PCHR

Palestinian Centre
for Human Rights
Annual Report 2008

pchr@pchrgaza.org
www.pchrgaza.org

PCHR

Palestinian Centre
for Human Rights

Annual Report 2008

Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

The Centre is an independent Palestinian human rights organization based in Gaza City. The Centre enjoys Consultative Status with the ECOSOC of the United Nation. It is an affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists-Geneva; the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) - Pairs; member of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network - Copenhagen; member of the International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) - Stockholm; member of the Arab Organization for Human Rights - Cairo; and member of the World Coalition against the Death Penalty - Rome. It is a recipient of the 1996 French Republic Award on Human Rights, the 2002 Bruno Kreisky Award for Outstanding Achievements in the Area of Human Rights and the 2003 International Service Human Rights Award (UNAIS). The Centre was established in 1995 by a group of Palestinian lawyers and human rights activists in order to:

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

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

The Philosophy of the Centre's Work

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

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

Work Units of the Centre

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

Field Work Unit

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

Legal Unit

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

Democratic Development Unit

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

Economic and Social Rights Unit

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

Woman Rights Unit

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

The Training Unit

The Training Unit is a main instrument in PCHR's work in disseminating and developing a human rights culture, and promoting democratic concepts in the local community with all its various segments. The Unit organizes and holds training courses and workshops in order to develop theoretical knowledge and provide professional skills that can contribute to a real change in the behavior of the society, which in turn can promote respect for, and protection of human rights and participation in community building. The target groups of the training courses and workshops are particularly the youth, including university students, activists of political parties, lawyers, media, union members, and other civil society groups.

The Library

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

Funding of the Centre

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

Oxfam NOVIB - Holland	Kvinna Till Kvinna – Sweden
Open Society Institute - U.S.A	Al Quds Association Malaga – Spain
Christian Aid - U.K	Trócaire – Ireland
Dan Church Aid - Denmark	CARE International West Bank and Gaza
Grassroots International - U.S.A	Royal Danish Representative Office
European Commission	NGO Development Center – NDC
Representative Office of Norway	Denis O>Brien – Ireland
Irish Aid	

Administrative Board

Raji Sourani	Jaber Weshah	Iyad Alami	Hamdi Shaqqura

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

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

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

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

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

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

(1) International Commission of Jurists

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

(2) Federation Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme

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

(3) Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network

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

(4) International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC)

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

(5) The Arab Organization for Human Rights

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

(6) World Coalition against the Death Penalty

The World Coalition against the Death Penalty is an alliance of about 48 NGOs, bar associations, local bodies and unions, including the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights. I was created in Rome in May 2002. Since 2003, the Coalition has made 10 October the World Day against the Death Penalty.

Content

Annual Report 2008 9

PART ONE: HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE OPT 11
Summary 13
Recommendations 28
- Recommendations to the International Community 28
- Recommendations to the PNA 29

Section 1: Israeli Violations of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law 30
Excessive Use of Force, Killings & Other Violations of the Right to Life 31
- Bombardment and Destruction 34
- Incursions into Palestinian Communities 36
- Extra-Judicial Executions (Assassinations) 39
- Killing of Palestinian Children 41
- Attacks against Medical Crews 43
- Attacks against Journalists 44

Ongoing Policy of Total Closure and Violation of the Right to Freedom of Movement 46

Arrests, Torture and Other Forms of Cruel and Inhuman Treatment 52
- Torture and Ill-Treatment 53
- Administrative Detention 54
- Detention According to «Illegitimate Combatants Law» 55
- Death of Palestinian Detainees in Israeli Jails 55

Settlement Activities & Attacks by Settlers against Palestinian Civilians and Property 57
- Settlement Expansion 57
- Confiscation of Palestinian Civilian Property 57
- Judaization of East Jerusalem 58
- Attacks by Israeli Settlers against Palestinian civilians and Property 59

Destruction of Houses and Other Civilian Property 61

Annexation Wall in the West Bank 63
- The Wall around Jerusalem 63
- Restrictions on the Movement of Palestinian Farmers 65

The Absence of Justice in the Israeli Judiciary and Efforts to Prosecute 66

Section 2: Palestinian Violations of Human Rights and Obstacles to Democratic Reform 68

Controversy over End of Presidential Term Obstacles to Hold Elections 70
Controversy over End of Presidential Term 70
Elections of Local Councils 71

Violations of the Right of Life and Attacks on Personal Security 73
Excessive Use of Force by Law Enforcement Officials 73
Misuse of Weapons by Known and Unknown Armed Groups 74
Using Weapons in Personal and Clan Disputes 78
Extra-Judicial Executions "to Protect Family Honor" 79
Killings of Prisoners and Detainees Who Fled Gaza Central Prison during the Israeli Military Offensive on Gaza 80

Arrests, Torture and Other Forms of Cruel and Inhuman Treatment 81
Torture and Ill-Treatment 83
Deaths in Custody in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip 83

Violations of the Right to Freedom of Expression and Assaults against Press Freedoms 86

Violations of the Right to Peaceful Assembly 90

Violations of the Right to Association 93

Death Penalty 96

Deterioration in the Sector of Public Service in the Gaza Strip 99

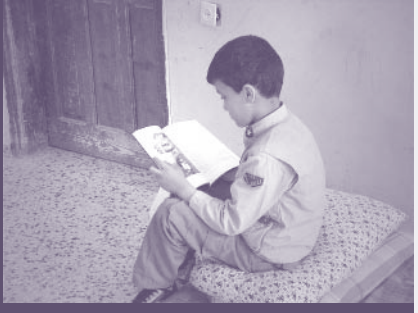
PART TWO: PCHR'S ACTIVITIES IN 2008 103
PCHR Units' Activities 104
Introduction 105
Legal Aid Unit 109
Democratic Development Unit 131
Field Work Unit 143
Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights Unit 153
Women's Rights Unit 164
Training Unit 172

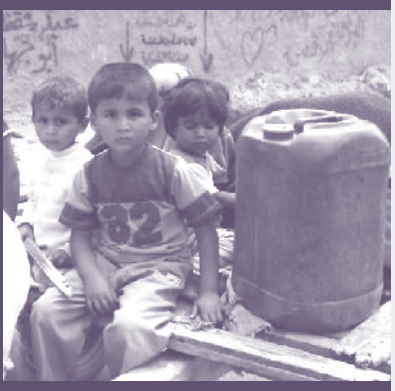
Advocacy and Lobbying Activities 184
Participation in International and Regional Conferences and Meetings 185
Visiting International Delegations and Figures 189
Interviews with Local and International Media in 2008 199

PCHR's Publications in 2008 202

PCHR's Web Site (www.pchrgaza.org) 214

Annual Report 2008





This report is the outcome of PCHR's activities in 2008. PCHR has published annual reports since 1997.

PCHR's 2008 Annual Report is divided into two sections:

- **Part One** provides a comprehensive picture of the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) from 1 January to 31 December 2008. It is divided into two sub-sections:
  1) Violations of international human rights and humanitarian law perpetrated by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) in the OPT; and
  2) Human rights violations perpetrated by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and obstacles to democratic reform.

- **Part Two** documents all PCHR's activities from 1 January to 31 December 2008. It covers activities by PCHR and its units at the local and international levels over the year.

PCHR's 2008 financial report, which is prepared by an independent professional auditing institution, will be published as a separate document.

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

PART ONE

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE OPT

Summary

While fireworks were flashing over the earth in celebration of the new year (2009), the Gaza Strip was spending a very hard night

While fireworks were flashing over the earth in celebration of the new year (2009), the Gaza Strip was spending a very hard night. IOF warplanes were drooping bombs whose weight amounted to 2,000 pounds each on towns, villages and refugee camps, gunboats at the coast in the west and artilleries stationed to the north and east were firing shells at Palestinian civilians and their property. At that very night, IOF warplanes bombarded and destroyed the buildings of the Palestinian Legislative Council and the Ministry of Justice, in the context of the wide scale military offensive on the Gaza Strip, which started on 27 December 2008.

Over the last 5 days of 2008, the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip deteriorated in an unprecedented manner since Israeli occupied Palestinian territories in 1967. IOF launched a wide scale offensive on the Gaza Strip, which it named "Operation Cast Lead. It had been the most brutal offensive on the Gaza Strip since the beginning of the Israeli military occupation and even over the history of the Gaza Strip. On Saturday noon, 27 December 2008, while Palestinian civilians were actively practicing their daily life, IOF warplanes launched a series of air strikes simultaneously against police headquarters and stations throughout the Gaza Strip. Dozens of Palestinian police officers, as well as civilian bystanders, were killed or wounded. Such attacks soon expanded as IOF employed fighter jets, helicopter gunships, drones, gunboats and artilleries to bombard public and civilian facilities, including ministries, municipalities, roads, bridges, fishing harbors, mosques, houses, workshops and factories. Over the last 5 days of 2008, IOF launched at least 300 air strikes against targets in the Gaza Strip.

By the end of 2008, the IOF military offensive on the Gaza Strip has been in its early stage. They first 18 days of 2009 witnessed more escalation in attacks by IOF, and the military offensive entered a new stage, when IOF launched a ground operation into Palestinian communities throughout the Gaza Strip, specially in Gaza City and the northern Gaza Strip, which had been cut off from other parts of the Gaza Strip. IOF killed civilians massively and extensively destroyed civilian property to the extent that completely changed the overall scene of some areas, such as al-Zaytoun, al-Shoja'eya, al-Tuffah and Tal al-Hawa neighborhoods in Gaza City, 'Izbat 'Abed Rabbu area in the Jabalya town and al-'Atatra and al-Twam areas in Beit Lahia town.

IOF launched this wide scale military offensive on the Gaza Strip under suspicious international official silence that could be understood as a green line for IOF to commit crimes in the Gaza Strip. PCHR reiterates its condemnation for the international community's position towards systematic crimes committed by IOF against Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip. PCHR stresses that IOF would not have gone that far with violations of international humanitarian law, which amounted to war crimes, without the agreement and silence of the international community. Contrary to Israeli claims that IOF did not target civilians, field investigations conducted by PCHR strongly indicate that what happened was a comprehensive military offensive against civilians who are protected under international humanitarian law.

During the 23-day military offensive on Gaza, IOF killed 1,417 Palestinians, including 1,181 ones who were not involved in hostilities, and accordingly considered protected under international humanitarian law (83.3% of the total number of victims). Of these, 926 were unarmed civilians (65.3% of the total number of victims) and 255 police officers, including 240 ones who were killed on the first day of the offensive while they were in police stations. The civilian victims included 313 children (26.5%) and 116 women (9.8%). The total number of the wounded was 4,336, including 1,133 (26.1%) and 735 women (17%).

In the last 5 days of 2008 – the period which is covered by this report – IOF killed 411 Palestinians and wounded 996 others, dozens of whom sustained serious wounds. Contrary to Israeli claims, the majority of victims were unarmed civilians; 143 civilian bystanders (34.8% of the total number of victims), and 247 police officers (60.1% of the total number of victims), who were not engaged in any hostilities, were killed as a result of these attacks. The civilian victims included 38 children and 13 women; most of them were killed while at or around homes. IOF also destroyed 25 public buildings; the headquarters of the Palestinian Legislative Council; 37 houses; 7 mosques; 3 fishing harbors; at least 20 workshops; and 4 shops of money exchange.

According to investigations conducted by PCHR, based on eyewitnesses' testimonies and material evidence, IOF undoubtedly used excessive and disproportionate force against Palestinian civilians, who are protected under international humanitarian law. They disregarded the principles of distinction between civil and military targets, and proportionality of response to the opposite military power. These facts can explain the high number of deaths among Palestinian civilians, including children and women, as a result of human rights violations perpetrated by IOF over the year.

In the last 5 days of 2008 – the period which is covered by this report – IOF killed 411 Palestinians and wounded 996 others, dozens of whom sustained serious wounds In the last 5 days of 2008 – the period which is covered by this report – IOF killed 411 Palestinians and wounded 996 others, dozens of whom sustained serious wounds.

The deterioration in human rights situation in the OPT has never peaked as it was in 2008, the 60th anniversary of the Palestinian *Nakba* (the uprooting of the Palestinian people from their land in 1948), which took place a few months before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The human rights situation in that past three years can never be separated from the three main factors that have contributed to further deterioration to the human rights situation. The first factor was escalating violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by IOF in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip, including willful killings and violations of the right to life; the tightened siege and restrictions on the freedom of movement; torture and cruel and inhuman treatment of Palestinian detainees; settlement activities and attacks by settlers; and continued construction of the Annexation Wall inside the West Bank territory.

The second factor was the international community's position, which not only failed to fulfill legal obligations towards the Palestinian civilian population under international humanitarian law, but also effectively contributed to the financial sanctions imposed on the government that was formed following the second Palestinian legislative elections, which were held in January 2006. Such sanctions were uncommon in the history of international relations, as it was the first time for sanctions to be imposed on a people under occupation instead of taking effective measures against the occupying power that continues to commit crimes against civilians

and their property. The third factor was the continued internal conflict between Hamas and Fatah movements, the two major political players in the Palestinian arena, and the continued separation between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Not only has this conflict negatively impacted the performance of public institutions, but also contributed to deterioration in the human rights situation in the PNA controlled areas in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Most violations of human rights at the internal level are attributed to the conflict between Hamas and Fatah movements and measures taken by the two governments and their security services in Gaza and Ramallah against supporters of the two movements.

Since the beginning of 2008, IOF had escalated crimes of willful killing and violations of the right to life, especially in the first half of the year. In the first half of 2008, IOF killed 409 Palestinians, including 225 civilians. The civilian victims included 58 children and 16 women. Additionally, IOF wounded 741 Palestinians. On 19 June 2008, a 6-month Egyptian-brokered *Tahdey'a* (lull) was declared between Palestinians and IOF. In the four months that followed the declaration of the *Tahdey'a*, only one Palestinian was killed by IOF. However, the *Tahdey'a* started to stagger in the last two months of 2008, which witnessed an Israeli military escalation, reflected in incursion into Palestinian area followed by extra-judicial execution of Palestinian activists, which left 10 Palestinians dead. On the other side, Palestinian resistance groups fired a number of home-made rockets into Israeli towns. Following the declaration of an end for the *Tahdey'a* on 19 December 2008, IOF launched a wide scale military offensive on the Gaza Strip, which continued for 23 days.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, 868 Palestinians died as a result of actions by IOF and settlers; this figure includes 820 Palestinians, including 371 civilians, in the Gaza Strip (94.5%).

In the West Bank, IOF focused on extra-judicial executions of Palestinian activists from various factions. Such crimes did not stop all over the year, even during the period of the Tahdey'a. Most of those crimes were committed by IOF undercover units. In total, IOF killed 42 Palestinian civilians, including 9 children.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, 868 Palestinians died as a result of actions by IOF and settlers; this figure includes 820 Palestinians, including 371 civilians, in the Gaza Strip (94.5%), and 48 ones, including 43 civilians, in the West Bank (5.5%). IOF continued to disregard the principles of proportionality and distinction in their actions in the OPT, resulting in the death of 414 unarmed civilians (47.7% of the total number of victims), and 247 police officers, including 240 ones who were killed on the first day of the IOF offensive on the Gaza Strip. Of the civilians killed, 108 were children and 29 were women. In addition, at least 2,260 Palestinians were wounded by IOF (1,736 ones in the Gaza Strip and 524 ones in the West Bank). Thus, the number of Palestinians killed by IOF and settlers since the beginning of the current Intifada in September 2000 has increased to 5,287, including 3,885 civilians. The number of civilians includes 919 children and 174 women. In addition, tens of thousands of Palestinians, including at least 12,000 ones in the Gaza Strip, have been wounded since September 2000. Hundreds of those wounded have sustained permanent disabilities.

In 2008, IOF continued to impose a tightened siege on the OPT, especially on the Gaza Strip where Palestinian civilians were denied access to their basic needs of food, medicines, fuels, electricity and other necessary

commodities. IOF continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians and goods. The total siege imposed by IOF on the Gaza Strip has left disastrous impacts on the humanitarian situation and has violated the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population. It has also paralyzed most economic sectors. Poverty and unemployment in the Gaza Strip have sharply amounted to 80% and 55% respectively.

In the West Bank, including Jerusalem, IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians through at least 630 checkpoints established throughout the West Bank. IOF have also continued to construct the Annexation Wall, which has added more restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians and has further cut off Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank.

In 2008, IOF continued to arrest Palestinians during house raids, especially in the West Bank, and Israeli incursions into Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Hundreds of Palestinians were also arrested at Israeli military checkpoints and roadblocks erected on roads and at entrances to Palestinian communities and at border crossings, especially in the West Bank. In 2008, IOF arrested at least 2,500 Palestinians (2,433 in the West Bank and 68 in the Gaza Strip).

By the end of 2008, at least 9,000 Palestinians, including 248 children and 69 women, were still in Israeli custody in detention facilities mostly inside Israel, in violation of article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention which obligates the occupying power to detain persons from occupied territory in that territory. At least 337 of these prisoners were arrested by IOF before the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1994,[1] while the majority of prisoners have been detained by IOF since the beginning of the al-Aqsa Intifada in September 2000. The number of prisoners detained by IOF from West Bank is approximately 7,500, and the number of those from the Gaza Strip is at least 1,100. Additionally, IOF have continued to detain hundreds of Palestinians from Jerusalem and those who live inside Israel.

In 2008, two Palestinian detainees died in Israeli jails. PCHR is concerned that those detainees might have died due to medical negligence. PCHR warns of further deterioration to the health conditions of dozens of detainees who suffer from chronic diseases and need medical treatment urgently.

In addition, arrest campaigns continued to target political leaders and representatives of the Palestinian people. By the end of 2008, IOF continued to detain at least 40 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), the majority of whom are of the Change and Reform parliamentary bloc of Hamas, including Dr. 'Aziz al-Dweik, Speaker of the PLC, and Dr. Mahmoud al-Ramahi, Secretary of the PLC. On 16 December, an Israeli court sentenced Dr. 'Aziz al-Dweik, Speaker of the PLC, to 3 years of imprisonment. On 25 December, an Israeli court sentenced Ahmed Sa'adat, PLC member and Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, to 30 years of imprisonment, charging him of planning for the assassination of the later Israeli Minister of Tourism, Rehavam Ze'vi, in 2001.

By the end of 2008, at least 9,000 Palestinians, including 248 children and 69 women, were still in Israeli custody in detention facilities mostly inside Israel, in violation of article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention which obligates the occupying power to detain persons from occupied territory in that territory.

[1] According to the Palestinian Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs, 91 prisoners have served periods of imprisonment exceeding 20 years in Israeli jails, the oldest of them was Sa'id al-'Ataba, from Nablus, who served 30 years of imprisonment and was released on the second half of 2008. By the end of 2008, two prisoners had completed 30 years of imprisonment in Israeli jails.

Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails are subjected to various forms of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment. The long journey of their suffering starts with violent beating and insulting and extends to various method of torture practiced against them during interrogation. The suffering of Palestinian detainees does stop with the end of the interrogation period, rather it continues throughout the period of detention. Palestinian detainees are subjected to cruel measures by the administrations of Israeli jails and detention centers, including: torture and degrading treatment; deprivation of sleeping; denial of access to appropriate medical care; denial of family visitation; and obstruction of access to legal counsel.

The Israeli General Security Service interrogators who practice torture against Palestinian detainees are granted impunity by the Israeli judiciary, including the Israeli High Court. Most of the complaints submitted with regard to torture practiced against Palestinian detainees are not considered, and even when some are considered, the perpetrators cynically receive light punishment.

The Israeli government, its occupations forced and settlers living in the OPT in violation of international law have continued activities or settlement expansion in the West Bank. Armed Israeli settlers, protected by IOF, have also continued to commit crimes against Palestinian civilians and property.

In 2008, IOF and their civil wings, such as the Municipality of Jerusalem, Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Interior and the Higher Council of Organization invited bids for the construction of 2,400 housing units in the OPT. This number includes 100 units in "Alakanah" and "Ariel" settlements near Salfit town in the northern West Bank. The remaining unit were planned to be constructed in settlements established in Easat Jerusalem and its suburbs, such as "Pisgat Ze'ev", "Har Homa" and "Beitar Elite" settlements. Israeli authorities also approved and/or endorsed the construction of 6,570 housing units in settlements established in East Jerusalem and its suburbs, including the settlements of "Neve Yacoub", "Ramat Shlomo", "Har Homa", "Givat Ze'ev" and "Givat Hamatos." Thus, the number of housing units, whose construction was started or approved in 2008 was 8,970, most of which are inside the boundaries of Jerusalem, which were unilaterally decided by IOF.

The Israeli General Security Service interrogators who practice torture against Palestinian detainees are granted impunity by the Israeli judiciary, including the Israeli High Court.

In the context of ethnic cleansing practiced against Palestinian civilians living in Area C as categorized the Oslo Accords of 1993, the Israeli High Court rejected a petition submitted by the Committee against House Demolition, which demanded the cancellation of orders to demolish many houses in al-'Aqaba village in the northern Jordan Valley. If these orders were implemented, at least 60% of the total number of houses in the village would be demolished and the area of the village would be reduced from 3,000 to 100 donums. This court ruling further supports PCHR's view that the Israeli judiciary has turned into a tool to legalize illegal Israeli measures and settlement activities in the OPT.

The court ruling also came in the context of an Israeli policy that aims at sealing off the Jordan Valley along the eastern border of the West Bank. In the context of this policy, IOF confiscated at least 416 donums[2] of agricultural

[2] One donum is equal to 1,000 square meters.

land in Kherbat Samra area, east of Tubas town, and Bardala village in the northern Jordan Valley, for the purpose of settlement expansion.

The Israeli government and its occupation forces have continued settlement activities in East Jerusalem and suburbs in the context of efforts to Judaize the city. They have cut off the city from its Palestinian extension in the West Bank, have constructed new sections of the Annexation Wall, have continued activities of settlement expansion inside and around the city. The Israeli Ministry of Interior has continued to confiscate identity cards of Palestinian civilians, while the Municipality of Jerusalem has continued to demolish their houses under allegations of unlicensed construction.

In 2008, IOF, through the Municipality of *Jerusalem*, continued to demolish Palestinian houses throughout the city and its suburbs under claims of unlicensed construction. The municipality has continued to impose prolonged and complicated procedures for issuing construction licensed for Palestinian civilians, who are under the pressure of strong needs of natural growth to build new houses or expand existing ones without obtaining licenses.

IOF have continued preparations to establish a railway network in Jerusalem. The IOF Municipality of Jerusalem started this project in 2006. This network aims at linking Israeli settlements located to the northeast of Jerusalem with West Jerusalem. The project has long-term goals of undermining any possible Palestinian sovereignty over the city in any future political solutions.

Additionally, IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on activities of Palestinian NGOs in Jerusalem claiming that they are linked with Palestinian Liberation Organizations (PLO) and/or the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), even though the identity and activities of those NGOs are clear. Measures by IOF included storming offices of NGOs banning official and public meetings even if they were social ones, claiming that such activities are linked with the PLO or the PNA.

In 2008, attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and property continued. PCHR documented 170 attacks by Israeli settlers, in comparison with 100 attacks in 2007. Most of these attacks (90) took place in Hebron. In 2008, 5 Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli settlers in the OPT; four civilians were shot dead whereas the fifth one was run down. This brings the number of Palestinian civilians killed by Israeli settlers to 45 since the beginning of the current Intifada in September 2000. Attacks by Israeli settlers often take place before the eyes of IOF, which even protect them. IOF also neglect complaints submitted by Palestinian civilians concerning attacks launched by settlers, thus encouraging them to launch more attacks.

In the last month of 2008, attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and their property became more systematic. After the Israeli High Court ordered the evacuation of al-Rajabi building, which had been seized by Israeli settlers in Hebron since 19 March 2007, Israeli settlers launched a series of attacks throughout the West Bank, using firearms. IOF did not intervene to stop such attacks, and even provided protection to settlers.

In 2008, attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and property continued. PCHR documented 170 attacks by Israeli settlers, in comparison with 100 attacks in 2007.

In 2008, IOF continued to destroy Palestinian houses and other civilian property in the OPT, especially in East Jerusalem. Destruction of houses and civilian property constitute grave breaches of international humanitarian law that amount to war crimes. Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 provides that "any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations." Article 147 of the Convention prohibits "extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly." Such attacks are a form of collective punishment and reprisals against the Palestinian civilian population in violation of article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which states that "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. Pillage is prohibited. Reprisals against protected persons and their property are prohibited."

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, IOF destroyed 216 houses in the OPT (107 in the West Bank and 109 in the Gaza Strip. They also heavily damaged 680 houses in the Gaza Strip.

Over the year, IOF indiscriminately attacked all civilian property, including houses, schools, industrial and commercial facilities, agricultural land and public buildings. They used various means to carry out the destruction of civilian property; they employed the law to demolish houses under the pretext of the lack of licenses, as it was the case in Jerusalem, they destroyed civilian property through air strikes; and they destroyed civilian property during military incursions into Palestinian communities.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, IOF destroyed 216 houses in the OPT (107 in the West Bank and 109 in the Gaza Strip. They also heavily damaged 680 houses and razed 3,424 donums of agricultural land in the Gaza Strip. Additionally, they destroyed other civilian facilities, including public buildings, charities and sports clubs.

IOF have continued to construct the Annexation Wall, in violation of international humanitarian law.

The end of 2008 was characterized by wanton destruction of civilian property in the context of the IOF offensive on the Gaza Strip, which started on 27 December 2008. In the first strike, IOF attacked at least 100 targets throughout the Gaza Strip, destroying hundreds of buildings, facilities and houses. That strike and subsequent ones destroyed security sites; public and governmental buildings, including the headquarters of the Palestinian Legislative Council; hospitals; clinics; universities; schools; kindergartens; industrial and commercial facilities; NGOs; and agricultural land.

IOF have continued to construct the Annexation Wall, in spite of the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice on 4 July 2004. In the past 7 years, IOF completed the construction of many sections of the Wall, which is being constructed inside the West Bank territory rather than along the Green Line separating the West Bank from Israel. Israel, which sticks to security claims to create unilateral new facts on the ground, has used the Wall as a birder in its negotiations with Palestinians, who aspire to establish their state within the 4 June 1967 boundaries. The Wall has created new facts on the ground that makes it difficult to talk about the establishment of a viable, contiguous Palestinian state.

The construction in 2008 was mainly focused around Jerusalem. IOF have completed the construction of the majority of the section of the Wall around the city according to the plans of the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem. In the end of 2008, the Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, instructed IOF to complete the construction of the Wall by 2009.

The construction of the Wall in the south, north and east of Jerusalem comes in the context of a settlement project known as "Jerusalem envelope," whose length is approximately 50 kilometers. The northern section of the Wall starts from Bitounia town, northwest of Jerusalem, passing through Qalandya area, and ends near al-Ram town, north of Jerusalem. The construction of this section, whose length is 8 kilometers, has been completed and Qalandya checkpoint between Ramallah and Jerusalem has been transformed into an international crossing point. Another section of the Wall has been constructed on Ramallah – Jerusalem road between Qalandya and Dahiat al-Barid checkpoints, placing Palestinian areas in the west within the boundaries of Jerusalem according to Israeli annexation plans. Palestinian areas in the east, which are densely populated areas, have been kept within the boundaries of the West Bank. IOF have also placed cement blocks in Wadi 'Ayad area between Dahiat al-Barid and al-Aqbat areas near "Neve Ya'coub" settlement, north of East Jerusalem.

The construction in 2008 was mainly focused around Jerusalem. IOF have completed the construction of the majority of the section of the Wall around the city according to the plans of the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem.

IOF started to construct a 17-kilometer-long part of the eastern section, extending form al-Khas and al-No'man villages, east of Bethlehem, to Abu Dis and al-'Eizariya villages in the south. The other part covers a distance of fourteen kilometers, from the southern edge of 'Anata to the Qalandya checkpoint on the north. It surrounds al-Ram, 'Anata and Kufor 'Aqab villages, Shu'fat refugee camp, and Sameeramis suburb.

The southern section of the Wall around Jerusalem extends from al-Khas and al-No'man villages, east of Bethlehem, passing through Beit Sahour, Bethlehem and Beit Jala towns, to the Tunnels roads, southwest of Bethlehem. IOF have completed the construction of large parts of this section. They have also established a new crossing to the north of Bethlehem. This section separates between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and deprives hundreds of Palestinian civilians of access to their land located to the north of the Wall (approximately 8,000 donums).

IOF have imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinians on both sides of the Wall. In 2008, IOF imposed additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinians. IOF decreased hours of opening gates established along the Wall, restricting access of Palestinian farmers to their agricultural lands which are isolated behind the Wall. During the season of olive cultivation, IOF impose a strict system of restrictions on the movement of Palestinian farmers. Thousands of Palestinians have difficulty going to their fields and marketing their produce in other areas of the West Bank. Farming is a primary source of income in the Palestinian communities situated along the Wall's route. The harm to the farming sector is liable to have drastic economic effects on the residents – whose economic situation is already very difficult – and drive many families into poverty.

The impacts of restrictions on the movement of Palestinians have not bee limited to the agricultural sector, rather they have included other aspects

of life. Access of Palestinian to medical care, education and relatives has been restricted, as Palestinian are required to obtain permits to move through gates established on the Wall, which are operated under a strict security system. IOF often close those gates for no apparent reasons.

In light of the failure of the Israeli judiciary to ensure justice for Palestinian civilians in the OPT, PCHR, in cooperation with a number of international legal and human rights organizations, has resorted to international legal means to prosecute Israeli war criminals.

In light of the failure of the Israeli judiciary to ensure justice for Palestinian civilians in the OPT, PCHR, in cooperation with a number of international legal and human rights organizations, has resorted to international legal means to prosecute Israeli war criminals. PCHR continued such efforts in 2008. In this context, on 24 June 2008, PCHR filed a lawsuit at the National Court of Spain, the highest Spanish judicial council, against seven former senior Israeli military officials. These include former Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, his former military advisor, Michael Herzog, former Israeli Army Chief of Staff Moshe Ya'alon and Dan Halutz, former Commander of the Israeli Air Force, who are all suspected of committing a war crime in the Gaza Strip in July 2002. On 29 January 2009, the Spanish National Court instructed the seven suspects to present themselves to the court in Spain within 30 days. If the suspects failed to do so, the court would issue international warrants for their arrests. In addition to this ground-breaking decision, the Spanish National Court announced that, if intent to exterminate the Palestinian population can be proven, the charge may be increased to genocide. PCHR welcomed this decision as the first step towards justice for the survivors of a massive extra-judicial execution operation perpetrated by IOF in the Gaza Strip in July 2002.

By the end of 2008, political fragmentation and conflict in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) had further escalated in an extension of the internal fighting of June 2007 that ended with Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip. The conflict has caused a deep division in the Palestinian political systems, which has been reflected in the continued operation of two governments and separate police and security forced in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The vision has also continued in the legislature, as the Change and Reform Bloc affiliated to Hamas has continued to hold sessions in Gaza and enacting legislations, although other parliamentary blocs have boycotted such sessions. On the other hand, the Palestinian President and the government in Ramallah have continued to trespass the legislature by issuing decrees that have the power of law, but applicable only in the West Bank. Additionally, the judiciary has continued to be seriously impacted since Hamas' illegal takeover of the judiciary in the Gaza Strip, and accordingly two separate have been working in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Not only has the political conflict impacted the performance of the governance establishment, but it also has led to further deterioration to the human rights situation in the PNA controlled areas.

Not only has the political conflict impacted the performance of the governance establishment, but it also has led to further deterioration to the human rights situation in the PNA controlled areas. Most violations of human rights are attributed to the conflict between Hamas and Fatah movements, and measures taken by the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah against Fatah members and Hamas members respectively.

As the conflict and political fragmentation in the PNA have escalated, as well as due to the external factors that have undermined the democratic

process following the Palestinian legislative elections of January 2006, Palestinians have moved farther away from the track of the democratic process. There were hopes that efforts to ensure national reconciliation and dialogue would prove fruitful, but all such efforts failed and the internal situation further deteriorated and Palestinians were disappointed.

The second half of 2008 witnessed widespread national controversy regarding the end of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' term in office on 9 January 2009. Hamas and the government in Gaza claimed the current Presidential term would end on 8 January 2009, in accordance with the end of the four-year period since the last Presidential Election was held on 9 January 2005. They stated that, unless new Presidential elections were held at that time, the Presidential post would become vacant. At this point the Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) would temporarily fill the vacancy for 60 days, during which period new elections would be held in order to elect a new President of the PNA, as stated in the Palestinian Basic Law. However, Fatah movement and the government in Ramallah claimed that Election Law No. 9 (2005), which was passed by the PLC, extended the President's term in order to allow simultaneous elections for the PLC and the Palestinian Presidency to be held at the end of the PLC term in January 2010.

The second half of 2008 witnessed widespread national controversy regarding the end of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' term in office on 9 January 2009.

PCHR conducted extensive legal discussions over this issue. It recruited the assistance of legal experts, including constitutional law experts. It also conducted a thorough analysis of statements and claims issued by both by Fatah and Hamas supporters. Following such discussions, PCHR issued a position paper representing the conclusions it reached, which the PCHR hoped would contribute to clarifying the issues involved, and undermining the manipulation of law in order to serve political interests. PCHR warned of continued fragmentation in the PNA institutions, which would lead to further deterioration of the Palestinian people's struggle for self-determination, and place additional burdens on Palestinians across the OPT. In its position paper, PCHR argued that there is no provision in the Basic Law stating that the end of the 4-year Presidential term constitutes a vacancy in the Presidential post. If that was the case, the legislators would have explicitly stated so.

Even though PCHR realizes that the end of the Presidential term requires holding Presidential elections prior to 10 January 2009, holding such elections require appropriate conditions and environment to ensure fairness and transparency in all stages of the electoral process to reflect the electorate's will. In light of the ongoing split between Fatah and Hamas, the conditions and environment in the OPT do not ensure free and transparent elections reflecting the will of the electorate. Current conditions do not indicate that this environment would change in the foreseeable future if both sides do not immediately start serious and constructive dialogue in order to end the split and agree on elections or another solution in order to re-unify the OPT and the political leadership of the PNA. In light of these problems, PCHR concluded that without a comprehensive national dialogue for all Palestinian factions, including Fatah and Hamas movements, putting the interests of the Palestinian people above the narrow, factional interests of the conflicting parties, appropriate conditions to hold legislative and presidential elections would not be achieved.

The internal situation and continued fragmentation in the PNA, as well as the international boycott the Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip negatively impacted efforts to complete elections of local councils in the PNA controlled areas.

The internal situation and continued fragmentation in the PNA, as well as the international boycott the Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip negatively impacted efforts to complete elections of local councils in the PNA controlled areas. According to the Palestinian Electoral Law, news elections are supposed to be held for local councils that were elected in the first stage of local elections that were held n 23 December 2004 for 26 local councils in the West Bank and on 27 January 2005 for 10 local councils in the Gaza Strip. However, by the end of 2008, such elections had not been held and no dates had been specified for holding such elections. Moreover, by the end of 2008, elections for 59 local councils in the West Bank and the Gaza, including major cities, had not been held. Concerning the local councils of al-Boreij, Beit Lahia and Rafah, for which the Palestinian judiciary decided a return of elections in 2005, they continued to be managed by councils appointed by the government in Gaza.

In 2008, violations of the right of life and attack on personal security in the OPT continued. In 2008, 146 Palestinians, including 25 children and 13 women, were killed and at least 411 others were wounded by Palestinians. The excessive use of force by law enforcement officials was the major form of violations of the rights to life. Two persons were also killed as a result of other forms of violence and misuse of weapons, which are part of the sate of lawlessness and security chaos spreading over the OPT.

In 2008, violations of the right of life and attack on personal security in the OPT continued. In 2008, 146 Palestinians, including 25 children and 13 women, were killed and at least 411 others were wounded by Palestinians.

In 2008, 26 Palestinians were killed by Palestinian security officers during processes of law enforcement in the Gaza Strip. Additionally, at least 170 others, including 20 children and 7 women, were wounded. Excessive force was used during attempts to arrest suspects or wanted persons, and during armed clashes with Palestinian clans. Regrettably, no investigation was conducted into such incidents and no legal action was taken against shooters.

In 2008, 64 Palestinians, including 19 children and 8 women, were killed and at least 150 others were wounded as a result of the misuse of weapons by known and unknown armed groups, in the context of the state of lawlessness plaguing the OPT. Those incidents endangered the security and safety of Palestinians and continued to cause casualties as legal action to confront them were absent. Incidents of the misuse of weapons included storage of weapons in populated areas; use of weapons by unknown groups; and use of weapons by militias.

