aktus Consulting Limited Ayman Fteiha, The European Commission Technical Assistance Office Judge Bernard Senria	4
13 July	Petter Beocq, Norwegian Representative Office	1
14 July	Manonite Association, Canada	3
15 July	Mill Kritz, US Institute for Peace	1
16 July	A delegation of the international quadrilateral committee to discuss the independence of the judiciary	4
17 July	Douglas Dicks and Rev. Sandra Olewine, CRS	2
17 July	ACT – World Church Council	4
18 July	Sabine Jaggi, Tobias Jasses, YMCA – YWCA	2
20 July	A delegation of Dove Operation, Italy	3
20 July	A delegation of British physicians and academics	16
20 July	A delegation of the European Union	6
22 July	Kirsten Maas, Heinrich Boll Foundation	1
24 July	General Board of Global Ministries – the United Methodist Church	14
5 August	Louisa Margantine, Member of the European Parliament	1
6 August	Elizabeth Hodgkin and Donatella Rovera, Amnesty International	2
19 August	Dra. Arq. Brunella Brunello – Ricciardi – Presidenta – Asociacio Internacional Dona Europa (AIDE) – Spain Amalia Aguza Criado – Vicepresidenta – Asociacio Internacional Dona Europa (AIDE) – Spain	2
21 August	A US delegation through World Church Council	15
23 August	Rev. J. Mark Lewis, Moderator of the 128 th General Assembly- The Presbyterian Church in Canada	1
27 August	Maria Skoula, Head of Mission in Palestine, MSF, Greece (Doctors without Borders) Tsaggas Pangiotis, Doctors without Borders, Greece	2
28 August	Jim Blackwell, Legal Advisor, ICRC	1
29 August	Ann Mawe, Vice Consul, Swedish Consulate Henrik Lundberg, Analyst, Swedish Armed Forces –Headquarters	

4 September	Mark Giersson, Netherlands Representative Office	
8 September	Jacques Fournier, Conseiller d' Etat – Consulat General De France French General Consul – Jerusalem	1
9 September	Garrick Ruiz, International Solidarity Movement, USA	1
9 September	Fillon Du fouleur, French Cultural Consul	1
10 September	Karen Koning Abu Zayd, Deputy Commissioner General, UNRWA Scott Custer, UNRWA	2
17 September	Claudette Habesch, President; Joseph Rouhban, Director in France; Karin Laansoo, Public Relation Officer; and Sebastien Dechamps, Middle East and North Africa Desk, Caritas International	4
23 September	Juliette Verhoeven, European Centre for Conflict prevention, Netherlands David Grant, Nonviolent Peace Force, USA	2
2 October	A delegation of the Manonite Association	30
5 October	An Austrian delegation of the Campaign of Palestinian Political Prisoners	3
14 October	Garth Bedford and Aris Tsalmanis, Monitors, European Union	2
20 October	World Vision	15
21 October	A delegation of US religious journalists through World Church Council	10
22 October	A delegation of US universities	8
23 October	Toime van Teeffer, United Civilian for peace Angels Saff, EMHRN, London	2
23 October	Thomas Hammarberg, Secretary General, the Olof Palme International Center	1
24 October	Angela Gass, European Union	1
24 October	A delegation through World Church Council	6
24 October	Kvinna Till Kvinna, CIDA and Swedish Consulate	3
26 October	British Union of Labor	6
28 October	Petter Beocq, Norwegian Representative Office	1
28 October	Edward Mortimer, Director of Communications, Executive office of the UN Secretary General Karen Koning Abu Zayd, Deputy Commissioner General, UNRWA	2
29 October	A delegation of United Church of Christ	12
29 October	Group of Church Advocates – Christian Aid	9
30 October	A delegation of church associations	4
30 October	William Roebuck – U.S Embassy	1
30 October	A delegation of European Policy Studies Center, Belgium	2
31 October	A delegation of Swedish Christian Study Centre	5

31 October	Ann Mawe, Vice Consul, Swedish Consulate General	1
13 November	Regis Koetschet, French Consul General Bernarld Sillion Dusouleur, Coordinator of Cooperation, French Consulate	2
20 November	South African politicians through the South African representative office	6
20 November	Ava Rogers, Economic Officer for Gaza, Embassy of the United State of America	1
30 November	A delegations of British lawyers	6
1 December	Louisa Margantine, Member of the European Parliament	1
10 December	Karen Koning Abu Zayd, Deputy Commissioner General, UNRWA William Shawcross, UNRWA	2
10 December	Lori Allen, University of Chicago	1
10 December	A delegation of From Conference of Religious in England, Catholic Relief Services	6
12 December	William Roebuck, Gaza Political Officer, US Embassy	1
16 December	Journalists from Canada, Germany, South Africa and Switzerland	6
18 December	Martin Smedjback and Britta Samuelsson, Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation	4
18 December	A delegation of Global Exchange – USA	12
18 December	Martin Vicklin, Press Officer, Diakonia Sweden; Peter Lunberg, Sida Rep., Jerusalem; Christian Lagerlof, Regional Rep. of Diakonia; and Margoth Sonnebo, Information focal point at Diaonia Jerusalem	4
21 December	Lennart Skov-Hansen, Emergency Coordinator, and Ruth Baarris, Dan Church Aid	2
29 December	A delegation of Middle East Children Alliance headed by Yannada Shirabe	7
30 December	Rebecca Johnson, World Council of Churches	
31 December	A delegation of Middle East Children Alliance	8

5) Interviews with Local and International Media in 2002

PCHR continues to cultivate relationships and promote cooperation with journalists and representatives of the local and international media. PCHR believes it is vitally important to maintain these contacts in order to articulate its positions regarding the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In 2002, PCHR continued to meet journalists and representatives of local and international media. In addition, PCHR widely circulated press releases, documents and reports, locally and internationally. In light of the increasing violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces in the OPT, PCHR has intensified efforts to encourage journalists to visit the region

to see the situation on the ground, and in many occasions, PCHR provided assistance for journalists and representatives of the media during their missions in the Gaza Strip.

Journalists and Media Organizations That Interviewed PCHR Staff in 2002

Names of Journalists and Media Organizations	Date
Mette Jorgensen, The Daily Danish newspaper information	7 January
Pavla Jazairiova, Foreign Desk Reporter, Radio Zurnal	
Stephen Franklin, Reporter, Chicago Tribune	15 January
Paul Meuhier, French Editor, Journal SUD West	16 January
An interview with the Irish Radio	17 January
An interview on Palestine Satellite Channel with Jaber Wishah and Minister Hisham 'Abdul Raziq	20 January
Gras Dominulqe, Photographer, and Marchand Laure, Journalist, LA Vie (Weekly French Magazine)	23 January
Alex Rietman – Correspondent & TV producer – Dutch TV	26 January
Are Hovdenak, Freelance Middle East Correspondent	29 January
An interview with <i>Sawt Falastin</i> (Voice of Palestine) Radio	2 February
Hogger Jensen and George Kochaniec, Rocky Mountain News	11 February
Michael Bond, Opinion Editor, Newscoientist	12 February
Sophie Claudet, AFP	
Qassem Khatib, Middle East Broadcasting Corporation (MBC)	
Kent Klich, Photographer, Denmark	13 February
An interview with the Moroccan Television	17 February
An interview with Palestine Television	25 February
Meron Rapoport, Journalist, the Israeli Yediot Aharanot	27 February
An interview with Palestine Television	5 March
An interview with <i>Sawt Falastin</i> (Voice of Palestine) Radio	6 March
Laura King, AP (Associated Press)	11 March
Pawlowsky Agnes, Researcher and Journalist in freelance	12 March
Laurie Kassman, Correspondent, Voice of America	18 March
Nilson Henrick, Swedish Journalist	20 March
An interview with Palestine Television	22 March
Dan Ephrdn and Islam Abdel Karim, Newsweek	26 March
An interview with BBC National Radio	28 March
An interview with Palestine Television	31 March
An interview with Palestine Television	4 April
Klinke Lwajla, Clarissa Crasemann, US TV	8 April
An interview with BBC	8 April
An interview with Nile TV, Shams al-Wazir	8 April
Middle East Broadcasting Corporation (MBC)	9 April
An interview with the Dutch Television	9 April
An interview with the French Television	12 April
An interview with the Tunisian Television	13 April
An interview with Abu Dhabi Satellite Channel	13 April
An interview in English with Palestine Television	13 April
An interview with the Lebanese al-Nour Radio	13 April

An interview in English with the Lebanese al-Manar Television Channel	14 April
An interview with the Tunisian Television	14 April
An interview with the Lebanese Future Television	15 April
An interview with Abu Dhabi Satellite Channel	15 April
Lubbert Jorge, TV Portugal	16 April
An interview with the Palestinian al-Horriya Radio	17 April
Bruno Philip, Correspondent, Le Monde	18 April
An interview with the Algerian Television	18 April
Fayed Abu Shammala, BBC	21 April
David Lamb, Reporter, Los Angeles Times – USA	
Matt Rees, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, Time Magazine	21 April
An interview with Palestine Television	23 April
Two reporters of Chicago Tribune	24 April
Taher al-Nunu, journalist	24 April
Jun Yasukawa, The Yomiuri Shimbun – Japanese Newspaper Shinichi Hirano, Cairo Bureau Chief - The Yomiuri Shimbun	25 April
An interview with Abu Dhabi Satellite Channel	27 April
An interview with al-Jazeera Satellite Channel	28 April
An interview with Palestine Television	29 April
Vivienne Waer, USA Today	30 April
Jorn Donner, Finnish TV	4 May
Khaled Sadiq, Correspondent, the Iranian Television	4 May
An interview with Sharqa Television, UAE	5 May
Rolf Passch, Reporter, Frannkfurter Rundschau, Germany	7 May
An interview with BBC	9 May
Barthe Benjamin, Reporter, Le Nouvel Observateur	9 May
David Blau, Journalist, Daily Telegraph	9 May
Erk Seals and Sudarsan Rachaian, Knight Ridder	9 May
Astrid Frefel, Correspondent for Middle East, Tages Mazeiger, Zurich	11 May
An interview with Palestine Television	12 May
Catherine Taylor, The Christian Science Monitor	13 May
Nobuo Fukuda, Correspondent, The Asahi Shimbun, Japan	18 May
Time golden	19 May
Mark Magnier, Los Angeles Times	20 May
Dan Ephrdw, Newsweek	26 May
An interview with the Egyptian Satellite Channel	31 May
An interview with Palestine Television	3 June
Murata Shinichi and Koga Chihiro, Tokyo	8 June
Siagura Umberto, Italian Photographer	8 June
An interview with al-Jazeera Satellite Channel	9 June
An interview with the Palestinian al-Horriya Radio	17 June
Karsteu Ruhutop, German Journalist	20 June
An interview with the Times, UK	21 June
Ricki Rosen, Time Magazine	25 June
An interview with NBC, USA	27 June
Stephen Farrell, The Times, UK	1 July
Gilles Paris, Le Monde	1 July