Weapons continued to be employed in personal and clan disputes in the context of the state of lawlessness plaguing the OPT. In 2008, 22 Palestinians, including 3 children and two women, were killed, and 49 others were wounded in personal and clan disputed.

In 2008, 3 Palestinian women and one man were killed "to protect family honor."

In 2008, 3 Palestinian women and one man were killed "to protect family honor." PCHR has often expressed deep concern over the continuation of murders related to the so called protection of family honors, as murderers are granted impunity with sentences of imprisonment for short periods. PCHR calls for taking deterring measures to deal with such murders, which are a form of willful killing, taking into consideration the law and international human rights instruments.

In the last 5 days of 2008, unidentified gunmen killed at 17 and detainees who fled Gaza Central Prison, which lies in the Palestinian security compound (al-Saraya) in central Gaza City, after the IOF had bombarded the compound on 28 December, 2008. The prisoners who fled included persons sentenced to death for collaboration with Israeli Security Services, those convicted of committing other criminal offenses, and persons who had been detained for questioning or were awaiting trial. According to testimonies given to PCHR by the families of those who were killed, as well as by eyewitnesses, unidentified gunmen abducted a number of prisoners whilst they were fleeing Gaza Central Prison, and their dead bodies were found a few days later in different areas of the Gaza Strip. Other prisoners and detainees who had escaped were abducted from their homes, and later found either dead or seriously injured. Some of the most seriously injured subsequently died of their injuries.

PCHR holds IOF responsible for the lives of those persons who were detained inside the prison, as targeting a prison, where dozens of civilians convicted or suspected of serious security and criminal crimes were detained, can never be justified. Nevertheless, PCHR believes that pursuing and killing those persons after fleeing as such constitute a form of security chaos and lawlessness. Accordingly, PCHR calls upon the Attorney-General to investigate these crimes and bring the perpetrators to the judiciary.

In 2008, illegal arrests and crimes of torture increasingly continued in 2008 under the state of political fragmentation in the PNA. Some political and field leaders of Fatah and Hamas movements were arrested in mutual reactions between the two sides, who did not admit that such arrests were political and claimed that they were based on security or criminal offenses.

In 2008, illegal arrests and crimes of torture increasingly continued in 2008 under the state of political fragmentation in the PNA. Some political and field leaders of Fatah and Hamas movements were arrested in mutual reactions between the two sides,

In many cases, arrests are not carried out in accordance with appropriate legal procedures. Sometimes, arrests are conducted by parties that are not authorized of law enforcement, in violation of the Palestinian law, under which arrests fall under the mandate of judicial officials, including the civil police, who are under the supervision of the Attorney-General. Other time, arrests are conducted by law enforcement officials, but without following necessary legal procedures, including having arrest warrants issued by the Attorney-General. Additionally, detainees are held in illegal detention centers, which lack the minimum standards of appropriate detention conditions, in violation of the Law of Reform and Rehabilitation Centers of 1998.

In the Gaza Strip, hundreds of Palestinians, especially supporters and members of Fatah movement, were arrested by security services of the Gaza government. Mostly, such arrests were based on security or criminal allegations, such as accusations of involvement in explosions against security officials in Gaza or public places, or having contacts with the Ramallah government. The largest arrest campaign waged by security services was that one that followed an explosion at Gaza beach on 26 July 2008, which killed 6 Palestinians, including members of the 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades of Hamas. The arrest campaign targeted hundreds of activists of Fatah movement who were arrested by the Internal Security

Service and the police. The campaign also targeted 18 persons with leading positions in Fatah movement, including secretary generals of Fatah movement in various districts, the spokesman of Fatah movement in Gaza, Dr. Hazem Abu Shanab, and the governors of Khan Yunis and Gaza, Dr. Ussama al-Farra and Mohammed al-Qidwa.

In the West Bank, Palestinian security services waged arrest campaigns against activists and supporters of Hamas, including senior leaders and PLC members. Such arrests were based on allegations of possession of weapons, forming armed groups, establishing an executive force aiming at disrupting public order, or having contacts with the Gaza government. The largest arrest campaign by security services in the West Bank was the one that came in response in arrest campaigns against activists of Fatah movement and closure of a number of institutions close to Fatah movement in the Gaza Strip following the explosion at Gaza beach on 26 July. The campaign targeted at least 100 Palestinians, including academics, imams of mosques, university students, teachers and mayors affiliated to Hamas.

In 2008, 3 detainees died in prisons and detention centers in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; two detainees died in the West Bank and the third one died in the Gaza Strip.

In a continuation of the aforementioned arrest campaigns, in early August, security services in the West Bank arrested more supporters and members of Hamas in Qalqilya and Nablus. Some of the detainees were released later, while others remained in custody.

In light of persistent demanded by PCHR and other civil society organizations to put and end to political arrests by the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah, the Gaza government released 18 political prisoners from Fatah movement on 30 October 2008 as a good will initiative. Civil society groups welcomed this step and demanded a similar one in the West Bank.

In the majority of cases of detention in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, members of Hamas and Fatah movements respectively were subjected to methods of torture and ill-treatment. Such methods included: insulting; beating using batons, sharp tools, feet and hands; and tying the feet and hands to a chair and beating with batons or wires of feet; and other methods. PCHR received many complaints from Palestinians who had been detained by the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah that they were subjected to various methods of torture and ill-treatment. In many occasions, detainees were taken to hospitals as they had been subjected to extreme torture in detention centers.

In 2008, 3 detainees died in prisons and detention centers in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; two detainees died in the West Bank and the third one died in the Gaza Strip. In light of practicing detainees to various methods of torture and degrading treatment in prisons and detention centers that lack the minimum standards of appropriate detention conditions, including access to appropriate medical care, PCHR is concerned that these detainees died because of such circumstances.

In 2008, violations of the right to freedom of expression and assaults against press freedoms escalated in an unprecedented manner. The two governments in Gaza and Ramallah and their executive services

perpetrated serious violations of this right in their respective controlled areas. Violations of this right by the two governments included detention of journalists; beating and humiliation; banning the distribution of newspapers; preventing journalists for carrying out their job; and storming media institutions and offices.

In 2008, violations of the right to peaceful assembly escalated as the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah imposed severe restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly, which is ensured by the Palestinian Basic Law, the Public Meetings Law and international human rights instruments. In spite of the many differences between the two governments at the political and legal levels, they both uphold the Executive Bill of the Public Meetings Law issued by the Interior Minister in 2000, which PCHR and other human rights organizations strongly criticized since it undermines the right to peaceful assembly and puts it and subjects it to licensing by the Ministry of Interior. PCHR documented more cases of banning the organization of peaceful demonstrations, sit-ins, public meetings and celebrations in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Even though the number of such cases in 2008 was less than those documented in 2007, it is not an indication of improved performance of the two governments, rather it an indication of a state of abstention from organizing peaceful assembly fearing of security repercussions. It was clear that many of such violations of the right to peaceful assembly were closely related to the state of fragmentation in the PNA; in the Gaza Strip, Fatah movement was prevented from organizing peaceful assemblies, including the celebration of its anniversary, while Hamas was prevented from organizing similar activities in the West Bank.

In 2008, violations of the right to association continued throughout the OPT. Such violations escalated under the ongoing political fragmentation in the PNA. The two governments in Gaza and Ramallah attacked associations affiliated to each other, including societies, unions, sports clubs and partisan offices.

In 2008, violations of the right to association continued throughout the OPT. Such violations escalated under the ongoing political fragmentation in the PNA. The two governments in Gaza and Ramallah attacked associations affiliated to each other, including societies, unions, sports clubs and partisan offices most of which are related to Fatah movement, in the context of measures they took following a crime committed at Gaza Beach on 25 July 2008. Such measures also included the detention of dozens of supporters and leaders of Fatah movement. Following insistent calls by civil society organizations, the Ministry of Interior in Gaza ordered reopening dozens of institutions that had been closed during the campaign, while dozens of others have remained closed under the pretext of being illegal. However, belongings of some of the institutions that were reopened were not returned. In the West Bank, the situation was not less worse as attacks on the right to association continued, especially attacks against institutions and associations related to Hamas. In 2008, Palestinian security services in the West Bank stormed and confiscated property of a number of institutions and associations.

In 2008, the issue of application of the death penalty in the PNA witnessed a negative development, as a number of death sentences were issued making a setback to the positive developments at this level in 2006 and 2007, during which time, Palestinian courts did not issue ant death sentence, nor did any

death sentences from previous years were implemented. Over the year, a total of 9 death sentences were issued by Palestinian courts – 4 ones in the Gaza Strip and another 5 in the West Bank. Most of these sentences were issued by military courts. Additionally, 3 sentences to death against 3 men issued in previous years were supported. Thus, the number of death sentences issued by Palestinian courts (military, state security and civil) since the establishment of the PNA in 1994 has mounted to 83, including 13 ones that have been implemented. Even though none of such sentences were implemented by official bodies, following the IOF bombardment of Gaza Central Prison, which led some prisoners to flee, militants pursued and killed those prisoners. PCHR documented a number of statements by Hamas officials, which indicate that Hamas was involved in such killings.

Over the year, a total of 9 death sentences were issued by Palestinian courts – 4 ones in the Gaza Strip and another 5 in the West Bank. Most of these sentences were issued by military courts. Additionally, 3 sentences to death against 3 men issued in previous years were supported.

PCHR emphasizes that the death penalty constitutes a flagrant violation of international human rights instruments. It is a form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, and it does not either constitute a deterrent. Accordingly, PCHR calls upon the PNA to make necessary legal amendments to abolish laws that stipulates the application of the death penalty.

The political crisis in the PNA and the authorities conflict between the two Palestinian governments in Gaza and Ramallah have negatively impacted the economic and social conditions of the public service employees in the Gaza Strip; both military and civil ones. Measures taken by the two governments, including the cutting off of salaries of thousands of public services employees, employing new individuals in a manner violating the Civil Service Law, and the dismissal, marginalization and substitution of hundreds of employees in the public service in the Gaza Strip, have left severe impacts the living conditions of employees and undermined their ability to provide means of subsistence for themselves and for their families. In 2008, all public services, especially educational and health ones, were negatively impacted by a general strikes organized by the public service employees in the Gaza Strip. PCHR strongly condemned such strikes considering them politically motivated.

The political crisis in the PNA and the authorities conflict between the two Palestinian governments in Gaza and Ramallah have negatively impacted the economic and social conditions of the public service employees in the Gaza Strip; both military and civil ones.

On 14 October 2008, in violation of the Palestinian law, the Palestinian Ministry of Education in the West Bank sent written notices to dozens of teachers affiliated to Hamas, dismissing them from their teaching posts. PCHR strongly condemned this illegal measure, and called upon the Palestinian government in Ramallah to reverse this decision, and refrain from pushing public service employees into the ongoing conflict between the Fatah and Hamas movements. PCHR called for neutralizing the public service sector and not to pushing it into the political conflict, but instead to utilize the Public Service Law as a basis for dealing with all issues related to public service employees. It also called for ensuring respect and support of the right to work, and the right to be employed in public jobs, and promoting equal opportunities based on qualifications and experience, without any discrimination on whatever basis, including discrimination based on political orientation or partisan affiliation

Recommendations

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

PCHR calls for investigating Israeli war crimes and grave breaches, especially those perpetrated by IOF against Palestinian civilians and their property during the latest military offensive on the Gaza Strip.

Recommendations to the International Community

- PCHR calls for investigating Israeli war crimes and grave breaches, especially those perpetrated by IOF against Palestinian civilians and their property during the latest military offensive on the Gaza Strip between 27 December 2008 and 18 January 2009.
- PCHR calls upon the international community, including the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, to end the strict siege imposed by IOF on the Gaza Strip since June 2006, which peaked in the second half of 2007 following internal fighting that ended with Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip.
- PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to fulfill their legal & moral obligations, including to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the OPT in accordance with Article 1. PCHR believes that the international silence towards grave breaches of the Convention perpetrated by IOF in the OPT serves to encourage Israel to act as a state above law & results in the perpetration of more grave breaches.
- PCHR reminds the international community and the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention that the Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip remains effective in its physical and legal forms in spite of the implementation of the Disengagement Plan, which is a form of redeployment of IOF rather an end to occupation in the Gaza Strip.
- PCHR believes that the High Contracting Parties are responsible for searching for and prosecuting Israelis responsible for grave breaches, some of which have been defined as war crimes, as the Israeli judiciary does not prosecute them and even provided legal cover for these individuals in many cases.
- PCHR calls upon international civil society organizations, including human rights organizations, bar associations and solidarity groups, to lobby for governmental action in respect of bringing Israelis responsible for the violations of international law to justice.
- PCHR calls upon the international community to take effective steps to dismantle the Annexation Wall being constructed inside the West Bank territory. PCHR particularly calls upon the United Nations to take measures that conform to the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice, the highest international judicial body, in 2004, which considers the Wall illegal.
- PCHR calls upon the international community to stop the crime of settlement in the OPT, and calls upon all global companies to stop all projects in Israeli settlements.
- PCHR calls upon the European Union to activate Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, which provides that both sides must respect human rights as a precondition

PCHR calls upon Fatah and Hamas movements to initiate dialogue to end the current political crisis and end the division in PNA, which has expanded to impact all components of the Palestinian political system

for economic cooperation between the EU states and Israel. PCHR also calls upon all states to prohibit import of goods produced in illegal Israeli settlements in the OPT.

- As Israel and its occupation forces have continued to impose severe restrictions on access of international solidarity groups to the OPT and Israel, PCHR calls for ensuring the freedom of movement of international delegations visiting the OPT similar to the freedom enjoyed by Israeli citizens abroad.

- PCHR reiterates that any political settlement not based on international human rights law and humanitarian law cannot lead to a peaceful and just solution of the Palestinian cause. Rather, such settlement can only lead to further suffering and instability in the region. PCHR calls upon governments and civil society organizations to implement the international law at the Palestinian level.

Recommendations to the PNA

- PCHR calls upon Fatah and Hamas movements to initiate dialogue to end the current political crisis and end the division in PNA, which has expanded to impact all components of the Palestinian political system and maintain the separation between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

- PCHR calls for retaining the dignity of the judiciary and taking effective measures to ensure its non-politicization in the context of the existing conflict.

- PCHR calls for reactivating the legislature through joints efforts by all parliamentary blocs to stop all maneuvers that have paralyzed the Palestinian Legislative Council.

- Calls for making efforts to ensure appropriate conditions to hold presidential and parliamentary elections, and to conclude elections for local councils in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in order to renew the legitimacy of the Palestinian people's representatives.

- PCHR calls for stopping all political arrests that target activists of Fatah and Hamas movements in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank respectively and to ensuring the release of political prisoners, and stopping torture and cruel treatment in detention centers administered by security services in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

- PCHR calls for stopping crimes of torture in detention centers managed by security services in the Gaza Strip & the West Bank.

- PCHR calls for taking effective measures to end the state of lawlessness plaguing the OPT, which has taken the lives of hundreds of Palestinian civilians.

- PCHR calls for ensuring the right of the freedom of expression, including stopping all attacks against journalists and media institutions, especially those affiliated to parties of the current internal conflict.

- PCHR calls for ensuring the right of peaceful assembly, including peaceful demonstrations and public meetings provided that the peaceful nature of such activities is maintained.

- PCHR calls for ensuring the right of association, stopping attacks against associations and abstaining for pushing civil society organizations into any conflict.

- PCHR calls for the abolition of the death penalty and abstention from implementing death sentences that have been issued so far.

- PCHR calls upon the PNA to adhere to international human rights standards and make sure that all measures it takes conform to international human rights standards and respect basic rights of citizens.

Section 1

Israeli Violations of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law

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

In 2008, IOF continued the use of excessive force, willful killing and violations of the right to life against the Palestinian civilian population in the OPT. Killings committed by IOF escalated in an unprecedented manner in the last 5 days of 2008, when IOF launched a wide scale military offensive on the Gaza Strip, which continued from 27 December 2008 to 18 January 2009. The first day of the offensive was the bloodiest one since 1967, as IOF surprisingly launched dozens of air strikes against dozens of stations, sites and premises of the Palestinian civil police throughout the Gaza Strip, causing dozens of deaths and injuries among police officers and civil bystanders. In the last 5 days of 2008 – the period which is covered by this report – IOF killed 411 Palestinians and wounded 996 others, dozens of whom sustained serious wounds. Contrary to Israeli claims, the majority of victims were unarmed civilians; 143 civilian bystanders (34.8% of the total number of victims), and 247 police officers (60.1% of the total number of victims), who were not engaged in any hostilities, were killed as a result of these attacks. The civilian victims included 38 children and 13 women; most of them were killed while at or around homes.

During the 23-day military offensive on Gaza, IOF killed 1,417 Palestinians, including 1,181 ones who were not involved in hostilities.

During the 23-day military offensive on Gaza, IOF killed 1,417 Palestinians, including 1,181 ones who were not involved in hostilities, and accordingly considered protected under international humanitarian law (83.3% of the total number of victims). Of these, 926 were unarmed civilians (65.3% of the total number of victims) and 255 police officers, including 240 ones who were killed on the first day of the offensive while they were in police stations. The civilian victims included 313 children (26.5%) and 116 women (9.8%). The total number of the wounded was 4,336, including 1,133 (26.1%) and 735 women (17%).

Since the beginning of 2008, IOF had escalated crimes of willful killing and violations of the right to life, especially in the first half of the year. They launched air strikes against civilian targets and conducted wide scale incursions into border areas in the Gaza Strip. Additionally, IOF escalated extra-judicial executions, through air strikes, against persons whom they accuse of involvement in "hostilities against Israel," including those who launch home-made rockets into Israeli towns near the border

of the Gaza Strip. In the first half of 2008, IOF killed 409 Palestinians, including 225 civilians. The civilian victims included 58 children and 16 women. Additionally, IOF wounded 741 Palestinians.

On 19 June 2008, a 6-month Egyptian-brokered *Tahdey'a* (lull) was declared between Palestinians and IOF, according to which IOF would stop attacks against Palestinians, including shelling and extra-judicial executions, while Palestinians would stop launching home-made rockets into Israeli towns. Additionally, IOF would gradually reopen border crossing to allow the movement of persons and goods to and from the Gaza Strip. While Palestinian resistance activities were stopped, including firing home-made rockets into Israeli towns, IOF implemented the first part of the deal by stopping killings of Palestinian resistance activists, but did not commit to the other part of the deal; that is, gradually reopening border crossings. According to PCHR's documentation, in June, July, August and September, only one Palestinian was killed by IOF. In their turn, Palestinian resistance groups were generally committed to the *Tahdey'a*, excluding little home-made rocket firing.

However, the *Tahdey'a* started to stagger in the last two months of 2008, which witnessed an Israeli military escalation, reflected in incursion into Palestinian area followed by extra-judicial execution of Palestinian activists, which left 10 Palestinians dead. On the other side, Palestinian resistance groups fired a number of home-made rockets into Israeli towns. Following the declaration of an end for the *Tahdey'a* on 19 December 2008, IOF launched a wide scale military offensive on the Gaza Strip, which continued for 23 days.

In the West Bank, IOF focused on extra-judicial executions of Palestinian activists from various factions. Such crimes did not stop all over the year, even during the period of the *Tahdey'a*. Most of those crimes were committed by IOF undercover units. In total, IOF killed 42 Palestinian civilians, including 9 children.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, 868 Palestinians died as a result of actions by IOF and settlers; this figure includes 820 Palestinians, including 371 civilians, in the Gaza Strip (94.5%), and 48 ones, including 43 civilians, in the West Bank (5.5%). IOF continued to disregard the principles of proportionality and distinction in their actions in the OPT, resulting in the death of 414 unarmed civilians (47.7% of the total number of victims), and 247 police officers, including 240 ones who were killed on the first day of the IOF offensive on the Gaza Strip. Of the civilians killed, 108 were children and 29 were women. In addition, at least 2,260 Palestinians were wounded by IOF (1,736 ones in the Gaza Strip and 524 ones in the West Bank). Thus, the number of Palestinians killed by IOF and settlers since the beginning of the current Intifada in September 2000 has increased to 5,287, including 3,885 civilians. The number of civilians includes 919 children and 174 women. In addition, tens of thousands of Palestinians, including at least 12,000 ones in the Gaza Strip, have been wounded since September 2000. Hundreds of those wounded have sustained permanent disabilities.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, 868 Palestinians died as a result of actions by IOF and settlers; this figure includes 820 Palestinians, including 371 civilians, in the Gaza Strip (94.5%).

According to investigations conducted by PCHR, based on eyewitnesses' testimonies and material evidence, into most crimes committed by IOF during and before their offensive on the Gaza Strip, IOF undoubtedly used excessive and disproportionate force against Palestinian civilians, who are protected under international humanitarian law. They disregarded the principles of distinction between civil and military targets, and proportionality of response to the opposite military power. These facts can explain the high number of deaths among Palestinian civilians as a result of human rights violations perpetrated by IOF over the year. These civilians were killed when they did not pose any threats to the lives of IOF soldiers. They were killed during bombardments of civilian targets, including houses, facilities and cars; extra-judicial executions of Palestinian activists; incursions into Palestinian communities; or were killed by Israeli settlers.

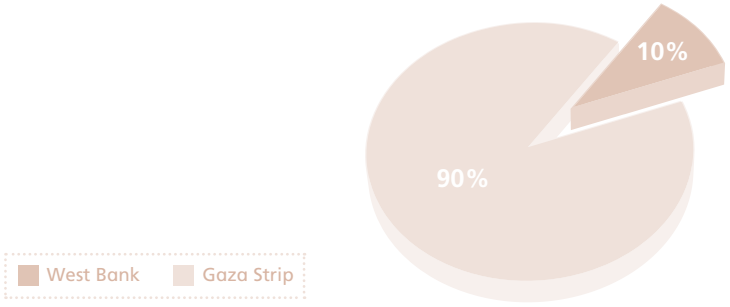


Diagram (1):
Geographical Distribution of Palestinian Civilians Killed by IOF in 2008

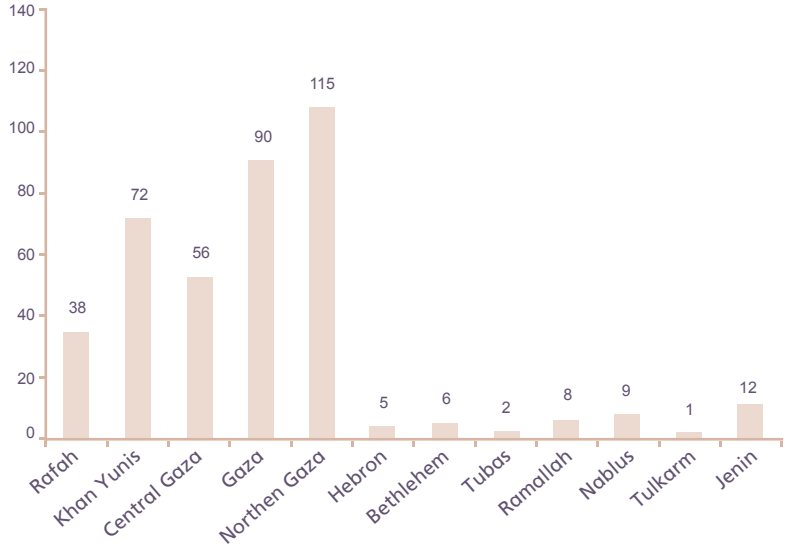


Diagram (2):
Geographical Distribution of Palestinian Civilians Killed by IOF in 2008 (By Districts)

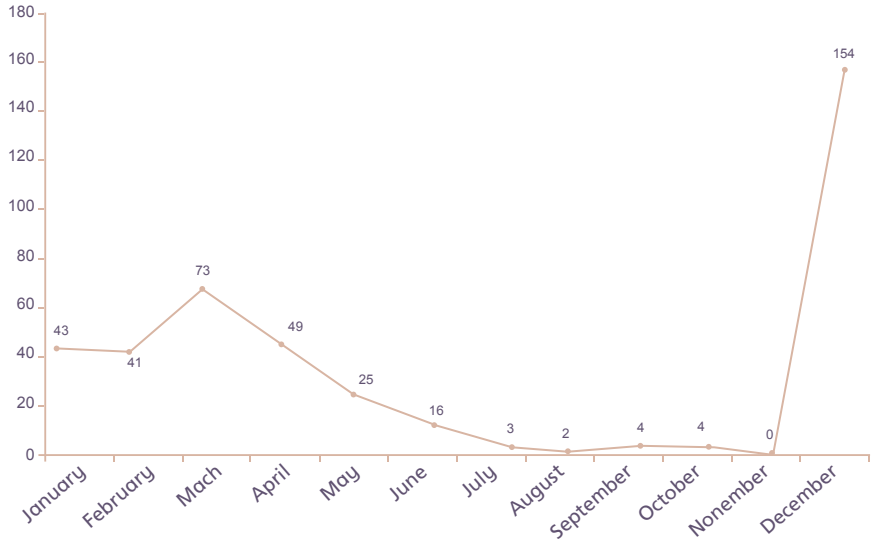


Diagram (3):
Monthly Distribution of Palestinian Civilians Killed by IOF in 2008

Bombardment and Destruction

In 2008, IOF escalated bombardment of Palestinian targets using warplanes, tanks and artilleries. They attacked civilian targets, including governmental buildings and houses, as well as security sites, including police station, and sites of Palestinian resistance groups. Hundreds of Palestinians, including dozens of civilians, were killed as a result of such attacks.

In 2008, IOF escalated bombardment of Palestinian targets using warplanes, tanks and artilleries. They attacked civilian targets, including governmental buildings and houses, as well as security sites, including police station, and sites of Palestinian resistance groups.

The most significant of such attacks in 2008 were:

- In the last 5 days of 2008, and in the context of the wide scale Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip, IOF employed its air force, tanks and gunboats to bombard towns, villages and refugee camps in the Gaza Strip with thousands of bombs, causing extensive destruction to public and private civilian facilities. During this period, IOF destroyed 25 public buildings, including those of ministries and the Palestinian Legislative Council; 37 houses; 7 mosques; 3 fishing harbors; 20 workshops; and 4 money exchange shops.

- On 7 January 2008, IOF launched a surface-to-surface missile at a number of activists of the Palestinian resistance who were in al-Qerem Street in the east of Jabalya town in the northern Gaza Strip. Two activists were killed and two others were wounded. Later, IOF aircrafts fired 6 missiles at different areas in Jabalya town. As a result, 4 activists of the Palestinian resistance, including two brothers, were killed, and two others were wounded, one of whom died of his wound on 10 February 2008. The seven victims of those attacks were identified as:

  1. Ahmed Zakaria Abu Humaid, 25, from al-Tuffah neighborhood in Gaza City;

2. Hammouda Mohammed al-Shurafa, 40, from al-Tuffah neighborhood in Gaza City;
3. Sa'ed 'Abdullah Nabhan, 20, from Jabalya;
4. Jawdat 'Abdullah Nabhan, 22, from Jabalya;
5. Saleh 'Abdullah Nabhan, 22, from Jabalya;
6. Mohammed Yousef al-Mutawaq, 26, from Jabalya; and
7. Ussama Fayez 'Assaf, 22, from Jabalya.

- On 18 January 2008, an IOF war dropped a bomb at a 5-story building near the Palestinian Governmental Complex in the densely populated Tal al-Hawa neighborhood in the southwest of Gaza City. The bomb hit and completely destroyed the building. Flying debris and shrapnel from the bombing killed 52-year-old Haniya Hussein 'Abdul Jawwad, who was on her way to her nephew's wedding celebration, some 120 meters from the targeted building. In addition, 46 civilians, including 19 children and 3 women, were injured by the blast. A large number of houses and vehicles in the area also sustained damage. The targeted building was empty, and was no longer used by the Government in Gaza as it had previously been bombed twice.

- On 5 February 2008, IOF troops positioned at the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel, east of Khan Yunis, launched a surface-to-surface missile at the Palestinian riot control police workplace, located on the main road in 'Abassan village, east of Khan Yunis. As a result, 7 police officers were killed:

  1. Ahmed Isma'il Musabbeh, 22.
  2. Mo'taz 'Abdul Raziq Abu Shahla, 25.
  3. 'Abdul Nasser Ibrahim Abu Nasser, 31.
  4. Wafi Hamad Abu Yousef, 22.
  5. Mohammed Mousa Abu Sa'ada, 20.
  6. Ussama 'Ali Abu Sa'ada, 21.
  7. Ra'fat Ahmed Qudaih, 22.

  An eighth police officer, 22-year-old Mohammed Zaki al-Edrissi, sustained moderate shrapnel injuries.

- On 7 February 2008, IOF troops positioned at the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel, east of Gaza City, launched a surface-to-surface missile at a number of activists of the Palestinian resistance who were near the Agricultural Secondary School in the north of Beit Hanoun town in the northern Gaza Strip. The missile fell onto the school yard, where at least 70 students and 35 staff members were. As a result, Hani Sha'ban Na'im, 41, a teacher, was killed by shrapnel. Three students were also wounded.

- On 23 February 2008, At approximately 15:40, IOF troops positioned at the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel fired a surface-to-surface missile at 3 Palestinian civilian who were having a picnic in al-Nazzar areas in the east of Beit Hanoun town in the northern Gaza Strip, nearly 1,200 meters away from the border. The three civilians were killed:

1. Mohammed Talal al-Za'anin, 20, from Beit Hanoun;
2. Ibrahim Ahmed Abu Jarad, 20, from Beit Hanoun; and
3. Mohammed Hassan Hassanain, 22, from Jabalya.

An IOF spokesman claimed that IOF targeted Palestinian gunmen accused of launching home-made rockets at Israeli towns. Investigations conducted by PCHR refute this claim and prove that the three victims were unarmed civilians who were in a picnic.

- On 1 March 2008, an IOF aircraft fired 3 missiles at a house belonging to 'Abdul Rahman Mohammed 'Ali 'Atallah, 62, near al-Bokhari Mosque in al-Nafaq Street in the east of Gaza City. The aerial bombardment completely destroyed the house, killing 6 members of the same family, including 3 women. Another 8 members of the family were wounded. Four of the wounded were children, including a 2-day-old infant. Those who were killed are:

1. 'Abdul Rahman Mohammed 'Ali 'Atallah, 62;
2. Su'ad Rajab 'Atallah, 60, his wife;
3. Ibrahim 'Abdul Rahman 'Atallah, 38, son;
4. Khaled 'Abdul Rahman 'Atallah, 34, son;
5. Rajaa' 'Abdul Rahman 'Atallah, 30, daughter; and
6. Ibtissam 'Abdul Rahman 'Atallah, 25, daughter.

The house and 2 vehicles belonging to the family were totally destroyed, and a number of neighboring houses were damaged.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, 182 Palestinians were killed during Israeli military incursions into Palestinian communities in the Gaza Strip.

Incursions into Palestinian Communities

Incursions into Palestinian communities in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip in the first half of the year, were the most prominent form of crimes committed by IOF in 2008.[3] This fact is supported by the high number of Palestinians, especially civilians, killed during Israeli military incursions into Palestinian communities in the Gaza Strip. According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, 182 Palestinians were killed during Israeli military incursions into Palestinian communities in the Gaza Strip. IOF frequently claim that that such incursions aim at pursuing Palestinians launching home-made rockets at Israeli towns from the Gaza Strip or arresting wanted Palestinians in the West Bank. During some incursions into the West Bank, IOF undercover unit were employed to extra-judicially execute allegedly wanted Palestinians.

The following are the most significant Israeli military incursions into Palestinian communities in the OPT in 2008:

The Gaza Strip

- In the period 29 February – 2 March 2008, IOF launched a wide scale military operation called "Operation Warm Winter" in Jabalya town and nearby areas. During the operation, IOF employed their full-fledged arsenal and used excessive force without any consideration of the lives of Palestinian civilians. IOF aircrafts pursued activists of

[3] Ground incursions during the latest IOF offensive on the Gaza Strip took place in the beginning of 2009, so they are not included in this report.

the Palestinian resistance using missiles in the middle of densely populated areas. As a result, dozens of Palestinian civilians, including many children, were killed or wounded. Moreover, IOF obstructed the work of medical crews and even fired at them, killing a paramedic and wounding another one seriously. A number of ambulances were also damaged by the gunfire. Additionally, many houses and large areas of agricultural land were destroyed. During this operation, IOF killed 69 Palestinians, many of them were civilians, including 21 children and 2 women, and wounded 175 others, including 44 children and 6 women. Before this land military operation, IOF launched a series of air strikes against targets against Jabalya and its vicinity

- At approximately 03:30 on 2 January 2008, IOF moved into the east of al-Shojaeya neighborhood in the east of Gaza City. A number of members of the Palestinian resistance clashed with IOF, whose aircrafts attacked the area. Six members of the Palestinian resistance were killed:

1. 'Aahed Mahmoud Shamali, 30, killed by shrapnel.
2. Yousef Mohammed Shamali, 21, killed by shrapnel.
3. Mos'ab Waleed Jindiya, 18, killed by shrapnel.
4. Hamada Ahmed Abu 'Ameera, 27, killed by shrapnel.
5. 'Abdul Karim Ahmed al-Hilu, 23, killed by shrapnel.
6. Salem Fu'ad al-Wadiya, 20, killed by a gunshot to the head.

A seventh resistance member and 4 civilian bystanders were also wounded.

- On 3 January 2008, IOF moved into al-Zanna area and al-Qarara village, east of Khan Yunis. During this incursion, IOF killed 7 Palestinians, including a woman, her two sons, her daughter and her nephew. They also wounded 22 Palestinians, destroyed houses and razed large areas of agricultural land.

- On 15 January 2008, IOF killed 17 Palestinians, including 5 civilians, and wounded at least 30 others, 5 of whom are in a serious condition, during an incursion into the al-Shojaeya and al-Zaytoun neighborhoods of east Gaza City. The incursion continued until noon. Investigations conducted by PCHR indicate that most of the victims were killed by tank shells, and that IOF troops used excessive lethal force without regard for the lives of Palestinian civilian living in the affected areas.

- At approximately 10:00, an IOF infantry unit moved nearly 200 meters into the east of al-Qarara village, east of Khan Yunis. IOF troops clashed with 4 members of the Palestinian resistance who were in the area. IOF sent reinforcements into the area and more members of the Palestinian resistance were involved in the clashes. At approximately 11:30, IOF aircrafts fired 3 missiles at the area of clashes. A number of houses were damaged. IOF did not allow ambulances to enter the area until 12:30. Medical crews then found bodies of 4 members of the Palestinian resistance who were killed by gunshots and shrapnel. They were identified as:

1. Mohsen Mousa Hamdan al-Qedra, 23;
2. Mahmoud Na'im Siam, 26;
3. Rami 'Omar Khalil Fraina, 35; and
4. Isma'il Mohammed 'Ali Abu al-'Ola, 33.

The West Bank

- On 3 January, one day after Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak visited a checkpoint in Nablus, IOF invaded the city and neighboring refugee camps. This IOF operation lasted for 3 days, during which time 38 Palestinians civilians, including 19 children, were wounded and 31 others, including a child and paramedic, were arrested by IOF troops. According to investigations conducted by PCHR, at approximately 01:55 on 3 January, IOF, reinforced by 40 military vehicles and a number of bulldozers, moved into Nablus and neighboring refugee camps, and imposed a curfew. IOF troops moved into the old city, and transformed a number of houses into military sites, from where they fired indiscriminately at anything that moved. At approximately 06:00, IOF imposed a curfew on the old city. They also besieged hospitals and obstructed the activities of medical crews. IOF arrested a paramedic and fired a tear gas canister into an ambulance.

- On 26 June 2008, IOF moved into Beit Ummar village, north of Hebron, covered by intense gunfire. They raided and searched a number of houses and held and interrogated their residents. They also stopped, checked and interrogated passing Palestinian civilians. A number of Palestinian children gathered and threw stones at IOF military vehicles. Immediately, IOF troops fired at the children. As a result, Mohammed Anwar Jameel Abu Sara (al-'Allami), 16, was seriously wounded by a gunshot to the heart, when he was near his house. He was evacuated to a medical center in the village. IOF troops positioned at the entrances of the village prevented a Palestinian ambulance from entering the village to evacuate the child to a hospital. The child died of his wound at the medical center. According to eyewitnesses, the victim was not involved in clashes with IOF troops, and he was nearly 170 meters away from the area of clashes.

- On 13 September 2008, IOF moved into Beit Ummar village, north of Hebron, covered by intense gunfire. They raided and searched a number of houses and held and interrogated their residents. They also stopped, checked and interrogated passing Palestinian civilians. A number of Palestinian children gathered and threw stones at IOF military vehicles. Immediately, IOF troops fired at the children. As a result, Mohammed Anwar Jameel Abu Sara (al-'Allami), 16, was seriously wounded by a gunshot to the heart, when he was near his house. He was evacuated to a medical center in the village. IOF troops positioned at the entrances of the village prevented a Palestinian ambulance from entering the village to evacuate the child to a hospital. The child died of his wound at the medical center. According to eyewitnesses, the victim was not involved in clashes with IOF troops, and he was nearly 170 meters away from the area of clashes.

Extra-Judicial Executions (Assassinations)

Extra-judicial executions constitute the most blatant form of willful killing committed by IOF against Palestinian civilians, predetermined and approved by the Israeli political establishment and the judiciary, represented by the High Court. Israel claims that it targets wanted persons, who pose a threat to the security of the State of Israel. In 2008, IOF increasingly committed extra-judicial executions against Palestinians, either by bombarding civilian establishments, houses and cars in the Gaza Strip, or by undercover units in the West Bank. This policy is approved by the Israeli government and the judiciary, represented by the highest judicial body – the High Court.

In 2008, IOF increasingly committed extra-judicial executions against Palestinians, either by bombarding civilian establishments, houses and cars in the Gaza Strip, or by undercover units in the West Bank.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, IOF committed several extra-judicial executions, in which 53 Palestinians were killed. Of those killed, 44 were targeted persons (31 in the Gaza Strip and 13 in the West Bank), and 9 (8 in Gaza and one in the West Bank) were non-targeted civilian bystanders, including one child. In addition, dozens of Palestinians, mostly civilian bystanders, were wounded. Since the beginning of the current Palestinian Intifada in September 2000 until the end of 2008, IOF had extra-judicially executed 743, which constitutes 18.8% of the total number of civilians killed by IOF. This figure includes 513 targeted persons (267 in the West Bank and 246 in the Gaza Strip) and 230 civilian bystanders (74 in the West Bank and 156 in the Gaza Strip).

The following are the most significant extra-judicial executions carried out by IOF in 2008:

The West Bank

- On 12 March 2008, IOF extra-judicially executed 4 activists of the Palestinian resistance in Bethlehem. According to investigations conducted by PCHR, the 4 Palestinians were traveling in a car in Jamal 'Abdul Nasser Street in the center of Bethlehem. Another civilian car with a Palestinian registration plate intercepted them. Members of an IOF undercover unit, who were traveling in the car, jumped out of the car and opened fire at the four Palestinians from a very close range. The four Palestinians were instantly killed by dozens of gunshots to their heads and chests. Soon after, IOF military vehicles moved into the town and opened fire to secure the withdrawal of the undercover unit. The four victims were identified as:

  1. Mohammed Shihada 'Abed al-Ta'mari, 45, a prominent activist of the al-Quds Brigades (the armed wing of Islamic Jihad), whose house was demolished by IOF last week;
  2. Ahmed Khalil Salem al-Balboul, 48, the leader of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades (an armed wing of Fatah movement) in Bethlehem;
  3. 'Emad Hassan Mahmoud al-Kamel "al-'Asakra", 35, an officer of the Palestinian National Security Forces; and
  4. 'Eissa Marzouq Zawahra, 36, an activist of Islamic Jihad and an elected member of the municipal council of Bethlehem.

- On 24 June 2008, IOF carried out an extra-judicial execution in Nablus, which left dead 2 Palestinians, including a university student. According to investigations conducted by PCHR, at approximately 03:50 an IOF infantry unit moved into Nablus. IOF troops broke into al-Sal'ous apartment building in al-Makhfiya neighborhood in the south of the city, whose door was open at the time. They then planted explosives at the door of a flat on the first floor and blew it up. The door of a neighboring flat was also destroyed. IOF troops opened fire inside the two flats for 45- minutes. As a result, Tariq Jom'a Abu Ghali, 26, from Jenin, was killed by several gunshots throughout the body. Abu Ghali is one of the most prominent activists of the al-Quds Brigades (the armed wing of Islamic Jihad). He had been wanted by IOF for 4 years and he had survived 3 extra-judicial execution attempts by IOF. A university student in the other flat, Eyad Radwan 'Abdul Rahman Khanfar, 25, from al-Rama village south of Jenin, was also killed.

The Gaza Strip

- On 17 January 2008, an IOF aircarfte fired two missiles at a civilian vehicle near Sheikh Zayed intersection in Beit Lahia town in the northern Gaza Strip. The vehicle was directly hit, and its two occupants killed immediately. They were identified as 30-year-old Ra'ad Shihda Abu Fuol, a member of the al-Quds Brigades (the armed wing of Islamic Jihad), and his 35-year-old female civilian neighbor, Fathiya Yusef al-Hassoumi.

- On 18 January 2008, IOF fired a missile at the Sheikh Zayed intersection in Beit Lahia town. A vehicle was traveling in the targeted area, as well as a donkey cart with several passengers. The missile exploded 3 meters away from the cart, killing 52-year-old Miriam Mohammad Ahmad al-Rahel, and her 22-year-old son, Mohammed Saleh al-Rahel. Her 17-year-old son, Mansour, was seriously wounded. Another five civilian bystanders were also wounded, including two children:

  1. Duha Hassan al-Dahnoun, 2, wounded by shrapnel to the shoulder;
  2. Aaya Hasan al-Dahnoun, 3, wounded by shrapnel throughout the body;
  3. Hassan Ibrahim al-Dahnoun, 33, wounded by shrapnel to the neck;
  4. Hatem Nafez Wirsh Agha, 24, wounded by shrapnel throughout the body; and
  5. Saqer 'Aadel Subeh, 20, wounded by shrapnel throughout the body.

  The Israeli media reported that IOF sources claimed the bombing had targeted a group of resistance activists traveling in a vehicle in the targeted area.

- On 27 February 2008, an IOF aircraft fired 2 missiles at a white civilian microbus that was traveling on the coastal road near al-Aqsa University in the west of Khan Yunis. Six members of the 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades were traveling in the microbus. Five of them were killed:

1. 'Omar 'Atiya Salama Abu 'Akar, 26, from Khan Yunis;
2. 'Abdullah Mohammed Yahia 'Edwan, 22, from Beit Hanoun;
3. Mohammed Majdi Abu al-Hussain, 22, from Jabalya;
4. Hassan Nour al-Din al-Mutawaq, 19, from Jabalya; and
5. 'Aziz Jawdat Mas'oud, 21, from Beit Lahia.

The sixth occupant was seriously wounded.

Killing of Palestinian Children

In 2008, IOF increasingly committed extra-judicial executions against Palestinians, either by bombarding civilian establishments, houses and cars in the Gaza Strip, or by undercover units in the West Bank.

Children are granted a range of special protections under international human rights instruments. In 2008, IOF killed 108 Palestinian children (99 in the Gaza Strip and 9 in the West Bank) in comparison with 51 ones in 2007. Children killed by IOF in 2008 constitute 26% of the total number of civilians killed in 2008. Thus, the number of Palestinian children killed by IOF from the beginning of the Intifada in September 2000 up to the end of 2008 mounted to 919 (23.6% of the civilians killed during the same period).

During the last five days of 2008, during which time, IOF were launching a wide scale military offensive on the Gaza Strip, IOF warplanes, artilleries and gunboats killed 332 Palestinians, mostly civilians, including 34 children. The circumstances of the deaths of these children indicate that IOF demonstrated blatant disregard for their lives and safety.

For instance, on 29 December 2008, IOF warplanes bombarded 'Emad 'Aqel Mosque in Block 4 in the densely populated Jabalya refugee camp. The mosque and a neighboring house belonging to Anwar Khalil Ba'lousha were destroyed. The house was destroyed over the family, killing 5 of Ba'lousha's female children: Jawaher, 4; Dunia, 8; Samar, 12; Ikram, 14; and Tahreer, 17. Ba'lousha, his wife and another three of their children were also wounded. Additionally, 17 civilians in neighboring houses, including 5 children, were wounded.

Since the beginning of the current Palestinian Intifada in September 2000 until the end of 2008, OF had extra-judicially executed 743 Palestinians.

In a similar attack, at approximately 01:00 on 29 December 2008, IOF warplanes fired two missiles at a house belonging to Ra'ed al-'Attar, a leader of the 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades of Hamas, in Yebna refugee camp in Rafah. One of the missile hit and destroyed the house that had been already evacuated. The other missile hit and destroyed a house belonging to Zaid al-'Absi, which is located nearly 500 meters away from the targeted house. As a result, three of al-'Absi's children were killed: Sidqi, 3; Ahmed, 12; and Mohammed, 14. Al-'Absi himself, his wife and another three of their children were also wounded. Additionally, 7 civilians living in neighboring houses, including two children, were wounded.

In the period 27 February – 1 March 2008, IOF launched a wide scale military operation called "Operation Warm Winter" in Jabalya town and nearby areas. During that operation, IOF killed 69 Palestinians, many of them were civilians, including 21 children, and wounded 175 others, including 44 children. During that operation, IOF fired 2 missiles at a

number of Palestinian children who were playing football in an open area near their houses in al-Qerem Street in the east of Jabaliya town. Four children were killed and their bodies were dismembered:

1. Mohammed Na'im Hammouda, 9;
2. 'Ali Munir Dardouna, 8;
3. Dardouna Deeb Dardouna, 12;
4. 'Omar Hussein Dardouna, 14.

On 29 February 2008, IOF troops opened fire at a house belonging to Ra'ed 'Ali Sa'id Abu Saif in 'Ezbat 'Abed Rabbu areas. His child, 12-year-old Safaa', was seriously wounded by a gunshot to the abdomen. Ambulances were not allowed to reach the house. IOF claimed allowing an ambulance to reach the area, but once it got close to the area, IOF troops fired at it. It was damaged. The child died of her wound 3 hours later.

On 2 March 2008, IOF troops fired an artillery shell at a number of Palestinian boys near Zimmu intersection in the east of Jabalya. Three boys were killed: Mahmoud 'Abdul Khaliq Abu 'Eita, 18; 'Abdul Rahman Mohammed Saleh, 17; and Lu'ai Isma'il Ibrahim Taha, 16.

On the same day, an IOF aircraft fired a missile at vehicle, in which a number of activists of the Palestinian resistance were traveling, in the center of Jabalya. The activists were able to flee from the vehicle before the missile hit it. Soon after, a number of Palestinian children gathered around the vehicle. Immediately, the aircraft fired another missile at them. Seven children were killed:

1. Khaled Munther 'Abdul Qader Rayan, 17;
2. Ahmed Ziad 'Abdul Qader Rayan, 17;
3. Isma'il 'Arafat Mustafa Abu Sultan, 17;
4. 'Abdul Karim Husni al-Haw, 15;
5. Ahmed Nemer 'Abdul Latif Zughra, 17;
6. Mahmoud Nayef Hamattu Hnaidiq, 16; and
7. Ahmed Na'im Abu Salama, 16.

Investigations conducted by PCHR into other crimes committed by IOF over the tear indicate that IOF used excessive force against Palestinian civilians, including willful killing of children.

On 27 February 2008, IOF aircrafts fired 3 missiles at a building of the Ministry of Interior in the center of Gaza City, which is a densely populated area. Two floors of the 5-storey building were destroyed and a number of neighboring houses and buildings were heavily damaged. Shrapnel from the missiles killed 7-month-old Mohammed Nasser al-Bora'ei when he was sleeping at his family's home. He was hit by shrapnel to the head and the chest.

On 16 April 2008, an IOF aircraft that provided air cover for an IOF incursion into Juhor al-Din village, southeast of Gaza City, fired 2 missiles at a number of Palestinian civilians who gathered near al-Ihsan Mosque,

nearly 300 meters away from the area in which IOF troops were deployed. As a result, 9 Palestinian civilians, including 6 children and 2 brothers were killed, and 18 others, including 12 children were wounded. The civilians who were killed were identified as:

1. Mahmoud Ahmed Mohammed, 45;
2. Sofian Ahmed Mohammed, 41;
3. 'Abdullah Maher Abu Khalil, 15;
4. Tariq Fareed Abu Taqiya, 16;
5. Islam Hussam al-'Eissawi, 16;
6. Talha Hani Abu 'Ali, 13;
7. Bayan Sameer al-Khaldi, 17;
8. Mohammed Mohammed al-'Assar, 17; and
9. Fadi Jamal Musran, 20.

In 2008, IOF killed 108 Palestinian children (99 in the Gaza Strip and 9 in the West Bank).

On 28 April 2008, IOF troopsmoved approximately 1,200 meters into Beit Hanoun town in the northern Gaza Strip. The raiding forces took positions on the Water Reservoir Hill, apposite to al-Nada housing project and 'Izbat 'Abed Rabbu, and in Sultan 'Abdul Hamid Street in the west of the town. IOF fired heavily as the moved and took up positions. Soon after, an IOF aircraft fired a missile at a number of activists of the Palestinian resistance near 'Abdullah 'Azzam Mosque, southwest of 'Izbat 'Abed Rabbu, approximately 1,000 meters away from the main area of the incursion. The missile fell 10 meters away from the house of Ahmad 'Eid Hassan Abu Me'tiq, seriously wounding a resistance activist. Less than a minute later, IOF aircrafts fired another 2 missiles at the same area, which landed at the door of the same house, killing another resistance activist, Ibrahim Salem Suleiman Hajouj, 20. Shrapnel from the missile destroyed the house door and spread inside the house. Meyasar Metliq Abu Me'tiq, 40, and her 6 children were having their breakfast only 2 meters away from the door. The shrapnel killed four of the children immediately. The mother was seriously wounded, and the other two children were moderately injured. The mother died of her wounds later. In addition, 10 bystanders were wounded, some of them sustaining moderate to serious wounds.

The children who were killed are:

1. Mes'id Ahmad 'Eid Abu Me'tiq, 1;
2. Hana Ahmad 'Eid Abu Me'tiq, 3;
3. Rudeina Ahmad 'Eid Abu Me'tiq, 4; and
4. Saleh Ahmad 'Eid Abu Me'tiq, 5.

Attacks against Medical Crews

In 2008, IOF continued to attacks Palestinian medical crews providing medical services to the wounded and patients. They continued to attack ambulances and medical vehicles even through they area clearly marked. Such attacks amount to war crimes according to the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949 and the two Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions.[4]

[4] This section of the report does not cover Israeli denial of medical supplies into the Gaza Strip, as this issue is covered in the section of the Israeli siege below.

In 2008, 3 medical personnel were killed by IOF, raising the number of medical personnel killed by IOF from the beginning of the Intifada in September 2000 up to the end if 2008 to 27. They were all killed while carrying out their humanitarian mission.

According to PCHR's documentation, on 3 March 2008, medical crews found the body of Mahmoud Suleiman Zaqqout, 23, a paramedic of Palestinian Civil Defense. He had been missing for 2 days. Zqqout was killed during the "Operation Warm Winter" carried out by IOF in Jabalya town and nearby areas in the period 28 February – 1 March 2008.

On 31 December 2008, during the IOF offensive on the Gaza Strip, an IOF aircraft fired a missile at a number of activists of the Palestinian resistance in the east of Gaza City. An activist was killed and another one was wounded. An hour later, a Palestinian ambulance moved towards the area to evacuate the wounded activist. An IOF aircraft fired a missile at the same area. As a result, Sa'id Abu Hassira, 21, a paramedic was killed. Eihab 'Omar al-Madhoun, 35, a physician, and Hishamt 'Ajjour, 30, the ambulance driver, were seriously wounded.

In 2008, 3 medical personnel were killed by IOF, raising the number of medical personnel killed by IOF from the beginning of the Intifada in September 2000 up to the end if 2008 to 27.

Attacks against Journalists

IOF have continued to attack journalists despite the protection assigned to them under international humanitarian law. Journalists have been subjected to various kinds of attacks in apparent attempts by IOF to prevent media coverage of human rights violation those forces have perpetrated against Palestinian civilians in the OPT. In this context, in a report published in October 2008, Reporters sans Frontières (Reporters without Borders) placed Israel amongst "the list of countries that extensively violate press freedoms, especially in areas beyond its borders," in reference to the OPT.

Attacks against journalists include, killing and injuries, denial of access to certain areas, denial of travel, detention, confiscation and destruction of media equipment and beating and harassment.

In 2008, IOF continued their attacks against journalists. One journalist was killed and 28 others were wounded. Thus, the number of journalists killed by IOF from the beginning of the Intifada in September 2000 up to the end of 2008 mounted to 9, including two international ones (Italian and British), and the number of those who had been wounded mounted to at least 170.

According to information obtained by PCHR, and the testimony of Wafa Abu Mezyed, a Reuters soundman, at approximately 17:00 on Wednesday, 16 April 2008, Fadel Subhi Shana'a, 23, a cameraman, and Wafa Younsi Abu Mezyed, 25, a soundman, both working for Reuters, were near al-Ihasn Mosque in Juhor al-Dik village, southeast of Gaza City, photographing crimes committed by IOF in the area. When they finished their work, Shana'a and Abu Mezyed traveled in their sport utility vehicle

bearing "TV" and "Press" markings towards Salah al-Din Street to leave the village. Abu Mezyed Sated:

"When we were traveling towards Salah al-Din Street, Israeli military vehicles were nearly 700 meters away from us. We stopped and got out of the vehicle and Shana'a started to photograph the military vehicles. We were wearing bulletproof suits and carrying cameras. When I was driving a number of children away from us, I was surprised by a shell falling near Shana'a who was standing near the vehicle. I saw him falling on the ground and I was wounded by shrapnel to the left hand. Another shell hit the back of the vehicle, and I was wounded by shrapnel to the pelvis and the right foot. I cried and ran towards ambulances to save us."

Immediately, ambulances evacuated Shana'a and Abu Mezyed to al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in Deir al-Balah. According to medical sources, Shana'a was brought the hospital dead.

Reuters stated on its web site that "Shana'a was covering events in the Gaza Strip for Reuters on a day of intense violence." "He had stepped from his car to film an Israeli tank dug in several hundred meters (yards) away, when an explosion killed him and two youth passing by. Video from Shana's camera showed the tank opening fire. Two seconds after the shot raises dust around its gun, the tape goes blank – seemingly at the moment Shana was hit," the statement added.

On 12 August 2008, Reuters news agency received a letter from Brigadier General Avihai Mendelblit, in which he stated that the Israeli troops in Juhor Al-Dik could not see whether Fadel Shana'a was operating a camera or brandishing a weapon. In his letter to Reuters, Mendelblit claimed that "The tank crew was unable to determine the nature of the object mounted on the tripod, and positively identify it as [either] an anti-tank missile, a mortar or a television camera." Mendelblit also wrote that "In light of the reasonable conclusion reached by the tank crew and its superiors that the characters were hostile, and were carrying an object most likely to be a weapon, the decision to fire at the target… was sound…"

Investigations conducted by PCHR immediately after the 16 April attack in Juhor Al-Dik strongly refute these claims, and proved beyond all reasonable doubt that IOF willfully killed journalist Shana'a and the three other civilians who died alongside him. In addition, another 9 unarmed civilians, including 6 children, were killed in Juhor al-Dik village in an IOF missile attack that was launched earlier the same day. A total of 13 unarmed Palestinian civilians, including 8 children, were killed in the area of Juhor Al-Dik on 16 April. In addition, 32 civilians, including seventeen children, were wounded.

On 27 December 2008, the first day of the IOF offensive on the Gaza Strip, a number of journalists were wounded while reporting on Israeli air strikes against targets in Gaza. One of these journalists, Bassel Ibrahim Faraj, 22, a cameraman of the Algerian Television, was seriously wounded and he died of his wound on 6 January 2009.

Ongoing Policy of Total Closure and Violation of the Right to Freedom of Movement

In 2008, IOF continued to impose a tightened siege on the OPT, especially on the Gaza Strip where Palestinian civilians were denied access to their basic needs of food, medicines, fuels, electricity and other necessary commodities. IOF continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians and goods. The total siege imposed by IOF on the Gaza Strip has left disastrous impacts on the humanitarian situation and has violated the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population. It has also paralyzed most economic sectors. Poverty and unemployment in the Gaza Strip have sharply amounted to 80% and 55% respectively. The international community, especially the High Contracting Parties to the 1949 Geneva Convention Relative of the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, has shamefully failed to take necessary action to ensure Israel's respect for the Convention in the OPT, including lifting the siege and stopping such policy which violates economic, social, civil and political rights of the Palestinian civilian population.

The total siege imposed by IOF on the Gaza Strip has left disastrous impacts on the humanitarian situation and has violated the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population. It has also paralyzed most economic sectors.

IOF continued to prevent the Palestinian civilian population from entering Israel, including even patients and people with emergency humanitarian needs. They also continued prevent thousands of Palestinian civilian who study or work abroad from traveling. Over the year, IOF imposed additional restrictions on internal movement in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, through at least 630 military checkpoints and barriers. They turned Palestinian communities into isolated Bantustans. IOF also imposed further restrictions on traveling through al-Karama International Crossing Point. They decreased working hours at the crossing point and practiced inhuman and degrading treatment against Palestinian civilians.

In the Gaza Strip, IOF continued to close Rafah International Crossing Point on the Egyptian – Palestinian border. From 10 June 2007, before Hamas's takeover of the Gaza Strip, up to the end of 2008, IOF closed the crossing point for 541. In 2008, the crossing point was closed for 345 days completely and for 21 days partially. As a result of the repeated closure of the crossing point, thousands of Palestinian civilians wishing to travel from and to the Gaza Strip were blocked at both sides of the crossing point. When the crossing point was partially opened, it witnessed congestion due to the high number of travelers. Palestinian travelers, especially patients,

In 2008, the crossing point was closed for 345 days completely and for 21 days partially.

faced extreme difficulties passing through the crossing point and they had to wait for long periods. The closure of Rafah International Crossing Point left disastrous impacts of hundreds of Palestinians, who had been stuck at the Egyptian side of the crossing after they had received medical treatment in Egypt and others who had been held at Egyptian airports.

As a reaction of the policy of economic and humanitarian stranglehold practiced by IOF against the Gaza Strip, on 23 January 2008, hundreds of thousands of Gazans crossed the border into Egypt when Palestinian resistance activists blew up entire sections of the border fence in Rafah. In addition to residents of Gaza crossing into Egypt en masse, hundreds of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip who had been stranded in Egypt, due to the enforced closure of Rafah International Crossing Point, also returned home to Gaza. The Egyptian authorities responded positively and with restraint, allowing Palestinian civilians to purchase foods, medicines, and other supplies which are not available in Gaza due to the escalating IOF siege and closure of the Gaza Strip. However, opening the border between Egypt and the Gaza Strip did not meet all the basic needs of the civilian population of Gaza. Civilians across the Gaza Strip continued to suffer from severe shortages, or total unavailability, of many essential items, including domestic fuel and industrial fuel for Gaza's single power plant. In addition, hundreds of students, patients and Gazans living abroad remained in effective limbo; many had been waiting for permission to leave the Gaza Strip legally since June 2007. Approximately 2,000 Gazans gathered in the Egyptian town of al-Arish, and asked the Egyptian authorities to allow them to travel via Cairo to third countries, where they would be able pursue their work, study or medical treatment.

At least 4,000 Palestinians had not been allowed to travel abroad since June 2007. This figure included hundreds of students and at least 500 patients who need advanced medical treatment, which is not available in the Gaza Strip. However, the problem emerged again as at least 1,500 Palestinians had been stuck at the Egyptian side of Rafah International Crossing Point waiting to be allowed to travel back to the Gaza Strip. This figure included dozens of patients who had received medical treatment abroad. Those Palestinians had remained stuck at the Egyptian side of the crossing point for nearly 5 months under severe humanitarian conditions.

Furthermore, IOF have maintained the separation between the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. Palestinian civilians from the Gaza Strip have been denied access to holy sites in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron. During the Christmas celebration, IOF allowed a limited number of Christians from the Gaza Strip to travel to holy sites in Bethlehem.

Although this policy is a form of collective punishment prohibited under international humanitarian law, and in spite of international calls for stopping this policy, IOF have tightened the siege imposed on the OPT, especially the Gaza Strip, when internal Palestinian fighting escalated in the Gaza Strip, which ended with Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip on 15 June 2007.

The increasing economic and social strangulation of the Gaza Strip has effectively turned the territory into a prison inhabited by more than 1.5 million Palestinians. The civilian population of the Gaza Strip lives under severe movement restrictions, lacking basic humanitarian needs, including access to certain foods, medicine, and other basic needs. In addition, the civilian population of the Gaza Strip is being systematically denied their industrial, agricultural, construction, transportation and fuel needs. The collective punishment of the civilian population of Gaza has caused a chronic deterioration in all aspects of civilian life, and is decimating the livelihoods of the people of Gaza.

In April 2008, IOF further tightened the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip. The total siege imposed by IOF on the Gaza Strip left disastrous impacts on the humanitarian situation and violated the economic and social rights of the nearly 1.5 million Palestinian civilian population, particularly the rights to appropriate living conditions, health and education. It also paralyzed most economic sectors. Furthermore, severe restrictions were imposed on the movement of the Palestinian civilian population. The siege imposed on the Gaza Strip severely impacted the flow of food, medical supplies and other necessities such as fuel, construction materials and raw materials for various economic sectors. Impacts of these restrictions were demonstrated in the following:

- Gaza Strip cities, villages and refugee camps were in a state of near paralysis with streets almost devoid of normal movement and life.
- UNRWA was forced to stop all its humanitarian aid food distribution programs targeting some 650,000 refugees in the Gaza Strip for 4 days.
- Living conditions continued to deteriorate due to the siege and scarcity of foodstuffs and medicines, resulting in serious price increases.
- Hundreds of citizens remained deprived from their right to access treatment in hospitals outside the Gaza Strip
- The work of educational facilities, including schools, institutes, and universities, were reduced due to the paralysis of the transport sector. In addition, student absences increased due to fuel shortages.
- 85% of public transportation stopped due to fuel shortages.
- The operation of 15 drinking water wells was completely stopped, causing shortages of water for more than 100,000 people across Gaza, and the operation of a further 125 water reservoirs was affected.
- 12 wastewater treatment plants completely ran out of fuel, and daily dumping of 50,000 m3 of untreated water into the sea continued.
- The risks of environmental crisis increased as garbage dumpsters belonging to local municipalities and councils were forced to cease working, and UNRWA was also forced to reduce its cleaning services in the refugee camps.
- 85% of vehicles belonging to the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) were taken off the road. This hindered the delivery of drinking water to citizens, as well as the treatment of wastewater, and maintenance of public networks.

On another hand, the Gaza Strip suffered from acute shortages of most commodities, particularly flour and wheat, due to the continued closure

of commercial crossings of the Gaza Strip. In addition, Gaza's warehouses ran out of wheat; their daily needs of wheat and flour are estimated at 500 tons. The 6 flour mills were shut down. UNRWA was forced to suspend its food aid for approximately 750,000 Palestinian refugees.

As of the end of 2008, IOF continued to impose a siege on the 1.5 million civilians living in the Gaza Strip. The border crossings of the Strip had been closed for more than two years as part of IOF's collective punishment policy, imposing severe restrictions on the movement of civilians and goods. As a result, the territory was unable to secure its basic needs of food, medicine, and other supplies, pushing the poverty rate above 80%. The continued Israeli ban on fuel supplies required for civilian life in the Gaza Strip led to the paralysis of the educational sector. Healthcare facilities have registered a drop in clients due to the transport crisis, and hundreds of healthcare professionals were unable to reach their work places. The tightened siege led to the collapse of the Gaza Strip economic sectors. Most production facilities have ceased to operate due to the siege and restriction on movement of goods and individuals.

In 2008, hundreds of Gazan patients were denied access to medical treatment at hospitals in Israel and the West Bank, including Jerusalem. According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, 29 patients died as they were denied access to advanced medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip, raising the number of patients of had died since tightening the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip since 10 June 2007 mounted to 50 ones, including 17 women and 10 children. In 2008, IOF allowed only 5,839 patients to pass through Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing to have medical treatments at hospitals in Israel and the West Bank, including Jerusalem (an average of 16 patients daily). Before tightening the siege in June 2007, an average of 50 patients had been allowed to travel through Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing to receive medical treatment at hospitals in Israel and the West Bank, including Jerusalem.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, 29 patients died as they were denied access to advanced medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip.

Due to the continued closure of Rafah International Crossing Point, hundreds of patients were not able to travel to receive medical treatment at hospitals in Arab countries. Additionally, many patients who had received medical treatment abroad had been stuck for long periods at the Egyptian side of the crossing point under severe humanitarian conditions.

IOF have closed al-Mentar (Karni) commercial crossing, through which foodstuffs, medicines and other basic needs are entered into the Gaza Strip. IOF have also denied exportation of products from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank and abroad.

As a result of the Israeli siege, thousands of Palestinian families have lost their incomes, which made at least 80% of those families live below the poverty line. Unemployment mounted also 50% of the labor force in the Gaza Strip. Prices of goods, due to the shortages of supplies, mounted to unprecedented high levels. The Gaza Strip suffered also from shortages of medicines.

IOF allowed a limited number of containers of humanitarian aids into the Gaza Strip through Karm Abu Salem ("Kerem Shalom") and Sofa crossings

near Rafah, but those aids did not meet the needs of the Palestinian civilian population as at least 200 containers of goods used to be entered into the Gaza Strip through al-Mentar (Karni) crossing. IOF also limited the goods to be allowed into the Gaza Strip to 9 basic ones only.

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

IOF have continued to restrict access to occupied East Jerusalem for residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As a result, Palestinians have been denied access to advanced medical care provided by hospitals in East Jerusalem, to family, education, to work and to religious sites in the city.

In the West Bank, IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians through at least 630 checkpoints established throughout the West Bank. IOF have also continued to construct the Annexation Wall, which has added more restrictions on the movement of Palestinian civilians and has further cut off Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank.

There are approximately permanent 630 roadblocks, manned and unmanned checkpoints across the West Bank. In addition, there are some 6080- 'flying' or temporary checkpoints erected across the West Bank by IOF every week. When complete, the illegal Annexation Wall will stretch for 724 kilometers around the West Bank, further isolating the entire population. 350 kilometers of the Wall has already been constructed. Approximately 99% of the Wall has been constructed inside the West Bank itself, further confiscating Palestinian land. At least 65% of the main roads that leads to 18 Palestinian communities in the West Bank are closed or fully controlled by IOF (47 out of 72 roads). Additionally, there are around 500 kilometers of restricted roads across the West Bank. Approximately one third of the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem, is inaccessible to Palestinians without a permit issued by the IOF. These permits are extremely difficult to obtain. Palestinian civilians continue to be harassed by IOF in Jerusalem, and across the West Bank, including being regularly stopped and searched in the streets by IOF.

There are approximately permanent 630 roadblocks, manned and unmanned checkpoints across the West Bank.

The total siege imposed by IOF on the OPT has left disastrous impacts on the humanitarian situation and has violated the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population, particularly the rights to appropriate living conditions, health and education. It has also paralyzed most economic sectors. As a consequence of the total closure imposed on the OPT, unemployment has mounted to 40% and the level of poverty has increased to 73%; in the Gaza Strip, poverty has mounted to 83%. In the first three years of the current Palestinian Intifada, the per capita individual income decreased by 32%, and by 45% at the end of 2008 in subsequent years.

The policy of closure is a form of collective punishment prohibited by international humanitarian law. Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention specifically prohibits punishment of protected persons for offences they have not personally committed. It also prohibits collective

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

penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or terrorism. IOF have implemented these restrictions in an entirely disproportionate and excessive manner. The closure policy has been implemented as a means of punishment, intimidation and retaliation against Palestinian civilians. Article 12(1) of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights prescribes that "everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence."

Arrests, Torture and Other Forms of Cruel and Inhuman Treatment

By the end of 2008, at least 9,000 Palestinians, including 248 children and 69 women, were still in Israeli custody in detention facilities mostly inside Israel, in violation of article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention which obligates the occupying power to detain persons from occupied territory in that territory. At least 337 of these prisoners were arrested by IOF before the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1994,[5] while the majority of prisoners have been detained by IOF since the beginning of the al-Aqsa Intifada in September 2000. The number of prisoners detained by IOF from West Bank is approximately 7,500, and the number of those from the Gaza Strip is at least 1,100. Additionally, IOF have continued to detain hundreds of Palestinians from Jerusalem and those who live inside Israel.

In 2008, IOF continued to arrest Palestinians during house raids, especially in the West Bank, and Israeli incursions into Palestinian towns, villages and refugee camps throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Hundreds of Palestinians were also arrested at Israeli military checkpoints and roadblocks erected on roads and at entrances to Palestinian communities and at border crossings, especially in the West Bank. In 2008, IOF arrested at least 2,500 Palestinians (2,433 in the West Bank and 68 in the Gaza Strip).

In addition, arrest campaigns continued to target political leaders and representatives of the Palestinian people. By the end of 2008, IOF continued to detain at least 40 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), the majority of whom are of the Change and Reform parliamentary bloc of Hamas, including Dr. 'Aziz al-Dweik, Speaker of the PLC, and Dr. Mahmoud al-Ramahi, Secretary of the PLC. In 2008, IOF brought a number of PLC members to trial. They sentences placed a number of PLC members under administrative detention, while sentenced others to imprisonment. On 24 November, an Israeli court sentenced Nayef al-Rajoub, a PLC members and former Minister of Religious Affairs and Endowments, to 40 months of imprisonment. Another court sentenced PLC member Mahmoud al-Khatib to 36 months of imprisonment and a fine of 4,000 NIS. On 16 December, an Israeli court sentenced Dr. 'Aziz al-Dweik, Speaker of the PLC, to 3 years of imprisonment. On 22 December, an Israeli court sentenced 5 PLC members to 46 months of imprisonment for each: Yasser Mansour; Husni al-Bourini;

By the end of 2008, IOF continued to detain at least 40 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), the majority of whom are of the Change and Reform parliamentary bloc of Hamas, including Dr. 'Aziz al-Dweik, Speaker of the PLC, and Dr. Mahmoud al-Ramahi, Secretary of the PLC.

[5] According to the Palestinian Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs, 91 prisoners have served periods of imprisonment exceeding 20 years in Israeli jails, the oldest of them was Sa'id al-'Ataba, from Nablus, who served 30 years of imprisonment and was released on the second half of 2008. By the end of 2008, two prisoners had completed 30 years of imprisonment in Israeli jails.

Riad Raddad; 'Imad Noufal; and Nasser 'Abdul Jawad. The court also sentenced PLC member Fat'hi Qar'awi to 35 months of imprisonment. On 25 December, an Israeli court sentenced Ahmed Sa'adat, PLC member and Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, to 30 years of imprisonment, charging him of planning for the assassination of the later Israeli Minister of Tourism, Rehavam Ze'vi, in 2001. Sa'adat and another 4 Palestinians were arrested when IOF stormed PNA Jericho Prison in March 2006, shortly after his British guards had left the prison. It is worth noting that Sa'adat had been detained in Jericho Prison since May 2001, as Israel accused him of being involved in the assassination of Ze'evi. He was arrested by Palestinian security services on 15 January 2002. He and 5 other detainees were transferred to Jericho Prison on 1 May 2002 according to US-brokered agreement.

In 2008, PCHR received more reports regarding various methods of interrogation used against Palestinian detainees, including minors, held in Israeli jails and detention centers, which constitute torture and ill treatment.

Torture and Ill-Treatment

Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails are subjected to various forms of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment. The long journey of their suffering starts with violent beating and insulting and extends to various methods of torture practiced against them during interrogation.

In 2008, PCHR received more reports regarding various methods of interrogation used against Palestinian detainees, including minors, held in Israeli jails and detention centers, which constitute torture and ill treatment as defined both in the Convention against Torture and other international instruments. These methods include:

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

In September 2008, Amnesty International submitted a briefing to the United Nations Committee against Torture in view of its consideration of Israel's fourth periodic report on its implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. According to the briefing, there are three particularly painful

[6] Shabeh entails shackling the detainee's hands and legs to a small chair, angled to slant forward so that the detainee cannot sit in a stable position.

forms of stress positions in use by the interrogators of the Israeli General Security Service (GSS) against Palestinian detainees; all positions are often with tightened handcuffs or shackles and accompanied by blows. The three positions are:

- The "banana" position, in which the detainee is placed sidewise on a chair with their back unsupported; interrogators press their torso back over the edge of the chair while fixing their feet on the other side causing stretching of the abdominal muscles and hyperextension of the spine and consequently severe pain in the back and stomach; this treatment is often accompanied by heavy pressure applied to the chest;
- The "frog" position, in which the detainee is forced to squat on their heels for up to 45 minutes; and
- A position involving the detainee being made to stand on tiptoes for prolonged periods.