Dan Fortsen, American Journalist, KMUD Radio	1 July
Andrea Kunzig, Photographer, and Gisela Dachi, Journalist, Die Zeit	3 July
Journalist, Daily Telegraph	7 July
Barbara Victor, Paris, TFI	9 July
An interview with Tehran Radio	14 July
Yun Suh, KPFA Radio	20 July
Ken Lee, Freelance journalist, USA	24 July
Dona Bryson, Middle East News Editor, AP	12 August
Wesam Nassar, Sands of the Ummah	14 August
An interview with Ireland Radio, Dublin	25 August
Wesam al-Basiouni, Kuwait Television	25 August
An interview with Monte Carlo Radio, Paris	3 September
An interview with Palestine Radio	3 September
An interview with Palestine Satellite Channel	4 September
Ilene Prusher, Middle East Bureau Chief, The Christian Science Monitor	4 September
Tahsier Hijazi, Gianlnce Grossi, Swiss National TV	6 September
Bibiana Piene, Journalist, NORAD	12 September
An interview with KTV, Algeria	12 September
Federico Pezzolato, Journalist, Italy	19 September
An interview with the Palestinian al-Horriya Radio	28 September
Henrik Samuelsson, Journalist, Swedish News agency	10 October
An interview with Ireland Radio	2 November
An interview with CNN	13 November
An interview with ORF Television, Austria	8 December
An interview with <i>Sawt Falastin</i> (Voice of Palestine) Radio	9 December

Section (2): PCHR's Publications

PCHR's publications include press releases, studies, periodic and non-periodic reports, working papers, interventions with UN bodies and in conferences and a monthly magazine. These publications are translated from Arabic into English, except for the monthly magazine which is published in Arabic only. PCHR makes efforts to circulate its publications to an unlimited number of those interested both at the international and local levels. These publications are available on PCHR's web page and some are distributed via e-mail.

1) Press Releases

PCHR regularly issues press releases providing detailed and timely information regarding specific incidents of human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces or the Palestinian Authority.

In 2002, PCHR issued 97 press releases, most of which (80.4%) were devoted to human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians, whereas the rest (19.6%) were devoted to issues relevant to human rights

violations perpetrated by the Palestinian Authority.⁶⁴ In addition, PCHR issued dozens of press releases on other issues, such as activities relevant to the international popular campaigns for the protection of the Palestinian people and meetings with international figures. The following table classifies PCHR's press releases in 2002:

Issue	Number	Percentage
Israeli violations	78	80.4%
Palestinian violations	19	19.6%
Total	97	100%

The following table summarizes PCHR's press releases on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights in 2002:

No.	Date	Subject	Details
1.	3 January	Detaining bodies	Israeli occupying forces handed bodies of 3 Palestinian children killed by these forces
2.	7 January	Intifada, house demolition	Five children of a homeless family died burning in a refugee tent
3.	12 January	Intifada, house demolition	More than 100 Palestinian families were rendered homeless in Rafah after houses demolished
4.	15 January	Intifada, house demolition	Urgent appeals to international officials on house demolitions in Rafah
5.	26 January	Israeli practices, freedom of movement	Palestinian human rights activist was prevented from participating in international conference in Cairo
6.	28 January	Israeli practices, obstruction of legal work	Palestinian prisoner was deprived attorney visit by Israel authorities
7.	28 January	Intifada, house demolition	PCHR called for international investigation into the demolition of more than 140 houses in Rafah
8.	30 January	Intifada, willful killing	New evidence in case of three Palestinian children unlawfully killed by Israeli forces
9.	4 February	Intifada, assassination	4 Palestinians were assassinated by Israeli occupying forces in Rafah
10.	11 February	Intifada, shelling	Israeli occupying forces shelled Palestinian civilian and security facilities
11.	13 February	Intifada, invasion	Israeli occupying forces invade cities throughout Gaza strip in major offensive killing four Palestinians and arresting dozens
12.	16 February	Intifada, invasion	3 Palestinians were killed when Israeli occupying forces invaded al-Boreij refugee camp

⁶⁴ The high number of press releases on violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces in comparison to those which focused on violations of human rights perpetrated by the Palestinian Authority is attributed to the ongoing escalation of Israeli illegal military actions against Palestinian civilians.

13.	19 February	Intifada, shelling	3 Palestinians, including a child, were killed when Israeli occupying forces shelled houses with flechette shells
14.	19 February	Intifada, assassination	3 Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli occupying forces in Jabalaya in an assassination attempt
15.	19 February	Intifada, house demolition	Urgent appeal to save Palestinian houses at risk of demolition
16.	20 February	Intifada, willful killing	Israel launched massive ground, air, and sea attacks throughout the occupied West Bank and Gaza strip, killing 14 Palestinians
17.	21 February	Intifada, house demolition	PCHR rejected attempt by Israeli State Prosecutor to legalize house Demolition
18.	27 February	Israeli practices, racial discrimination	PCHR expressed solidarity with Azmi Bishara, an Arab member of the Israeli Knesset
19.	28 February	Intifada, detainees	A Palestinian from Gaza was placed under administrative detention
20.	4 March	Intifada, assassination	A woman and 5 children were killed in an a failed assassination attempt
21.	6 March	Intifada, settlement	Israeli police initiated an investigation into settlers' violence in al-Mawasi area
22.	6 March	Intifada, shelling	Israeli occupying forces shelled Palestinian civilian and security facilities
23.	7 March	Intifada, shelling	School for blind children in Gaza was severely damaged by Israeli bombardment
24.	8 March	Intifada, invasion	Israeli onslaught intensifies; at least 20 Palestinians were killed overnight in Gaza strip and dozens were injured
25.	12 March	Intifada, invasion	Israeli forces invaded Jabalya refugee camp killing 22 Palestinians
26.	13 March	Intifada, closure	An urgent appeal for international intervention to lift Israeli siege on al-Mawasi in the southern Gaza strip
27.	14 March	Intifada, house demolition	PCHR won an Israeli Supreme Court decision temporarily halting demolition of 7 Palestinian houses in Deir al-Balah
28.	14 March	Intifada, house demolition	An urgent appeal to international officials to assist Palestinian houses at risk of demolition in Deir al-Balah
29.	15 March	Intifada, house demolition	Israeli Supreme Court ordered temporary halt to house demolitions near al-Mughraqa
30.	19 March	Intifada, remainders of occupation	A PCHR Investigation revealed that Israel was most likely responsible for death of 5 Palestinian civilians in al-Boreij
31.	19 March	Intifada, house demolition	Israeli Supreme Court issued guidelines on house demolitions
32.	24 March	Israeli practices, freedom of movement	Israeli occupying forces obstructed entry of the body of a deceased Palestinian through Rafah Terminal
33.	24 March	Intifada, detainees	A Palestinian from Gaza was placed under administrative detention

34.	2 April	Israeli practices, freedom of movement	Foreign solidarity group forced open two Israeli military checkpoints
35.	3 April	Israeli practices, house enumeration	Israeli forces enumerated Palestinian houses and resumption of house demolitions was possible
36.	7 April	Intifada, willful killing	3 Palestinian civilians, including two children, were killed in Rafah
37.	7 April	Economic and social rights	An urgent appeal to the international community to stop Israeli attacks against medical personnel
38.	9 April	Israeli practices, ill-treatment	Fear of Torture and Ill-Treatment of Thousands of Palestinians Detained by Israeli Occupying Forces
39.	10 April	Israeli practices, freedom of movement	PCHR condemned Israeli actions against foreign activists
40.	14 April	Israeli practices, detainees	Israel reopened notorious desert prison camp
41.	17 April	Intifada, detainees	PCHR called upon concerned agencies to intervene to stop Israeli violations of the rights of Palestinian prisoners
42.	22 April	Israeli practices, obstructions of the work of human rights committees	Israel blocked visiting mission by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
43.	2 May	Intifada, settlement	Israeli forces seized a tract of land in the northern Gaza Strip for an Israeli settlement
44.	11 May	Intifada, deportation	PCHR condemned the illegal deal that ended the siege of the Church of the Nativity, under which a number of Palestinians were deported
45.	18 May	Intifada, closure	PCHR called for lifting the siege imposed on al-Mawasi area in the southern Gaza Strip
46.	22 May	Intifada, house demolition	Israeli forces demolished houses, in violation of an Israeli Supreme Court order
47.	22 May	Intifada, closure	Israeli forces declared al-Mawasi “closed military zone” and PCHR called for international intervention
48.	2 June	Intifada, economic and social rights	PCHR called upon the international community to intervene to stop Israeli violations of the right to education
49.	23 June	Israeli practices, expulsion	Israeli authorities deported a PCHR staff member
50.	24 June	Intifada, assassination	Israeli occupying forces assassinated 6 Palestinians in Rafah
51.	24 June	Israeli practices, expulsion	Two PCHR staff members deported by Israeli authorities in two days
52.	24 June	Israeli practices, prevention of construction	Israeli occupying forces prevented the establishment of a sewage facility in Rafah

53.	24 June	Israeli practices, destruction of a sewage facility	Members of a French delegation served as human shields to enable workers of the Municipality of Rafah to repair a sewage facility
54.	26 June	Intifada, house demolition	PCHR stopped the demolition of a civilian house in Gaza
55.	16 July	Intifada, economic and social rights	PCHR called for immediate intervention to contribute to solving the problems of unemployment and poverty among Palestinian workers
56.	20 July	Intifada, settlement	Israeli Occupying Forces Commander in Gaza strip issued a military order to seize land to establish a new settlement road
57.	23 July	Intifada, assassination	Israeli occupying forces committed an assassination that left dead 14 Palestinians, including 8 children
58.	24 July	Intifada, assassination	Killing Palestinian civilians with impunity
59.	25 July	Intifada, assassination	The bodies of three children were discovered under ruins in al-Daraj neighborhood
60.	3 September	Intifada, deportation	The Israeli Supreme Court approved the expulsion of two Palestinians from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip
61.	5 September	Intifada, deportation	Israeli occupying forces dumped two deportees near "Netzarim" settlement
62.	7 September	Israeli practices, distortion of facts	Israeli occupying forces freed themselves of the charges of committing war crimes
63.	10 September	Intifada, deportation	PCHR discussed the situation of deportees with the ICRC
64.	24 September	Intifada, invasion	9 Palestinians were killed and dozens were wounded in an Israeli invasion of Gaza City
65.	2 October	Israeli practices, freedom of movement	Israeli occupying forces prevented a PCHR lawyer from traveling
66.	7 October	Intifada, incursion	13 Palestinian civilians were killed and dozens were wounded in an Israeli attack on Khan Yunis
67.	8 October	Intifada, shelling	Israeli occupying forces shelled Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis
68.	19 October	Intifada, shelling	6 Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli shelling against Rafah
69.	21 October	Intifada, excessive use of force	Petition to the Israeli Supreme Court demanding that Israeli occupying forces cease use of flechette anti-personnel rounds
70.	31 October	Intifada, closure	Urgent appeal to allow more than 200 Palestinian civilians living in al-Mawasi area into the area
71.	1 December	Intifada, incursion	Israeli forces killed two Palestinian civilians and demolished 3 houses in Beit Lahia
72.	3 December	Intifada, rights of the handicapped	An appeal to stop Israeli violations against handicapped Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