The briefing indicates, according to the Public Committee gainst Torture in Israel, that those who are about to suffer torture under interrogation are examined by a doctor attached to the GSS who certifies that the individual is healthy enough to withstand methods of interrogation which amount to torture or other ill-treatment.

The GSS interrogators who practice torture against Palestinian detainees are granted impunity by the Israeli judiciary, including the Israeli High Court. Most of the complaints submitted with regard to torture practiced against Palestinian detainees are not considered, and even when some are considered, the perpetrators cynically receive light punishment.

The suffering of Palestinian detainees does stop with the end of the interrogation period, rather it continues throughout the period of detention. Palestinian detainees are subjected to cruel measures by the administrations of Israeli jails and detention centers, including: torture and degrading treatment; deprivation of sleeping; denial of access to appropriate medical care; denial of family visitation; and obstruction of access to legal counsel.

Administrative Detention

Administrative detention has been used by IOF to arrest and detain Palestinians without charge or trial for long periods. Current administrative detention orders permit for periods of detention of up to 36- months that are indefinitely renewable without reference to charge or trial. These orders are issued by Israeli district military commanders in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. By the end of 2008, at least 900 Palestinians were still in custody under administrative detention orders issued by IOF. Administrative detention violates the Fourth Geneva Convention, whose article 78 prohibits the use of this measure as a form of punishment, rather as an exceptional measure for "imperative reasons of security."

In 2008, IOF continued to place dozens of Palestinians under administrative detention in the West Bank.

Detention According to "Illegitimate Combatants Law"

Following the IOF redeployment from the Gaza Strip in September 2005, Israel invented the concept of "illegitimate combatant" to describe Palestinian prisoners who are in fact civilian persons protected under the Fourth Geneva Convention, and consequently justify their detention in accordance with a special law called "Illegitimate Combatants" issued in 2002. According to this law, the IOF Chief of Staff has the authority to issue an arrest warrant against a person if there is a basis to assume that such person is "a legitimate combatant."

According to this law, the IOF Chief of Staff has the authority to issue an arrest warrant against a person if there is a basis to assume that such person is "a legitimate combatant."

Riad Sa'di 'Ayad, 32, and Hassan Mas'oud 'Ayad, 33, both from Gaza, had been held under administrative detention. The IOF Chief of Staff issued decisions ordering their continued detention considering them "illegitimate combatants." Riad 'Ayad was arrested by IOF on 1 January 2002, and on 17 March 2002, he was placed under a renewable 6-month administrative detention. He has been detained without any charge. With regard to Hassan 'Ayad, he was arrested by IOF on 24 January 2003, and he was placed under a renewable 6-month administrative detention without any charge on 24 February 2003. On 12 September 2005, the same day of the declaration of the end of Israeli military government in the Gaza Strip, the IOF Chief of Staff ordered to continue the detention of Riad and Hassan in accordance with the concept of "illegitimate combatant", in violation of international human rights instruments, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Death of Palestinian Detainees in Israeli Jails

In 2008, two Palestinian detainees died in Israeli jails. PCHR is concerned that those detainees might have died due to medical negligence. PCHR warns of further deterioration to the health conditions of dozens of detainees who suffer from chronic diseases and need medical treatment urgently.

In 2008, two Palestinian detainees died in Israeli jails. PCHR is concerned that those detainees might have died due to medical negligence.

On 29 February 2008, Fadel 'Ouda 'Atiya Shaheen, 47, from in Gaza City, died in Be'r al-Saba' Prison inside Israel. According to information available to PCHR, Shaheen had been detained since 15 October 2004, and was serving a sentence of 8.5 years of imprisonment. Shaheen's brother told a PCHR lawyer on 16 October 2004, when he authorized PCHR to pursue the case, that Shaheen was suffering from diabetes and was regularly injected by insulin in order for his health condition to be stable. A lawyer delegated by PCHR, who visited Shaheen in the prison, repeatedly indicated that Shaheen was suffering from acute diabetes. Shaheen's health condition recently deteriorated as he suffered from a blockage of arteries and hypertension in addition to chronic diabetes. These facts raise suspicions about the causes of his death as PCHR repeatedly received information about medical negligence and the failure of Israeli prison authority to provide Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails with appropriate medical care. On 29 February, Shaheen was so sick. His colleagues asked for a doctor to check him and he did, but claimed that Shaheen was suffering from nothing. As his colleagues insisted on further medical checking on him,

the prison's administration decided to transfer him to the hospital, but he died before being transferred to the hospital.

On 23 December 2008, Jom'a Isma'il Mohammed Mousa, 65, from Sho'fat refugee camp near Jerusalem, died in Nitsan Prison in al-Ramla town inside Israel. According to information available to PCHR, Mousa had been serving a sentence to life imprisonment since 2 April 1993. He was suffering from various diseases in the heart, intestines and stomach. Israeli Prison Authority was negligent in providing him with appropriate medical treatment, so his health condition deteriorated.

Settlement Activities and Attacks by Settlers against Palestinian Civilians and Property

The Israeli government, its occupations forced and settlers living in the OPT in violation of international law have continued activities or settlement expansion in the West Bank. Armed Israeli settlers, protected by IOF, have also continued to commit crimes against Palestinian civilians and property.

Settlement Expansion

Although the Israeli government undertook, especially in the Annapolis Conference held at the end of November 2007, to stop all settlement activities in the OPT, it intensified settlement activities in 2008.

PCHR emphasizes that Israeli settlement activities in the OPT clearly violate international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention. PCHR further reminds that the Israeli government undertook to stop settlement activities both in the Oslo Accords of 1993, and in its acceptance of the Road Map Plan of 2003 for peace in the Middle East.

Thus, the number of housing units, whose construction was started or approved in 2008 was 8,970.

In 2008, IOF and their civil wings, such as the Municipality of Jerusalem, Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Interior and the Higher Council of Organization invited bids for the construction of 2,400 housing units in the OPT. This number includes 100 units in "Alakanah" and "Ariel" settlements near Salfit town in the northern West Bank. The remaining unit were planned to be constructed in settlements established in Easat Jerusalem and its suburbs, such as "Pisgat Ze'ev", "Har Homa" and "Beitar Elite" settlements. Israeli authorities also approved and/or endorsed the construction of 6,570 housing units in settlements established in East Jerusalem and its suburbs, including the settlements of "Neve Yacoub", "Ramat Shlomo", "Har Homa", "Givat Ze'ev" and "Givat Hamatos." Thus, the number of housing units, whose construction was started or approved in 2008 was 8,970, most of which are inside the boundaries of Jerusalem, which were unilaterally decided by IOF. IOF annexed large parts, which are occupied Palestinian lands, within these boundaries in application to a Jewish settlement theory that is based on "wider land and less Arabs."

Confiscation of Palestinian Civilian Property

In 2008, IOF continued to confiscate Palestinian civilian property for the purpose of settlement expansion, in violation of the international

humanitarian law, which prohibits changing the nature of an occupied territory without a military necessity, a condition that is not fulfilled in this case.

In the context of ethnic cleansing practiced against Palestinian civilians living in Area C as categorized the Oslo Accords of 1993, the Israeli High Court rejected a petition submitted by the Committee against House Demolition, which demanded the cancellation of orders to demolish many houses in al-'Aqaba village in the northern Jordan Valley. If these orders were implemented, at least 60% of the total number of houses in the village would be demolished and the area of the village would be reduced from 3,000 to 100 donums. This court ruling further supports PCHR's view that the Israeli judiciary has turned into a tool to legalize illegal Israeli measures and settlement activities in the OPT.

The court ruling also came in the context of an Israeli policy that aims at sealing off the Jordan Valley along the eastern border of the West Bank. In the context of this policy, IOF confiscated at least 416 donums of agricultural land in Kherbat Samra area, east of Tubas town, and Bardala village in the northern Jordan Valley, for the purpose of settlement expansion.

Judaization of East Jerusalem

The Israeli government and its occupation forces have continued settlement activities in East Jerusalem and suburbs in the context of efforts to Judaize the city. They have cut off the city from its Palestinian extension in the West Bank, have constructed new sections of the Annexation Wall, have continued activities of settlement expansion inside and around the city. The Israeli Ministry of Interior has continued to confiscate identity cards of Palestinian civilians, while the Municipality of Jerusalem has continued to demolish their houses under allegations of unlicensed construction.

The Israeli government and its occupation forces have continued settlement activities in East Jerusalem and suburbs in the context of efforts to Judaize the city.

In 2008, IOF, through the Municipality of Jerusalem, continued to demolish Palestinian houses throughout the city and its suburbs under claims of unlicensed construction. The municipality has continued to impose prolonged and complicated procedures for issuing construction licensed for Palestinian civilians, who are under the pressure of strong needs of natural growth to build new houses or expand existing ones without obtaining licenses. IOF, through the Municipality of Jerusalem, the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Interior and settlement associations, approved the construction of thousands of housing units for Israeli settlers inside and around the city.

IOF have continued preparations to establish a railway network in Jerusalem. The IOF Municipality of Jerusalem started this project in 2006. This network aims at linking Israeli settlements located to the northeast of Jerusalem with West Jerusalem. With regard to the progress of work, IOF have almost completed the second stage in Sho'fat area in the north of the city and "Pisgat Ze'ev" settlement. The first stage included 3 out of 15 kilometers, which is the expected length of the railway. Works at the project has caused disruption of traffic in Palestinian areas in the north of Jerusalem.

Additionally, IOF have continued to impose severe restrictions on activities of Palestinian NGOs in Jerusalem claiming that they are linked with Palestinian Liberation Organizations (PLO) and/or the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), even though the identity and activities of those NGOs are clear. Measures by IOF included storming offices of NGOs banning official and public meetings even if they were social ones, claiming that such activities are linked with the PLO or the PNA.

Attacks by Israeli settlers often take place before the eyes of IOF, which even protect them.

The Judaization of Arab Jerusalem started with its annexation to Israeli territory, and continued with the confiscation of Palestinian property, the establishment of Jewish settlements, construction of the Annexation Wall, the prevention of building new house and demolition of existing ones, the issuance of racist orders that aim at expelling the Palestinian population and the isolation of the city through imposing a tightened siege on it. PCHR believes that forcible migration of Palestinian civilians from Jerusalem is one of the methods followed by Israel to create a new reality in the city, where Jews constitute the overwhelming majority of the population. Israeli successive governments have made efforts to ensure that the Palestinians never exceed 22% of the total population of the city in order to change the demographic nature of the city. To achieve this goal, those governments have taken a series of measure, the latest of which have been the construction of the Annexation Wall, which has rendered thousands of Palestinians outside the boundaries of the city, the confiscation of Jerusalemite identity cards of Palestinians and the annexation of Israeli settlement blocs to the city.

Attacks by Israeli Settlers against Palestinian civilians and Property

In 2008, attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and property continued. Such attacks included shootings, running down civilians with vehicles and destruction of or damage to civilian property. In 2008, 5 Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli settlers in the OPT; four civilians were shot dead whereas the fifth one was run down. This brings the number of Palestinian civilians killed by Israeli settlers to 45 since the beginning of the current Intifada in September 2000.

Attacks by Israeli settlers often take place before the eyes of IOF, which even protect them. IOF also neglect complaints submitted by Palestinian civilians concerning attacks launched by settlers, thus encouraging them to launch more attacks.

In the last month of 2008, attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and their property became more systematic. After the Israeli High Court ordered the evacuation of al-Rajabi building, which had been seized by Israeli settlers in Hebron since 19 March 2007, Israeli settlers launched a series of attacks throughout the West Bank, using firearms. IOF did not intervene to stop such attacks, and even provided protection to settlers.

In 2008, PCHR documented 170 attacks by Israeli settlers, in comparison with 100 attacks in 2007. Attacks in 2008 were: 90 in Hebron; 26 in Nablus;

20 in Ramallah and al-Bireh; 12 in Qalqilya; 8 in Jerusalem; 7 in Salfit; 4 in Bethlehem; and 3 in Jenin. The categories of the attacks were: 48 of them were harassments; 36 were against houses; 34 were against farmers and shepherds and their property; 13 were shootings; 7 were against religious sites; 5 were running down by cars; and 27 were other attacks, including closing roads and throwing stones at Palestinian civilian vehicles.

Attacks against farmers and shepherds and their property constituted a large portion of the total number of attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and property.

Shooting: In 2008, PCHR documented 13 gunfire attacks by armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians. Three Palestinian civilians were killed. On 3 March 2008, dozens of Palestinian school students demonstrated in al-Mazra'a village, northwest of Ramallah, in protest to attacks by IOF against the Gaza Strip. The demonstrators moved towards "Tilmon B" settlement to the southwest of the village. Immediately, an Israeli settler who gathered with other settlers near the settlement fired at the demonstrators. As a result, a Palestinian civilian was killed. On 31 March 2008, an Israeli settler shot dead a Palestinian civilian when he got close to 2 Israeli settlers who were waiting at a bus stop near the entrance of "Shilu" settlement north of Ramallah. Israeli sources claimed that 2 Israeli settlers noticed a Palestinian running towards them and holding a knife, so one of them shot him dead. On 9 May 2008, a Palestinian civilian was shot dead and another one was arrested by the guards of "Ofra" settlement, northeast of Ramallah. IOF claimed that the victim attempted to get close to the settlement to fire at it from a hunting rifle. On 27 September 2008, Israeli settlers abducted and shot dead a Palestinian civilian from 'Aqraba village, southeast of Nablus.

Running down: On 7 April 2008, an Israeli settler driving a bus ran down to death a Palestinian child to the east of Nablus. According to investigations conducted by PCHR, the child was on a donkey grazing animals crossing the bypass road to the east of the village. An Israeli bus coming from the east ran him down to death. His donkey and 8 sheep were also killed.

Attacks against Farmers and Shepherds and Their Property: Such attacks constituted a large portion of the total number of attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and property. They included beating farmers and shepherds; expelling farmers from their lands; destruction of agricultural tools; seizure of agricultural lands; and uprooting trees. The number of such attacks in 2008 was 34.

Acts of harassment by IOF against Palestinian civilians serve to encourage Israeli settlers to do the same.

Attacks on Houses: In 2008, PCHR documented 36 attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian houses. Most of those attacks took place in Hebron, where dozens of extremist settlers live in settlement outposts in its center. Israeli settlers fired and threw stones and empty bottles at them.

Harassment: Acts of harassment by IOF against Palestinian civilians serve to encourage Israeli settlers to do the same. In 2008, PCHR documented 48 cases of harassment by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including medics, journalists and human rights defenders, especially in Hebron.

Destruction of Houses and Other Civilian Property

In 2008, IOF continued to destroy Palestinian houses and other civilian property in the OPT, especially in East Jerusalem. Destruction of houses and civilian property constitute grave breaches of international humanitarian law that amount to war crimes. Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 provides that "any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations." Article 147 of the Convention prohibits "extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly." Such attacksare a form of collective punishment and reprisals against the Palestinian civilian population in violation of article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which states that "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. Pillage is prohibited. Reprisals against protected persons and their property are prohibited."

Over the year, IOF indiscriminately attacked all civilian property, including houses, schools, industrial and commercial facilities, agricultural land and public buildings. They used various means to carry out the destruction of civilian property; they employed the law to demolish houses under the pretext of the lack of licenses, as it was the case in Jerusalem, they destroyed civilian property through air strikes; and they destroyed civilian property during military incursions into Palestinian communities.

The end of 2008 was characterized by wanton destruction of civilian property in the context of the IOF offensive on the Gaza Strip, which started on 27 December 2008.

According to PCHR's documentation, in 2008, IOF destroyed 216 houses in the OPT (107 in the West Bank and 109 in the Gaza Strip. They also heavily damaged 680 houses and razed 3,424 donums of agricultural land in the Gaza Strip. Additionally, they destroyed other civilian facilities, including public buildings, charities and sports clubs.

The end of 2008 was characterized by wanton destruction of civilian property in the context of the IOF offensive on the Gaza Strip, which started on 27 December 2008. In the first strike, IOF attacked at least 100 targets throughout the Gaza Strip, destroying hundreds of buildings, facilities and houses. That strike and subsequent ones destroyed security sites; public and governmental buildings, including the headquarters of the Palestinian Legislative Council; hospitals; clinics; universities; schools; kindergartens; industrial and commercial facilities; NGOs; and agricultural land.

In the West Bank, IOF continued to demolish Palestinian houses in Area "C" under the Oslo Accords. In 2008, this policy was focused on occupied Arab Jerusalem, where IOF demolish Palestinian houses under various pretexts, including the lack of building licenses. IOF require Palestinians to obtain building licenses in East Jerusalem and areas located near Israeli

settlements and bypass roads, but they adopt prolonged and complicated procedures in offering such licenses. The policy adopted by IOF for offering building licenses is of a racist nature, as Palestinian civilians have to follow very complicated procedures to obtain licenses, whereas Israelis can obtain such licenses easily. In light of such policy and the pressure of the need, Palestinian civilians are forced to build houses without licenses even though they know the outcome in advance.

In 2008, IOF demolished 107 houses in the West Bank distributed as shown in the following table:

Distribution of Houses Demolished by IOF in the West Bank

District	Number of Houses
Jerusalem	60
Hebron	32
Qalqilya	8
Ramallah and al-Bireh	3
Bethlehem	3
Tulkarm	1
Total	**107**

The policy adopted by IOF for offering building licenses is of a racist nature, as Palestinian civilians have to follow very complicated procedures to obtain licenses, whereas Israelis can obtain such licenses easily.

In the Gaza Strip, IOF destroyed houses and civilian property during military incursions into Palestinian areas. According to PCHR's documentation, IOF demolished 109 houses completely and 680 ones partially, as shown in the following table:

Distribution of Houses Demolished by IOF in the Gaza Strip

District	Complete Demolition	Partial Demolition	Total
Gaza	13	65	78
North Gaza	11	243	254
Central Gaza	28	118	146
Khan Yunis	39	81	120
Rafah	18	173	191
Total	**109**	**680**	**789**

IOF also destroyed 127 civilian facilities, including factories, workshops and public buildings.

Additionally, IOF razed 3,420 donums of agricultural land, and destroyed 72 irrigation networks, 4 water wells, 3 agricultural pools, 11 bird farms and 34 agricultural rooms. They also destroyed 43 greenhouses and damaged 7 ones.

Annexation Wall in the West Bank

In the end of June 2002, the Israeli government, headed by Ariel Sharon, decided to construct a separation barrier between Israel and the West Bank, to prevent Palestinians from entering its territory expect through a security system it establishes. At first, the Israeli government claimed that the barrier would be of a security nature and without any political implications. Over the time, with new facts were created on the ground, some Israeli politicians declared that the barrier would constitute a border line between Israel and a future Palestinian state.

In the past 7 years, IOF completed the construction of many sections of the Wall, which is being constructed inside the West Bank territory rather than along the Green Line separating the West Bank from Israel. Israel, which sticks to security claims to create unilateral new facts on the ground, has used the Wall as a birder in its negotiations with Palestinians, who aspire to establish their state within the 4 June 1967 boundaries. The Wall has created new facts on the ground that makes it difficult to talk about the establishment of a viable, contiguous Palestinian state.

The International Court of Justice issued, on 9 July 2004, its advisory opinion regarding the legal consequences of the Wall, in response to a request by a UN General Assembly resolution on 3 December 2003. The Court ruled the Wall being constructed by Israel in the OPT, including Jerusalem, violates international law. The court also decided that Israel is obliged to stop its violations of international law, stop the construction of the wall, tear down the sections already constructed, abolish all relevant legislations and orders and compensate Palestinians harmed during the construction of the wall.

The International Court of Justice issued, on 9 July 2004, its advisory opinion regarding the legal consequences of the Wall, in response to a request by a UN General Assembly resolution on 3 December 2003. The Court ruled the Wall being constructed by Israel in the OPT, including Jerusalem, violates international law.

The Wall around Jerusalem

In spite of the ICJ Advisory Opinion, IOF have continued to construct the Annexation Wall. The construction in 2008 was mainly focused around Jerusalem. IOF have completed the construction of the majority of the section of the Wall around the city according to the plans of the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem.

The dominant principle in setting the route in the Jerusalem area is to run the route along the city's municipal border. In 1967, Israel annexed into Jerusalem substantial parts of the West Bank, a total of some 70,000 dunoms. Some 220,000 Palestinians now live in these annexed areas. There are two sections in which the Wall does not run along the municipal border. One is in the Kufr 'Aqab neighborhood. The other is in the area of

the Shu'afat refugee camp. These are separated from the rest of the city by the barrier even though they lie within the city's jurisdictional area.

The construction of the Wall in the south, north and east of Jerusalem comes in the context of a settlement project known as "Jerusalem envelope," whose length is approximately 50 kilometers. The northern section of the Wall starts from Bitounia town, northwest of Jerusalem, passing through Qalandya area, and ends near al-Ram town, north of Jerusalem. The construction of this section, whose length is 8 kilometers, has been completed and Qalandya checkpoint between Ramallah and Jerusalem has been transformed into an international crossing point. Another section of the Wall has been constructed on Ramallah – Jerusalem road between Qalandya and Dahiat al-Barid checkpoints, placing Palestinian areas in the west within the boundaries of Jerusalem according to Israeli annexation plans. Palestinian areas in the east, which are densely populated areas, have been kept within the boundaries of the West Bank. IOF have also placed cement blocks in Wadi 'Ayad area between Dahiat al-Barid and al-Aqbat areas near "Neve Ya'coub" settlement, north of East Jerusalem.

IOF started to construct a 17-kilometer-long part of the eastern section, extending form al-Khas and al-No'man villages, east of Bethlehem, to Abu Dis and al-'Eizariya villages in the south. The other part covers a distance of fourteen kilometers, from the southern edge of 'Anata to the Qalandya checkpoint on the north. It surrounds al-Ram, 'Anata and Kufor 'Aqab villages, Shu'fat refugee camp, and Sameeramis suburb.

The southern section of the Wall around Jerusalem extends from al-Khas and al-No'man villages, east of Bethlehem, passing through Beit Sahour, Bethlehem and Beit Jala towns, to the Tunnels roads, southwest of Bethlehem. IOF have completed the construction of large parts of this section. They have also established a new crossing to the north of Bethlehem. This section separates between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and deprives hundreds of Palestinian civilians of access to their land located to the north of the Wall (approximately 8,000 donums).

A few days before the end of 2008, the Israeli Prime Minister Ehurd Olmert instructed the IOF command to complete the construction of the Annexation Wall around Jerusalem by 2009. Olmert took this decision following a tour near the Wall surrounding Jerusalem. He claimed that the construction of the Wall "is necessary for Israel's security." He further claimed that "as time passes, the security fence turned from a project that is condemned by the international community into a one that explains how to provide protection from suicide bombings; states that wish to combat terrorism, like that we saw in Jerusalem and other towns, refer to Israel to study this model." According to the Israeli Prime Minister's office, the Wall around Jerusalem would be 164.5 kilometers long; and approximately 110 kilometers of it have been constructed, 50 kilometers are being constructed and 4.5 kilometers are under court consideration.

The construction of the Wall in the south, north and east of Jerusalem comes in the context of a settlement project known as "Jerusalem envelope."

Restrictions on the Movement of Palestinian Farmers

IOF have imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinians on both sides of the Wall. In 2008, IOF imposed additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinians.

The construction of the Wall has brought new restrictions on movement for Palestinians living near the Wall's route, in addition to the widespread restrictions that have been in place since the outbreak of the current Palestinian Intifada.

IOF decreased hours of opening gates established along the Wall, restricting access of Palestinian farmers to their agricultural lands which are isolated behind the Wall. During the season of olive cultivation, IOF impose a strict system of restrictions on the movement of Palestinian farmers. The IOF "Civil Administration" requests Palestinian farmers to obtain permits to be allowed to reach their agricultural land beyond the Wall. To be able to obtain a permit, a farmer must be a registered owner of a tract of land, which is almost unavailable as most of agricultural land are registered to deceased people and the heirs do not all live in the West Bank.

The construction of the Wall has brought new restrictions on movement for Palestinians living near the Wall's ro ute, in addition to the widespread restrictions that have been in place since the outbreak of the current Palestinian Intifada. Thousands of Palestinians have difficulty going to their fields and marketing their produce in other areas of the West Bank. Farming is a primary source of income in the Palestinian communities situated along the Wall's route. The harm to the farming sector is liable to have drastic economic effects on the residents – whose economic situation is already very difficult – and drive many families into poverty.

The impacts of restrictions on the movement of Palestinians have not bee limited to the agricultural sector, rather they have included other aspects of life. Access of Palestinian to medical care, education and relatives has been restricted, as Palestinian are required to obtain permits to move through gates established on the Wall, which are operated under a strict security system. IOF often close those gates for no apparent reasons.

The Absence of Justice in the Israeli Judiciary and Efforts to Prosecute Israeli War Criminals before the International Judiciary

Justice is absolutely absent in the Israeli judiciary, especially the military one, when cases are related to Palestinians, particularly those living in the OPT. IOF initiated investigations into a few dozens out of thousands of crimes committed by IOF in the OPT during the al-Aqsa Intifada, and in the majority of cases, civilian victims were not granted reparation.

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

In light of these facts, PCHR, in cooperation with a number of international legal and human rights organizations, has resorted to international legal means to prosecute Israeli war criminals. PCHR continued such efforts in 2008. In this context, on 24 June 2008, PCHR filed a lawsuit at the National Court of Spain, the highest Spanish judicial council, against seven former senior Israeli military officials. These include former Defence Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, his former military advisor, Michael Herzog, former Israeli Army Chief of Staff Moshe Ya'alon and Dan Halutz, former Commander of the Israeli Air Force, who are all suspected of committing a war crime in the Gaza Strip in July 2002. This is the first time survivors of an Israeli military attack have filed a lawsuit against members of the Israeli military in Spain. The National Court of Spain accepted to examine the case, the first step towards launching a formal prosecution.

In May 2008, PCHR instructed Prof. Dr. Liesbeth Zegveld of Dutch law firm Bohler Franken Koppe Wijngaarden (BFKW) to submit a complaint to the prosecutors' office on his behalf asking for Mr Ayalon to be arrested and prosecuted in the Netherlands. The evidence file of Mr. Khaled al-Shami's torture in 1999-2000 was collected by PCHR, which only sought justice abroad after the Israeli authorities failed to act on al-Shami's allegations, in part because torture is routinely sanctioned in Israel. On 16 May 2008, law firm BFKW filed a torture complaint with the Dutch Prosecution authorities on behalf of Mr Al Shami. Under Article 6 and Article 7 of the United Nations Convention Against Torture (UNCAT) any State Party in whose territory a person alleged to have committed torture is present should arrest the suspect and prosecute him or her (or extradite the suspect for trial elsewhere). The Dutch authorities failed to arrest Ayalon, currently Minister without Portfolio in the Israeli Government, while he was visiting the Netherlands from 16 to 20 May 2008, even though there was a prima facie case and they concluded he was not immune from prosecution - that failure would be the subject of a legal challenge in the Court of Appeal in The Hague, and an Order would be sought requiring a criminal investigation supported by an extradition request or an international arrest warrant. An application for his arrest was submitted to the Dutch authorities by Khalid al-Shami, who alleged that he

Justice is absolutely absent in the Israeli judiciary, especially the military one, when cases are related to Palestinians, particularly those living in the OPT.

was a victim of torture in 1999/2000, when Ami Ayalon was the Director of Shin Bet (the Israeli General Security Service).

Ayalon's visit to the Netherlands provided an exceptional opportunity and engaged a duty to arrest him and establish jurisdiction. The initial torture complaint included a request for urgency, since Mr Ayalon was thought to be due to leave the Netherlands on 20 May 2008. The failure of the Public Prosecutor to initiate an investigation occurred because of a delayed decision by the College of Procurators-General ('the College') that Ami Ayalon lacked immunity. Accordingly, Mr Ayalon could indeed be prosecuted in the Netherlands, but by the time the decision of the College was made, on 21 May 2008, he had just left Dutch territory.

On 6 October 2008, PCHR applied to the Court of Appeal in The Hague for an Order requiring the Prosecutor to start a criminal investigation into Ayalon and to issue an extradition order or an international arrest warrant to secure his presence in the Netherlands during any trial. Alternatively, Mr. al-Shami at least seeks an Order for an 'anticipatory investigation', so that a criminal investigation file is opened.

Ayalon's visit to the Netherlands provided an exceptional opportunity and engaged a duty to arrest him and establish jurisdiction.

In spite of the importance of court rulings against Israeli war criminals in countries where complaints were submitted, procedures to arrest them were often disappointing for PCHR and the victims. In all cases where arrest warrants were issued against war criminals, executive bodies were so slow and hesitant in implementing them, which allowed war criminal to evade arrests. For instance, the Anti-Terrorist and War Crimes Unit of the Metropolitan Police in the United Kingdom failed to execute a warrant for the arrest of Major General Almog, GOC Southern Commander of the Israeli military from 8 December 2000 to 7 July 2003, when he refused to leave a plane which had recently landed at Heathrow and police officers decided not to board it to arrest him. One of Almog's alleged victims, Mr. Abdul Salam Matar, made a police complaint about the apparent tip off to Mr Almog and the failure to board the aircraft to arrest him. The Metropolitan Police Service initially refused even to record the police complaint, let alone investigate it, but, after the Independent Police Complaint Comission intervened, the shocking details of their incompetence on 1011- September 2005 were revealed.[7] In these circumstances, it was not surprising that Mr Almog was alerted to the existence of the warrant and so decided not to leave the airplane on 11 September. What is surprising are the reasons why Det. Superintendent MacBrayne and Commander McDowall made the decision not board the airplane.

In spite of the disappointing deliberate hesitation that has so far allowed suspect Israeli war criminals to evade justice abroad, PCHR will continue its efforts, in cooperation with international legal organizations and lawyers, to ensure the prosecution of Israeli war criminals before the

[7] For more details, see the joint press release issued by PCHR and Hickman & Rose on 19 February 2008.

Section 2

Palestinian Violations of Human Rights and Obstacles to Democratic Reform

This section of the report highlights Palestinian violations of human rights and obstacles to democratic reform. By the end of 2008, political fragmentation and conflict in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) had further escalated in an extension of the internal fighting of June 2007 that ended with Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip. The conflict has caused a deep division in the Palestinian political systems, which has been reflected in the continued operation of two governments and separate police and security forced in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The vision has also continued in the legislature, as the Change and Reform Bloc affiliated to Hamas has continued to hold sessions in Gaza and enacting legislations, although other parliamentary blocs have boycotted such sessions. On the other hand, the Palestinian President and the government in Ramallah have continued to trespass the legislature by issuing decrees that have the power of law, but applicable only in the West Bank. Additionally, the judiciary has continued to be seriously impacted since Hamas' illegal takeover of the judiciary in the Gaza Strip, and accordingly two separate have been working in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Most violations of human rights are attributed to the conflict between Hamas and Fatah movements, and measures taken by the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah against Fatah members and Hamas members respectively.

international judiciary.

Not only has the political conflict impacted the performance of the governance establishment, but it also has led to further deterioration to the human rights situation in the PNA controlled areas. Most violations of human rights are attributed to the conflict between Hamas and Fatah movements, and measures taken by the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah against Fatah members and Hamas members respectively.

This section of the report starts with addressing the impacts of the political conflict on the process of democratic reform, especially in light of the controversy over the end of the presidential term in January 2009, and the threats vowed by the government in Gaza and Hamas of considering the post of the President vacant unless new presidential election was held. PCHR explains its position towards this debate, and towards legislative, presidential and local elections in general.

This section then highlights other violations of human rights over the year, including violations of the right of life and attacks on personal security; arrests, torture and other forms of cruel and inhuman treatment; violations of the right to freedom of expression; violations of the right to peaceful assembly; violation of the right to association; and deterioration in the sector of public service in the Gaza Strip.

Controversy over End of Presidential Term and Obstacles to Hold Elections

As the conflict and political fragmentation in the PNA have escalated, as well as due to the external factors that have undermined the democratic process following the Palestinian legislative elections of January 2006,[8] Palestinians have moved farther away from the track of the democratic process. There were hopes that efforts to ensure national reconciliation and dialogue would prove fruitful, but all such efforts failed and the internal situation further deteriorated and Palestinians were disappointed.

This section focuses on two main issues: The controversy over the end of the presidential term, and the election of local councils in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Controversy over End of Presidential Term

The second half of 2008 witnessed widespread national controversy regarding the end of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' term in office on 9 January 2009. Hamas and the government in Gaza claimed the current Presidential term would end on 8 January 2009, in accordance with the end of the four-year period since the last Presidential Election was held on 9 January 2005. They stated that, unless new Presidential elections were held at that time, the Presidential post would become vacant. At this point the Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) would temporarily fill the vacancy for 60 days, during which period new elections would be held in order to elect a new President of the PNA, as stated in the Palestinian Basic Law.

However, Fatah movement and the government in Ramallah claimed that Election Law No. 9 (2005), which was passed by the PLC, extended the President's term in order to allow simultaneous elections for the PLC and the Palestinian Presidency to be held at the end of the PLC term in January 2010.

PCHR conducted extensive legal discussions over this issue. It recruited the assistance of legal experts, including constitutional law experts. It also conducted a thorough analysis of statements and claims issued by both by Fatah and Hamas supporters. Following such discussions, PCHR issued a position paper representing the conclusions it reached, which the PCHR hoped would contribute to clarifying the issues involved, and undermining the manipulation of law in order to serve political interests. PCHR warned of continued fragmentation in the PNA institutions, which would lead to further deterioration of the Palestinian people's struggle for self-determination, and place additional burdens on Palestinians across the OPT. PCHR called for unity in order to end

[8] PCHR's Annual Report 2007 includes a thorough analysis of these external factors, especially crimes committed by IOF, including the siege imposed on the OPT and the detention of the PLC Speaker and members; and the internal boycott. This document is available at PCHR's web page: http://www.pchrgaza.org

the Israeli occupation and to facilitate the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

In its position paper, PCHR argued that article 37 of the Amended Palestinian Basic Law (2003) unequivocally and precisely states three cases in which the post of PNA President is considered vacant: a. Death; b. Resignation handed to the PLC if accepted by a 23/ majority; and c. Loss of legal jurisdiction through a decision by the Higher Constitutional Court and accepted by a 23/ majority in the PLC. PCHR stressed that only in these three cases does the PLC Speaker assume the responsibilities of the PNA Presidency for up to 60 days, during which time Presidential Elections are held in accordance with the law. There is no provision in the Basic Law stating that the end of the 4-year Presidential term[9] constitutes a vacancy in the Presidential post. If that was the case, the legislators would have explicitly stated so.

Even though PCHR realizes that the end of the Presidential term requires holding Presidential elections prior to 10 January 2009, holding such elections require appropriate conditions and environment to ensure fairness and transparency in all stages of the electoral process to reflect the electorate's will. In light of the ongoing split between Fatah and Hamas, the conditions and environment in the OPT do not ensure free and transparent elections reflecting the will of the electorate. Current conditions do not indicate that this environment will change in the foreseeable future if both sides do not immediately start serious and constructive dialogue in order to end the split and agree on elections or another solution in order to re-unify the OPT and the political leadership of the PNA. PCHR added that if the PLC took over the Presidential post after 9 January 2009, this would lead to further fragmentation that would not allow for free and fair elections in the OPT within 60 days.

In light of these problems, PCHR concluded that without a comprehensive national dialogue for all Palestinian factions, including Fatah and Hamas movements, putting the interests of the Palestinian people above the narrow, factional interests of the conflicting parties, appropriate conditions to hold legislative and presidential elections would not be achieved.

Elections of Local Councils

The internal situation and continued fragmentation in the PNA, as well as the international boycott the Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip negatively impacted efforts to complete elections of local councils in the PNA controlled areas.

According to the Palestinian Electoral Law, news elections are supposed to be held for local councils that were elected in the first stage of local elections that were held n 23 December 2004 for 26 local councils in the West Bank and on 27 January 2005 for 10 local councils in the Gaza Strip. However, by the end of 2008, such elections had not been held and no dates had been specified for holding such elections.

[9] As determined in Article 36 of the Basic Law (2005) amending some Articles of the 2003 Amended Basic Law)

Moreover, by the end of 2008, elections for 59 local councils in the West Bank and the Gaza, including major cities, had not been held. Elections for these councils were supposed to be held in the context of the 5th stage of local elections, whose previous 4 stages were held between December 2004 and December 2005 and included 265 local councils. The second stage of elections for local councils, which was held in May 2005 and included 84 local councils, including 8 ones in the Gaza Strip, was characterized by some problems regarding fairness of elections for the elections of the local councils of al-Boreij, Beit Lahia and Rafah in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian judiciary decided to hold a rerun in some stations in these areas on 1 June 2005, but Hamas boycotted these elections. Since then, appointed local councils have continued to administer services in these areas.

In 2008, the two governments in Ramallah and Gaza continued to appoint local councils. In Gaza, the government appointed local councils for major towns, where elections had not been held. It also dismissed local councils of al-Boreij, Beit Lahia and Rafah, and appointed new ones affiliated to Hamas. In the West Bank, appointed local councils in areas where elections had not been held continued to service in office.

In 2008, the two governments in Ramallah and Gaza continued to appoint local councils.

Violations of the Right of Life and Attacks on Personal Security

In 2008, violations of the right of life and attack on personal security in the OPT continued. In 2008, 146 Palestinians, including 25 children and 13 women, were killed and at least 411 others were wounded by Palestinians. The excessive use of force by law enforcement officials was the major form of violations of the rights to life. Two persons were also killed as a result of other forms of violence and misuse of weapons, which are part of the sate of lawlessness and security chaos spreading over the OPT. The state of lawlessness included also the misuse of weapons by well-known and unknown armed groups; employment of weapons in personal and clan disputes; and extra-judicial killing of persons alleged to protect "family honor;" and killings of prisoners and detainees who fled Gaza Central Prison, which lies in the Palestinian security compound known as "al-Saraya", after IOF had bombarded the compound.

Excessive Use of Force by Law Enforcement Officials

In 2008, 26 Palestinians were killed by Palestinian security officers during processes of law enforcement in the Gaza Strip.

In 2008, 26 Palestinians were killed by Palestinian security officers during processes of law enforcement in the Gaza Strip. Additionally, at least 170 others (154 in the Gaza Strip and 16 in the West Bank), including 20 children and 7 women, were wounded. Excessive force was used during attempts to arrest suspects of wanted persons, and during armed clashes with Palestinian clans. Regrettably, no investigation was conducted into such incidents and no legal action was taken against shooters.

- On 15 April 2008, 4 Palestinian civilians, including a child, were wounded when Palestinian security forces fired at a militant who did not obey orders to stop in the center of Nablus.
-
- On 18 May 2008, Abdul Hadi Shatti al-Soufi, 38, from Rafah, was shot dead when he attempted to escape from police officers who came to arrest him in al-Mawasi area in the west of the town.
-
- On 1 June 2008, 7 Palestinian civilians were wounded during clashes with Palestinian security officers in Beit Fourik village, east of Nablus, when security forces waged a campaign against illegal vehicles in the village.
-
- On 6 June 2008, 4 persons, including a police officer, were killed, and 9 others were wounded during armed clashes between the Hassanain clan and the police, which erupted when the police stormed the clan's houses in al-Shoja'eya neighborhood in the east of Gaza City to arrest wanted persons. Those who were killed are:

  1. Nawaf Kamel Hassanain, 39;
  2. Mawan Kamel Hassanain, 37;

3. 'Attaf 'Omar Hassanain, 30; and
4. Jamal Yousef Abu al-Qumsan, a police officer.

- On 2 August 2008, al-Shoja'eya neighborhood in the east of Gaza City witnessed bloody clashes between security services of the Ministry of Interior and gunmen from the Helles clan. Eleven Palestinians, including 2 police officers and 8 members of the Helles clan, were killed, and 103 others, including 17 children and 6 women, were wounded. The clashes erupted as the Helles clan rejected demands by the government in Gaza to extradite a number of suspects of assaults against the rule of law, including the explosion that occurred at Gaza beach on 25 July 2008, which killed a child and 5 members of the 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades (the armed wing of Hamas), according to sources of the Ministry of Interior.

- On 15 September 2008, Al-Sabra neighborhood in the east of Gaza City witnessed bloody clashes between the Palestinian police and gunmen from the Dughmosh clan. Ten members of the Dughmosh clan, including 2 children, and a police officer were killed, and another 42 persons, including 10 police officers were wounded. The clashes erupted after a police officer, 'Abdul Karim 'Aadel Khuzaiq, 20, was killed by a gunshot to the head, and another one was wounded in an exchange of fire between the police and a suspect, Jameel Dugmosh, when the police attempted to arrest him inside the headquarters of the Municipality of Gaza. There were allegations that a number of the Dughmosh clan were executed after having been arrested. On 17 September 2008, PCHR sent a letter to the Minister of Interior in Gaza, Mr. Sa'id Siam, demanding investigation into information obtained by PCHR from eyewitnesses that 7 members of the Dughmosh clan, including two wounded ones, were executed after they had been captured by the police on 16 September 2008. However, PCHR has not received any response to its letter yet.

- On 9 December 2008, 5 persons, including a woman, were wounded by Palestinian security services that attempted to arrest a wanted person in al-Rama neighborhood in Hebron. Security officers also beat a number of bystanders, including women.

Misuse of Weapons by Known and Unknown Armed Groups

In 2008, 64 Palestinians, including 19 children and 8 women, were killed and at least 150 others were wounded as a result of the misuse of weapons by known and unknown armed groups, in the context of the state of lawlessness plaguing the OPT. Those incidents endangered the security and safety of Palestinians and continued to cause casualties as legal action to confront them were absent. Incidents of the misuse of weapons included storage of weapons in populated areas; use of weapons by unknown groups; and use of weapons by militias.

- On 12 January 2008, the body of Sha'ban Salem Dughmosh, 39, from al-Sabra neighborhood in Gaza City was found in the Juhor al-Dik

In 2008, 64 Palestinians, including 19 children and 8 women, were killed and at least 150 others were wounded as a result of the misuse of weapons by known and unknown armed groups.

area of the central Gaza Strip. Dughmosh worked in the Naval Police of the government in Gaza. According to medical sources, he was killed by a gunshot to the head.

- On 16 January 2008, the body of Hamza Tayseer al-'Arqan, 12, from al-Shoja'eya neighborhood in Gaza City was brought to Shifa Hospital. The boy was killed by a bullet to the abdomen that was accidentally fired by one of the participants during a wedding celebration of a relative.

- On 16 January, Nawal Jamal al-Serhi, 18, from Gaza City, was killed by a bullet to the chest that was accidentally unleashed from her father's pistol while she was trying to clean it.

- On 2 February 2008, the body of Ahmed Eyad Bilal, 15, from Sheikh Radwan district in Gaza City, was brought to Shifa Hospital in Gaza city. He was killed by a bullet to the chest fired from an unknown source. The victim's family informed PCHR that Ahmed was walking with his father in Nafaq Street in the northeast Gaza City, when a stray bullet hit him in the chest.

- On 15 February 2008, a heavy explosion rocked al-Boreij refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip. The explosion occurred in the house of Ayman 'Atallah Ahmad Fayed, 41, an activist in Al-Quds Brigades, the armed wing of Islamic Jihad. The explosion destroyed the ground-floor concrete house completely, killing the activist, his wife Marwa Azzam Fayed, 39, and three of his children: Basma, 12; 'Ali, 17; and Ayyoub, 5. A fourth son, Adam, 15, was seriously injured. In addition, three of Fayed's neighbors were killed: Zakaria Nabil al-Kefafi, 17, who was in Fayed's house at the time; Talal Salah Sa'id Abu al-'Oun, 16; and 'Atallah Samir Mohammad Ismail, 24. Approximately 60 people were injured, including 23 women and 20 children. Among the injured were 14 people suffering serious injuries. The explosion destroyed 6 nearby houses completely, and caused extensive destruction to 10 other houses. Dozens of houses were also damaged.

- On 18 March 2008, 3 masked gunmen fired at 'Abdul Karim Saleh Hussein 'Omar, 75, from Beit Ameen village south of Qalqilya, when he was in the center of Qalqilya. He was instantly killed by several gunshots to the upper part of the body.

- On 13 April 2008, militants fired at the convoy of Dr. Jamal Mhaisen, Governor of Nablus, in Balata refugee camp east of the city. They then attacked and burnt a vehicle of Nablus Governorate.

- On 15 April 2008, the body of Sami 'Atiya Khattab, 36, from Deir al-Balah, was found in Sheikh Ejlin area in the southwest of Gaza City. Khattab, a member of the Palestinian General Intelliegnce Services was abducted by a number of masked gunmen from a store of clothes in Deir al-Balah on 13 April 2008. According to observations on the body by PCHR's staff members, there were thromboses, clear

cuts and bruises all over the body, which strongly indicates that he was subjected to severe physical violence during his abduction.

- On 2 may 2008, a debate over stationing in border areas in Um al-Nasser village, east of Rafah, that erupted between militants from the 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades (the armed wing of Hamas) and others from the National Resistance Brigades (the armed wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine) developed into an exchange of fire between the two sides. As a result, a civilian bystander, 'Abdul Ra'ouf Ahmed Thabet, 55, was killed by several gunshots to the abdomen, the pelvis and the thighs.

- On 31 May 2008, 10 members of the Abu Sha'ban clan were injured, including 4 women and 3 children, when a bomb mishandled by a member of the family exploded inside the two-storey house in al-Daraj neighborhood in the east of Gaza City.

- On 12 June 2008, a heavy explosion occurred in a house belonging to 'Abdul 'Azim Khaled Hammouda in the centre of Beit Lahia town in the northern Gaza Strip. As a result of the explosion, 8 Palestinians, including two children, were killed:

  1. Nour Majdi Hammouda, 4 months;
  2. Mahmoud 'Ataya Hammouda, 16;
  3. Ashraf Na'im Mushtaha, 32;
  4. Hassan Mohammed Abu Shaqfa, 28;
  5. Majid 'Aadel Hammouda, 28;
  6. Mohammed Sabri Abu Naja, 25;
  7. Mohammed Hamdan Miqdad, 22;
  8. Ahmed Muneer Subaih, 20.

  The 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades (the armed wing of Hamas) stated in a press release issued on 13 June that 6 of its members were killed "while they were in the final stage of preparation for a special Jihad mission."

- On 25 July, an explosive device went off in al-Hilal Café on the Gaza City beach. It is a café usually frequented by Hamas activists and supporters. The explosion killed 6 people vacationing on the beach; all of them from Gaza City. One of the victims was a 4-year old child, while the other 5 were Hamas members. In addition, 27 people were injured. Police sources informed PCHR that the explosive device was directed and was placed inside the café; and that it contained metallic shrapnel 10 – 12 millimeters in length. Sources in Shifa Hospital in Gaza City identified the victims as:

  1. Siren Ismail Ahmad al-Safadi, 4;
  2. Nihad Mohammed Hussein Mesabeh, 27;
  3. Tamer Sa'id al-Hilu, 33;
  4. Eyad 'Abdul Hamid Ismail al-Hayya, 32;
  5. Nidal Khalil Ziad al-Mbayed, 37; and
  6. Hassan Mohammed Rushdi al-Hilu, 28.

- On 29 August 2008, an RBJ projectile fired by gunmen who were training in the east of Jabalya town hit a house belonging to Hassan Salah Junaid, 45. The projectile exploded inside the house and wounded 2 of the owner's daughters:

  1. Asmaa', 19, seriously wounded by shrapnel throughout the body and her right hand was amputated; and
  2. Hiba, 14, wounded by shrapnel to the left leg.

- On 10 September 2008, 11-year-old Hassan Ali al-Shishneya from al-Boreij refugee camp in Central Gaza Strip was killed. The child was hit by a gunshot to the head while he was playing with his father's firearm. The father, who is an police officer, informed PCHR that they, the father and mother, were not at home at the time of the incident.

- On 15 September 2008, a number of masked gunmen who stepped down from 2 civilian vehicles (a grey GMC and a while Land Rover) kidnapped Ra'ed al-Harazin, who used to be a member of the Palestinian General Intelligence Service, from his house in al-Mansoura Street in al-Shoja'eya neighborhood in the east of Gaza City and took him to an unknown destination. An hour and a half later, his family was informed that he was in an area close to the house. Members of the family went to the area where they found him in a crtical condition. They took him to al-Quds Hospital in Gaza City. As his health condition deteriorated, a decision was taken to transfer him to an Israeli hospital, but he died at Erez crossing on 17 September 2008. According to the Forensic Medicine Department at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, signs of torture on a large portion of the victims body; bruises; cuts to the head; and red painting on the face, chest and abdomen, which strongly indicates that he was subjected to severe physical violence during his abduction.

- On 25 September 2008, a gunman in civil clothes stepped down from a Preventive Security Service vehicle and fired at Iman Barabra while she was standing near a clothing store on al-Barid Street in the center of Ramallah. Barabra was wounded by several bullets in different places of her body. She was taken to hospitals but she was pronounced dead shortly later.

- On 2 October 2008, a row erupted between members of the al-Masri clan and supporters of Hamas who were traveling in a bus that stopped in the Jourat al-Lout area of Khan Yunis due to a technical failure. The row escalated, with the two sides hurling stones at each other. In the meantime, masked gunmen who wore bandanas on which the words 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades' were written, fired at members of the al-Masri clan. As a result, 19-year-old Mohammed Farhan al-Masri, was wounded. He died en route to hospital.

- On 24 December 2008, Eyad 'Abdul Jawad al-Duraimli, 35, a staff member of the Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict

Resolution from Tal al-Hawa neighborhood in the southwest of Gaza City, was injured by shrapnel throughout the body, when a home-made rocket landed onto his house.

Using Weapons in Personal and Clan Disputes

Weapons continued to be employed in personal and clan disputes in the context of the state of lawlessness plaguing the OPT. In 2008, 22 Palestinians, including 3 children and two women, were killed, and 49 others were wounded in personal and clan disputed.

In 2008, 22 Palestinians, including 3 children and two women, were killed, and 49 others were wounded in personal and clan disputed.

- On 7 January 2008, Najwa 'Aqel al-Sayed, 45, from Nussairat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, was killed and three others, including a woman, were injured in an intra-clan clash involving members of the Abu Meddain clan over a tract of land.

- On 12 January 2008, Sami Salman al-Rawagh, 33, was killed by a gunshot to the back during an armed clash between al-Rawagh and Abu Harb clans in a Bedouin village in the northern Gaza Strip.

- On 17 January 2008, Salem 'Ouda Madi, 45, from Rafah, was killed by members of his clan in an old vendetta killing.

- On 20 January 2008, Marwan 'Awadh al-Gharabli, 24, from al-Shoja'eya neighborhood in Gaza City, was killed and two others were injured in an armed clash between members of al-Gharabli and Abu 'Amru clans.

- On 1 February 2008, unknown gunmen shot and killed 28-year-old Hussein Abu Jarghoun, 28, whilst he was standing near his house in the Jouret al-Lout area in Khan Yunis. Abu Jarghoun was killed by several bullets. In addition, 16-year-old Wa'el Nabil Abu Hadayed was injured by a bullet to the right shoulder. The police stated that a member of the Abu Jarghoun clan surrendered, claiming he shot his relative because of an old vendetta.

- On 11 March 2008, Subhi Mohammed Hassanain, 50, and Ahmed Khamis Abu Jibba, 19, were killed and 8 others were wounded in an armed dispute between the clans of Hassanain and Abu Jibba in al-Shojayea neighborhood in the east of Gaza City.

- On 28 March 2008, 3 Palestinians were killed and 10 others were wounded in Kufor Thuluth village, southeast of Qalilya, in an exchange of fire between the Shawahna and Mara'ba clans while a reconciliation meeting was being held between the two clans. The persons who were killed are:

  1. Kamal Qassem 'Awadh Mara'ba, 45;
  2. Mohammed 'Awadh Qassem Mara'ba, 22; and
  3. Nour Sa'id 'Ali Mara'ba, 13.

- On 3 June 2008, 5 gunmen opened fire at a number of members of the al-'Ajlouni clan, who were near a grocery shop in Jabal Jouhar neighborhood in the southeast of Hebron, in the context of an old dispute between al-'Ajlouni and al-Rajabi clans. As a result, Mahmoud Sameeh al-'Ajlouni, 31, was killed by several gunshots, and 5 of his relatives were lightly injured by shrapnel from gunshots. On the following day, Safawt Mohammed al-Salaima, 13, was seriously killed by a gunshot to the head during an exchange of fire between the two disputing clans. Al-Salaima was with his father in al-Sahla car park in the southeast of Hebron.

Extra-Judicial Executions "to Protect Family Honor"

In 2008, 3 Palestinian women and one man were killed "to protect family honor." PCHR has often expressed deep concern over the continuation of murders related to the so called protection of family honors, as murderers are granted impunity with sentences of imprisonment for short periods. PCHR calls for taking deterring measures to deal with such murders, which are a form of willful killing, taking into consideration the law and international human rights instruments.

PCHR has often expressed deep concern over the continuation of murders related to the so called protection of family honor

- On 3 February 2008, 'Abdul Rahman Mohammed 'Ouda, 40, from Hawara village south of Nablus, was killed in an exchange of fire between him and Hani Mahmoud 'Ouda, 35, in a dispute related to "family honor." The latter was also wounded. The 'Ouda's clan had accused the former of sexually harassing the latter's wife.

- On 8 April 2008, the body of Rasha Khalil Bani 'Ouda, 28, was found in Tammoun village, southeast of Tubas. The woman had disappeared days earlier. The police reported that she was killed because of "family honor" and her father and two brothers were arrested.

- On 3 June 2008, the body of Khouloud Mohammed al-Najjar, 32, from Khan Yunis, was brought to the Martyr Mohammed Yousef al-Najjar Hospital in Rafah. Her bruised and bloody corpse was transferred to the Forensic Medicine Department at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City. her father, Mohammed Hussein al-Najjar, was arrested, and during questioning he apparently confessed that his daughter having died as a result of having been severely beaten by members of her family for her "immoral behavior."

- On 29 August 2008, a girl in Khan Yunis allegedly to maintain "the honor" of her family. On the following day, Hussein Mustafa Kaware', 67, from Jourat al-Lout area in the southern Gaza Strip town of Khan Yunis, went to a police station in the town and confessed murdering his 24-year-old daughter, Hala, and burying her in land belonging to the family.

Killings of Prisoners and Detainees Who Fled Gaza Central Prison during the Israeli Military Offensive on Gaza

In the last 5 days of 2008, unidentified gunmen killed at 17 and detainees who fled Gaza Central Prison, which lies in the Palestinian security compound (al-Saraya) in central Gaza City, after the IOF had bombarded the compound on 28 December, 2008. The prisoners who fled included persons sentenced to death for collaboration with Israeli Security Services, those convicted of committing other criminal offenses, and persons who had been detained for questioning or were awaiting trial. According to testimonies given to PCHR by the families of those who were killed, as well as by eyewitnesses, unidentified gunmen abducted a number of prisoners whilst they were fleeing Gaza Central Prison, and their dead bodies were found a few days later in different areas of the Gaza Strip. Other prisoners and detainees who had escaped were abducted from their homes, and later found either dead or seriously injured. Some of the most seriously injured subsequently died of their injuries.

PCHR holds IOF responsible for the lives of those persons who were detained inside the prison, as targeting a prison, where dozens of civilians convicted or suspected of serious security and criminal crimes were detained, can never be justified. Nevertheless, PCHR believes that pursuing and killing those persons after fleeing as such constitute a form of security chaos and lawlessness. Accordingly, PCHR calls upon the Attorney-General to investigate these crimes and bring the perpetrators to the judiciary.

PCHR believes that pursuing and killing those persons after fleeing as such constitute a form of security chaos and lawlessness.

Arrests, Torture and Other Forms of Cruel and Inhuman Treatment

This section of the report highlights crimes of torture and other forms of cruel and inhuman treatment by security forces of the two Palestinian governments in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. It particularly details arbitrary campaigns of arrest by security services belonging to the two governments in the context of mutual retaliation between the two sides. According to PCHR's documentation, illegal arrests and crimes of torture increasingly continued in 2008 under the state of political fragmentation in the PNA. Some political and field leaders of Fatah and Hamas movements were arrested in mutual reactions between the two sides, who did not admit that such arrests were political and claimed that they were based on security or criminal offenses.

In many cases, arrests are not carried out in accordance with appropriate legal procedures. Sometimes, arrests are conducted by parties that are not authorized of law enforcement, in violation of the Palestinian law, under which arrests fall under the mandate of judicial officials, including the civil police, who are under the supervision of the Attorney-General. Other time, arrests are conducted by law enforcement officials, but without following necessary legal procedures, including having arrest warrants issued by the Attorney-General. Additionally, detainees are held in illegal detention centers, which lack the minimum standards of appropriate detention conditions, in violation of the Law of Reform and Rehabilitation Centers of 1998.

In 2008, Palestinian lawyers faced extreme difficulties in their attempts to visit their clients in prisons and detention centers in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In Gaza, PCHR lawyers were prevented in several occasions from visiting their clients detained by security services of the government in Gaza. PCHR is concerned that such ban was motivated by the perpetration of illegal actions such as torture and other forms of cruel and inhumane treatment against prisoners, and views it as a violation of the law and relevant international standards. Specifically, it violates the right of detainees to lawyer visits.

In the Gaza Strip, hundreds of Palestinians, especially supporters and members of Fatah movement, were arrested by security services of the Gaza government. Mostly, such arrests were based on security or criminal allegations, such as accusations of involvement in explosions against security officials in Gaza or public places, or having contacts with the Ramallah government. The largest arrest campaign waged by security services was that one that followed an explosion at Gaza beach on 26 July 2008, which killed 6 Palestinians, including members of the 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades of Hamas. The arrest campaign targeted hundreds of activists of Fatah movement who were arrested by the Internal Security

Service and the police. The campaign also targeted 18 persons with leading positions in Fatah movement, including secretary generals of Fatah movement in various districts, the spokesman of Fatah movement in Gaza, Dr. Hazem Abu Shanab, and the governors of Khan Yunis and Gaza, Dr. Ussama al-Farra and Mohammed al-Qidwa.

On 19 May, the Internal Security Service arrested Khan Yunis Governor, Dr. Ussama 'Abdul Sattar al-Farra, and three activists of Fatah movement. According to Dr. al-Farra, at approximately 00:00 on Monday, 19 May 2008, gunmen in civilian clothes apprehended Dr. al-Farra at his house in the Sheikh Nasser neighborhood in Khan Yunis. They also apprehended Eyad Nasser, Secretary General of Fatah movement in the west of Khan Yunis; Salem Abu Salah, Deputy Secretary General of Fatah movement in the east of Khan Yunis; and Dr. Nasser Farwana, Secretary General of Fatah's Office for Physicians in Khan Yunis. The four men were taken to the Internal Security Apparatus compound west of Khan Yunis. Dr. al-Farra stated that he and the other men were all questioned about an event being organized by the National Commission for Civil Society Organizations to honor workers. Dr. al-Farra said they were all accused of incitement, and of inciting others by inviting them to the event. They were all released at approximately 04:00.

On 6 November 2008, members of the Internal Security raided the house of PLC Member Ashraf Jom'a, in al-Junaina neighborhood in Rafah. The force arrested more than 30 members of Fatah movement who were invited to have lunch in honor of other members of Fatah movement who were released by the government in Gaza on 30 October 2008. The arrested persons were taken to the police station in the building of Rafah Governorate. They were questioned about the lunch at Jom'a's house and about the activities of Fatah members. They were released later at 20:00 on the same day with the exception of Salah al-'Oweisi and Khaled Mousa, both are Fatah district leaders.

In the West Bank, Palestinian security services waged arrest campaigns against activists and supporters of Hamas, including senior leaders and PLC members. Such arrests were based on allegations of possession of weapons, forming armed groups, establishing an executive force aiming at disrupting public order, or having contacts with the Gaza government. The largest arrest campaign by security services in the West Bank was the one that came in response in arrest campaigns against activists of Fatah movement and closure of a number of institutions close to Fatah movement in the Gaza Strip following the explosion at Gaza beach on 26 July. The campaign targeted at least 100 Palestinians, including academics, imams of mosques, university students, teachers and mayors affiliated to Hamas.

In a continuation of the aforementioned arrest campaigns, in early August, security services in the West Bank arrested more supporters and members of Hamas in Qalqilya and Nablus. Some of the detainees were released later, while the following persons remained in custody: Bilal Sa'id Swailem, 41, a member of the municipal council of Qalqilya; Mustafa 'Ali Sabri, 42, a journalist and a member of the municipal council

of Qalqilya; Mohammed 'Abdul Rahman Mansour, 50, a staff member of the Municipality of Qalqilya; Mohammed Farah Robin, 31; 'Ammar Mahmoud Swaileh, 41; and Hassan 'Abdul Rahman Mansour, 46.

Over the period prior to this wide scale arrest campaign, security services in the West Bank arrested dozens of Palestinians, including some leaders of Hamas. For instance, on 1 May, the Preventive Security Service in Nablus arrested a Palestinian without an arrest warrant. They subjected him to torture, transported him to the hospital, and re-arrested him. On 3 May, members of the Preventive Security Service raided the house of the Nablus Municipality Council member Kholoud al-Masri, and arrested her husband, Ammar al-Masri, 42. They also confiscated some belongings without arrest or search warrants.

In the majority of cases of detention in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, members of Hamas and Fatah movements respectively were subjected to methods of torture and ill-treatment.

In light of persistent demanded by PCHR and other civil society organizations to put and end to political arrests by the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah, the Gaza government released 18 political prisoners from Fatah movement on 30 October 2008 as a good will initiative. Civil society groups welcomed this step and demanded a similar one in the West Bank.

Torture and Ill-Treatment

In the majority of cases of detention in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, members of Hamas and Fatah movements respectively were subjected to methods of torture and ill-treatment. Such methods included: insulting; beating using batons, sharp tools, feet and hands; and tying the feet and hands to a chair and beating with batons or wires of feet; and other methods. PCHR received many complaints from Palestinians who had been detained by the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah that they were subjected to various methods of torture and ill-treatment. In many occasions, detainees were taken to hospitals as they had been subjected to extreme torture in detention centers.

Deaths in Custody in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip

In 2008, 3 detainees died in prisons and detention centers in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; two detainees died in the West Bank and the third one died in the Gaza Strip. In light of practicing detainees to various methods of torture and degrading treatment in prisons and detention centers that lack the minimum standards of appropriate detention conditions, including access to appropriate medical care, PCHR is concerned that these detainees died because of such circumstances.

- On 22 February, Majd 'Abdul 'Aziz al-Barghouthi, 44, from Koubar village, northwest of Ramallah, while in illegal detention, administered by the General Intelligence Service (GIS) of the Palestinian National Authority in Ramallah. The Palestinian Attorney General ordered an autopsy to be performed at the forensic medicine institute in Abu Dis. According to the forensic report – a copy of which has been obtained

by PCHR – "the cause of death was the inflation and subsequent failure of the heart. Having inflated to a size above normal, the heart failed, and under these circumstances, death is often sudden." Al-Barghouthi was arrested by the GIS on 14 February once he exited from the local mosque in Koubar village. He was immediately transferred to the GIS Headquarters in the north of al-Bireh for interrogation. During his detention, al-Barghouthi was subjected to beating and torture. In an affidavit given to PCHR, a Palestinian who had been detained by the GIS at the same time as Majd al-Barghouthi alleged that al-Barghouthi was violently beaten whilst in detention. The detainee claimed he recognized al-Bargouthi's voice calling for help from an interrogation room opposite his own cell. He also alleged that he could hear al-Bargouthi being interrogated about his relationship with the Executive Force of the Palestinian Ministry of Interior in the dismissed government in the Gaza Strip.

- On 27 June, the body of Taleb Mohammed Abu Sitta, 72, from al-Zawaida village in the central Gaza Strip, was transported in an ambulance to al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir al-Balah, and from there to the forensic department at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City. According to investigations conducted by PCHR, and testimonies of Abu Sitta's family, on 26 June, police officers went to Abu Sitta's house in al-Zawaida village in the central Gaza Strip, accompanied by his son, 26-year-old Mustafa, who had been arrested on the previous day. They searched the house for drugs. They then arrested Abu Sitta and took him to Deir al-Balah police station. The victim's son, Mustafa, whom the police released after his father had dies, told PCHR that he was violently beaten and tortured during interrogation in Deir al-Balah police station, and that he was detained together with his father. He added that police officers tied his father's hands and feet to a bed and beat him. They also violently beat him and his father during several rounds of interrogation, which continued until Friday morning, Mustafa added. At approximately 06:00, police officers awoke him and ordered him to help his father who was lying on the ground near the door of the room. They then ordered him to fill a bottle of water and splash it on the face of his father, who was fatigued, but the father died. A PCHR field worker reported that he could see clear signs of beating on Mustafa's feet.

- On 29 September, Shadi Mohammed Mohammed Shaheen, 27, from al-Bireh town in the West Bank, died whilst in police custody in Jericho. Shaheen was originally detained by Palestinian military court order. On 8 March, he received a summons from the General Intelligence Service (GIS) in Ramallah, and was interrogated regarding charges of committing "Crimes that endanger the safety of internal homeland security." Shaheen was detained by the GIS until 15 June 2008, when he was transferred to the Palestinian Police Rehabilitation and Discipline Center in Jericho, after an arrest warrant had been issued by the military prosecution. At approximately 15:00 on 29 September, Shaheen's brother, Ashraf, received a phone call from a police officer who informed him that Shaheen was seriously ill. Ashraf immediately

went to see his brother, and he was informed that Shaheen had just died at Jericho Hospital. Shaheen's family stated that he had been interrogated about firing at the house of former PNA Minister of Information, Nabeel 'Amru. The Ramallah police stated that, according to a report issued by the Forensic Medicine Institute, Shaheen died as a result of a pulmonary clot, without any external intervention. A PCHR field worker attempted to obtain a copy of the report from the Attorney-General's office in Ramallah, but was informed that the Attorney-General's office had already initiated an investigation into the circumstances of Shaheen's death.

During the IOF war on the Gaza Strip (27 December 2008 – 18 January 2009, unidentified gunmen killed at least seventeen prisoners and detainees who fled or were released from Gaza Central Prison, which lies in the Palestinian security compound (*Saraya*) in the center of Gaza City, after the IOF had bombarded the compound on 28 December, 2008. The prisoners who fled included persons sentenced to death for collaboration with Israeli security services, those convicted of committing other criminal offenses, and persons who had been detained for questioning or were awaiting trial. Unidentified gunmen abducted a number of prisoners whilst they were fleeing Gaza Central Prison, and their dead bodies were found a few days later in different areas of the Gaza Strip. Other prisoners and detainees who had escaped were abducted from their homes, and later found either dead or seriously injured. Some of the most seriously injured subsequently died of their injuries. Some prisoners who were wounded by the IOF bombardment were shot dead by gunmen inside hospitals.[10]

[10] For more details, see the section on violations of the right to life above. See P. 80

Violations of the Right to Freedom of Expression and Assaults against Press Freedoms

In 2008, violations of the right to freedom of expression and assaults against press freedoms escalated in an unprecedented manner. The two parties of the conflict, the Gaza government headed by Isma'il Haniya and the Ramallah government headed by Salam Fayad, and their executive services perpetrated serious violations of this right in their respective controlled areas. Palestine Television and its reporters and correspondents were prevented from working in the Gaza Strip, and al-Aqsa Television and its reporters and correspondents were prevented from working in the West Bank. Other violations of this right by the two governments included detention of journalists; beating and humiliation; banning the distribution of newspapers; preventing journalists for carrying out their job; and storming media institutions and offices.

In the Gaza Strip, the most significant violations of this right were:

- On 7 January, unknown assailants raided the offices of the State Information Service in a 5-story building near United Nations Square (Haidar 'Abdul Shafi Square) in Gaza City. They searched the offices and seized all computers and other equipment.

- On 15 January, members of the Internal Security Service of the Gaza government arrested journalist Muneer Abu Riziq when he had just left his house Tal al-Hawa neighborhood in the south of Gaza City. Abu Riziq was taken to al-Mashtal detention center north of Beach Camp in the west of the city.

- On 6 February, Gaza District Court issued a decision suspending the publication and distribution of al-Ayyam newspaper in response to a complaint submitted by Acting Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), Dr. Ahmer Bahar, against editor-in-chief of the newspaper, after it had published a caricature in its issue #4242, which the PLC considered an insulation and criticism. In spite of the court ruling, the newspaper continued to be distributed in the Gaza Strip until 11 February, when the director of its office in Gaza, Sami al-Qishawi, received a phone call from an official at the Ministry of Interior, who informed him that the distribution of the newspaper in the Gaza Strip must be stopped; otherwise, it would be stopped by force. Accordingly, the distribution of the newspaper was stopped on 12 February. The distribution of the newspaper was resumed on 1 May.

- On 4 March, Sameer Khalifa, 38, correspondent of Palestinian Television, received a phone call from the spokesman of the Ministry of Interior in the dismissed government, Eihab al-Ghussain, informing him that a decision was taken to prevent him and his colleague, 'Aadel al-Za'noun, from working for Palestine Television, including stopping sending voice reports to Palestine Television.

- On 3 April, the Palestinian police confiscated the memory card of a camera belonging to a PCHR field worker, Waleed Zaqqout, and the video tapes of journalists Ibrahim Abu Mustafa and Nihad Shana'a, working for Reuters news agency, while they were in a work mission in al-Zawaida village in the central Gaza Strip.

- On 18 April, police officers stopped 'Emad al-'Ajrami, a cameraman of al-Aalam Satellite Channel, as he was intending to photograph the demonstration. They forcibly confiscated his camera. Al-'Ajrami was waiting to photograph a demonstration organized by Fatah movement in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails on the Palestinian Prisoners Day.

- On 23 May, the police arrested Mohammed 'Abdul Ra'ouf Killab, 56, from Khan Yunis, after he had published an article titled "A Message from a Donkey in Gaza to Its Friend in the West Bank" on al-Quds Net's web site. In his article, Killab criticized Hamas and the Gaza government. He was released on 3 June 2008.

- On 23 May, the police held Sameer Khalifa, Correspondent of Sudan Television,[11] and Ahmed al-Ras, a cameraman of Ramattan news agency, while they were working at Palestine Square in the center of Gaza City.

- On 19 June, unknown gunmen fired at the office of Mustafa al-Sawaf, 53, Editor-in-Chief of Palestine newspaper, on the 6th floor of Kuhail building in al-Samer neighborhood in the center of Gaza City. A bullet penetrated the room in which al-Sawaf was sitting, but he was not hurt.

- On 26 July, masked gunmen from the Internal Security Service in Gaza arrested Sawwah Abu Saif, 41, correspondent of the German ARD TV, from his house in Tal al-Hawa neighborhood in Gaza City. They took him to an undisclosed location. The gunmen confiscated his laptop computer. During his detention, ABU Saif was subjected to beating and degrading treatment. He was released on 31 July.

- On 26 July, agents of the Internal Security Service in Gaza raided offices of the Palestinian News Agency (WAFA) in al-'Aaidi building in Tal al-Hawa neighborhood in Gaza City. They confiscated all belongings and carried them in trucks to undisclosed locations.

- On 27 July, the Palestinian police closed offices of Gaza Media Center on the 12th floor of al-Shorouq building in the west of Gaza City. The center provided media services to Abu Dhabi Television and other international news television channels, including the US FOX News and the British SKY News.

- On 28 July, the Palestinian police confiscated copies of the three local Palestinian newspapers (al-Quds, al-Ayyam and al-Hayat al-Jadeeda) near Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing after the distributors of these newspapers had just received them. On the following day, the

[11] It is worth noting that Khalifa moved from Palestine Television to work in the Sudanese Television.

police prevented the distributors of these newspapers from reaching Beit Hanoun crossing to receive their copies. The distribution of al-Hayat al-Jadeeda and al-Ayyam newspapers in the Gaza Strip has continued to be banned, while the police allowed resuming the distribution of al-Quds newspaper on 23 August 2008.

- On 30 July, the Palestinian police arrested 'Emad Mahmoud 'Eid, director of Gaza office of Ma'an news agency and correspondent of al-Manar Television. He was questioned about a news item published by Ma'an news agency on 29 July. 'Eid was released half an hour later.

- On 29 November, the police stopped Ala'a Salama, 25, a reporter for the local al-Quds Radio, while returning home after covering the Gaza pilgrims story at Rafah crossing. A police officer forced Salama to enter a jeep, blindfolded him and took him to an unknown destination. On the way, Salama was beaten by the police. He was forced to eat a piece of bread that was full of sand although he was fasting on that day.

In the West Bank, the most significant violations of this right were:

- On 7 February, the Palestinian General Intelligence Service (GIS) in Qalqilya arrested journalist Mustafa 'Ali Sabri. The journalist was questioned about his work. He was detained for 4 days.

- On 14 February, the GIS in Salfit arrested Khaled Ma'ali, director of al-Sahel press office. He was questioned about a news item published on the web site of a newspaper. Ma'ali was released two days later as there was no evidence was found concerning his relation with the published news item.

- On 24 February, the GIS in Hebron summoned Khaled Mohammed 'Amaira, 51, correspondent of the Egyptian al-Ahram Weekly.