73.	13 December	Intifada, excessive use of force	5 Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli occupying forces in Khan Yunis
74.	15 December	Intifada, economic and social rights	PCHR supervised the "Schoolbag" campaign, Appreciating the difficult economic conditions thousands of Palestinian families live under as a result of measures taken by the Israeli occupying forces
75.	16 December	Intifada, deportation	Israeli occupying forces demolished 16 houses and destroyed 8 greenhouses in Rafah
76.	16 December	Intifada, house demolition	The two deportees from the West Bank met with their family
77.	26 December	Intifada, closure	Hundreds of Palestinian travelers had been stuck for days on the Egyptian side of the Rafah Terminal due to Israeli restrictions
78.	30 December	Intifada, detainees	New arbitrary measures against Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails

The following table summarizes PCHR's press releases on violations of human rights by the Palestinian Authority in 2002:

No.	Date	Subject	Details
1.	9 January	Shooting	Shooting at citizens in public places by members of Palestinian security services
2.	17 January	Political arrest	PCHR condemned arrest of PFLP Secretary General
3.	6 February	Rule of law	PCHR condemned the murder at the State Security Court in Jenin and demanded upholding of the Rule of Law
4.	11 February	Freedom of expression	Palestinian High Court of Justice demanded explanation for closure of <i>al-Resala</i> weekly
5.	24 April	Death of a detainee	A Palestinian died Palestinian police custody in Gaza
6.	25 April	Freedom of expression	Palestinian High Court of Justice ordered the reopening of offices of <i>al-Resala</i>
7.	27 April	Military court	A Palestinian military court sentenced 4 for Killing of an Israeli Minister
8.	8 May	Arbitrary arrest	Palestinian High Court of Justice demanded explanation for detention of PFLP Secretary General
9.	1 June	Arbitrary arrest	Palestinian High Court of Justice set a session to decide on release of PFLP leader
10.	3 June	Arbitrary arrest	Palestinian High Court of Justice ordered release of PFLP leader
11.	4 June	Independence of the judiciary	PCHR called for immediate implementation of the High Court decision to release PFLP Secretary General
12.	6 June	State security	Palestinian State Security Court sentenced two to death
13.	7 July	Judiciary law	A Presidential Decree against law
14.	15 July	Rule of law	PCHR condemned the killing of a detainee in custody

15.	11 September	Kidnapping	Foreign activists were kidnapped in Khan Yunis
16.	7 October	Misuse of weapons	PCHR called for a stop to internal bloodshed after 5 Palestinians were killed
17.	3 November	Freedom expression	PCHR condemned attack on journalists in Gaza
18.	7 December	Freedom of expression	PCHR condemned an attack on al-Jeel press office
19.	29 December	Rule of law	The latest Presidential Decree appointing the Palestinian Attorney General is unconstitutional

2) Reports, Studies and Other Publications

Publication	Kind	Number	Language
Annual Report 2001	Annual report	1	Arabic and English
Human Rights in the Palestinian Curricula	Study	1	Arabic
Palestinian Legislative Council: Performance Evaluation of Sixth Term (March 2001 – September 2002)	A series study	1	Arabic and English
Extra-Judicial Killing (Assassinations)	A series report	2	Arabic and English
Attacks on Journalists by Israeli occupying Forces	A series report	3	Arabic and English
Land Leveling and House and Civilian Facility Destruction	A series report	1	Arabic and English
Israeli Attacks on Medical Personnel	A non-periodic report	1	Arabic
Israeli Attacks on Fishermen in the Gaza Strip	A non-periodic report	1	Arabic and English
The Right to Education: Special Report on Israeli Violations of the Right to Education in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the Case of Gaza Strip	A non-periodic report	1	Arabic and English
Israeli Attacks on Workers in the Gaza Strip	A non-periodic report	1	Arabic
Israeli Attacks on Industrial Facilities	A non-periodic report	1	Arabic
Closure Update: Report on the Israeli Closure on the Gaza Strip	A series report	3	Arabic and English
Reforms in the Palestinian Authority	Position paper	1	Arabic and English
Illegal Transfer of Protected Persons	Position paper	1	Arabic and English
Searching for, and Prosecuting Collaborators with Israeli Occupying Forces	Position paper	1	Arabic and English
Weekly Report on Israeli Violations of Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories	A series report	52	Arabic and English

Al-Mentar	Monthly newsletter	12	Arabic
Poster on the World Woman Day	Poster	1	Arabic and English
Poster on Israeli War Crimes	Done by International Solidarity Movement	1	Arabic and English
A wall painting ⁶⁵			

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

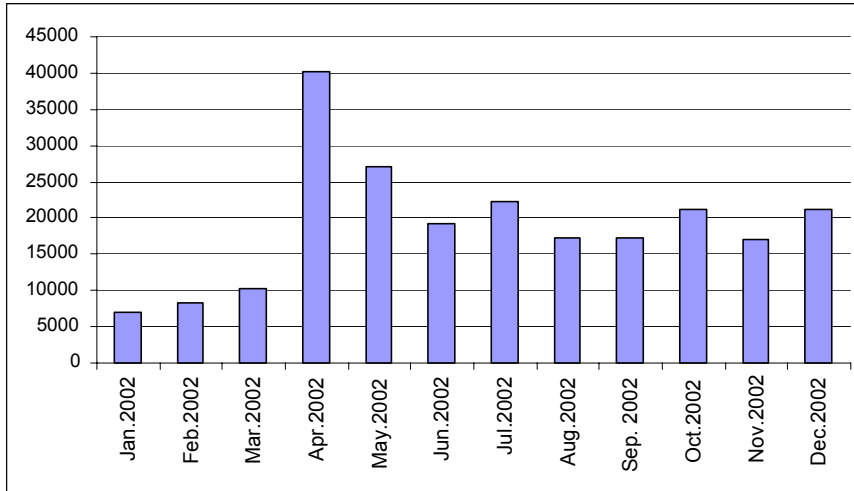
PCHR realizes and appreciates the increasing importance of information technology in our contemporary world. PCHR increasingly depends on its web site as a means of disseminating human rights information. PCHR updates its web site daily with publications and information about its activities. The material on the web page is available in both Arabic and English, and some materials are available in other languages such as French and Spanish.

According to a survey of visitors to PCHR's web site and references made by other web sites, the following statistics could be inferred:

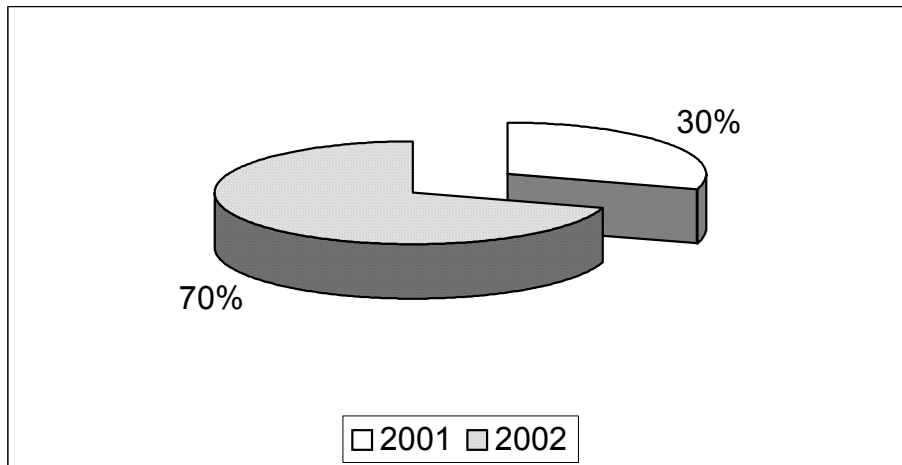
1. In 2002, PCHR's web site received 211,584 visits with an average of 588 visits daily.
2. PCHR's web site received its highest number of visits (40285) during April 2002, as Israeli occupying forces waged a full-scale aggression against the West Bank.
3. The number of visits in 2002 increased by 135% in comparison with 2001, when PCHR's web site received 90,000 visits throughout the year, with an average of 7,500 visits per month, or 250 visits daily.
4. The number of pages seen by visitors in 2002 was 1,005,256, with an average of 83,770 pages per month, or 2792 pages daily.
5. There was an increase by 55% in the number of pages seen by visitors of PCHR's web page in 2002 in comparison to 2001, when 650,000 pages were seen, with an average of 54,016 pages per month, or 1,800 pages daily.
6. PCHR was mentioned 5,000 times on the internet.

⁶⁵ In cooperation with the Palestinian Ministry of Culture, PCHR made a wall painting, 20m long and 1.5m wide on World Women's Day. Twelve Palestinian artists participated in the painting, on 6 March 2002. The painting appeared on the external wall of PCHR's office in Gaza City for several days.

A Diagram of Monthly Visits to PCHR's Web Page in 2002



Comparison of Visitors in the Period 2001-2002



Section (3): Activities of PCHR's Units

This part of the report covers activities of PCHR's units in 2002. It was first prepared by units and then submitted to the board of administration. PCHR's units carried out more than 90% of their 2002 annual plans. Sometimes, priority was given to other activities not included in the annual plans due to emergent circumstances.

1) Field Work Unit

The information gathered by the Field Work Unit form the basis of much of PCHR's work. Its staff collects information regarding violations of Palestinian human rights by whatever party. Field workers have created links with the local communities through their presence throughout the Gaza Strip monitoring the human rights situation. They encourage victims of human rights violation to go PCHR's offices to receive legal aid. PCHR's has no field workers in the West Bank, so it depends on the documentation conducted by human rights organization located there.

The unit documents violations of Palestinian human rights by both Israeli occupying forces and the Palestinian Authority. The unit's work load has increased in light of the escalation of violations of Palestinian human rights by Israeli occupying forces.

Documentation of Israeli Violations of Human Rights

In 2002, the unit continued to document violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces in the OPT, including killings, shelling and destruction of property, land leveling, house demolition and arrests. Field workers visit affected areas, investigate violations and prepare reports supported by testimonies of eyewitnesses and photos. They encourage victims of human rights violations to go to PCHR's offices to receive legal aid.

Documentation of Palestinian Violations of Human Rights

In 2002, the unit continued to document violations of human rights perpetrated by the Palestinian Authority, including proceedings at State Security Courts and military courts, misuse of weapons, extra-judicial killing, violations of the right to free expression and illegal arrests. Field workers encourage victims of human rights violations to go to PCHR's offices to receive legal aid.

Publications

The unit prepares weekly reports on Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT, issued every Thursday. In 2002, the unit prepared 46 out of 52 weekly reports published by PCHR. The unit was also involved in preparing press releases issued by PCHR, especially those relevant to violations of human rights by Israeli occupying forces.

Database

The unit, in cooperation with other units, supervises PCHR's database and provides other units with necessary information, which serves as the basis of many of PCHR's publications. The database provides detailed and classified data about human rights violations in the OPT and is available for usage by all PCHR's units.

Accompanying Visiting Delegations

In 2002, the unit staff organized more than 30 visits for international delegations to affected areas and families of victims in the Gaza Strip.

2) Legal Unit

The unit carried out all duties cited in the 2002 work plan.

Work on Israeli Violations of Human Rights

In 2002, the unit received 1014 complaints relevant to Israeli abuses in the Gaza Strip.

1) Legal Aid for Victims of Human Rights Violations

In 2002, the unit followed up 404 complaints relevant to material and physical damage incurred to Palestinian civilians by Israeli occupying forces. The unit submitted complaints to relevant bodies of Israeli occupying authorities: the Israeli military legal advisor, the compensation officer of the Israeli Ministry of Defense and the Israeli military prosecution. The unit received only 3 responses to these complaints; 2 negative responses from the Israeli military legal advisor and the compensation officer and 1 positive from the Israeli military prosecution. The unit received 5 positive responses from the Israeli police, 14 negative responses from the compensation officer and 1 positive response and 1 negative response from the Israeli military prosecution regarding complaints the unit had followed up in the past years.

It can be noticed that the number of responses the unit received from Israeli official parties in 2002 decreased in comparison to 2001. In 2001, the unit received responses to 343 complaints out of the 553 the unit had followed up. Although all those responses were negative – which indicates the denial of Israel and its occupying forces of their legal obligations towards victims – the figures for 2002 reflect a new policy of not responding at all.

The following table shows the numbers and categories of complaints received by the Legal Unit in 2002:

Subject	Gaza office	Jabalya office	Khan Yunis office	Total
Land leveling and property destruction	123	91	101	315
Shelling of property		28	1	29
Killings and injuries	21	18	21	60
Total	144	137	123	404

The following table shows details of complaints, actions taken and the Israeli response:

Subject	Number of complaints	Complaints sent to:	Israeli response	Notes
Land leveling and property destruction	315	legal advisor, military prosecution, compensation officer	1 negative response and no response to the rest	Following up the complaints is ongoing

Shelling of property	29	legal advisor, military prosecution, compensation officer	No response to any	Following up the complaints is ongoing
Killings and injuries	60	legal advisor, military prosecution, compensation officer	1 negative response, 1 positive and no response to the rest	Following up the complaints is ongoing
Total	404			

2) Legal Aid for Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli Jails

In 2002, the unit followed new cases of 421 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and cases of 29 prisoners from previous years, compared to 199 cases in 2001, 72 cases in 2000 and 87 cases in 1999.

The following table shows the number of cases of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails pursued by the unit at PCHR's offices in 2002:

Category	Gaza office	Jablaya office	Khan Yunis office	Total
New cases in 2002	184	48	189	421
Cases from previous years	13	3	13	29
Total	197	51	202	450

The following table shows kinds of legal aid provided by the unit to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails in 2002:

Office	Determination of location of detention	Visitation	Representation before courts	Release at the end of sentence
Gaza	184	200	142	6
Jabalya	48	31	18	4
Khan Yunis	189	235	117	8

Notes:

- In 2002, Israeli occupying forces prevented PCHR lawyers from visiting 85 prisoners whose cases were being pursued by the Legal Unit, due to a policy adopted by these forces, which deprives prisoners of their right to meet their lawyers. PCHR is concerned that these prisoners may have been subjected to torture during interrogation.
- In 2002, Israeli occupying forces released 177 prisoners, whose cases were pursued by the Legal Unit, without having accused them of any charge.
- In 2002, Israeli occupying forces released 18 prisoners, whose cases were pursued by the Legal Unit, after they had completed their sentences.
- Among the prisoners, whose cases were followed by the unit, there were 10 who were held in administrative detention without any charge.

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

In 2002, the unit provided legal aid for Palestinians whom Israeli occupying forces prevented from traveling abroad, and pursued cases in which families or individuals were prevented from visiting Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails when family visitation was allowed. In 2002, the unit followed up 99 cases relevant to freedom of movement. In all of these cases, PCHR lawyers submitted complaints to the Israeli military legal advisor. The unit received positive responses in 56 cases and negative responses in 7 cases, while the unit continued to follow up 36 cases. In one of the cases for which the unit received a negative response, PCHR, in cooperation with Physicians for Human Rights, submitted an appeal to the Israeli High Court against the travel ban on Dr. Eyad Helles for educational purposes. By the end of 2002, the case was still under consideration.

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

Office	Number of cases	Negative responses	Positive responses	Cases under consideration
Gaza	77	5	46	26
Jabalya	9	2	1	6
Khan Yunis	13	0	9	4
Total	99	7	56	36

4) Other Complaints by Palestinians Regarding Israeli Practices

In 2002, the unit followed up 48 complaints by Palestinians with regard to miscellaneous Israeli practices, detailed in the following table:

Complaint	Number	Mechanism of consideration	Response	Notes
Appeals against the demolition of houses	8	Complaints sent to the Israeli military legal advisor	Positive	In 2 cases, Israeli forces closed windows and balconies
Appeals against land leveling	2	Complaints sent to the Israeli military legal advisor	Positive	
Retrieval of bodies of Palestinians killed by the Israeli forces	12	Complaints sent to the Israeli military legal advisor (in cooperation with the Committee against Torture and Physicians for Human Rights)	6 positive, 2 negative and no response to the rest	
Investigation into the deaths of Palestinians inside Israel	2	Submitting complaints to the legal advisor of Israeli occupation forces	Positive in 1 and 1 was still under consideration	Under consideration

Shelling of a fishing boat	1	A complaint sent to the Israeli military legal advisor	No response	Under consideration
Confiscation of fishing boats and equipment	3	Complaints sent to the Israeli military legal advisor, military prosecution	1 positive and no response to the rest	Under consideration
Disappearance of a Palestinian inside Israel	1	In cooperation with Hamoked	Positive	Ended
Belongings of released prisoners	1	The unit commissioned a lawyer in Israel to follow the case	No response	Under consideration
Compensation	4	Complaints sent to the Israeli Water Company (Makarot), the Israeli military legal advisor and a complaint sent in cooperation with Hamoked	1 negative and no response to the rest	Under consideration
Retrieval of an identity card	1	A complaint sent to the Israeli military legal advisor	Negative	A request for family unification was submitted
Beating during arrest	2	Complaint sent to the Israeli military legal advisor	No response	Under consideration
Degrading treatment at Beit Hanoun (Erez) Crossing	1	A complaint sent to the Israeli military legal advisor	No response	Under consideration
Expulsion to the Gaza Strip	2	Complaints sent to the Israeli military legal advisor	1 positive, and no response to the other	Under consideration
Request to visit deportees and responsibility for their expenditure	2	Sent to the Israeli military legal advisor	No response	Under consideration
Improvement of detention conditions	3	Complaints sent to the Israeli military legal advisor	No response	Under consideration
An attack on a house	1	A complaint sent to the Israeli military legal advisor	No response	Under consideration
Total	48			

The Case of the Ajouris

The unit has pursued the case of Kifah and Intissar 'Ajouri since Israeli occupying forces expelled them from their home in Nablus to the Gaza Strip on 4 September 2002. On that day, Israeli occupying forces dumped the two Palestinians in the Sheikh Aljeen area near the "Netzarim" settlement, south of Gaza City. The two were found wandering by a local farmer and were brought to the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) in Gaza City. PCHR had been asked by the Ajouris' lawyers, Hamoked and Lea Tsemel, to assist them when they reached the Gaza Strip. Kifar and Intissar Ajouri gave a press conference in PCHR's office to describe the circumstances of their arrival in the Gaza Strip. They then requested that they be moved to the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Gaza City.

PCHR has followed this case, in cooperation with Hamoked, to ensure the return of the 'Ajouris to their home. The two organizations submitted requests to the Israeli Attorney General demanding that Israel assume responsibility for their deportation and allow them family visitation rights. On 16 December 2002, Israeli occupying forces permitted the deportees' mother and Kifah's wife and daughter to visit them in the Gaza Strip for a few hours.

5) Appeals to the Israeli High Court Regarding Land Confiscation and Leveling

In 2002, the unit, through Israeli lawyers, appealed on 5 cases before the Israeli High Court. 3 of these appeals were related to the demolition of 85 Palestinian houses, while the other 2 were relevant to land-leveling and the establishment of a settlement road by Israeli occupying forces. The court took decisions to temporarily stop the demolition of the houses. In its final ruling, the court took the unprecedented step of deciding that the Israeli military does not have the authority to immediately demolish houses belonging to Palestinians.

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 2002, 17 patients from the Gaza Strip benefited from this service and received medical treatment in Israeli hospital and clinics, while other cases were still followed up by the Legal Unit.

7) Legal Consultation

In 2002, the unit provided 357 legal consultations in many cases, including obtaining bills of indictment, civil cases and cases relevant to work.

8) The Issue of Flechette Shells

The Legal Unit, in cooperation with Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, submitted an appeal to the Israeli High Court against the Israeli Ministry of Defense to prohibit the use of the internationally banned flechette shells, used by the Israeli military against

Palestinian civilians in the Palestinian Authority areas. By the end of 2002, the case was still under consideration before the Israeli judiciary.

9) Bringing Suits before the Israeli and European Judiciary

PCHR began to bring suits against the state of Israel. For this purpose, it commissioned Avigdor Fildman to follow up the case of the bombardment of al-Daraj neighborhood in Gaza City by Israeli F-16 fighter jets on 22 July 2002, which left dead 12 Palestinians, including 6 children, injured 77 others, destroyed 4 houses completely and damaged nearly 30 houses. PCHR commissioned Fildman to also follow up one of the most important cases of house demolition, in which 30 houses were demolished in Block O in Rafah refugee camp on 10 January 2002.

At the international level, PCHR continues to follow up a number of cases through lawyers from the United Kingdom and Switzerland, to bring to justice alleged Israeli war criminals, including the current Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz. The Legal Unit filed a number of cases, including assassinations, killing of civilians, demolition of houses and destruction of industrial facilities. The unit is preparing dozens of other files on Israeli violations of human rights to be presented to the European Judiciary.

Work on Human Rights Violations by the Palestinian Authority

In 2002, the unit provided 527 legal aids in various cases relevant to human rights violations by the Palestinian Authority and other parties under its jurisdiction. The unit provides Palestinians with legal consultation and intervention with concerned parties, including governmental institutions and the judiciary. In 2002, the unit provided 372 legal consultations relevant to civil and criminal cases and measures taken by Palestinian ministries. The unit lawyers represent 44 Palestinians illegally detained in Palestinian jails and detention centers. It submitted 58 complaints on behalf of Palestinians to concerned Palestinian parties. The unit also represented 53 cases before the judiciary.

1) Detainees in Palestinian Jails and Detention Centers

In 2002, the unit followed up cases of 44 Palestinians arrested by Palestinian security services. All of these cases were in the Gaza Strip, except for the case of the Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine Ahmed Sa'adat. In this case, PCHR lawyers, 'Abdul Rahman Abu al-Nasser, president of the Palestinian Bar Association and lawyer Younis al-Jaru submitted an appeal to the Palestinian High Court of Justice to order his release. On 3 June 2002, the court ordered Mr. Sa'adat's immediate release, but he remained in custody in violation of the decision taken by the highest Palestinian judiciary body.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ For more details about this case, see page 51 of this report.