- On 4 March, the GIS in Nablus arrested Mos'ab Hussam al-Din Qatalouni, 24, a reporter of al-Aqsa Television. He was questioned about his work and his political affiliation. Qatalouni was released on 20 May.

- On 11 March, Palestinian security services arrested Mohammed al-Qeeq, who works of several local and Arab news web sites, when he was covering a demonstration organized by Palestinian NGOs in Hebron in protest to the closure of a number of NGOs in Hebron by Israeli Occupation Forces. Al-Qeeq was released on 27 March.

- On 12 March, armed members of the Preventive Security Service stormed the headquarters of Ramattan News Agency in al-Wehaidi Building in al-Masyoun neighborhood in Ramallah. They arrested Nawaf Ibrahim al-'Aamer, 48, an editor. 'Aamer was released on 13 March 2008.

- On 8 May, the GIS arrested Usaid 'Abdul Majeed 'Amarna, 23, a cameraman of al-Aqsa Television, when he was photographing a demonstration organized on the 60th anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba (the uprooting of the Palestinian people from their land in 1948). In Qalqilya, the GIS arrested Mustafa 'Ali Sabri, 41, a freelance journalist; Mohammed Darwish 'Athba, 32, a cameraman of Associated Press; and Dr. 'Essam Mohammed Shawar, 42, a columnist of Palestine daily, which is published in the Gaza Strip.

- On 2 July, the Military Intelligence Service in Qalqilya arrested journalist Mustafa Sabri and questioned him about his work. He was released at night.

- On 26 July, the GIS in Qalqilya arrested journalist Mustafa Sabri. GIS members beat and insulted Sabri, who was released on the following day without any charge.

- On 26 July, the GIS in Hebron arrested 'Alaa' Jaber al-Titi, 26, correspondent of al-Aqsa Television. He was interrogated about his work. Al-Titi was released on 17 August 2008.

- On 29 July, a force of the Preventive Security Service raided the Arab Media Center in Dura town southwest of Hebron. They arrested the center's director, 'Awad Ibrahim al-Rjoub, 31, who is the correspondent of Al-Jazeera Net and other news agencies.

- On 29 July, Palestinian security forces arrested journalist Farid Hammad, 35, from Silwad village northeast of Ramallah. He works in the editorial section of Al-Ayyam newspaper.

- On 29 July, Palestinian security officers prevented journalists from covering a women demonstration organized by the Hizb ul Tahreer (Liberation Party) in Hebron. Two security officers forcibly took the camera of Yusri Mahmoud al-Jamal, 32, a cameraman of Reuters news agency, and hit it with the body of a car parking in the area.

- On 10 September, in violation of a decision taken by the Palestinian High Court of Justice, the Palestinian General Intelligence Service (GIS) in Qalqilya refused to release journalist Mustafa Sabri. Sabri had been detained by the GIS since 31 July 2008. In spite of being a civilian, Sabri had been referred to the military prosecution that had ordered detaining him since 13 August 2008.

- On 29 November, Ramattan news agency suspended its activities in the OPT in protests to harassments by the PNA in the West Bank.

- The publication and distribution of Palestinian and al-Resala newspapers have been banned in the West Bank since 16 June 2007.

Violations of the Right to Peaceful Assembly

In 2008, violations of the right to peaceful assembly escalated as the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah imposed severe restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly, which is ensured by the Palestinian Basic Law, the Public Meetings Law and international human rights instruments. In spite of the many differences between the two governments at the political and legal levels, they both uphold the Executive Bill of the Public Meetings Law issued by the Interior Minister in 2000, which PCHR and other human rights organizations strongly criticized since it undermines the right to peaceful assembly and puts it and subjects it to licensing by the Ministry of Interior.

In 2008, PCHR documented more cases of banning the organization of peaceful demonstrations, sit-ins, public meetings and celebrations in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Even though the number of such cases in 2008 was less than those documented in 2007, it is not an indication of improved performance of the two governments, rather it an indication of a state of abstention from organizing peaceful assembly fearing of security repercussions. It was clear that many of such violations of the right to peaceful assembly were closely related to the state of fragmentation in the PNA; in the Gaza Strip, Fatah movement was prevented from organizing peaceful assemblies, including the celebration of its anniversary, while Hamas was prevented from organizing similar activities in the West Bank.

The most significant violations of the right to peaceful assembly in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank were as follows:

1 Violations of the Right to Peaceful Assembly in the Gaza Strip

- The government in Gaza banned celebrations of the anniversary of Fatah movement on the 1st of January. The Palestinian police of Hamas-affiliated militants waged a campaign of arrests against activists of Fatah movement, stormed offices affiliated to the movement and raided some houses. As a consequence, bloody clashes erupted between activists of Fatah movement and security services, which left 7 people killed and dozens of others injured.

- On 25 February, the Palestinian police attacked the funeral of Mohammed Ibrahim Hassanain, 21, and Ibrahim Zaidan Abu Jarad, 22, from Beit Hanoun. The funeral was organized by Fatah movement.[12]

- On 13 April, the chief of police in al-Shati refugee camp sent instructions to the directors of hotels requesting to inform people who wish to hold wedding parties to apply to the police to obtain licenses for such parties. This measure constitutes even a violations of the limitations

[12] On 24 February 2008, Mohammed Hassanain, Ibrahim Abu Jarad and Mohammed al-Za'anin were killed by IOF shelling while they were having lunch.

included in the Executive Bill of the Public Meetings Law through imposing additional restrictions of private meetings that are held in closed places, such as conferences and colloquia.

- On 18 April, the police violently beat a number of supporters of Fatah movement to prevent them from organizing gathered a demonstration in the center of Rafah town in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails on the Palestinian Prisoners Day. The police also arrested 2 supporters of Fatah movement, but released them later following the intervention of other parties.

- On 1 May, the police banned the organization of a public meeting on the International Labor Day by 6 factions in Rafah: Fatah movement; Popular Struggle Front; Palestinian Democratic Union (Fida); Arab Liberation Front; Palestine Liberation Front; and the Palestinian National Initiative.

- On 10 May, 4 police officers stormed the annual conference of the Palestinian Center for Media and Studies in the Commodore Hotel in Gaza City. They cut off television communication and confiscated recording tapes and a list of attendants, claiming that the conference was organized without a license. The center organized its annual conference on "negotiations and resistance and searching for a compromise" in Best Eastern Hotel in al-Bireh town in the West Bank and the Commodore Hotel in Gaza City via video conference.

- On 13 May, a number of militants who introduced themselves as members of the Internal Security Service interrupted a workshop organized by the NGO Safety Office in the Gaza Strip in the Commodore Hotel in Gaza City, claiming that the workshop was organized without prior coordination with the government in Gaza.

- On 13 May, the Palestinian police dispersed a candle march organized by the National Work Committee in Beit Lahia town to commemorate the Palestinian Nakba (the uprooting of the Palestinian people from their land in 1948). They also arrested 4 participants, but released them later.

- On 14 June, the police and activists of Hamas dispersed dozens of children and activists of Fatah movement who gathered near the house of Eyad 'Aashour, who had been killed in the internal fighting between Hamas and Fatah movements in 2007, in Tal al-Sultan neighborhood in Rafah. A number of participants in the gathering sustained bruises.

- On 19 May, the Internal Security Service arrested Dr. Ussama al-Farra, Governor of Khan Yunis, and another 3 leaders of Fatah movement in the town. The four figures were questioned about a ceremony in appreciation for workers that was supposed to be organized on that day.

- On 15 June, the police intercepted dozens of people who were on

their way to participate in a gathering to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba, which was invited to by the National Work Committee in the northern Gaza Strip. Police officers violently beat some of these people. The police also stormed the place where the gathering was supposed to be held and attacked the organizers using batons.

2 Violations of the Right to Peaceful Assembly in the West Bank

- On 10 January, the Palestinian police and security forces used force to disperse a demonstration organized in Ramallah by leftist factions (the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine]PFLP[, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Palestine People Party and the Palestinian National Initiative), some members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) and leaders of the civil society, in protest to a visit by US President George Bush to the presidential compound in the town. As a result, Basheer al-Khairi, member of the political bureau of the PFLP, sustained a fracture to the left shoulder, and 4 demonstrators suffered from tear gas inhalation, including PLC members Khaleda Jarrar and Bassam al-Salhi.

- On 24 February, security services in Ramallah dispersed the funeral of Majd al-Barghouthi, who died on 22 February while in custody by the General Intelligence Service in al-Bireh. Security officers attacked the participants using batons.

- On 15 July, the Preventive Security Service (PSS) in Hebron dispersed a peaceful demonstration organized by residents of al-Sammou' village, south of the town, towards the headquarters of the PSS, in protest to the detention of their mayor. It is worth noting that the PSS arrested Jamal Abu al-Jadayel, Mayor of al-Sammou', on 6 July 2008.

- On 29 July, security officers prevented people from going to Taj Mahal Hotel in al-Salam Street in Hebron to attend a women colloquium organized by the Hizb Ut Tahrir (Liberation Party). They also violently dispersed women who gathered in the area.

- On 2 August, security services used force to disperse a peaceful demonstration organized by the Hizb Ut Tahrir in the center of Tulkarm on the anniversary of the fall of the Islamic Khilafa. As a result, 4 demonstrators were injured. On 28 July, Brigadier Talal Dwaikat, Governor of Tulkarm, declared during a meeting of the Executive Council of the Governorate that he decided to ban the organization of demonstrations intended by the Hizb Ut Tahrir claiming that the decision aimed at maintaining security and stability.

Violations of the Right to Association

In 2008, violations of the right to association continued throughout the OPT. Such violations escalated under the ongoing political fragmentation in the PNA. The two governments in Gaza and Ramallah attacked associations affiliated to each other, including societies, unions, sports clubs and partisan offices.

Such attacks violate the Palestinian Basic Law, which ensures the right to association, including "the formation of syndicates, societies, unions, clubs and public communities in accordance with the law." They also violate international human rights standards, which ensure the right to association under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

In the Gaza Strip, the government and its security services waged a wide scale campaign against dozens of NGOs, including societies, sports clubs and partisan offices most of which are related to Fatah movement, in the context of measures they took following a crime committed at Gaza Beach. Such measures also included the detention of dozens of supporters and leaders of Fatah movement.[13]

On 25 July, unknown persons detonated an explosive device near a café on the Gaza City beach, which is usually frequented by Hamas activists and supporters. The explosion killed 6 people vacationing on the beach; all of them from Gaza City. One of the dead was a 4-year old child, and the other 5 were Hamas members. In addition, 27 people were injured. In response, the government in Gaza and its security forces embarked, immediately after the crime, on a series of steps against Fatah members and institutions and other civil society organizations affiliated to Fatah movement, as if it was behind the crime.

The police raided and closed Fatah offices and dozens of civil society institutions throughout the Gaza Strip. According to PCHR's documentation, the police raided more than 214 offices, sports club, benevolent societies, cultural centers, and development agencies. The police confiscated the belongings of these organizations and took them to undisclosed locations. The raids also targeted organizations such as the Palestinian Council for External Relations, a civil society organizations run by independent PLC member Ziad Abu Amru, whom Hamas supported in the last parliamentary elections. In addition, the office of the National Work Commission in Gaza City was raided. The Commission is composed of PLO factions.

[13] For more details, see p.81-82

Following insistent calls by civil society organizations, the Ministry of Interior in Gaza ordered reopening dozens of institutions that had been closed during the campaign, while dozens of others have remained closed under the pretext of being illegal. However, belongings of some of the institutions that were reopened were not returned.

Over the year, PCHR documented other assaults on the right to association in the Gaza Strip by unknown people. The most significant of such attacks were:

- On 9 January, three gunmen in a civilian vehicle fired one a rocket-propelled grenade at the building of the American School north of Gaza City. The projectile caused a large explosion and fire in the second floor of the building, which includes the cafeteria and art rooms. The gunmen fled the scene and no casualties were reported.

- On 12 January, several masked gunmen broke into the American School in northern Gaza City. They detained the school security guard and stole computers and other equipment from the school. Before leaving, they set fire to 5 buses and a car belonging to the school.

- On 15 February, at least 10 unidentified militants, some masked, broke into the YMCA, in al-Jalaa' Street in the centre of Gaza City. The militants overpowered two security guards. They handcuffed both men at gunpoint, and confiscated their mobile phones as well as the keys to the YMCA. The militants subsequently broke into, and damaged, the YMCA administration office, before breaking into the library. The two guards were then blindfolded, forced into a car, driven approximately three kilometres north east of Gaza City, and then abandoned. Later, a heavy explosion was heard in the centre of Gaza city. This was later identified as an explosion in the YMCA library which was completely destroyed. This was one of the explosive devises planted by the militants at the YMCA. A second unexploded device was discovered at the entrance to the YMCA auditorium, and later deactivated by the police.

- On 2 March, a number of gunmen traveling in 2 vehicles intercepted Mr. Ahmed Khader Abu Tawaheena, 47, when he was traveling in his car in the center of Deir al-Balah town in the central Gaza Strip. At least 10 masked gunmen got out of the two vehicles. They besieged Abu Tawaheena's car and forced him out of it. Immediately, a gunman violently beat him and fired 2 gunshots near his head to terrify him. The gunman then fired a third gunshot which hit a tire of Abu Tawaheena's car. The gunmen then left the area. According to Abu Tawaheena, the attack was related to his work at Gaza Community Mental Health Programme.

Over the year, the armed wing of Hamas took over a number of sports clubs in the Gaza Strip after dismissing their administrations. For instance, on 21 May, masked gunmen wearing a swathe on the head that read "Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades" took over Khan Yunis Youth Club after dismissing its administration and appointing another one affiliated to Hamas.

In the West Bank, the situation was not less worse as attacks on the right to association continued, especially attacks against institutions and associations related to Hamas.

It is worth noting that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and the government in Ramallah took a series of administrative measures, following Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip in June 2007, that imposed additional restrictions on the right to association under the state of emergency declared in the Palestinian Territories.[14] Such measures were apparently a prelude crack down civil society organizations. On 28 August 2007, the Prime Minister in Ramallah, Dr. Salam Fayyad, stated on 28 August 2007 that his government decided to dissolve 103 non-governmental organizations in the OPT for "committing legal, administrative, or financial violations of Law No. 1 of 2000 on Benevolent Societies and Non-Governmental Institutions."

Over the year, PCHR documented other assaults on the right to association in the West bank, the most significant of which were:

- On 6 August, Palestinian security services raided 4 benevolent associations and 2 printing houses in the Hebron Governorate, and confiscated their belongings. The security forces raided the Mujama' Islami Headquarters in al-Zahiriya village south of Hebron; the Islamic Cultural Center in Taffouh village west of Hebron); Benevolent Islamic Society in Beit Oula village northwest of Hebron; and Islamic Orphanage in Beit Ummar village north of Hebron. The security forces confiscated 2 student buses belonging to the Benevolent Islamic Society School in Beit Oula village as well as files and computers from the offices of all the targeted organizations.

- On 9 August, a force from the General Intelligence Apparatus in Hebron raided a warehouse belonging to the Sewing Workshops of the Islamic Benevolent Society in Hebron. The force searched the warehouse, located in 'Ein Sara neighborhood in the north of Hebron, and confiscated some of the stored materials.

- On 13 July, PCHR received a complaint from a candidate for the elections of the board of the Union Women Association, in which she stated that the Ministry of Interior deprived her and another 4 women of their right of candidature although they met all conditions of candidature, including paying the fees and commitment to the association's bylaw. The woman said that Director-General of the Ministry of Interior in Nablus sent a letter on 8 July to the director of the association stating that a committed headed by the Ministry of Interior, with the General Intelligence and the Preventive Security Service as members, approved only 11 out of 16 candidates to the elections, which means that those candidates would won the elections uncontestedly.

[14] For more details about these decisions, see PCHR's Annual Report 2007.

Death Penalty

In 2008, the issue of application of the death penalty in the PNA witnessed a negative development, as a number of death sentences were issued making a setback to the positive developments at this level in 2006 and 2007, during which time, Palestinian courts did not issue ant death sentence, nor did any death sentences from previous years were implemented. Over the year, a total of 9 death sentences were issued by Palestinian courts – 4 ones in the Gaza Strip and another 5 in the West Bank. Most of these sentences were issued by military courts. Additionally, 3 sentences to death against 3 men issued in previous years were supported. Thus, the number of death sentences issued by Palestinian courts (military, state security and civil) since the establishment of the PNA in 1994 has mounted to 83, including 13 ones that have been implemented. Even though none of such sentences were implemented by official bodies, following the IOF bombardment of Gaza Central Prison, which led some prisoners to flee, militants pursued and killed those prisoners. PCHR documented a number of statements by Hamas officials, which indicate that Hamas was involved in such killings.

Most sentences to death were issued by state security courts, which issued 38 of the total number of sentences to death issued by Palestinian courts. PCHR has strongly criticized state security courts, which lack minimum standards required for fair trials, since their establishment in accordance with a presidential decree in 1995. Other sentences to death (26 ones) were issued by military courts. These sentences were issued in accordance with the Revolutionary Penal Code of Palestine Liberation Organization of 1979, which is unconstitutional in the Palestinian National Authority, as it has not been presented to nor approved by the legislature. PCHR has repeatedly called for its abolition as it violates international standards of fair trial and does not include fair and independent mechanisms for appealing against court sentences.

The first sentence to death in 2008 was issued by the Gaza Military Court on 24 January against Yasser Sa'id Zannoun, 41, from Rafah. Zannoun was convicted of murdering Isma'il Salama al-Mishwakhi, an intelligence officer.

On 6 April 2008, the Palestinian High Military Court in Tulkarm sentenced Tha'er Mahmoud Husni Rmailat, 23, to death by firing squad after convicting him of murdering 'Alaa' 'Aayesh Mubarak, a member of the Palestinian National Security Forces.

On 28 April 2008, the High Military Court in Hebron sentenced 'Emad Mahmoud Sa'ed Sa'ed, 25, from Yatta village, to death by firing squad for treason and collaboration with the Israeli occupation.

On 15 July 2008, the High Military Court in Hebron sentenced Wa'el Sa'id Sa'ad, 27, and Mohammed Sa'ad Sa'ad, 44, both from Yatta village, to death by firing squad after convicting them of treason and collaboration with Israeli occupation.

On 20 July 2008, the Military Court in Gaza sentenced Eyad Ahmed Diab Sukkar, 35, from al-Shoja'eya neighborhood in Gaza City, to death by firing squad. The court convicted Sukkar of carrying out hostile activities against Palestinian revolutionists and military operations of the Palestinian revolution.

On 12 November 2008, the Military Court in Bethlehem sentenced Ayman Ahmed 'Awwad Daghamgha, 24, from al-'Arroub refugee camp north of Hebron, to death by firing squad.

On 16 December 2008, the High Military Court in Gaza sentenced Mohammed Ali Hassan Saidam, 34, from Rafah, to death by hanging. The Court convicted the defendant of treason, spying and conspiracy.

On 29 October 2008, the Gaza Court of Cassation, issued its support for the death sentences by hanging issued by the Court of Appeal on 13 April 2004 against 4 Palestinians. The defendants are: Eihab Diab Abu al-'Amrain, 28; Rami Sa'id Juha, 28; 'Abdul Fattah Mohammed Sammour, 26; and Sa'id Jameel Zuhod, 22. These deaths sentences date back to 3 April 2004, when the Court of Gaza sentenced the first three defendants to death, whilst the final defendant, Sa'id Jameel Zuhod, was sentenced to life imprisonment as he was a minor. The Court of Appeal changed Zuhod's sentence from life imprisonment to the death sentence. The four men had been accused of raping and murdering a child, Mayada Khalil Abu Limthi, on 25 September 2003. Changing the sentence issued against Zuhod constitutes a violation of article 65- of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states that "sentence of death shall not be imposed for crimes committed by persons below eighteen years of age and shall not be carried out on pregnant women."

PCHR emphasizes that the death penalty constitutes a flagrant violation of international human rights instruments. It is a form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, and it does not either constitute a deterrent.

It is worth noting that sentences to death can never be implemented with being ratified by the Palestinian President. PCHR feels comfortable that the Palestinian President has not ratified any of these sentences and hopes that his abstention from ratification will be a step towards stopping the application of the death penalty. That last sentence to death to be implemented in the PNA was on 27 July 2005, which was strongly criticized at the international level in light of a growing international position opposing the death penalty. This position was enhanced by the adoption a resolution issued by of the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 2007 calling for an international moratorium on the use of the death penalty as a prelude to abolishing the death penalty worldwide. The resolution was adopted with 104 votes in favor, 54 against and the abstention of 29 members. PCHR views this resolution as a very important and positive step forward at the level of international efforts to abolish the death penalty.

PCHR emphasizes that the death penalty constitutes a flagrant violation of international human rights instruments. It is a form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, and it does not either constitute a deterrent. Accordingly, PCHR calls upon the PNA to make necessary legal amendments to abolish laws that stipulates the application of the death penalty.

Additionally, PCHR calls for resuming the review of death sentences issued by state security courts before civil court in accordance with a decree issued by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on 22 June 2005. PCHR also welcomes the decision taken by the PNA on 27 July 2003 freezing the operation of state security courts, which violate the minimum standards of fair trials and the rule of law. Accordingly, PCHR calls upon the Palestinian President to issue a presidential decree abolishing these courts and canceling decree #49 of 1995, which established them.

PCHR is extremely concerned over repeated statements by officials in the Gaza government with regard to the application of the death penalty, and calls upon the government not to approve death sentences. For instance, Colonel Ahmed 'Atallah stated that "we will fail to achieve justice for people and apply the law if the President did not ratify court rulings, through 'the resistant legal jurisprudence' innovated by Palestinians for their own case."[15] Dr. Mahmoud al-Zahhar, a senior leader of Hamas, also stated that "the government in Gaza has found the appropriate legal mechanism through which it can apply the death penalty against collaborators and murderers."[16] PCHR asserts that the statement by the Minister of Justice in Gaza government, Faraj al-Ghoul, that the government was searching for legal alternatives and that the law has a wide space to apply the death penalty, is very grave since the law stipulates that no death sentence can be ever applied without the Palestinian President's ratification. Al-Ghoul also said: "We deal with the law in accordance with the higher interests of the Palestinian people while respecting the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary. Sentences must be implemented according to article 106 of the Palestinian law, which considers anyone who may interrupt issuing such sentences, does not implement them or interrupt their implementation as one who commits a crime…"[17]

PCHR is extremely concerned over the continued application of the death penalty in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), and therefore:

1. Calls upon the PNA to announce an immediate moratorium on the use of this form of punishment, which violates international human rights standards and instruments, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (1966), and the UN Convention against Torture (1984).

2. Calls upon Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas not to ratify these cruel and inhumane sentences, and to prevent their implementation.

3. Reiterates that abolishing the death penalty does imply leniency towards dangerous criminals, who must be subjected to punishment that acts as a deterrent, but also maintains human dignity.
4. Calls upon the PNA to review all legislation relative to the death penalty, especially Law No. 74 (1936) that remains effective in the Gaza Strip, and the Jordanian Penal Code No. 16 (1960) that remains effective in the West Bank, and to enact a unified penal code that conforms to the spirit of international human rights instruments, especially those pertaining to the abolition of the death penalty.

PCHR calls upon Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas not to ratify these cruel and inhumane sentences, and to prevent their implementation.

[15] 'Attallah's statement was published on the website of the Ministry of Interior in Gaza www.moi.ps on 13 August 2008.

[16] Al-Zahhar was speaking in a colloquium held in the Islamic University in Gaza on 9 September 2008. His statement was published on web site of Palestine Times, www.paltimes.net.

[17] Al-Ghoul's statement was published on the web site of al-Bian Media Center www.albian.ps on 15 November 2008.

Deterioration in the Sector of Public Service in the Gaza Strip

The political crisis in the PNA and the authorities conflict between the two Palestinian governments in Gaza and Ramallah have negatively impacted the economic and social conditions of the public service employees in the Gaza Strip; both military and civil ones. Measures taken by the two governments, including the cutting off of salaries of thousands of public services employees, employing new individuals in a manner violating the Civil Service Law, and the dismissal, marginalization and substitution of hundreds of employees in the public service in the Gaza Strip, have left severe impacts the living conditions of employees and undermined their ability to provide means of subsistence for themselves and for their families. In 2008, all public services, especially educational and health ones, were negatively impacted by a general strikes organized by the public service employees in the Gaza Strip. PCHR strongly condemned such strikes considering them politically motivated.

In 2008, all public services, especially educational and health ones, were negatively impacted by a general strikes organized by the public service employees in the Gaza Strip.

The General Secretariat of General Union of Palestinian Teachers, which is aligned with the Fatah movement, declared a 5-day strike at public schools throughout the Gaza Strip to be launched on 24 August, the first day of the new school year, in protest to what it described as 'arbitrary decisions' taken by the Ministry of Education of the Gaza government. These decisions have included transferring school directors and teachers to other schools, arresting a number of directors and teachers, attacking janitors and confiscating keys to schools.

On the first day of the new school year, 24 August 2008, a partial strike was reported at all public educational institutions in the Gaza Strip. The commitment of teachers to the strike was estimated at 4555%-. Consequently, the first day of school was largely disrupted as many school directors, teachers and administrative staff committed themselves to the 5-day strike declared by the General Union of Palestinian Teachers. In a subsequent development, the Internal Security Service belonging to the Ministry of Interior of the Gaza government circulated communiqués to directors of public schools, in which it threatened to take what it called 'necessary legal actions' against whoever disrupts the educational process. In the same context, the police of the Gaza government arrested a number of school directors.

PCHR followed up all accelerated developments that impacted on the public education sector. PCHR called upon all parties, including the governments of Gaza and Ramallah, to nullify all measures and decisions that had completely or partially disrupted the educational process at schools in the Gaza Strip. PCHR also called upon all parties to respect and promote the right of education for all people, to ensure the sustainable development of the education sector in Gaza, for the sake of thousands of Gaza students. PCHR further called upon the Palestinian police in Gaza to immediately release all school directors and teachers who had been arrested in the context of measures taken to confront the strike at public

schools. It also condemned threats by parties against to employees of the public education sector, which serve to create an atmosphere of concerns over their future.

PCHR contended that the Palestinian law ensures the right for everyone to organize strikes as a protesting expression and in defense for the interests of various groups, provided that strikes are voluntary and self-decided without any coercion or threat. PCHR also called upon the Ministry of Education in Gaza to invite the General Union of Palestinian Teachers for negotiations over all related issues, in order to reach an agreement that can ensure the interests of students of public schools in the Gaza Strip, and the interests of both the ministry and employees of public education, which could eventually lead to the resumption of the educational process in Gaza.

In a serious development, on 30 August 2008, public sector employees announced the start of an all-out strike in all governmental facilities in the Gaza Strip, in response to a call by the Palestinian Syndicate of Public Employees. Thousands of public sector employees joined the strike. A week earlier, education sector employees launched an open strike in response to a call by the General Union of Palestinian Teachers. This strike was supported by the government in Ramallah, which threatened to sack those who did not join the strikers, or to deprive them of their salaries. The government in Gaza subsequently took measures that included arresting dozens of education sector employees, as well as threatening to dismiss those who commit to the strike, whom it accused of attempting to destroy the education system in Gaza. In view of the serious repercussions of the near paralysis of all public service, and the enormous negative impacts on teachers and medical staff, PCHR affirmed that:

In view of international work relations, it was alarming that the employer (in this case the Government in Ramallah) supported this strike, compelled employees to commit to the strike, and threatened those who did not commit to be dismissed and/or deprived of their salaries. International good work practices demand that employers, either private or public, takes all necessary steps to prevent a strike by their employees. This exposed the strikes as politically motivated and rendered them illegitimate. These strikes were completely politicized actions that lacked all economic and social demands, and did not represent the real interests of public sector employees. Instead, these strikes represented severe internal political fragmentation, and the culmination of conflicting acts taken by the two conflicting parties.

- The people who were really paying the price for these politically motivated strikes were the public who need and use the public sector services. Thousands of civilians are in need of daily healthcare, including those who are critically ill in hospitals and need intensive follow-up public health services. PCHR considered it very concerning that the parties involved in these strikes had not allocated teams for the delivery of emergency health and sanitation services. A strike is the biggest protest that employees can use in order to realize a set of demands and interests, and a genuine work strike is never compulsory

or coercive. In the case of the strikes in Gaza, employees were being held hostages by threats of dismissal and deprivation of salary. These threats set a dangerous precedent of coercion and force. The civil service had become the victim of politically motivated official policies that threaten worker's access to their jobs and their salaries.

The civil service had become the victim of politically motivated official policies that threaten worker's access to their jobs and their salaries.

- Under the modified Civil Service act no. 4 (2005), the Government does not have the right to cut the salary of a civil service employee, except if he or she breaches the law. Therefore, all such threats were illegal, and represented arbitrary measures that severely violated the right of every human being to work and to enjoy an adequate standard of living. Following the events of June 2007, there were warnings about the serious implications of suspending the services of the General Attorney's Office, and security services. These warnings were not heeded, and today the same mistakes are being made.

- PCHR praised the positions of the medical services in the Gaza Strip and the employees who had refused to commit to the strike, and who had called upon their members to commit to their work for the sake of delivering public services.

- PCHR condemned all measures that had been taken by the security services in the Gaza Strip, including the harassment of dozens of public sector employees as well as arrests. PCHR also called for the immediate release of all employees who had been arrested for these reasons. Additionally, PCHR called for urgent dialogue between parties in order to resolve all disputes. PCHR demanded that public sector jobs are distributed and upgraded on the basis of competency and precedence, not political affiliation.

Under the modified Civil Service act no. 4 (2005), the Government does not have the right to cut the salary of a civil service employee, except if he or she breaches the law.

On 14 October 2008, in violation of the Palestinian law, the Palestinian Ministry of Education in the West Bank sent written notices to dozens of teachers affiliated to Hamas, dismissing them from their teaching posts. PCHR strongly condemned this illegal measure, and called upon the Palestinian government in Ramallah to reverse this decision, and refrain from pushing public service employees into the ongoing conflict between the Fatah and Hamas movements. PCHR called for neutralizing the public service sector and not to pushing it into the political conflict, but instead to utilize the Public Service Law as a basis for dealing with all issues related to public service employees. It also called for ensuring respect and support of the right to work, and the right to be employed in public jobs, and promoting equal opportunities based on qualifications and experience, without any discrimination on whatever basis, including discrimination based on political orientation or partisan affiliation

PART TWO

PCHR'S ACTIVITIES IN 2008

PCHR Units' Activities

Introduction

The previous section of this report has detailed the human rights situation in the OPT in 2008. It shows the unprecedented deterioration in the human right situation in light of grave breaches perpetrated by IOF against the Palestinian civilian population, and the escalation in the state of lawlessness in the OPT. Humanitarian and living conditions in the OPT have also deteriorated due to the tightened siege imposed on the OPT, especially the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian political fragmentation have impacted all aspects of life in the OPT, and violations of human rights by the two parties of the conflict, Hamas and Fatah movements, have continued. Additionally, the international boycott against the Gaza Strip has continued, while the international community has continued to be silent towards crimes committed by IOF against the Palestinian civilian population.

This tragic situation coincides with the 6th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as the Palestinian Nakba (the uprooting of the Palestinian people from their land). Sixty years have passed and the Palestinian people are still deprived of their rights ensured by the international law, including the right to self-determination and the right of return.
Under these circumstances, PCHR has vowed to implement its plans and activities decided for 2008, which sharply increased due to the tragic developments that took place over the tear.

Before highlighting activities, it is important to address some major issues that characterized PCHR's activities in 2008:

1. Intensified Efforts to Prosecute Israeli War Criminals before the International Judiciary
2. Promotion of Cooperation with Civil Society Organizations to Face Deterioration in the Human Rights Situation
3. Coordination and Cooperation with Other Human Rights Organizations
4. Cooperation with International Civil Society Organizations
5. Promotion of Activities Related to Gender Issues

1 Intensified Efforts to Prosecute Israeli War Criminals before the International Judiciary

In 2008, PCHR continued its persistent efforts to search for and prosecute suspect Israeli war criminals, both political and military ones, before international courts for their responsibility for crimes committed by IOF against the Palestinian civilian population. These efforts, which have been made for several years, have led to important achievements. In 2008, PCHR maintained contacts and meetings for legal consultations. PCHR, through its Legal Aid Unit, and in coordination with a number of lawyers and legal organizations in Arab and European countries, was able to a file a number of lawsuits. Director of PCHR, Raji Sourani, supported by PCHR's staff, held participated in dozens of meetings and conference in the context of PCHR's efforts to prosecute Israeli war criminals.

In 2008, efforts made by PCHR were concluded by filing two lawsuits against Israeli war criminals:

- **A Lawsuit in Spain**

On 24 June 2008, PCHR filed a lawsuit at the National Court of Spain, the highest Spanish judicial council, against seven former senior Israeli military officials. These include former Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, his former military advisor, Michael Herzog, former Israeli Army Chief of Staff Moshe Ya'alon and Dan Halutz, former Commander of the Israeli Air Force. PCHR filed this lawsuit on behalf of six Palestinians who survived an Israeli extra judicial execution operation in the Gaza Strip in July 2002. The attack killed and wounded dozens of Palestinian civilians.

- **A Lawsuit in Netherlands**

An application was submitted to the Dutch authorities to arrest Ami Ayalon, currently Minister without Portfolio in the Israeli Government, while he was visiting the Netherlands from 16 to 20 May 2008, by Khalid al-Shami, who alleged that he was a victim of torture in 19992000/, when Ami Ayalon was the Director of Shin Bet (the Israeli General Security Services – GSS).

- **Cairo Conference**

On 8 November 2008, PCHR, in conjunction with its Egyptian partners, the Arab Centre for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession (ACIJLP), and the Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR) co-hosted a human rights conference in Cairo. The one-day conference focused on extra-judicial executions and prosecution of Israelis suspected of committing war crimes. More than 60 international delegates attended the conference, including human rights lawyers and advocates from the OPT, Egypt, Morocco, Spain, South Africa and the UK. Representatives from the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Swedish NGO Diakonia, the Centre for Transitional Justice (CTJ) and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) also attended. The delegates discussed the legal and judicial issues surrounding extra-judicial executions perpetrated by the Israeli military (Israeli occupation forces occupying the OPT) and issues relating to accountability and transitional justice.

The Cairo conference provided a rare opportunity for human rights lawyers and advocates to discuss the current state of universal jurisdiction from several different international perspectives, and the potential for expanding universal jurisdiction across the 27 EU States.

On 9 November, a meeting was held to discuss efforts to prosecute Israeli war criminals. The meeting discussed the legal and judicial issues

surrounding extra-judicial executions perpetrated by IOF and issues relating to accountability and transitional justice. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, held several meetings with a number of international attorneys, including Daniel Machover, Kate Maynard, Gnozalo Boye, Antonio Segura, and a number of attorneys from the Centre for Transitional Justice. The meeting discussed efforts to file lawsuits against Israeli war criminals.

2 Promotion of Cooperation with Civil Society Organizations to Face Deterioration in the Human Rights Situation

PCHR organized several activities with in cooperation with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation in the OPT. Relevant activities are detailed in the reports of units.

- **National Reconciliation Committee**

In 2008, PCHR contributed to efforts to ensure national reconciliation and the end of internal Palestinian fragmentation. This committee was formed of national, political and academic figures and some civil society organizations. PCHR made efforts in the context of the committee's work to follow up issues related to the internal conflict through carrying out several activities, including media activities and contacts with the two parties of the conflict in Gaza and Ramallah to ensure an end for the political fragmentation and its impacts on the Palestinian society and the national cause.

- **The Committee to Release Political Prisoners**

In 2008, PCHR was active in the context of the Committee to Release Political Prisoners in Gaza and Ramallah. The committee is formed of national, political and academic figures. It makes efforts to ensure and end for political arrests in the PNA. PCHR, through the committee, made efforts to end such violations of the Palestinian law and international human rights instruments through several communications and initiatives.

- **Palestinian-International Campaign to Lift the Siege Imposed on Gaza**

It is an initiative by a number of national figures and civil society groups aiming at making local and international efforts to lift the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip. PCHR was active in this campaign through a series of activities of advocacy and lobbying at the international level to lift the siege. Such efforts proved fruitful as several international figures and organizations joined the campaign. International committees were able to send several ships towards Gaza, on board of which dozens of international solidarity activists and humanitarian assistance were.