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	42	Submitting 35 requests to Attorney General; other detainees were released	Negative	5 responses received
Determining locations of detention	42	Contacts, messages and visits	Positive except for messages	Locations of detention determined
Representation of detainees before courts	44	Summons before the High Court of Justice in Gaza	Positive	The Court ordered the release of 11 detainees, 8 of whom actually released, 23 detainees were released before the conclusion of trials, and 9 cases were still under consideration
Deterioration of detainees' health conditions	2	Requests to the Attorney General	1 Positive and no response to the other	One of the detainees was released, while the other remained in custody
Visits to detainees	3	Requests to the prison administration	Positive	All visits took place at Gaza Central Prison and the detention center of the Preventive Security

2) Other Complaints Received by the Unit

In 2002, the unit received 58 complaints on various issues. The unit intervened with relevant official parties. The following table shows details of these complaints:

Relevant party	Number of complaints	Response			Notes
		Positive	Negative	No response	
The Attorney General	26	5	2	19	Violation of legal orders, attacks by security men, an attack against a journalist, death at a checkpoint, deaths in custody and a complaint against a lawyer

Ministry of Health	11	2	2	7	Forming committees to investigate medical mistakes, requests for medical checking, investigation into the case of a detainee and administrative problems of employees
UNRWA	10	4	2	3	Damaging houses in Jablaya by sewage, obtaining a house, non-evacuation of a house, medical mistakes, financial aid, registration of a refugee, finding a job opportunity, results of examinations, resumption of paying salaries and determination of a place of service
General Personnel Council	4	1	1	2	Paying delayed salaries, promotions and due payments
Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs	2			2	Due payments
Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	1			1	Due payments for an employee
Ministry of Finance	1			1	Due payments for an employee
Al-Azhar University	1		1		Handing the certificate to a student
Arab Center for Agricultural Development	1	1			Exemption from interests
Palestine Red Crescent Society	1			1	Investigation into providing medical aid for wounded persons
Total	58	13	8	34	

3) Other Complaints before the Judiciary

In 2002, the unit followed up 9 cases before the judiciary detailed in the following table:

Court	Number of cases	Subject	Results
Magisterial Court	1	Compensation for the death of a child by security men	The court decided compensation for the family

High Court of Justice	8	Illegal blockade of medicines by Ministry of Trade and Industry, retirement of an employee, suspense of university employees, removal of names of lawyers by the Bar Association, seizure of land devoted for a sports club by a security service, closure of media institutions and closure of societies	The court ordered the reopening of offices of a newspaper, abolished the case of lawyers, rejected the case of the land and postponed the case of the closure of societies, while other cases were still under consideration
Total	9		

4) Legal Consultation

In 2002, the unit provided 372 legal consultations for Palestinians in civil cases and cases relevant to family quarrels and to disputes between citizens and institutions.

Other Activities

1. On 6 June and 4 July 2002, the unit held two meetings with lawyers from the southern Gaza Strip, briefing them on the legal aid provided by the unit, PCHR's publication and the promotion of their relations with the center.
2. On 14 February 2002, the unit participated in monitoring the election of the administration board of the General Union of Handicapped Palestinians in Khan Yunis.
3. Like other PCHR units, the unit delivers lectures in training courses organized by the Training Unit. On 4 November 2002, the unit contributed to a training course organized by Science and Culture Center in Nusseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip.

Illegal Transfer of Protected Persons – Position Paper

PCHR published this position paper in the aftermath of the ruling the Israeli High Court that approved the decision taken by Israeli occupying forces to expel Kifah and Intissar 'Ajouri from their home in Nablus to the Gaza Strip.⁶⁷ The paper asserted that this expulsion is a war crime and a crime against humanity according to international humanitarian law.

⁶⁷ For more details, see page 35 of this report.

3) Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit

In 2002, the unit monitored and studied economic, social and cultural rights in the OPT in general and the Gaza Strip in particular. The political and security situation and al-Aqsa Intifada impacted on the unit's agenda and programs. As a result, the annual plan was revised to carry out other tasks relevant to the Israeli violations of Palestinian economic, social and cultural rights in the OPT.⁶⁸

Despite these emergent developments, the unit was able to prepare a number of studies and report on many issues relevant to economic, social and cultural rights, and to participate in other PCHR activities and activities with civil society groups in the Gaza Strip.

Studies and Reports

In 2002, the unit prepared a number of studies and reports that documented and analyzed issues relevant to the economic, social and cultural rights from the perspectives of international human rights law and humanitarian law. Following is a list of the unit's publications in 2002:

1) Human Rights in the School Curricula in Palestine: A Critique of the Curriculum of the Sixth Grade of the Elementary Education

This study discussed the concepts of human rights in the new Palestinian school curricula, taking the curriculum of the sixth grade of the elementary education as a case study. It studied the subjects of national education, civil education and the Arabic language. The study concluded that the concepts of human rights were not covered enough in the Palestinian curricula, but this coverage was more comprehensive than in the school curricula in other Arab countries.

2) Israeli Violations of the Right to Education in the Gaza Strip

This report covered the period 29 September 2000 – 30 April 2002, and highlighted Israeli violations of the right to education in the Gaza Strip, including shooting at students, closing and shelling schools, seizing schools and transforming them into military locations, restrictions on the movement of students and teachers, and arresting students and teachers. It also discussed the impacts of the total Israeli siege on the educational process.

3) Report on Israeli Land Sweeping and Demolition of Palestinian Houses and Civilian Property in the Gaza Strip

In 2002, the unit published two reports in this series; one covered the period 1 January – 31 March 2002, while the other one covered the period 1 April – 30 June 2002.

⁶⁸ The unit coordinator worked as the Training Unit coordinator until May 2002, in addition to accompanying Palestinian solidarity delegations on tours of the Gaza Strip. He also attended a one-month training course on human rights in France.

4) Closure Update

In a series of reports that highlight the impact of the closure imposed by Israeli occupying forces on the Gaza Strip, Israeli violations of the Palestinian economic, social and cultural rights, including the rights to free movement, health, education, work, and free worship are documented. It also documents the restrictions imposed at commercial crossings and the impact on commercial transactions and the Palestinian economy in general. In 2002, the unit published three updates that covered the periods 1 January – 31 March, 1 April – 30 June and 1 July – 30 November.

5) Report on Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen in the Gaza Strip in al-Aqsa Intifada

The report covered the period 29 September 2000 – 31 May 2002, and documented the Israeli attacks against Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip, including arresting and shooting at fishermen, destroying their boats and fishing equipment, imposing fines on them and confiscating their fishing licenses. The report also highlighted the legal assistance provided by PCHR to victims of these attacks.

6) Report on Israeli Violations of the Rights of Palestinian Workers in the Gaza Strip

The report covered the period 29 September 2000 – 30 April 2002, and highlighted the impact of the Israeli siege and closure on the Palestinian labor force. It documented Israeli violations against Palestinian laborers, including their right to life and personal security, their access to their work places, arrests and inhumane and degrading treatment by Israeli forces. The report also surveyed emergency assistance provided to Palestinian workers and the role of the Palestinian Authority and labor unions in providing assistance and asserted that this assistance was not enough and did not meet basic needs of Palestinian workers.

7) Destruction of Palestinian Industrial Facilities by Israeli Occupying Forces

The report covered the period 29 September 2000 – 30 September 2002 and dealt with the destruction of industrial facilities from the perspective of human rights and international humanitarian law. The report indicated that Israeli occupying forces have adopted a policy of destroying Palestinian industrial facilities since the beginning of the Intifada on 29 September 2000. The report highlighted the negative impact of such destruction on Palestinian economic and social rights.

8) Report on Israeli Attacks against Palestinian Medical Personnel

This report was the second of its kind issued by the unit. It covered the period 11 April 2001 – 31 August 2002 and documented attacks by Israeli occupying forces against medical personnel. The report surveyed the impact of the Israeli siege on the OPT, which led to dozens of deaths among Palestinian civilians. It narrated cases in which medical personnel were killed or injured and ambulances were attacked by Israeli occupying forces.

9) Press Releases

The unit prepared a number of PCHR's press releases in 2002, particularly those relevant to violations of economic, social and cultural rights.

Documentation in the Field of Economic, Social and Cultural rights

The unit supervised PCHR's database in the following subjects:

- House demolition
- Land leveling
- Destruction of industrial facilities
- Closure
- Violations of the right to education
- Violations of the right to health
- Violations of the right to work

The unit, in cooperation with the Fieldwork Unit supervises updating data related to Israeli violations of economic, social and cultural rights.

Participation in Workshops, Conferences and Symposiums

1. On 28 January 2002, the unit ran a workshop on the right of the handicapped to education under Law 4 of 1999 on the rights of the handicapped in Palestine, which was organized by Visually Handicapped Graduate Society in the Gaza Strip in al-Nour Center. The unit coordinator submitted an intervention on the international standards of the rights of the handicapped to education, rehabilitation and incorporation.
2. The unit coordinator participated in the program of raising youth awareness in Rafah, Khan Yunis and Bani Suhaila in the field of human rights and democracy organized by the Culture and Free Thought Association in Khan Yunis in March 2002. He took four workshops out of the seven workshops of the three-stage program.
3. In April, the coordinator of the unit, in coordination with Majida Shehada, a researcher with the Women's Rights Unit, organized six workshops for members of the Union of Women for Social Work in Khan Yunis. These workshops focused on the issue of protection for women and children in times of armed conflicts.
4. On 28 April 2002, unit researcher Bassam Abu Hashish participated in a workshop on violations of the right to education and future perspectives organized by the Tamer Institute for Community Education. He submitted an intervention on Israeli violations of the Palestinian right to education.
5. On 18 May, the unit coordinator Khalil Shahin participated in a workshop on the support of the rights of the handicapped organized by the General Union of Handicapped Palestinians in offices of the national institutions in Khan Yunis. Mr. Shahin made two interventions, one on the rights of the handicapped in international human rights standards and the other on the activation of Law 4 of 1999 on the rights of the handicapped in Palestine.
6. Unit researcher Bassam Abu Hashish participated in a workshop on ways of protecting deaf women organized by the Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children in Gaza City on 27 June 2002.

7. On 16 September 2002, the unit coordinator Khalil Shahin and unit researcher Bassam Abu Hashish ran two training sessions on political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights for trainees in the Cana'an Institute for Development and Pedagogy in a training program for activists of the social, educational and cultural fields.
8. The unit coordinator participated in a training course organized by ad-Dameer Association for Human Rights for the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees in the period 23-29 September 2002. He ran two training sessions on the historical development of human rights and the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Unit researcher Bassam Abu Hashish also ran a training session on economic, social and cultural rights.
9. On 5 October 2002, the unit coordinator delivered a lecture on the Law of Civil Service to public employees of the Palestinian Ministry of Justice and the General Personnel Council.
10. On 16 October 2002, the unit coordinator submitted an intervention on the rights of the handicapped in international human rights standards at a workshop organized by Future Palestine and the Commission to Defend the Rights of Handicapped Palestinians.
11. In September, October and November 2002, the unit coordinator delivered five lectures on the children's health rights under the program of the promotion of the children's health rights organized by the Palestinian Society for Relief and Development.
12. From 14-26 December 2002, the unit participated in a training course on the area of human rights organized by ad-Dameer Association for Human Rights. The unit trained the trainers, developed the course outline and supervised trainers after the course.
13. On 31 December 2002, unit researcher Bassam Abu Hashish submitted an intervention on the deaf and the right to elections in a workshop organized by Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children in Gaza City.

Media Activities

In 2002, the unit developed relations with civil society institutions in conformity with PCHR's goals and participated in many activities organized by those institutions. At the media level, the unit covered many of PCHR's activities in interviews with local and international radio stations:

1. On 20 May, Lebanese al-Manar Television interviewed the unit coordinator on violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians in Rafah.
2. On 23 May, Palestine Television interviewed the unit coordinator on the demolition of houses in Rafah.
3. On 5 June, *Sawt al-Horriya* (Voice of Freedom) in Bethlehem interviewed the unit coordinator on targeting Palestinian children by Israeli occupying forces.
4. On 6 June, *Sawt Falastin* (Voice of Palestine) interviewed the unit coordinator on the right of the child.
5. On 4 September, Voice of Workers interviewed unit researcher Bassam Abu Hashish on Israeli violations of the rights of Palestinian workers.
6. On 22 December 2002, *Sawt Falastin* (Voice of Palestine 2) interviewed unit researcher Bassam Abu Hashish on PCHR's report "Destruction of Palestinian Industrial Facilities by Israeli Occupying Forces."

4) Training Unit

In 2002, the unit carried out all duties detailed in its annual plan, despite the difficult political and security situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, resulting from the crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians. In 2002, Israeli occupying forces repeatedly partitioned the Gaza Strip into three separate zones, which limited the unit's ability to communicate with target groups, especially in the first half of the year, as the unit was only able to organize three training courses.

Below are details of the unit's activities in 2002:

Training Courses on Human Rights and Democracy

In 2002, the unit conducted several courses in the field of human rights and democracy to raise awareness of human rights issues and democracy in Palestinian society and create an effective cadre able to promote human rights norms. The courses are conducted according to training objectives that were discussed by both the unit and the centre as a whole:

- 1) **Content:** The content of the training course includes an explanation of the concepts of human rights, according to international human rights instruments, democracy, civil society, pluralism and political participation, separation of powers, rule of law and independence of the judiciary, and the role of NGOs in promoting human rights. The content of each training course is designed according to the nature of target groups.
- 2) **Period:** The period of each course is 5-7 days, which included an average of 18-hour training period and PCHR offers trainees certificates at the end of the course.
- 3) **Trainers:** Specialized trainers manage the training sessions. The trainers are chosen according to the subject of each training session and it is also important that the trainers have enough experience and qualifications. Trainers from the Training Unit, Legal Unit, Field Work Unit, Democracy Development Unit and Women's Rights, and trainers from outside the center conduct these training courses.
- 4) **Target Group:** The target groups include various segments of the Palestinian society, including staffs of civil society institutions, lawyers, journalists, activists of women's institutions, activists of political parties, university students and public employees of the Palestinian Authority ministries and civil institutions.
- 5) **Methods of Training:** Training course are conducted according to modern training methods, using audio-visual means and specialized publications. The trainees have access to PCHR's publications to raise their awareness of the Palestinian human rights situation and the issues of democracy.

In 2002, the unit received more than 25 requests to organize training courses in the field of human rights and democracy. However, the unit was only able to organize 12 courses – 6 in Gaza city, 4 in Khan Yunis, 1 in the northern Gaza Strip and one in Rafah – in which 281 trainees participated and received 214 training hours. The period of each training course was 5-7 consecutive days or within two weeks. The target groups included activists of the Palestinian Ministry of Youth and Sports, a youth selected group of the Palestinian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation who were being prepared to work in the diplomatic field, members of staff of the Municipality of Gaza, university students, activists of political parties and NGOs staff.

It is worth noting that the unit conducted a specialized training course, the first of its kind in the Gaza Strip, in cooperation with Women’s Affairs Center in Gaza, in which 25 activists and employees of more than 25 women’s institutions participated. The course focused on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and relevant subjects.

Palestinian civil society institutions highly appreciate PCHR and its Training Unit for their efforts to promote the culture of human rights and democracy in Palestinian society and the coordinator of the unit has received thanks and appreciation for his and PCHR’s efforts.

Training Courses Organized by PCHR in 2002

No.	Target group	Number of trainees	Place	Number of hours	Period
1.	Activists of Ministry of Youth and Sports	33	Rafah	15	12-27 January
2.	Activists of Ministry of Youth and Sports	28	Khan Yunis	15	19-25 March
3.	Student of the Psychology Department at the Islamic University	30	Khan Yunis	15	24 April – 25 May
4.	Activists of Ministry of Youth and Sports	27	Jabalya	21	26 May – 1 June
5.	Association of University Graduates	19	Gaza	21	16-30 June
6.	Students of the faculties of law and political science at al-Azhar University	20	Gaza	21	22 June – 3 July
7.	Activists and members of political parties	24	Khan Yunis	21	7-14 July
8.	Educational supervisors of the Municipality of Gaza	20	Gaza	12	23-25 July
9.	Journalists of the Journalist Forum	26	Khan Yunis	21	28 July – 10 August
10.	Women’s Affairs Center	25	Gaza	20	9-24 October

11.	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	17	Gaza	14	7-20 November
12.	Members of staff of the National Society for the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped	12	Gaza	18	25 November – 2 December

Technical Assistance for NGOs in the Field of Training

- 1) Coordinator of the unit, Bassam al-Aqra' contributed to the preparation of a program for a training course in the field of human rights and democracy organized by ad-Dameer Association for Human Rights, in cooperation with the Palestinian Union of Women, from 23-29 September 2002.
- 2) Coordinator of the unit, Bassam al-Aqra' and coordinator of the Economic and Social Rights Unit Khalil Shahin prepared the program of a training course for trainers organized by ad-Dameer Association for Human Rights from 14-26 December 2002. The two also managed some training sessions in the course.

Participation in Workshops and Training Courses

In 2002, the unit participated in several activities organized by civil society institutions in the Gaza Strip in the field of human rights. The unit coordinator also supervised some training sessions and delivered some lectures in the field of human rights:

- 1) On 6 June 2002, the unit coordinator conducted a training session of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Israeli violations of the rights of Palestinian children, in offices of the Hulm Society for Culture and Revival of the Palestinian Heritage. More than 30 members of the society participated in the session.
- 2) On 3 August 2002, the unit coordinator conducted a training session on the Convention on the Rights of the Child in a training course organized by al-Ta'awon Association and Development Studies Program of Bir Zeit University from 28 July – 7 August 2002 in Wadi al-Salqa village, in which 15 trainees, who were responsible for summer camps, participated.
- 3) On 15 August 2002, the unit coordinator participated in a workshop on the rights of the child and human rights organized by the College Graduates Association, in cooperation with the Women's Unit of the Palestinian Legislative Council. The workshop was conducted in Khan Yunis, and the coordinator of the unit submitted an intervention on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and effects of the Intifada on Palestinian children. Thirty college graduates participated in the workshop.
- 4) The coordinator of the unit conducted three training sessions on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and evaluation of training, in a training course organized by ad-Dameer

Association for Human Rights, in cooperation with the Palestinian Union of Women. The course, in which 25 trainees participated, was conducted in the period 23-29 September 2002.

Media Activities

During his participation in the 58th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights held in Geneva in the period 18 March – 26 April 2002, unit coordinator Bassam al-Aqra' was interviewed by the European media:

- 1) On 9 April 2002, the coordinator of the unit was interviewed by Julius Kubik, correspondent of the Slovak news agency in Geneva. He answered questions about war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians.
- 2) On 12 April 2002, the unit coordinator was interviewed by Peace Radio. Throughout two hours, he detailed human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians. He also answered questions posed by listeners. Peace Radio broadcast its programs in both Arabic and French to Europe and North Africa.
- 3) On 14 April 2002, the unit coordinator was interviewed by al-Sharq Radio. He talked about human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians. Al-Sharq Radio broadcast its programs in both Arabic and French.

Accompanying Visiting International Delegations

The unit participated in activities with a number of international delegations. The unit participated in four field visits organized by PCHR for international delegation and briefed those delegations on the human rights situation and violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians and property.

5) Women's Rights Unit

In 2002, the unit carried out all duties included in its annual plan as follows:

Legal Aid Program for Women and Women's Organizations

This program seeks to provide legal assistance for women and women's organizations. Such legal assistance includes providing legal consultation and representing women in the *Sharia'* and civil courts. In 2002, the number of cases pursued by the unit before the *Sharia'* and civil courts significantly increased.

Table of *Sharia'* Cases Pursued by the Unit in 2002:

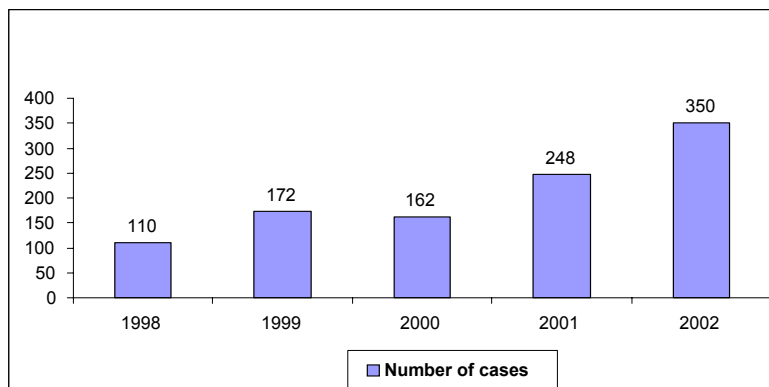
Case Type	Number
Alimony	114
Delayed dowry and rights to household property	64
Separation	22
Custody rights	24
Access rights to children	7
Payment for childcare	3
Obedience	3
Payment for childbirth	7
Counseling	62
Total	306

Table of Cases Pursued by the Unit before Civil Courts in 2002

Case Type	Number
Procedural cases	31
Rights cases	8
Judicial notifications	5
Total	44

In 2002, the unit handled 350 civil and *Sharia'* cases, which marks an increase by 11.5% in comparison to 2001.

Diagram of Cases Pursued by the Unit, 1998-2002



The increase in the number of cases pursued by the unit in 2002 was due to the following 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.

Legal Awareness Program for Women

Under the legal awareness program, PCHR organized a series of lectures and workshops on the rights of women and children in the Gaza Strip. These activities were organized in cooperation with Palestinian women's institutions. In 2002, the unit initiated a project of field legal awareness and consultation for women; a joint PCHR and the Swedish *Kvina Til Kvina* (Women for Women) project that is implemented in coordination with women's institutions.

1. Legal Awareness Lectures

In 2002, the unit organized 42 lectures which targeted 1377 women, including 25 lectures that were organized in cooperation with *Kvina Til Kvina*, which targeted 824 women.