- **The Committee to Follow up Closure of Civil Society Organizations**

PCHR participated in a series of activities organized by civil society organizations to confront measures of closure taken by the government in Gaza against at least 200 civil organizations in the Gaza Strip in July 2008. Upon an invitation from the Palestinian NGOs Network, a meeting was held on 26 July 2008 for representatives of civil society organizations and political factions. Hamdi Shaqqura, Director of Democratic Development Unit, represented PCHR in the meeting and was a member of the committee it established to make communications

with decision-makers in Gaza. The committee held a number of meetings to coordinate positions and determine priorities. It was able to hold the following meetings with decision-makers, including with the Palestinian Prime Minister in Gaza, Ismail Haniya; the Acting Speaker of the PLC, Dr. Ahmed Bahar; and the Monitoring and Human Rights Committee in the Palestinian Legislative Council. In all these meetings, representatives of civil society organizations called for respect for the right to freedom of association, reopening closed civil society organizations and returning their confiscating property.

3 Coordination and Cooperation with Other Human Rights Organizations

The continued deterioration in the human rights situation in the OPT increases the need for cooperation and coordination among human rights organizations. In 2008, PCHR enhanced cooperation and coordination with other Palestinian human rights organizations, through contacts, meetings, exchange of opinions and expertise. This effort was manifested in joint activities, such as the issuing joint press releases with other human rights organizations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. PCHR also enhanced contacts with human rights organizations in Israel, especially in the field of legal aid to Palestinian victims of Israeli violations of human rights. All contacts with human rights organizations were conducted via telephone or video conference due to the Israeli closure imposed on the Gaza Strip.

- **National Coalition against the Death Penalty**

PCHR cooperated with a number of human rights organizations working in the PNA controlled areas to for the Palestinian Coalition against the Death Penalty. The Coalition's goal is to abolish the death penalty from the Palestinian legislation through advocacy and lobbying activities. For this purpose, the Coalition carried out several activities in 2008, the most significant of which was the first Palestinian conference against the death penalty, which was held on 2 December 2008.

4 Cooperation with International Civil Society Organizations

In spite of the total siege imposed on the Gaza Strip, PCHR has continued its activities at the international level, including enhancing cooperation with international civil society and human rights organizations, to form a lobby to urge the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention and the European Union to exert pressure on the Israeli government to stop violations of Palestinian human rights.

5 Promotion of Activities Related to Gender Issues

In 2008, PCHR promoted activities related to gender issues. It continued to adopt policies based on gender equality in employment and in training programs. In 2008, two new female employees joined PCHR's staff; one is a lawyer who was employed in Women's Rights Unit and the other one is a translator who was employed in the Translation Unit. PCHR also employed 13 persons, including 10 women, who received tanning at PCHR.

PCHR also continued to allow equal opportunities in promotions for its staff members. It made efforts to allow women to contribute to the decision-making process. It is worth noting that the 7-program Program Committee, which sets out work plans at strategies for PCHR, includes two female members.

In 2008, PCHR, through its various units, made efforts to implement programs that target women in the Gaza Strip. It also continued to monitor and document violations of women's rights.

Legal Aid Unit

The unit worked on all activities included in its annual plan for 2008 and made efforts to carry out all of these activities. The unit provides legal assistance to victims of human rights violations.

Israeli Agenda

The unit carried out all activities set out in its annual plan regarding to providing legal assistance to victims of human rights violations perpetrated by IOF. In 2008, the unit was able to achieve a number of judicial precedents.

Output (1)
Legal Aid for Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli Jails
Making efforts to stop torture.
Ensuring medical care to prisoners.
Ensuring the release of prisoners.
Ensuring better detention conditions.
Determining the legal status and places of detention of prisoners.

Activities

The unit continued to provide legal aid for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, through representing them before courts, visiting them and submitting complaints and appeals to concerned bodies. In 2008, 69 Palestinian prisoners benefited from the legal aid provided by the unit.

Representing Palestinian Prisoners before Israeli Courts

The unit provided legal aid for 69 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, specifying places of their detention, visiting them and representing them before court. The lawyer authorized by the unit conducted 105 visits to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails to check their health conditions and legal status.

Submitting Complaints and Petitions

1

Complaints: The unit submitted 20 complaints to Israeli official bodies, including the prisons authority, the attorney general and the military legal advisor:

- In 2008, the unit followed up 11 complaints to stop torture. All of those complaints were submitted in previous years.

- The unit submitted 5 complaints to the Israeli prison authority and the Public Committee against Torture in Israel concerning health conditions of prisoners. A lawyer authorized by PCHR also visited 7 sick prisoners.
- The unit submitted one complaint to the Israeli prison authority and its legal advisor and the Public Committee against Torture in Israel concerning the death of a Palestinian prisoner in the Be'r al-Saba Prison due to the lack of appropriate health care.
- The unit submitted one complaint to the Israeli prison authority to retrieve belongings of a released prisoner.
- The unit submitted one complaint to the International Committee of the Red Cross concerning denial of family visitation for a sick prisoner.
- The unit submitted one complaint to the Israeli state prosecution and the legal advisor of the Israeli prison authority against a decision to deport a Gazan prisoner to Egypt.
- The unit issued a press release concerning demands to investigate the death of Fadel Shaheen while in detention in an Israeli prison.
- The unit was able to obtain bills of indictment of 15 prisoners and assisted families of two prisoners to ensure providing pocket money for them.

2 **Petitions**: In 2008, the unit submitted 3 petitions:

- On 27 April 2008, the unit submitted a petition to the Administrative Court in Bir Saba demanding allowing PCHR lawyers to visit Palestinian detainees in Ashkelon Prison.
- On 12 June 2008, the unit in conjunction with a number of other human rights organizations submitted a petition to the Israeli High Court demanding allowing family visitations for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- On 1 December 2008, the unit submitted a petition to the Israeli High Court demanding cancellation of a decision to deport a Gazan prisoner to Egypt.

Providing Medical Care to Prisoners

The unit coordinates and cooperates with a number of Israeli health care organizations, including Physicians for Human Rights and the Public Committee against Torture in Israel, to follow up health conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails through providing physicians who visit the prisoners. In 2008, the unit contacted Physicians for Human Rights and the Public Committee against Torture to visit 7 Palestinian prisoners to check his health condition.

Legal Consultation to Victims

In 2008, the continued to receive clients at PCHR's offices in Gaza, Khan Yunis and Jabalya. The unit lawyers provided 267 legal consultations to clients.

Reports

The unit writes legal reports when necessary. In 2008, the unit contributed to issuing a report on the conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli Jails.

Indicators

- The unit provided legal aid to 69 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- 15 prisoners, whose cases were pursued by the unit, were released without any charge being presented against them.
- The lawyer authorized by the unit conducted 105 visits to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- The unit followed up health conditions of 7 Palestinian prisoners to ensure better health conditions for them.
- The unit was able to obtain the bill of indictment of a Palestinian prisoner.
- The unit was able to get a court ruling in favor of a Palestinian prisoner.
- The unit submitted a complaint to concerned bodies demanding investigation into the death of a Palestinian prisoner.
- The unit issued one press release.
- The unit received a negative response with regard to a complaint related to the torture of a Palestinian prisoner.
- The unit received a negative response from the Israeli state prosecution to a compliant regarding the deportation of a Gazan prisoner to Egypt.
- The unit was able to retrieve personal belongings of a released prisoner.
- The unit was able to obtain a positive court ruling to allow PCHR lawyers to visit Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, and accordingly PCHR lawyers conducted 105 visits to prisoners.
- The unit provided 267 legal consultations to families of Palestinian prisoners.
- The unit published a report on the suffering of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, which is available on PCHR's web site.

Means of Verification

- The number of Palestinians arrested from the Gaza Strip increased.
- Some prisoners were visited by PCHR lawyers more than once.
- The unit found out that a number of prisoners were suffering from health problems.
- The unit received a negative response with regard to a complaint related to the torture of a Palestinian prisoner.
- The unit received a negative response from the Israeli state prosecution to a compliant regarding the deportation of a Gazan prisoner to Egypt.
- The unit was able to obtain a positive court ruling to allow PCHR lawyers to visit Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- The unit was able to retrieve personal belongings of a released prisoner.
- The unit assisted families in paying pocket money for their detained relatives.
- The unit issued one press release.
- At least 1,000 visitors to PCHR's web site downloaded the report published by the unit on the suffering of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

Output (2)
Legal Aid for Victims of Israeli Violations of International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law
1. Compensation for victims
2. Making use of universal jurisdiction
3. Meetings on universal jurisdiction

1 Compensation for Victims

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

Legal Documentation

The unit has continued to document Israeli violations of human rights. In 2008, the unit documented 235 files on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights as shown in the following table.

Table (1): Legal Files Prepared by the Unit on Israeli Violations of Human Rights in 2008

Violation	Number of Files
Killing	77
Injuries	89
Destruction or robbery of property	69
Total	**235**

Submitting Legal Complaints on Behalf of Victims to Concerned Bodies

In 2008, the unit pursued 235 complaints from Palestinian civilians who were subject to Israeli violations of human rights. These complaints were submitted to the Israeli military prosecutor and the compensation officer at the Israeli Ministry of Defense, demanding reparation for the victims. They included cases of killing, injury, torture, and destruction or robbery of property.

Table (2): Complaints Regarding Cases of Killing, Injuries and Destruction and Robbery of Property and Results of Pursuits in 2008

Subject of Complaint	Number of Complaints	Current Status
Killing	77	Still being pursued
Injuries	89	Still being pursued
Destruction or robbery of property	69	Still being pursued
Total	**235**	

In the addition, the unit sent 223 written notices to the Israeli Defense Ministry in 2009, in accordance with amendments made on 24 July 2002 to the Tort Law:

- The unit sent a letter to the Israeli military prosecution in response to inquiry about the ammunition used by IOF against 5 Palestinian victims.

- The unit sent a letter to the IOF civil defense in the West Bank demanding returning a Jordanian passport of a Palestinian.
- The unit sent a letter to Le'umi Bank in Ashkelon demanding paying pension for a Palestinian.
- The unit also sent dozens of reminding letters and affidavits to the Israeli military prosecutor, the Israeli military legal advisor, the Israeli military police and the compensation office at the Israeli Ministry of Defense concerning complaints submitted in 2007 and 2008.
- The unit issued a press release on Israel's denial of the entry of fuel into the Gaza Strip in violation of an Israeli High Court ruling.

Complaints Concerning Attacks against Palestinian Fishermen

In 2008, the unit submitted 13 complaints concerning attacks against Palestinian fishermen, as shown in the following table:

Table (3): Complaints Concerning Attacks against Palestinian Fishermen

Subject of Complaint	Number of Complaints	Current Status
Detention of fishing boats	13	7 positive responses, 3 negative ones and one is still being pursued
Total	**13**	**7 positive responses, 3 negative ones and one is still being pursued**

Claims before the Israeli Judiciary

In 2008, the unit continued to sue claims before the Israeli judiciary against the State of Israel on behalf of victims of Israeli violations of human rights, including killings, injuries and house demolitions. The unit demanded compensation for the victims.

Indicators

- The unit sued a compensation claim on behalf of 7 victims.
- The unit pursued 89 compensation claims before Israeli courts on behalf of victims.
- The unit paid financial insurance for many claims before Israeli courts, especially those related to compensation.
- 20 claims were dismissed, so the unit continued to pursue 69 claims.
- The unit issued a press release on the release of 3 fishing boats that had been held by IOF.

Means of Verification

- The unit established 235 files of human rights violations, including killings, injuries and destruction or robbery of property.
- In 2008, the unit received a number of responses from Israeli official bodies to its correspondences.

Table (4): Responses Received by the Unit from Israeli Authorities in 2008

Concerned Party	Positive	Negative	Under pursuit	Total
Compensation officer at Defense Ministry	Nil	208	131	**339**
Israeli military prosecutor	Nil	11	106	**117**
Israeli military police	Nil	Nil	5	**5**
Total	**Nil**	**219**	**242**	**461**

Notable Decisions:

- The unit received a positive response from the Israeli military legal advisor with regard to returning 6 fishing boats to the Gaza Strip.
- Israeli courts issued arbitrary decisions regarding compensation claims ordering claimants to pay too high amounts of money for insurance.
- A number of claims are threatened to be dismissed due to not paying the high amounts of money of insurance.
- A number of compensation claims were dismissed.

2 Making Use of Universal Jurisdiction

1. Prosecution of War Criminals

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

Legal Documentation

The unit has continued to document Israeli violation of human rights. In 2008, the unit established 235 files on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights as shown in the following table.

Table (5): Legal Files Prepared by the Unit on Israeli Violations of Human Rights in 2008

Violation	Number of Files
Killing	77
Injuries	89
Destruction or robbery of property	69
Total	**235**

Claims before the Israeli Judiciary

In 2008, the unit sued a compensation claim before Israeli courts on behalf of 7 victims of Israeli violations of human rights, and continued to pursue other compensation claims from previous years.

On 26 December 2008, the unit, in conjunction with the office of attorney Li'a Tsemel, submitted a petition on behalf of 3 Palestinian fishermen, to the Israeli High Court against the Israeli Defense Minister and commander of the Israeli navy, demanding the release of their boats. On 27 December,

the Israeli navy released the three boats before the case being considered by the court.

Contacts with International Attorneys and Legal Experts

In 2008, the unit maintained contacts with international attorneys and legal experts in the contexts of its efforts to search for and prosecute Israeli war criminals.

- An application was submitted to the Dutch authorities to arrest Ami Ayalon, currently Minister without Portfolio in the Israeli Government, while he was visiting the Netherlands from 16 to 20 May 2008, by Khalid al-Shami, who alleged that he was a victim of torture in 19992000/, when Ami Ayalon was the Director of Shin Bet (the Israeli General Security Services – GSS). Mr. al-Shami's evidence file was collected by his lawyers in Gaza City, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) and he only sought justice abroad after the Israeli authorities failed to act on his allegations, in part because torture is routinely sanctioned in Israel. The Dutch authorities failed to arrest Mr. Ayalon, even though there was a prima facie case and they concluded he was not immune from prosecution. On 6 October 2008, Mr. al-Shami applied to the Court of Appeal in The Hague for an order requiring the Prosecutor to start a criminal investigation into Mr Ayalon and to issue an extradition order or an international arrest warrant to secure his presence in the Netherlands during any trial. Alternatively, Mr Al-Shami at least seeks an Order for an 'anticipatory investigation', so that a criminal investigation file is opened.

- In June 2008, PCHR, in cooperation with Spanish partners (Antonio Segura, Gonzalo Boye, Juan Moreno and Raul Maillo), filed a lawsuit at the National Court of Spain, the highest Spanish judicial council, against seven former senior Israeli military officials. PCHR filed this lawsuit on behalf of six Palestinians who survived an Israeli extra judicial execution operation in the Gaza Strip in July 2002. An Israeli Air Force fighter jet dropped a 2,000 lbs. bomb on the house of Salah Shehada, Commander of Izzidin al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, who was living in al- Daraj district of Gaza city. The attack killed 18 Palestinian civilians, wounded 77 others and destroyed 11 houses completely and 32 others partially.

- Additionally, PCHR has maintained cooperation with the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) in New York and Hickman & Rose in London. PCHR cooperated with Hickman & Rose in fling a similar lawsuit against Major General (retired) Doron Almog, according to which an arrest warrant was issued against him on 10 September 2005 by Chief London Magistrate Timothy Workman, but he evaded justice and the arrest warrant was not implemented.

Indicators

- In 2008, the unit continued its efforts to prosecute Israeli war criminals before national judiciaries in a number of European States.
- The National Court of Spain accepted the lawsuit filed by PCHR and

Spanish partners against 7 former Israeli officials.
- The Dutch prosecution authorities accepted the complaint submitted against Ami Ayalon, Former Director of the Israeli General Security Service.
- An application was submitted to the Court of Appeal in The Hague for an order requiring the Prosecutor to start a criminal investigation into Ami Ayalon and to issue an extradition order or an international arrest warrant to secure his presence in the Netherlands during any trial, or alternatively, an order for an 'anticipatory investigation', so that a criminal investigation file is opened.
- Movement of a number of Israeli officials responsible for war crimes against Palestinians has been restricted in a number of countries due to claims brought against them before courts.
- The arrest warrant issued on 10 September 2005 by Chief London Magistrate Timothy Workman against Major General (retired) Doron Almog is still effective.
- The unit issued 3 press releases on efforts to prosecute Israeli war criminals.

Means of Verification
- This issue has a special Palestinian, Israeli and international legal attention.
- Raising this issue can deter many individuals from committing war crimes fearing from being prosecuted before the international judiciary.

2. Consultative Meetings on Universal Jurisdiction

PCHR held complementary meetings for the conference on universal jurisdiction in order to support the rule of law and the struggle against impunity. PCHR, in conjunction with International Federation for Human Rights, Hickman and Rose Solicitors and al Quds Association, organized the conference in April 2006 in Malaga, Spain. On 8 November 2008, PCHR, in cooperation with the Arab Organization for Human Rights and the Arab Center for the Independence of the Judiciary and Legal Profession, organized a conference in Cairo on the application of universal jurisdiction for the prosecution of suspects of committing war crimes in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Output (3)
Legal Aid to Those Who Are Denied Freedom of Movement
The unit continued to provide legal aid for Palestinian civilians with regard to restrictions imposed on their freedom of movement. In 2008, IOF tightened the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip and continued to close its border crossings. They imposed additional restriction on the movement of Palestinian civilians, including patients. To achieve this output, the unit carried out a number of activities as set out in its annual plan.

Complaints Regarding Freedom of Movement

The unit pursued 310 complaints in 2008, including some ones that were submitted of humanitarian cases center at Erez crossings.

Table (6): Complaints Regarding Freedom of Movement and Results of Pursuits in 2008

Subject of Complaint	Number of Complaints	Current Status
Denial of traveling to Israel for medical treatment	103	55 positive responses, 34 negative responses and 14 have received no responses
Denial of traveling to the West Bank for medical treatment	40	15 positive responses, 18 negative responses and 7 have received no responses
Denial of traveling to accompany patients	75	36 positive responses, 25 negative responses and 14 have received no responses
Denial of allowing Palestinians who have Israeli citizenship to enter the Gaza Strip to join their families	10	5 positive responses and 5 have received no responses
Denial of traveling abroad	31	13 positive responses, 8 negative responses and 10 have received no responses
Denial of traveling to the West Bank	34	3 positive responses, 25 negative responses and 6 have received no responses
Denial of traveling to Israel to join families	3	No responses
Denial of traveling to Israel to apply for visas to travel to the United States	2	2 negative responses
Denial of traveling back to the Gaza Strip	6	6 negative responses
Denial of renewing magnetic cards and permits	5	5 negative responses
Denial of issuing an identity card	1	No response
Total	**310**	**127 positive, 123 negative and 60 have received no responses**

The unit also submitted 62 appeals to the Israeli appeal department of state prosecution concerning freedom of movement. The unit received 28 negative responses, 19 positive ones and the remaining 15 ones have received no responses.

Table (7): Appeals Submitted to the Israeli Administrative Court in Bir Saba Court in 2008 Concerning Freedom of Movement

Subject	Number of Appeals	Current Status
Denial of access to medical treatment at Israeli hospitals	6	4 positive responses and 2 negative ones
Denial of allowing Palestinians who have Israeli citizenship from entering the Gaza Strip to join their families	1	A positive response
Total	**7**	**6 positive responses and 2 negative ones**

On 13 May 2008, 9 human rights organizations, including PCHR, petitioned the Israel High Court demanding that the Israel stop restricting fuel supply to the Gaza Strip as part of a policy of collective punishment.

Networking with Human Rights Organizations

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

- The unit provided assistance to Physicians for Human rights for their report on the suffering of Gazan patients at Erez crossing as they are subjected to interrogation and extortion by interrogators of the Israeli General Security Service.
- The unit sent 16 letters to Physicians for Human Rights to facilitate medical treatment of 16 Gazan patients at Israeli hospitals. The unit received 15 positive responses to its letters, whereas the 16th one is still being addressed.
- The unit sent several latter to external medical treatment department at the Palestinian Ministry of Health to provide financial coverage for the treatment of 35 patients outside the Gaza Strip. The unit received 28 positive responses and 4 negative ones to its later. The remaining 3 letters are still being pursued.
- The unit sent a letter to the director of al-Maqassed Charitable Hospital in Jerusalem to exempt a child of financial costs of her treatment. The issue is still being pursued.

Indicators

- In 2008, the unit pursued 310 complaints concerning freedom of movement.
- The unit received 127 positive responses and 123 negative ones to the complaints it submitted.
- The unit submitted 62 appeals to the appeal department at the Israeli state prosecution. It received 19 positive responses and 28 negative ones to its appeals.
- The unit submitted 7 appeals to Israeli courts with regard to the freedom of movement, 5 of which received 5 positive rulings whereas the remaining two ones received negative rulings.
- The unit received 43 positive responses out of 51 ones to its letters to health organizations concerning patients.
- The unit followed up two petitions submitted in conjunction with other human rights organizations to the Israeli High Court.
- The Israeli High Court issued a negative ruling in response to a petition related to the denial of providing the Gaza Strip with electricity.
- The unit issued one press release concerning a petition submitted by 9 human rights organizations, including PCHR, to the Israeli High Court with regard to Israeli restrictions on fuel supplies to the Gaza Strip.

Means of Verification

- The unit noticed an increasing number of responses to its complaints.
- Israeli courts issued a number of rulings preventing patients from receiving medical treatment in Israel, but allowing them to receive medical treatment in Egypt or Jordan.
- The unit documented a number of cases, in which Palestinian patients died because IOF denied them passage through Erez crossing to receive medical treatment at hospitals in Israel or the West Bank.

- On 17 December 2008, the unit staff met with the Head of the Mission of Medicins Sans Frontieres, Mr. Duncan McLean. The meeting focused on health conditions and the suffering of Palestinian patients under the Israeli siege.
- The Israeli High Court issued a decision with regard to the restriction of electricity supplies to the Gaza Strip.

Obstacles

- Israeli occupation authorities have maintained the closure of border crossings of the Gaza Strip.
- The health sector in the Palestinian National Authority suspended its activities.

Output (4)
Contribution to International Advocacy Projects

1. Contribution to PCHR's Interventions with UN Bodies

In 2008, the unit did not contribute to interventions with UN bodies.

2. Testifying before the UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices

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

3. Providing Assistance to International Organizations and Inquiry Missions

In 2008, the unit held meetings with, and provided assistance to a number of international human rights organizations which were interested in the human rights situation in the OPT:

- 22 May: Escorting Christina Ruiz from the al-Quds Association for Solidarity with Arab Peoples in a visit to the Abu Me'teq family in Beit Hanoun.
- 28 May: A meeting with Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who headed the UNHRC High Level Fact-Finding Mission investigating the massacre by the Israeli army against al-Athamna family on 8 November 2006.
- 29 May: A meeting with a delegation from the Irish Charity and Development Agency (Trocaire) and representatives of French and Belgian member organizations of the International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity (CIDSE). The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip and the deteriorated humanitarian situation in the territory.
- 1 June: A meeting with a delegation from the National Council of Interest from the US. The delegation was headed by the Chairman of the Council former US Ambassador to Jordan Richard Viets. The meeting discussed the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip

and systematic violations of human rights of the Strip's civilian population.

- 1 June: A meeting with a European Parliament delegation that included Luisa Morgantini, the Deputy Speaker of the European Parliament. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip.
- 2 June: A meeting with a delegation from the office of UNRWA's Commissioner-General.
- 24 June: A meeting with Mr. John Kjaer, Representative of the European Commission, Mr. Jerome Bellion, Political Officer, and Ms. Maja Sverbrup, Political Advisor. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip.
- 25 June: A meeting with delegation from Spanish Cooperation Program in Jerusalem, headed by Ms. Barbara Demurtos and Mr. Asier Rodriguez Villa. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip.
- 26 June: A meeting at UNDP headquarters in Gaza with Mr. Mr. Raymond Johansen, Deputy Foreign Minister of Norway. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the OPT and obligations of European States to ensure protection for Palestinian civilians and to pressure Israel to stop human rights violations.
- 6 July: A meeting with Ms. Grietje Baars, the Legal Advisor in Diakonia's Regional Middle East Office. The meeting discussed an upcoming conference in Brussels to discuss increasing the utilization of Universal Jurisdiction and pursuit of Israeli war criminals through joint action in international courts.
- 8 July: A meeting with a Parliamentary French delegation from the International Information Group on the Palestinian Territories. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the OPT, with emphasis on the catastrophic impact of Israeli siege of Gaza on the civilian population.
- 23 July: A meeting with Mr. Philippe Lazzarini, Head the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and staff members of the office. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip.
- 6 October: A meeting with UN Center for Humanitarian Assistance Center in Gaza. The meeting discussed the humanitarian and human rights situation in the Gaza Strip.
- 9 October: A meeting with a delegation of Quakers. The meeting discussed the human rights situation.
- 15 October: A meeting with an Irish delegation, which discussed the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip.

Indicators

- PCHR provided assistance to 16 international committees.
- The unit escorted two committees to field tours in the Gaza Strip to check the human rights situation.

Means of Verification

Information provided by PCHR was incorporated in reported wrote by international human rights organizations.

Output (5)
Raising Awareness of Legal Rights

1. Legal Consultation to Clients

Legal consultation is a means of raising awareness legal rights. Legal consultations were made through referrals from PCHR's offices in Gaza City, Jabalya and Khan Yunis. In 2008, 2,935 individuals referred to the unit for basic legal consultations. The unit lawyers provided 1,420 legal consultations on various issues.

Indicators

- There was an increase in the number of clients seeking legal consultations (2,935).
- There was an increase in the number of legal consultations provided by the unit (1,420).

Means of Verification

- Clients were satisfied with legal services provided by the unit.

2. Participation in Training Activities Organized by PCHR

The unit contributed to training courses organized by PCHR. Staff members of the unit delivered lectures focusing on the rule of law and the independence of trhe judiciary.

Indicators

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

Means of Verification

- In 2008 the unit staff members delivered 7 lectures in training courses organized by PCHR.
- The number of trainees who participated in these courses was 172.

Output (6)
Providing Legal Aid to Ensure the Release Bodies of Palestinians Held by IOF

In 2008, the unit pursued 18 cases of requests for return of victims' bodies, including cases from previous years. IOF have continued to hold the bodies of some Palestinians, refusing to deliver them to their families for burial in violation of humanitarian norms.

Indicators

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

Means of Verification

- The unit pursued 18 cases of requests for return of victims' bodies.

Obstacles

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

Output (7)
Ensuring Medical Care for Patients

To achieve this output, the unit carried out the following activities:

1. Complaints

In 2008, the unit provided legal assistance to 67 patients who needed urgent medical treatment.

2. Maintaining Contacts with Human Rights and Health Organizations to Facilitate Access of Patients to Medical Treatment

The unit maintained professional contacts with a number of human rights and health organizations, including Physicians for Human Rights in Israel, to ensure access of Palestinian patients to medical treatment at Israeli hospitals.

Indicators

The unit provided legal assistance to 67 patients.
19 Palestinian patients were allowed access to medical treatment at Israeli hospitals through contacts between PCHR and Israeli human rights and health organizations.

Means of Verification

Positive feedbacks.
Contacts with human rights and health organizations have proved to be fruitful with regard to ensuring access of Palestinian patients to medical treatment.

Obstacles

The continued siege imposed by IOF on the Gaza Strip.
The strike in the Palestinian public health sector.

Palestinian Agenda

In 2008, the OPT witnessed aspects of lawlessness in the streets and continued political fragmentation, which was characterized by political arrests, attacks on civil society organizations and strikes in the public sector. All of such aspects impacted activities conducted by the unit.

Output (1)
Providing Legal Aid for Prisoners in Palestinian Jails
1. Appeals against unjust sentences
2. Ensuring fair trials
3. Ensuring appropriate detention conditions
4. Ensuring the release of political prisoners

Activities:

The unit continued to provide legal aid to Palestinian prisoners in Palestinian jails, including submitting complaints and appeals to ensure their release or improving their detention conditions. In 2008, the unit submitted 5 complaints to the Attorney General concerning illegal detention of individuals and an attack against a prisoner inside Gaza Central Prison. It also submitted a complaint to the Minister of Justice demanding retrying an individual before a civil court. The unit further pursued an appeal submitted to the Palestinian High Court of Justice to ensure the release of a detainee who was illegally arrested. Additionally, the unit staff visited prisoners to check on their health conditions and ensure improvement of their detention conditions.

Appeals and Press Releases

1. The unit received information about 265 Palestinian detained in various detention centers in the Gaza Strip, including 19 political prisoners.
2. On 6 April 2008, the unit sent a letter to the Minister of Interior concerning banning PCHR lawyers from visiting prisoners in detention centers.
3. The unit assisted a released prisoner to retrieve his personal belongings.
4. The unit assisted 7 released prisoners to obtain certificates of "To Whom It May Concern"
5. The unit assisted two prisoners to make authorization for getting their salaries from banks.
6. The unit issued a press release on 16 January 2008 on preventing PCHR lawyers by the Internal Security Service (ISS) from visiting Brigadier Jamal Kayed.
7. The unit issued a press release on 20 April 2008 on preventing PCHR lawyers by the ISS from visiting clients in detention centers in the Gaza Strip.
8. The unit issued a press release on 6 August 2008 on preventing PCHR lawyers by the ISS from visiting political prisoners in detention centers in the Gaza Strip.

Observation of Court Sessions

The operation of Palestinian courts has continued to be instable due to the political fragmentation in the PNA and the subsequent measures taken by the government in Gaza, including attacks on the judiciary, the establishment of special courts, such as the military court, and the establishment of the Higher Justice Council. Such measures have largely undermined respect for human rights and the separation of powers.

1. In 2008, unit lawyers observed 45 sessions of Gaza military courts.
2. On 24 January 2008, the Gaza military court sentenced Yasser Zanoun to death and two other persons to life imprisonment in the case of murdering Isma'il al-Mishwakhi.
3. The unit submitted a complaint to the High Court in Gaza concering illegal detention of a person. This complaint had been the first of its kind since Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip.
4. On 20 July 2008, the military court in Gaza sentenced Eyad Ahmed Diab Sukkar to death after convicting him of carrying out hostile activities.
5. On 29 October 2008, the Gaza Court of Cassation, headed by Judge 'Abdul Ra'ouf al-Halabi, Head of the Higher Justice Council, issued its support for the death sentences by hanging issued by the Court of Appeal on 13 April 2004 against 4 Palestinians. The defendants are: Eihab Diab Abu al-'Amrain, 28; Rami Sa'id Juha, 28; 'Abdul Fattah Mohammed Sammour, 26; and Sa'id Jameel Zuhod, 22.
6. On 16 December 2008, the military court in Gaza sentenced Mohammed Ali Hassan Saidam to death by hanging. The Court convicted the defendant of treason, spying and conspiracy.

Meetings

The unit held 16 meetings to discuss problems related to the judiciary, especially those related to detainees:

- The unit held a meeting with the Judge Hassan al-Hessi, Chief Judge of Gaza District Court, to discuss the decision taken by the Court on 6 February 2008 to prevent the distribution of al-Ayyam newspaper in the Gaza Strip.
- In February 2008, the unit held a meeting with the Military Attorney-General, Ameen Noufal, to discuss several issued related to the military judiciary.
- The unit held 8 meetings in 2008 with the director of office for coordination of visits to prisoners detained in the headquarters of the Internal Security Service of Gaza government to discuss preventing PCHR lawyers from visiting prisoners.
- The unit participated in a workshop on the right to fair legal procedures and trial organized in May 2008 by the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights.
- On 3 September 2008, the unit held a meeting with Mr. 'Abdul Ra'ouf al-Halabi, President of the High Justice Council established by the Gaza government. The meeting discussed political arrests, the strike of the public employees, money rights of widows and divorced women blocked by the council and the possibility of holding meetings to

bring the judiciary back to track.

- The unit held two meetings with the Chief of Internal Security Service and the director of office for coordination of visits to prisoners detained in the headquarters of the Internal Security Service of Gaza government to discuss preventing PCHR lawyers from visiting prisoners.
- The unit held two meetings with the Chief of Police Investigation Department and the Investigation Officer in Gaza to specify locations of detention of 14 Palestinians.
- The unit held a meeting with the Military Attorney-General to discuss improving detention condition and family visitations of prisoners.
- The unit held meetings with ministers of interior and justice in the Gaza government to discuss detention conditions of prisoners and means of communication between official bodies and civil society with regards to demands to release prisoners or improving their detention conditions.

Indicators

- The unit lawyers conducted 54 visits to detention centers in the Gaza Strip. Gaza Central Prison, in which they visited 5 prisoners.
- The unit lawyers visited 265 detainees in 2008.
- 65 detainees were released in response to the unit's intervention.
- The unit lawyer visited 3 detentions centers.
- The unit lawyers attended 45 court sessions of the military judiciary.
- The unit lawyers held 18 meetings to discuss problems related to the judicial system and detention conditions.
- The unit sent two letters to the Minister of Interior concerning the prevention of PCHR lawyers from visiting prisoners in detention centers.
- The unit conducted a general visit to all discipline and rehabilitation centers.
- The unit lawyers participated in one workshop.

Means of Verification

- The unit received two positive responses from the Minister of Interior allowing the unit lawyers to visits prisoners in detention centers.
- Detainees explained their problems at detention to PCHR lawyers.
- The unit noticed significant cooperation with its lawyers by officials at detention centers.
- The unit noticed high interests in press releases it issued concerning the prevention of lawyers from vesting detainees.
- The unit documented a number of cases considered by the military judiciary.

Obstacles

The Palestinian Legislative Council was not able to hold sessions and enact laws due political fragmentation in the PNA, and the state of lawlessness continued to plague the OPT. Additionally, the establishment of the High Justice Council and the operation of military courts also impacted the judiciary.

Output (2)
Legal Assistance to Victims of the Misuse of Authority
1. Ensuring the application of the Civil Service Law
2. Ensuring the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly

1. Ensuring the Application of the Civil Service Law

Complaints and Claims before Courts on Behalf of Victims of the Misuse of Authority

Due to the unavailability of legal bodies, the unit's activities in this field were limited to documentation, meetings and, in emergency cases, letters to some ministries:

- The unit submitted 5 complaints to the Minister of Health.
- The unit submitted one complaint to the Minister of Agriculture.
- The unit submitted one complaint to, and a held a meeting with the Legal Advisor of the Municipality of Gaza concerning ordering a person to evacuate land belonging to the municipality.
- The unit organized a meeting for a delegation from the International Legal Assistance Consortium with members of the High Justice Council. The meeting discussed the current status of the Palestinian judiciary, especially in the Gaza Strip.

In 2008, 29 complaints submitted to official bodies and 17 court cases pursued by the unit continued to be suspended due to the instability in the judiciary and official bodies.

Table (8): Suspended Complaints and Appeals Submitted by the Unit to Official Bodies Since 2007

Official Body	Number	status
General Personnel Council	4	Suspended
Ministry of Finance	4	Suspended
General Corporation of Insurance and Severance Pay	8	Suspended
Ministry of Interior	2	Suspended
Ministry of Health	1	Suspended
Ministry of Transportation	2	Suspended
Attorney General	1	Suspended
Governor of the Palestinian Monetary Fund	1	Suspended
Bank of Palestine	1	Suspended
Bank of Housing	1	Suspended
Regulation and Organization Office	1	Suspended
Palestinian Fund for Compensation of Victims of Car Accidents	3	Suspended
Total	**29**	**Suspended**

Table (9): Claims Submitted by the Unit to Palestinian Courts in Previous Years and Are Currently Suspended

Case	Number of Cases	Year of Submission
Promotion of Sharia' judges	2	2007
Payment of financial rights to employees	5	2005
Payment of retirement financial rights	1	2007
Rejection against a decision issued by the Higher Judiciary Council	1	2006
Rejection against the prevention of the implementation of a decision issued by the High Court of Justice	1	2006
Demanding the implementation of a decision issued by the High Court of Justice	1	2006
Financial rights	1	2007
Rejection against the amendment of the graduation year of a university student	1	2005
Rejection against the non-registration of a charity by the Ministry of Interior	1	2005
Amendment of job title	3	2007
Cancellation of resignation	1	2007
Total	**17**	

Indicators

- The unit documented cases of misuse of authority.
- The unit submitted 5 complaints to the Ministry of Health.
- The unit submitted one complaint to the Minister of Agriculture.
- The unit submitted one complaint to the Legal Advisor of the Municipality of Gaza.
- The unit received positive responses to 3 complaints; negative responses to two ones; and two ones are still being pursued.
- 29 complaints submitted by the unit in previous years on behalf of victims of the misuse of authority continued to be suspended in 2008.
- 17 claims submitted by the unit in previous years continued to be suspended in 2008.
- The unit held two meetings to discuss cases of the misuse of authority.