Table of Legal Awareness Lectures Organized in Cooperation with *Kvina Til Kvina* in 2002

No.	Date	Place	Coordinating institution	Number of participants
1.	15 January	Baten al-Samin, Khan Yunis	Sanabel Project	25
2.	19 January	'Abasan	Ma'an Association	21
3.	22 January	Jourat al-Lout, Khan Yunis	Sanabel Project	25
4.	27 January	Khan Yunis	Amira Society for Woman Development	37
5.	28 January	Bani Suhaila	Al-Huda Development Society	41
6.	5 February	Khan Yunis	Women's Activities Center	45

		refugee camp		
7.	2 March	Al-Remal, Gaza	World Council of Churches	45
8.	6 March	Al-Daraj, Gaza	Women's Activities Center	45
9.	13 March	Al-Zaytoun, Gaza	Palestinian Women's Union	30
10.	23 March	Al-Remal, Gaza	World Council of Churches	45
11.	13 April	Al-Nasser, Gaza	Resistant House Society	30
12.	28 April	Jabalya	Union of Women's Committees for Social work	41
13.	7 May	Beit Hanoun	Palestinian Women's Union	32
14.	13 May	Jabalya	Palestinian Women's Union	40
15.	15 May	Beit Lahia	Women's Activities Center	50
16.	20 May	Beit Hanoun	Women's Activities Center	27
17.	27 May	Al-Shati	The local council	25
18.	27 May	Khuza'a	Women and Children Development Society	27
19.	2 June	Rafah	Women's Activities Center	28
20.	8 June	Jabalya	Women's Activities Center	32
21.	13 June	Rafah	Women's Activities Center	30
22.	20 June	Deir al-Balah	Women's Activities Center	30
23.	19 June	Al-Maghazi	Women's Activities Center	27
24.	22 June	Nusseirat	Women's Activities Center	28
25.	25 June	Al-Boreij	Palestinian House Development and Rehabilitation society	20
Total of participants				824

Table of Other Legal Awareness Lectures Organized by the Unit in 2002

No.	Date	Subject	Place	Coordinating institution	Number of participants
1.	8 April	Women and children in armed conflicts	Khan Yunis	Union of Women's Committees for Social work	36
2.	11 April	Women and children in armed conflicts	Jourat al-Lout, Khan Yunis	Union of Women's Committees for Social work	25
3.	13 April	Women and children in armed conflicts	Khan Yunis refugee camp	Union of Women's Committees for Social work	25
4.	15 April	Women and children in armed conflicts	Al-Qarara, Khan Yunis	Union of Women's Committees for Social work	29
5.	17 April	Women and children in armed conflicts	Al-Amal, Khan Yunis	Union of Women's Committees for Social work	26
6.	21 April	Women and children in armed conflicts	Khan Yunis refugee camp	Union of Women's	27

				Committees for Social work	
7.	27 April	Women and children in armed conflicts	Khan Yunis	Union of Women's Committees for Social work	35
8.	4 May	Violence against women	Gaza	World Council of Churches	45
9.	7 May	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Khan Yunis	Watan Charity Society	32
10.	14 May	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Khan Yunis	Watan Charity Society	29
11.	20 May	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Khan Yunis	Buthaina Hijju Society	42

12.	21 May	The role of women's institutions in the development of women	Khan Yunis	Watan Charity Society	28
13.	28 May	The role of women in al-Aqsa Intifada	Khan Yunis	Watan Charity Society	38
14.	23 May	Children in the Palestinian law	Gaza	Childhood Welfare Center	40
15.	15 July	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Al-Qarara, Khan Yunis	Al-Hayat Society for Family Development	35
16.	18 July	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Al-Qarara, Khan Yunis	Pioneers Camp	32
17.	19 July	Violence against women	Al-Qarara, Khan Yunis	Agricultural Cooperative society	27
Total of participants					553

2. Workshops and Meetings Organized by the Unit in 2002

- 1) On 3 April 2002, the unit organized a meeting with a French solidarity delegation in PCHR's offices in Khan Yunis. A number of women's organizations participated in the meeting, which discussed the unit's activities and the status of Palestinian women.
- 2) On 7 August 2002, the unit organized a meeting with a French solidarity delegation in PCHR's offices in Khan Yunis. A number of women's organizations participated in the meeting, which discussed the daily suffering of Palestinian women and their families in the southern Gaza Strip.
- 3) On 15 August 2002, the unit organized a workshop entitled "The Role of Women's Institutions in the Development of Women." Representatives of a number of women's institutions in the southern Gaza Strip participated in the workshop. Four working papers were discussed in the workshop:
 - Mechanisms of Work in Women's Institutions;
 - The Role of Women's Institutions in the Health Development of Women;
 - The Role of Women's Institutions in the Educational Development of Women; and
 - The Role of Women's Institutions in the Professional Development of Women.
- 4) On 12 December 2002, the unit organized a meeting with representatives of women's institutions in the southern Gaza Strip in PCHR's offices in Khan Yunis to enhance coordination and cooperation with these institutions.
- 5) On 12 December 2002, the unit organized a meeting for a representative of the Swedish *Kvina Til Kvina* with representatives of women's institutions in Gaza who discussed the nature and targets of their work.
- 6) On 14 December 2002, the unit organized a similar meeting in PCHR's offices in Jabalya in the northern Gaza Strip.

3. Participation in Training Courses

In cooperation with PCHR's Training Unit, an 18-hour training course was organized for senior students of psychology in the Islamic University from 22 April – 25 May

2002. The course was held in the offices of the Ma'an Charity Society in 'Abasan. The course focused on human rights and democracy, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the impacts of human rights violations on children.

4. Working Papers Submitted at Workshops and Meetings

- 1) On 20 July 2002, the unit coordinator Muna al-Shawas submitted a working paper on local councils and women's development needs at a workshop organized by the Palestinian Working Women Society for Development in al-Boreij service center.
- 2) On 21 August 2002, unit researcher Majida Shehada submitted a working paper on the impacts of Israeli violations on Palestinian women at a workshop organized by the Women's Support and Rehabilitation Project in Rafah in Rafah service center.
- 3) On 29 September 2002, unit coordinator Muna al-Shawa delivered a lecture on Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in a training course on human rights and democracy organized by ad-Dameer Association for Human Rights.
- 4) On 20 October 2002, unit researcher Majida Shehada submitted a working paper on the role of women in social awareness at a workshop organized by the Municipality of Khan Yunis on awareness and the local community.
- 5) On 23 October 2002, unit researcher Majida Shehada submitted a working paper on Israeli violations of the rights of Palestinian children at a workshop organized by the Child's Culture Center in Khan Yunis on the impacts of the Israeli violence on Palestinian children.

5. Media Activities

- The unit participated in a number of media activities, which are important for raising awareness on the rights of children and women:
- 1) On 25 September 2002, unit lawyer Hanan Matar participated in "Islam and Women's Issues," a program on the Palestine Television Channel, which discussed custody rights in law and Sharia'.
 - 2) On 22 October 2002, unit lawyer Hanan Matar participated in a program on Palestine Radio 2 on obedience.

6) Democracy Development Unit (DDU)

The unit carried out activities included in its 2002 annual plan, taking into consideration the rapidly evolving developments in the OPT. The unit's activities aim at the promotion of Palestinian democratic reform.

Monitoring the Performance of the Palestinian Legislative Council

The unit monitors the performance of the Palestinian legislature and its activities in monitoring and accounting the executive. It follows up all activities of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), including its sessions, meeting of its committees and its publications. The unit also holds meetings with PLC members to inquire about issues relevant to legislature. PCHR would like to thank PLC members who cooperated with the staff of the unit and provided information, whether in meetings or through answering written questions on the PLC's work.

Palestinian Legislative Council: Performance Evaluation of Sixth Term (March 2001 – September 2002)

The unit issues an annual report that evaluates the performance of PLC in each term, which serves as the outcome of the unit's work on this issue. In 2002, the unit issued the fifth report of this series, evaluating the performance of the PLC in the sixth term, which extended from March 2001 to September 2002.

In this report, PCHR asserted that the sixth term was affected by unprecedented challenges posed by the measures adopted by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which largely obstructed the PLC's activities. The same term was also considered the longest and most complicated one since the establishment of the PLC in 1996. The report concluded that the PLC's crisis deteriorated even further as a result of the total siege and closure imposed by Israeli occupying forces on the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which restricted movement of its members, and consequently limited their ability to carry out their parliamentary missions effectively. The crisis further deteriorated in the sixth term as Israeli occupying forces tightened the siege and closure imposed on the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In the first year of the sixth term, the PLC was rarely able to carry out its parliamentary jobs, and even when it was able to carry out these tasks, it was not able to carry them out effectively. However, the report highlighted the emergence of serious intention by the PLC, especially during the extended period of the sixth term to carry out its roles of monitoring and accountability effectively.

Documentation of Violations of the Rights to Free Expression and Free Assembly by the Palestinian Authority

The unit documents violations of the rights to free expression and free assembly and other civil and political rights perpetrated by the Palestinian Authority. In its efforts to ensure respect for these rights, the unit issues press releases on violations of these rights. It also issues reports that documents violations of these rights.

Due to the current situation, the unit was not able to issue a report on the rights to free expression and free assembly in 2002. The unit is still gathering information about violations of these rights and will issue a report covering the period from May 2000 until the end of 2002. The unit published two similar reports, the first of which covered the period January 1994 – December 1998, and the second one covered the period January 1999 – April 2000. It was not able to publish reports that cover the period May 2000 – December 2002, due to the Israeli wide scale aggression against the Palestinian people and the decrease of violations of these rights by the Palestinian Authority. However, PCHR continued to highlight violations of these rights in its press releases. In 2002, PCHR agreed to grant rights to publish its second report on the rights to free expression and free assembly to Reporters sans Frontiers, which published most of it in a book in French entitled “Israel-Palestine, Le Livre Noir.”

Monitoring Violations of Freedom of Press by Israeli Occupying Forces: Silencing the Press Series

PCHR documents violations of the right to freedom of press and attacks on journalists perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces. These practices have escalated since the beginning of al-Aqsa Intifada, and peaked when a number of local and foreign journalists were killed by Israeli occupying forces. Since 2001, the unit has published a series of periodical reports, “Silencing the Press,” that documents Israeli practices against journalists and reporters of local and international press agencies. In 2002, the unit issued three reports of this series; the first covered the period 1 January – 31 March 2002, the second covered the period 1 April – 30 June 2002, and the third covered the period 1 July – 30 September 2002.⁶⁹

Documentation of Extra-Judicial Assassinations

The unit continued to document extra-judicial assassinations perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinians. Israeli occupying forces assassinate Palestinians allegedly involved in activities against these forces. Orders of assassinations are issued by the Israeli government and its occupying forces, without granting targeted person the opportunity to defend themselves before judicial bodies. Dozens of Palestinians, including women and children, have been killed, while passing near targeted persons.

Assassination of Palestinians ...An Israeli Official Policy

The unit documents and highlights extra-judicial assassinations perpetrated by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinians in reports of the above title. In 2002, the unit issued two reports on this issue that covered the periods 29 September 2001 – 30 April 2002, and 1 May – 29 September 2002.

Al-Mentar – PCHR’s Newsletter

In 2002, the unit published PCHR’s newsletter, which has been published monthly since September 2000. It covers human rights violations in reportages and articles. It

⁶⁹ The unit is working on a report that covers the last quarter of 2002, which will be published in the first quarter of 2003.

also highlights PCHR's activities. It serves as a means of communication between PCHR and the local society towards raising awareness of human rights in general and the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories in particular. *Al-Mentar* is published on a monthly basis and is widely circulated both locally and regionally. In 2002, the unit published 12 volumes of *al-Mentar* in 11 issues, as volumes 22 and 33 were published together in one issue, as the editor traveled abroad to participate in a training course.

Other Publications

1.Position Paper: “Searching for, and Bringing to Justice Collaborators with the Israeli Occupation Is a Legitimate Right for the Palestinian People in the Context of the Rule of Law”

The unit wrote a position paper in the end of October 2002 on the issue of collaborators with Israeli occupying forces. This paper was written to explain PCHR's position in light of the war crimes committed by Israeli occupying forces, in which collaborators were involved, and the steps taken by the Palestinian Authority towards collaborators, including prosecuting them before State Security Courts and sentencing them to death. While PCHR considered it necessary to search for collaborators and bring them to justice, this does not include trialing them before State Security Courts. PCHR expressed its rejection of the death penalty and called for its abolition as it violates the right to life.

2.Position Paper: “Reforms of the Palestinian Authority”

This paper expressed PCHR's position towards reforms in the Palestinian Authority, which were increasingly addressed, especially in the second half of 2002. The paper criticized the steps towards reform in four fields: the Judicial Authority Law, the Basic Law, general elections and security services. According to the paper, these reforms being enacted are irrelevant at best and deceptive at worst.

3.Demolition of Palestinian Houses by Israeli Occupying Forces as a Means of Punishment and Deterrence

The unit prepared a report on the demolition of houses belonging to families of Palestinians who carried out, planned or facilitated armed attacks against Israeli targets as a means of deterrence. The report covered the period of 29 September 2000 – 31 December 2002. Israeli occupying forces have adopted the policy of house demolition since they first occupied the Palestinian Territories and the policy is supported by the Israeli political and judicial establishments. The reports indicated that in the period under study, Israeli occupying forces demolished 140 houses in the West Bank and Gaza Strip belonging to families of Palestinians who carried out, planned or facilitated armed attacks against Israeli targets in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and inside Israel.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Work on this report began in 2002, but it was published in January 2003.

4. Weekly Reports

The unit participated in preparing most of the weekly reports on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights in 2001, and it provided technical assistance for the Field Work Unit to start preparing the weekly reports with less intervention from the unit. In 2002, the unit prepared four weekly reports in emergent circumstances.

5. Press Releases

The unit prepared many of the press releases issued by PCHR in 2002, most of which concerned Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians. The other press releases prepared by the unit covered violations of human rights by the Palestinian Authority.

Workshops

In 2002, the unit organized four workshops in Rafah, Khan Yunis and the central Gaza Strip, three of which discussed the obstacles faced by the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) due to the Israeli total siege imposed on the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which has made the PLC unable to hold sessions in quorum nor carry out its duties of legislation, monitoring and accountability without restrictions. The fourth workshop discussed reforms in the Palestinian Authority, an issue that was increasingly discussed in 2002. Dozens of representatives of the civil society, including NGOs, political parties, PLC members, lawyers, academics, public figures and people interested in the issue, participated in these workshops. These workshops served as open forums for discussion of public issues as part of the efforts made to promote democratic change and in an attempt to raise awareness on those issues.

1. Three Workshops: The Palestinian Legislative Council: Current Challenges and Future Prospects

The first workshop was held in PCHR's office in Khan Yunis on 15 June 2002. Three PLC members: Ra'fat al-Najjar; Jawad al-Tibi; and 'Abed Rabbu Abu 'Oun, delivered speeches in the workshop. After these speeches, discussions were opened between the PLC members and the participants.⁷¹

The second workshop was held in Rafah Sports Club on 22 June 2002. PLC members: 'Abed Rabbu Abu 'Oun and Suleiman al-Roumi, delivered speeches in the workshop, and at the end, discussion was opened between the PLC members and the participants.⁷²

The third workshop was held in Nusseirat Sports Club in the central Gaza Strip on 29 June 2002. PLC members: Dr, Ibrahim al-Habbash and Jamila Saidam, delivered speeches in the workshop, and at the end, discussion was opened between the PLC members and the participants.⁷³

⁷¹ See PCHR's press release on this workshop on 15 June 2002.

⁷² See PCHR's press release on this workshop on 22 June 2002.

⁷³ See PCHR's press release on this workshop on 29 June 2002.

2. Workshop: Reforms between the Palestinian Local Need and External Pressure

On 21 July 2002, the unit organized this workshop in Khan Yunis Sports Club. It was supposed to be one in a series of workshops on reforms in the Palestinian Authority, but it was not possible to organize more workshops due to the escalation of Israeli actions against Palestinian civilians.⁷⁴ Dr. Ahmed Dahlan, a professor at al-Azhar University in Gaza City, ‘Abdul Karim Abu Salah, Head of the Legal Committee of the PLC, and Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, delivered speeches at the workshop. They talked about issues relevant to reforms, especially reforms of the judiciary, legislature, security services and public institutions. After the speeches, discussion was opened with participants, including representatives of NGOs and political parties, academics and others people interested in public issues.⁷⁵

Participation in Activities Organized by Civil Society Institutions

In 2002, the unit participated in a number of activities organized by civil society institutions, the most significant of which were:

- 1) On 6 March 2002, the coordinator of the unit Hamdi Shaqqura participated in a symposium organized by the Cana’an Institute for Pedagogy entitled “Palestinian Legislative Council and Democratic Reform in Palestine.” Mr. Shaqqura talked about the retreat in the performance of the PLC, which had affected democratic reform in Palestine due to the unprecedented Israeli aggression.
- 2) On 16-17 June 2002, the unit submitted a working paper at the Conference of Human Development organized by the Development Studies Program of Bir Zeit University. The working paper, which was prepared by unit coordinator Hamdi Shaqqura, constituted a part of the development report and included recommendation for developing and reforming the PLC. Because Mr. Shaqqura was abroad, the coordinator of the Economic and Social Unit Khalil Shahin submitted the paper on his behalf.
- 3) On 22 July 2002, unit researcher Nafez al-Khaldi participated in a workshop organized by the project for support and rehabilitation of women in Deir al-Balah under the auspices of Gaza Community Mental Health Program in the Palestinian National Institutions headquarters in the town. Al-Khaldi submitted an intervention on assassination of Palestinians.
- 4) On 25 September 2002, unit researcher Tariq Hanafi participated in a workshop on the role of the media in promoting and defending human rights. Hanafi talked about human rights, the problems of promoting the culture of human rights, the role of the media in changing Arab awareness and the problems faced by the Arab mass media and their relations to the restrictions imposed on human rights in the Arab states.
- 5) On 28 September 2002, unit coordinator Hamdi Shaqqura participated in a training course organized by ad-Dameer Association for Human Rights from 23-29 September 2002. Shaqqura delivered a lecture on democracy, its concepts and ways of promotion.

⁷⁴ After the workshop, which was held in Khan Yunis in the afternoon, members of PCHR’s staff, including the director, his deputy and coordinator of the Democratic Development Unit, were forced to spend the night in Khan Yunis because Israeli occupying forces closed the road leading to Gaza City.

⁷⁵ For more details about discussions at this workshop, see PCHR’s 22 July 2002 press release.

Other Activities

- 1) In 2002, the unit participated in the reception of several delegations and briefed them on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
- 2) The unit participated in PCHR's communication with journalists and local and international media institutions.
- 3) Nearly all of PCHR's publications are translated from English into Arabic and vice versa by a specialized translator, under the supervision of the coordinator of the Democratic Development Unit. Members of the unit's staff who have experience in translation sometimes participate in translation according to PCHR's needs. In 2002, the unit helped translate some of PCHR's publications, especially when the roads between the southern and northern Gaza Strip were closed, which made the translator unable to reach PCHR's offices in Gaza City.

Section (4): Participation in Training Courses to Develop PCHR Staff's Experience

As part of its ongoing efforts in staff development, in 2002, PCHR sent a number of its staff members from different units to participate in regional and international training courses:

1. In the period 2 March – 26 April 2002, Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, and Bassam al-Aqra', Coordinator of the Training Unit, participated in a training course on diplomacy and human rights organized by the International Service Association in Geneva. The course focused on the UN human rights instruments and their relations to diplomacy.
2. In the period 27 June – 27 July 2002, Khalil Shahin, Coordinator of the Economic and Social Rights Unit participated in a training course on international and regional human rights instruments and the rights of refugees and minorities, organized by the International Institute of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France.
3. In the period 3-16 July 2002, Ghadir al-'Emari of the Democratic Development Unit participated in a training course organized by the Arab Institute for Human Rights in Tunisia. The course focused on the historical and philosophical bases of human rights, international instruments for human rights protection, the Convention of the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Women and other subjects pertaining to human rights.
4. In the period 27 October – 2 November 2002, Bassam Abu Hashish of the Economic and Social Rights Unit participated in a workshop on human rights organized by the Middle East Church Council in Ayanaba in Cyprus. The workshop discussed the role of the church and human rights organizations in the support and promotion of the culture of human rights. A number of participants submitted relevant working papers.
5. In the period 27 October – 2 November 2002, Ibtissam Zaqqut, Coordinator of the Field Work Unit, participated in a training course on UN human rights instruments. The course was organized in Amman by the Arab Institute for Human Rights – Tunisia, Amman Centre for Human Rights Studies – Jordan, and the Arab Centre for Education of International Law and Human Rights.

Section (5): Pictures of PCHR's Activities in 2002



A Spanish delegation of the International Solidarity Movement with the Palestinian People in a meeting with mothers of prisoners and ex-prisoners in PCHR's offices, 3rd March 2002



A number of Palestinian artists while drawing a wall painting on the World Woman Day, 8 March 2002



A delegation of the International Parliament of Writers, in a tour in Block O in Rafah, organized by PCHR, 26 March 2002



Palestine Ambassador to France Leila Shahid in the meeting organized by PCHR for members of International Parliament of Writers with some writers, poets and journalist in PCHR's offices, 26 March 2002



French-Swedish solidarity delegation hosted by PCHR during a demonstration near Abu Houli checkpoint in an attempt to allow movement of Palestinians through the checkpoint, 1st April, 2002



Speakers during a workshop organized by PCHR in its Khan Yunis office on the Palestinian Legislative Council, 15 June 2002



Participants in a training course organized by PCHR in its Khan Yunis office, 14 July 2002



Speakers in a workshop on reforms in the Palestinian Authority, 21 July 2002



Kifah and Intissar Ajouri, who were expelled from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip, being received by PCHR, 4 September 2002



The French State Minister and accompanying delegation in a meeting in PCHR's office in Gaza, 8 September 2002



Director of PCHR during the ceremony of receiving the Bruno Kreisky Award for outstanding achievements in the area of Human Rights, which was granted to PCHR, Vienna, 27 September 2002



Director of PCHR receiving the Bruno Kreisky Award which was granted to PCHR, Vienna, 27 September 2002

Part 3

PCHR's 2002 financial report