Means of Verification

- The unit received a number of responses from Palestinian official bodies.
- Works of court and officials bodies were instable in 2008.
- Palestinian judges were highly interested in the meeting with the delegation of the International Legal Assistance Consortium.

Obstacles

The political fragmentation in the PNA, the state of lawlessness continued to plague the OPT and the establishment of the High Justice Council impacted the judiciary.

2. Ensuring the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Peaceful Assembly

- On 26 July 2008, the police of the government of Gaza waged a campaign against some civil society organizations. They raided, confiscated content of, and closed a number of organizations without any legal basis.
- On 29 July 2008, the unit submitted a complaint to the Minister of Interior in the government of Gaza concerning the police campaign against civil society organizations in the Gaza Strip.
- The unit lawyers observed the elections of the board of Happy Community Association for Development in al-Qarara village in response to the association's request.

Indicators

- The unit received a response from the Minister of Interior in the government of Gaza informing that offices of two civil society organizations would be reopened.
- The unit has a full list of civil society organizations that were closed.
- A unit lawyer observed the elections of the board of Happy Community Association for Development in al-Qarara village.

Means of Verification

- The Ministry of Interior established an inquiry commission to investigate closure of civil society organizations.
- Offices of a number of civil society organizations were reopened.
- Materials confiscated from offices of a number of civil society organizations were returned.
- A number of civil society organizations are still illegally closed.

Obstacles

- The state of lawlessness and the suspension of work at the Attorney-General's office and courts in the Gaza Strip.
- Continued political fragmentation in the PNA.

Output (3)
Legal Aid to Victims of Lawlessness

1. Making efforts to stop attacks on public property
2. Confronting the state of lawlessness and the proliferation of weapons

Due to the suspension of works of the Attorney-General's office and court, the availability of officials bodies to address and the political fragmentation in the PNA, the unit was not able to carry out all activities related to this output, and its activities were limited to:

- Gathering affidavits from victims of human rights violations perpetrated by security services of the government of Gaza in al-Shoja'eya neighborhood in the east of Gaza City against the Helles clan, when the clan refused to hand over some suspects of legal offences.
- Filing cases of the state of lawlessness.
- Issuing a number pf press release in coordination with PCHR Democratic Development Unit on assaults on the rule of law.

Means of Verification

- Positive feedbacks to press releases.

Obstacles

- The state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons has persisted in the OPT.
- The Palestinian National Authority has failed to enforce the law and order.
- The Attorney General's office and courts in the Gaza Strip suspended their activities.
- Cases of a penal nature were not considered.

Output (4)
Legal Aid for Victims of Medical Negligence

Submitting Complaints

- On 22 April 2008, the unit submitted a complaint to the Minister of Health calling for investigation into the death of a woman due to medical negligence.
- On 23 November 2008, the unit submitted a complaint to the Minister of Health calling for investigation into the death of a woman due to medical negligence.

Compensation Claims before Courts

The unit postponed for 6 months a compensation claim before Gaza initial proceedings court demanding compensation for the deaths of twins due to medical negligence. The claim was filed in 2006.

Indicators

- The unit received a positive response from the Minister of Health indicating that an inquiry commission was established to investigate the death of a woman due to medical negligence.
- The unit received a negative response from the Minister of Health concerning reparation for the death of a woman due to medical negligence.
- Two people would benefit from the compensation claim sued by the unit before Gaza initial proceedings court.

Means of Verification

- The unit received a positive response from the Minister of Health

indicating that an inquiry commission was established to investigate the death of a woman due to medical negligence.
- The unit received a negative response from the Minister of Health concerning reparation for the death of a woman due to medical negligence.
- Clients were satisfied by the legal aid provided by the unit.

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

Activities Not Included in the Annual Plan

- On 23 September 2008, the unit lawyers participated in a workshop organized by PCHR on the debate over of the Palestinian presidential term.
- On 27 August 2008, the unit held two meetings with Mr. Ibrahim Radwan, Acting Director-General of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), and Mr. Fawaz al-Sousi, Acting Director of PLC's Sessions Department.

Networking with Arab Human Rights Organizations

- The unit sent letters to the Secretary General of the Arab Organization for Human Rights and the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights in Egypt inquiring about health conditions of 20 Palestinians detained by the Egyptian authorities.
- The unit sent a letter to the Secretary General of the Arab Organization for Human Rights in Jordan inquiring about the health condition of a Palestinian detained by the Jordanian authorities.

Indicators

The unit sent 21 letters in 2008.

Means of Verification
- PCHR has strong relations with Arab human rights organizations.
- Human rights organizations welcomed cooperation with PCHR.

Democratic Development Unit

The unit was able to implement all the activities set out in its 2008 annual plan, which is derived from the general plan of 20062008-, in addition to a number of other activities to meet changes in the surrounding environment. Like in 2007, internal Palestinian developments occupied a major part of PCHR's focus in 2008, especially in light of the continued political fragmentation in the PNA and its impacts on the Palestinian political system and human rights in the OPT. Activities included in the 2008 annual plan are detailed below and their implementation is measured through verifiable indicators and means of verification.

Output (1)
Raising Awareness of the International Community and the Local Public on Violations of Civil and Political Rights and International Human Rights Law in the OPT

Activities

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

1. The report was prepared and published by PCHR in Arabic and English in May 2008. A summary of the report was also published.
2. The report and its summary were widely disseminated locally and internationally.

2. Specialized Reports

On 2 July 2008, the unit issued the 9th in a series of reports on extra-judicial executions committed by IOF against Palestinian activists. The report covers the period 1 August 2007 – 30 June 2008.

3. Press Releases and Other Media Outputs

1. The unit issued 77 press releases on Palestinian violations of human rights.
2. The unit issued 3 fact sheets on extra-judicial executions committed by IOF against Palestinian activists.

4. Meetings and Contacts

- **Media Interviews**

The unit staff members made 41 media interviews on several issues related to human rights and democracy, including the death penalty, elections, the human rights situation in the OPT and the state of lawlessness.

■ **Participation in Activities Organized by Other Civil Society Organizations**

The unit accepted a number of invitations to participate in activities organized by civil society organizations. The unit staff members submitted working papers at these activities:[18]

- On 7 July 2008, the unit director participated in a colloquium organized by al-Dameer Association for Human Rights titled "Enjoying Freedoms and Security... The Status of Freedoms in Palestinian One Year after the Incidents of June 2007." He submitted a working paper on the human rights situation one year after the incidents of June 2007. Other people who also submitted interventions included: Dr. Yahia Mousa, Member of the Palestinian Legislative Council; Dr. Mukhaimer Abu Sa'da, Professor of Political Science at al-Azhar University; Khalil Abu Shammala, Director of al-Dameer Association for Human Rights; and Samer Mousa, a lawyer at al-Dameer Association for Human Rights.
- On 23 October 2008, the unit director participated in a workshop organized by the United Nations Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights in Gaza on advocacy activities in the field of human rights. He submitted a working paper on PCHR's advocacy activities.
- On 27 October 2008, the unit director participated in an international conference organized by Gaza Community Mental Health Programme titled "The Siege and Mental Health... Barriers and Bridges." He facilitated a session on the siege from the perspective of international human rights law.
- On 4 December 2008, the unit director participated in a conference organized by the United Nations Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights and al-Mezan Center for Human Rights in Gaza on the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He submitted a working paper titled "Available Protection Mechanisms for Palestinians: The Use of Universal Jurisdiction."
- On 16 December 2008, the unit director participated in a conference organized by the United Nations Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights in Gaza on the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He facilitated a session that focused on detention of Palestinians by IOF or Palestinian security services in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

■ **Contribution to Training Courses Organized by PCHR Training Unit**

The unit staff members continued to training courses organized by PCHR Training Unit. They delivered 6 lectures (12 hours) on the right to freedom of expression, political participation of women and the death penalty.[19]

Indicators

- Local, regional and international media reported on these activities.
- Demands for information published by PCHR.

[18] Other participations are highlighted in other relevant sections of this report.

[19] This activity is detailed in PCHR Training Unit's activity report below.

Means of Verification

- PCHR has a documentation of news published in the media about the unit's activities.
- PCHR has a documentation of some international reports which depended on information included in PCHR's publications.

Output (2)
Documentation of the State of Lawlessness and Attacks on the Rule of Law and

Activities

1. Field Updates

In 2008, the unit issued 44 field updates on human rights violations related to the state of lawlessness and attacks on the rule of law.

2. Press Releases

A number of the press releases issued by the unit in 2008 focused on the state of lawlessness.

Indicators

- Wide media coverage of these activities.
- Positive feedbacks.

Means of Verification

- The unit has a documentation of media coverage.

Output (3)
Efforts to Minimize Violations of the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Peaceful Assembly through Reporting on These Violations

Activities

1. Periodic Report on Violations of the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Peaceful Assembly

It is a series of reports that highlight violations of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly under the Palestinian National Authority. A report covering the period 1 November 2006 – 31 July 2008 was published on 19 October 2008.

2. Silencing the Press

It is a periodic report in attacks by IOF against journalists and media institutions. A draft report was prepared, but it has not been published.

3. Press Releases

The unit issued 18 press releases on violations of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, including attacks against journalists and banning peaceful demonstration and public meetings by security

services of the two Palestinian governments in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.[20]

4. Roundtable Discussions on the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Peaceful Assembly

The unit organized 3 roundtable discussions to introduce its report on violations of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly:

- On 27 October 2008, the unit organized a roundtable discussion on the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly in its sub-office in Khan Yunis. At least 25 of journalists, academics, social activists, representatives of political factions and interested persons attended the roundtable.
- On 29 October 2008, in cooperation with the National Association of Democracy and Law (NADL), the unit organized a roundtable discussion on the rights to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly in NADL's offices in Rafah. At least 30 persons attended the discussion.
- On 30 October, 2008, the unit organized a roundtable discussion on the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly in Commodore Hotel in Gaza City. At least 50 journalists, academics, social activists, representatives of political factions and interested persons attended the roundtable

5. Advocacy and Lobbying in Support for Freedom of Expression

The unit's staff members participated in activities in support for press freedoms and the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly:

- On 20 May 2008, the unit director participated in an open meeting organized by the National Association of Democracy and Law in Rafah and the right to peaceful assembly. He submitted a working paper on the role of human rights organizations in defending the right to peaceful assembly.
- On 23 October 2008, the unit delivered a speech in a sit-in organized by Palestinian Media Professionals Forum in the yard of the PLC in solidarity with detained journalists in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Ms. Huda Na'im, PLC Member, and Imad al-Efranji, chairman of the forum, also delivered speeches. The sit-in called for releasing all detained journalists and ensuring the right to freedom of expression.
- On 28 October 2008, the unit director delivered a lecture on the right to freedom of expression in a training program organized by al-Marsad for Media and Communication for 20 media professionals.
- On 13 November 2008, the unit director participated in a workshop organized by the Palestinian Institute for Communication and Development on the right to freedom of expression in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. He submitted a working paper on the right to freedom of expression in the human rights system and Palestinian legislations. The workshop was held at offices of the Palestinian NGOs Network in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip through video conference.

[20] See the section on PCHR's publications in 2008, P.206-209

- On 20 December 2008, the unit director participated in a conference organized by the Palestinian Institute for Communication and Development on the freedom of expression and media in Palestinian Territories. He submitted a working paper on the legal environment of the freedom of expression and media. The conference was held in Gaza and Ramallah through video conference.

Indicators

- Decreased attacks against journalists and media institutions: Regrettably, the political fragmentation and conflict between Fatah and Hamas movements contributed to increased attacks on the freedom of expression and peaceful assembly in the Palestinian Territories.
- Organizations of peaceful demonstrations and public meetings: There was a decrease in organizing such activities due to the same reasons.
- Media coverage: The unit's activities were covered by the media.

Means of Verification

- PCHR has a documentation of violations of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.
- PCHR has a documentation of media coverage of the activities.

Output (4)
Efforts to Protect the Right to Freedom of Association through Reporting on Violations of This Right and Advocacy Activities

Activities

1. Press Releases

The unit issued 7 press releases and two field updates on violations of the right to freedom of association.

2. Periodic Report on the Right to Freedom of Association

A draft report was prepared, but it has not been published yet.

3. Advocacy and Lobbying in Support for Freedom of Association

PCHR participated in a series of activities organized by civil society organizations to confront measures of closure taken by the government in Gaza against at least 200 civil organizations in the Gaza Strip in July 2008. Upon an invitation from the Palestinian NGOs Network, a meeting was held on 26 July 2008 for representatives of civil society organizations and political factions. The unit director represented PCHR in the meeting and was a member of the committee it established to make communications with decision-makers in Gaza. The committee held a number of meetings to coordinate positions and determine priorities. It was able to hold the following meetings with decision-makers:

- A meeting with the Acting Speaker of the PLC, Dr. Ahmed Bahar, on 29 July 2008.
- A meeting with the Palestinian Prime Minister in Gaza, Ismail Haniya, on 5 August 2008.

- A meeting with the Monitoring and Human Rights Committee in the PLC on 5 August 2008.
- A meeting with the Minister of Interior in Gaza, Sa'id Siam, on 6 August 2008.

In all these meetings, representatives of civil society organizations called for respect for the right to freedom of association, reopening closed civil society organizations and returning their confiscating property. On 7 August 2008, the civil society organization held a meeting and a press conference to explain the communications it had made and a press release was disseminated to explain the position of civil society organizations.

Indicators

- Decreased violations of the right to freedom of association: A number of closed civil society organizations were reopened, but others have remained closed.
- Media coverage: The local media reported on the unit's activities.

Means of Verification

- PCHR has complete details of civil society organizations that were closed.
- PCHR has a documentation of media coverage of the activities.

Output (5)
Abolishment or Suspension of the Death Penalty

Activities (according to the plan of the third and last year of the project of the death penalty)

1. Workshops and Meetings

The unit organized 12 workshops and meetings, in which 303 persons participated, as shown in the following table:

No.	Date	Partner Organization	Place	Number of Participants
1	30 January	Palestinian Women Development Association	Office of the association, al-Boreij	16 female university graduates
2	18 February	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Gaza City	25 female graduate students
3	26 February	Panorama Center	Gaza City	27 youths
4	13 March	Al-Fukhari Society for Development and Culture	Al-Fukhari village, Khan Yunis	25 women and 5 members of the society
5	17 March	Al-Quds Open University	Rafah	70 students
6	18 March	Al-Qarara Center for Social Development	Al-Qarara village, Khan Yunis	17 women
7	23 March	Al-Qarara Youth Forum	Al-Qarara village, Khan Yunis	16 women
8	2 April	Palestinian Youth Media Community	Al-Boreij	21 media professionals, including 8 females

9	16 April	Palestinian NGO Agency	Khan Yunis	14 persons, including 5 women
10	20 April	-	Deir al-Balah	22 persons, including 8 women
11	11 June	Air and Light Association	Bani Suhaila village, Khan Yunis	21 persons, including 4 women
12	15 June	Al-Wihdat Charity	PCHR's sub-office in Khan Yunis	24 persons, mostly women

2. Training

The unit delivered 7 lectures on the death penalty at training courses organized by PCHR Training Unit. At least 150 persons, including some 70 women, attended these lectures.[21]

3. Documentary Film on Extra-Judicial Executions Committed by IOF against Palestinians

- PCHR produced a 45-minute documentary on extra-judicial executions committed by IOF against Palestinian activists. The documentary was directed by Hussam Wahba, a Palestinian German director, and was executed by Ramattan news agency.
- The documentary was shown on al-Jazzera Documentary 5 times in the period 27 November – 2 December 2008.
- Communications are ongoing to show the documentary on other television channels and to distribute it locally and internationally. The documentary is translated into English.

4. Poster and T-Shirt on Death Penalty

The unit made a poster on extra-judicial executions committed by IOF against Palestinian civilians, and another one on the death penalty under the PNA on the occasion of the World Day against the Death Penalty on 10 October.

5. Press Releases

The unit issued 7 press releases condemning death sentences in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

6. Contacts

- The unit sent a letter on 24 January 2008 to the Prime Minister of the dismissed Palestinian government, Ismail Haniya, calling him not to ratify a death sentence issued by a military court against a Palestinian in Gaza.
- The unit sent a letter on 7 April 2008 to Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, calling him not to ratify a death sentence issued by a military court against a Palestinian in the West Bank.

7. Media Interviews

On the occasion of the World Day against the Death Penalty, and in cooperation with the local Alwan Radio, the unit director was interviewed in 3 episodes, each of which was 60 minutes long: two episodes were devoted for PCHR's position against the death penalty and were broadcasted on 9

[21] For more details see PCHR Training Unit's activity report below.

and 16 October, and the third one was devoted to extra-judicial execution committed by IOF against Palestinian civilians and was broadcasted on 20 November.

Indicators

- Abstention from issuing an implementing death sentences: No death sentences were implemented, even though 9 death sentences were issued in 2008.
- Amendments to laws: No amendments were made to laws that allow the death penalty.
- Official statements: The unit observed a number of official statements that called for the application of the death penalty.
- Media coverage of activities: The unit's activities were covered by the media.
- Contribution to raising debate in the society over the death penalty.

Means of Verification

- Monitoring the judiciary and its rulings.
- Observation of the PLC's sessions.
- Documentation of official statements.
- The unit documented media interviews, in which the unit staff members explained PCHR's position towards the death penalty.
- PCHR's position towards the death penalty was supported by some people.
- Discussions at workshops and meetings revealed that the viewpoint supporting the death penalty is still superior over that which rejects it.

Output (6)
Monitoring the Performance of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) and Urging it to Assume its Full Responsibilities

1. Meetings with PLC Members

- The unit held meetings with a number of PLC members.

2. Attending Sessions and Observing Activities of the PLC

- Unit researched gathered information about sessions held by the Change and Reform Bloc, which had been boycotted by other parliamentary blocs. PCHR has always criticized such sessions in light of the continued political fragmentation in the PNA, which has impacted the PLC.

3. Study Evaluating the PLC's Performance (March 2006 – March 2007)

- The unit issued this study, which was part of the unit's 2007 annual plan, in March 2008.

4. Workshops on the PLC's Performance

- On 19 March 2008, the unit director participated in a workshop organized by the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR) on the PLC's role in the protection of rights and public freedoms. The speakers in the workshop were: Dr. Ahmed Bahar, Acting Speaker of the PLC; Bassem Bushnaq, Director of the ICHR; 'Essam Younis, Director

of al-Mezan Center for Human Rights; and Hamdi Shaqqura, Director of PCHR Democratic Development Unit. This workshop coincided with the publication of the study on the PLC's performance. It was an opportunity to raise discussions among PLC members, members of political factions and representatives of civil society organizations.

- On 12 July 2008, the unit director participated in a workshop organized by Hadaf Center for Human Rights on the PLC. He submitted a working paper on the PLC's role in the promotion of democratic values and separation of powers.

Indicators

- Media coverage of the unit's activities.
- More knowledge of PLC's work and criticism of its performance.
- Feedbacks.

Means of Verification

- The unit filed news articles published in newspapers on the unit's activities.
- The unit documented official statements on PCHR's activities, including the criticism of Dr. Ahmed Bahar, Acting Speaker of the PLC, of PCHR's study on the PLC's performance.

Output (7)
Independent and Objective Evaluation of General and Local Elections Organized by the Palestinian National Authority to Encourage Holding Free, Fair and Credible Elections

The political fragmentation in the PNA continued, and in 2008, the conflict over the Palestinian presidential election between Hamas and Fatah movements escalated. Hamas called for holding the presidential election on 9 January 2009; that is, 4 years following the last presidential election. It threatened that if the election was not held, the President's office would be vacant, and the Speaker of the PLC would assume the responsibilities of the office for 60 days, during which time new elections would be held. On the other hand, Fatah movement stressed that the presidential term would end in January 2010, together with the end of the PLC's term, according to amendments made to the Elections Law.

PCHR was strongly present in this debate, and it carried out a number of activities:

1. Position Paper: Controversy over End of Presidential Term in Office

On 18 September 2008, PCHR published a position paper on the debate over the presidential term. PCHR expressed its support for holding the presidential election on its due time, but stressed that the existing state of political fragmentation would not allow holding impartial election. It called on Fatah and Hamas movement to reach an agreement on this issue through dialogue. It also rejected the idea that the President's office would be vacant once the presidential term ended, and warned of the consequences of assigning the responsibilities of the office to the Speaker of the PLC.

1. Colloquia on the Debate over the Presidential Term

PCHR organized 3 colloquia to explain its position paper on the debate over the presidential term. A number of members of the PLC and representatives of political factions and civil society organizations participated in these colloquia, which contributed to more involvement of the civil society and political factions in the debate over the presidential term.

- On 22 September, PCHR organized a colloquium in the Commodore Hotel in Gaza. At least 50 members of the PLC, representatives of political factions and civil society organizations, legal experts, academics and public figures attended the colloquia.
- On 28 September, PCHR organized a colloquium in its sub-office in Khan Yunis. At least 30 representatives of political factions and civil society organizations attended the colloquia.
- On 12 October, PCHR, in cooperation with the National Association of Democracy and Law, organized a colloquium in Rafah. At least 30 members of the PLC and representatives of political factions and civil society organizations attended the colloquia.

Indicators

- Objective evaluation of elections: No elections were held in 2008.
- Media coverage of the position paper: The paper was widely covered by the local and Arab media.
- Media coverage of the colloquia: The colloquia were widely covered by the media, and one of them was broadcasted live on al-Jazeera Live.
- Accepting PCHR's invitations to participate in these meetings: Most of the people who were invited attended the meetings.
- Feedback: Most participants supported PCHR's position towards the debate over the presidential terms, excluding those affiliated to Hamas.

Means of Verification

- PCHR's publications on elections: There were no publications as no elections were held.
- Viewpoints of observers of elections: They were not available as no elections were held.
- The unit documented news articles on the unit's activities.
- The unit has a complete list of participants in its activities.
- The unit documented feedback.

Media Interviews with the Unit Director in 2008

No.	Date	Names of Journalists and Media Organizations	Subject
	14 January	Abu Dhabi Television	A statement by head of the Israeli General Service on killing 1,000 Palestinians in the past two years
	14 February	Daniel Williams, Bloomberg News	Violations of human rights and the status of Christians in Gaza
	5 March	Palestine Radio	A telephone interview on the failure of the United Nations Security Council to condemn Israeli acrimes in Gaza

19 March	'Aassef Abu 'Aamer, Aljazeera.net	The PLC's performance
24 April	Radio France 2	The human rights situation
24 April	Arab News Network (ANN)	The human rights situation
27 May	'Aadel al-Za'noun, Bahrain Television	The international fact-finding mission headed by Bishop Desmond Toto to investigate the killing of civilians in Beit Hanoun in 2006
28 May	Radio France 2	Bishop Desmond Toto's visit to the Gaza Strip
28 May	Al-Hal newsletter, Bir Zeit University	The first anniversary of the incidents of Gaza
29 May	Palestine Radio	Bishop Desmond Toto's visit to the Gaza Strip
31 May	BBC	Abduction of people by the al-Quds Brigades of Islamic Jihad
3 June	'Aadel al-Za'noun, France Press	The first anniversary of the incidents of Gaza
19 June	Al-Aaan Television	The human rights situation
6 August	Toni Olglean, The Guardian	The death penalty and military courts
17 August	Al-Sharq Radio, Ramallah	The Israel military advocate-general's decision not to take any legal action against the Israeli tank crew that killed journalist Fadel Shana'a
21 September	Al-Quds Television	Israeli violations of human rights and the report of the fact-finding mission to investigate the killing of civilians in Beit Hanoun
9 October	Alwan Radio, Gaza	A 60-minute dialogue program on the death penalty
12 October	Al-Quds Television	Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights
16 October	Alwan Radio, Gaza	A 60-minute dialogue program on the death penalty
22 October	Al-Qauds Television and al-Quds Radio	Attacks against journalists in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip
3 November	Al-Burqa Radio, Gaza	A 60-minute dialogue program on the death penalty
5 November	Al-Aqsa Radio, Gaza	A telephone intervention in a program broadcasted by several radio station in support for the internal dialogue
6 November	Alwan Radio, Gaza	A 60-minute dialogue program on the right to freedom of expression
20 November	Alwan Radio, Gaza	A 60-minute dialogue program on extra-judicial executions committed by IOF against Palestinians
20 November	Amira Hass, Ha'aretz	The death penalty under the PNA
22 November	Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel	A live interview on the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip
22 November	Al-Quds Television	A live interview on the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip

10 December	Al-Sa'ah Television	A live interview on the report of the UN Special Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which condemned Israel
10 December	BBC	A live interview on the human rights situation on the International Day of Human Rights
10 December	Al-Quds Television	A live interview on the human rights situation on the International Day of Human Rights
14 December	Alwan Radio, Gaza	A live interview on the human rights situation on the 6th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
29 December	Radio France 2	An interview on the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip
30 December	Future Television	A live interview on the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip
30 December	Al-Quds Television	An interview on the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip
31 December	Al-Aalam Television	A live interview on the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip
31 December	Dubai Television	An interview on the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip
31 December	Bahrain Television	An interview on the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip
31 December	Nile News Channel	An interview on the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip
31 December	Al-Daleel Television	An interview on the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip
31 December	France Press	An interview on the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip
31 December	BNN Radio, Bethlehem	An interview on the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip

Field Work Unit

In 2008, the Field Work Unit continued to monitor and document the human rights situation throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), including Jerusalem, as set out in its 2008 annual plan. It also carried out other activities aimed to promote PCHR's role in the local community. It is worth noting that Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) escalated their attacks on Palestinian civilians and property and imposed an extremely tightened siege on the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, IOF continued settlement activities and Israeli settlers continued to attack Palestinian civilians and property. Additionally, IOF continued efforts to Judaize East Jerusalem. In the second half of 2008, Palestinian resistance groups in the Gaza Strip concluded a 6-moth Egyptian-brokered Tahdi'a (lull), which slightly eased the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip. However, the Tahdi'a effectively ended before the official declaration of its end and the Gaza Strip was on the verge on a severe humanitarian catastrophe. At the Palestinian level, the political fragmentation in the PNA, which impacted the Palestinian community structure and undermined the civil society, continued even though scenes of fighting between Fatah and Hamas movements in the Gaza Strip disappeared. In the last days of 2008, IOF launched an unprecedented military offensive on the Gaza Strip, which continued until the middle of January 2009. PCHR field workers made their best to monitor and documents crimes committed by IOF.

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

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

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

The unit carried out the following activities:

- **Documentation of willful and extra-judicial killings, injuries, incursions, house raids and arrests perpetrated by IOF.**
  In this context, the unit documented 793 killings, 2,258 injuries, 2,501 arrests, 2,000 incursions and house raids and 500 cased of aerial, sea and ground shelling by IOF.

- **Documentation of restrictions imposed by IOF on the freedom of movement.**
  The unit monitored and documented restrictions imposed by IOF on the freedom of movement, including the tightened siege imposed on the Gaza Strip and its impacts on the Palestinian civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. In this context, field workers wrote hundreds of reports on the movement of goods and persons, including patients, at border crossings of the Gaza Strip. They documented the death of 50 patient in the Gaza Strip due to denial of access

to medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip. The unit also wrote hundreds of reports on the impacts of the siege on the infrastructure, education, health and other vital sectors in the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, the unit documented 162 cases of arresting Palestinians by IOF troops positioned at military checkpoints. It also documented two Palestinian deaths and at least 200 cases of harassment at IOF military checkpoints.

- **Documentation of civilian property confiscation and destruction**
  In the Gaza Strip, IOF destroyed 609 houses and civilian facilities and razed at least 3,420.5 donums of agricultural land. In the West Bank, IOF demolished 47 houses and razed hundreds of donums of agricultural land. In East Jerusalem, IOF demolished 60 houses claming that they had been built without licenses. .

- **Documentation of settlement activities, attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and property and developments related to the construction of the Annexation Wall in the West Bank.**
  In 2008, the unit documented 254 attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and property. The unit also documented 296 injuries and dozens of arrests among Palestinians by IOF during the dispersion of peaceful demonstrations organized in protest to the construction of the Annexation Wall in the West Bank. The unit also wrote hundreds of reports on restrictions imposed by IOF on access of Palestinian farmers to their lands.

- **Documentation of violations of the right to freedom of expression attacks against journalists and media institutions**
  In 2008, the unit documented 132 attacks by IOF against journalists and media institutions, including closure of a number of institutions.

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

1. Field Visits and First-Hand Information

Field workers conduct visits to the sites of violations of human rights, despite the dangers often existing in these areas. On average, a field worker can make 23- field visits to document one incident.

Means of Verification

- In 2008, field workers in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank conducted more than 10,000 field visits.

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

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

Means of Verification

- In 2008, field workers made at least 6,000 interviews with victims and eyewitnesses.
- Field workers gathered at least 4,000 testimonies from victims and eyewitnesses.

3. Completion of Forms for Reports on Violations of Human Rights

These forms are designed to gather clear and accurate information to be entered into the database. Each form requests basic details on an incident, its location, timing, victim and witnesses. Field workers are required to complete a form for each violation they report. Many incidents require a number of different individual reports.

Means of Verification

- In 2008, field workers filled in 6,955 forms in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank: 793 of killing; 2,258 of injuries; 749 of land leveling (in the Gaza Strip only); and 451 of house destruction (in the Gaza Strip only). The unit is still unable to fill forms of land leveling and house destruction in the West Bank due to the low number of field workers working in such wide area.

4. Collating Photographic/Video Evidence

Field workers are required to take photographs or video footages of the scenes of violations wherever possible. Photographic or video evidence can provide valuable record of incidents for both legal and historical records.

Means of Verification

- The unit has hundreds of photographs of hundreds of human rights violations.

5. Collating Other Documentation Related to Human Rights Violations

Documents, including medical reports, ownership documents, personal photographs, clichés and maps, are also necessary evidence for legal and historical record of incidents.

Means of Verification

- Hundreds of documents were referred to various PCHR units according to their areas of specialization.
- Some of these documents were used by various PCHR units.

6. Writing Reports on Human Rights Violations

Field workers wrote detailed reports on human rights violations, in which eyewitnesses' testimonies and the field workers' notes are included, to give a comprehensive description of violations.

Means of Verification

- In 2008, field workers wrote at least 5,000 field reports on human rights violations.

7. Filing Israeli Violations of Human Rights

In 2008, the unit prepared a number of files of various human rights

violations perpetrated by IOF in the West Bank, which are categorized according to governorates.

8. Scanning of Documents to Be Entered into the Database.

Indicators

- All documented human rights violations were entered into PCHR's database.
- All human rights violations were covered in 50 weekly reports.
- The unit issued 21 press releases on human rights violations perpetrated by IOF.
- A number of cases were referred to PCHR Legal Aid Unit.
- Documents related restrictions on the freedom of movement were referred to PCHR Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- Materials available at the unit were used in writing PCHR's annual report on the human rights situation in the OPT.
- Photographs taken by field workers were put on PCHR's web site and publications.
- Materials available at the unit were used in press releases and reports issued by PCHR, especially the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit.
- The unit director received scores of phone calls from other organizations inquiring about human rights violations.
- Materials available at the unit, including figures and statistics, were used in media interviews by PCHR staff.

Means of Verification

- The unit has hundreds of field reports on Israeli violations of human rights in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
- The unit established 15 file categories of human rights violations.
- At least 100 photographs taken by field workers were published on PCHR's web site.
- Photographs and other documents were used by other international, regional and local organizations.
- The unit received dozens of phone calls inquiring about certain human rights violations.
- The unit wrote 50 weekly reports and 21 press releases.
- Weekly reports and press releases prepared by the unit were published on PCHR's web site.
- All human rights violations were entered into PCHR's database.
- The unit staff conducted at least 14 media interviews.
- PCHR Legal Aid Unit pursued cases referred to it from the Field Work Unit.
- Materials available at the unit were used in 11 reports on the state of the Gaza Strip border crossings, 4 specialized reports and 8 press released prepared by the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit and one report on extra-judicial executions by IOF prepared by the Democratic Development Unit.

Risks and Obstacles

- The wideness of the area of the West Bank, the small number of field workers working there and the partition of the West Bank territory

into isolated cantons has made difficult for field workers to have access to places of human rights violations on appropriate time, which in effect disrupt legal intervention.
- Field workers in the Gaza Strip face dangers when attempting to reach areas of friction with IOF to document human rights violations on time.
- Victims have started to lose trust in the possibility of reparation for human rights violations by IOF, which has in effect impacted their cooperation with field workers.
- The change in the nature of the conflict and the separation between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has made it difficult to have effective communication with field workers in the West Bank.

B. Documentation of Palestinian Violations of Human Rights

The unit carried out the following activities:

- **Documentation of Killings and Injuries Related to the State of Lawlessness and Proliferation of Weapons in the OPT**
  In this context, the unit documented 146 killings and 411 injuries related to the state of lawlessness and the misuse of weapons.

- **Documented of Mass and Individual Arrests by security services of the dismissed government in Gaza and security services in the West Bank.**
  The unit documented dozens of political arrests.

- **Documentation of Cases of Torture in Detention Centers Administered by Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Those Administered by Palestinian Security Services in the West Bank**
  The unit documented dozens of cases of torture.

- **Documentation of Murders for "Family Honor"**
  The unit documented 4 murders committed for "family honor."

- **Documentation of Violations of the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Peaceful Assembly and Attacks on Journalists and Media Institutions**
  The unit documented dozens of attacks on journalists and media institution or persons because of their positions, opinions or participation in peaceful assemblies.

- **Documentation of Attacks against Civil Society Organizations by the Dismissed Government in the Gaza Strip or the PNA Security Services in the West Bank**
  In 2008, the unit documented dozens of attacks against civil society organizations. In the context of the political conflict between the two Palestinian governments in Gaza and Ramallah, 194 civil society organizations were closed in the Gaza Strip, while 10 ones were raided and attacked in the West Bank.

- **Observation of the State of Economic and Social Rights in the Gaza Strip**
  The unit observed strikes of municipalities, hospitals, the public sector and others, and environmental problems. The most significant subject in 2008 was the strike of employees in the sectors of education and health in the Gaza Strip because of arbitrary transfers and dismissals by the Hamas government.

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

1. Field Visits and First-Hand Information
Field workers conducted field visits to scenes of incidents, police stations, and hospitals to obtain further information on incidents. They also interviewed eyewitnesses. Field workers conducted thousands of field visits in 2008.

2. Interviews with Victims and/or Families and Eyewitnesses
Field workers are required to conduct interviews with several people regarding each incident in order to verify/cross-check information. Difficulties in obtaining accurate and detailed statements include witnesses' fears of reprisals. In 2008, field workers made at least 7,000 interviews with victims and eyewitnesses, and gathered at least 3,000 testimonies from victims and eyewitnesses.

3. Completion of Forms for Reports on Violations of Human Rights
Field workers are required to complete a form for each violation they report. In 2008, field workers filled in 557 forms on human rights violations in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

4. Collating Photographic/Video Evidence
This activity is explained above.

5. Collating Other Documentation Related to Human Rights Violations
Documents, including medical reports, ownership documents and personal photographs, are also necessary evidence for legal and historical record of incidents. Obtaining such documents is not an easy job, but efforts made by field workers to obtain such documents are often fruitful.

6. Writing reports on Human Rights Violations
Field workers write detailed reports on human rights violations, in which eyewitnesses' testimonies and the field workers' notes are included, to give a comprehensive description of violations. In 2008, field workers wrote at least 5,000 reports on human rights violations.

7. Creating Files of Palestinian Violations of Human Rights
The unit makes files of human rights violations that are classified in accordance of the kind of violation.

Indicators
- Information related to killings was entered into the database.

- Cases documented by the unit with regard to the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons were transferred to PCHR Democratic Development Unit to write field updates.
- Cases related to strikes were sent to Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit.
- Cases documented by the unit with regard to killings for family honor were transferred to Women's Rights Unit and Democratic Development Unit.
- Most human rights violations were highlighted in press releases issued by PCHR.
- All publications were put on PCHR's web page.
- Information gathered by the unit was used in PCHR's annual report.
- Information gathered by the unit was used in specialized reports written by other units.
- The unit transferred many cases of detentions and attacks against public freedoms to the Legal Aid Unit.
- Photographs taken by field workers were used on PCHR's web site and publications.
- PCHR was accredited as a reliable source of information and statistics for international, regional and local organizations. The unit received many phone calls and e-mails requesting information.

Means of Verification

- The unit has a well-classified database on such violations, which has been used by PCHR units and the media.
- 44 5ield updates on the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons were published on PCHR's web page.
- The unit has at least 4,000 field reports on such violations in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including Jerusalem.
- PCHR Democratic Development Unit wrote a report on the rights to freedom of movement under the PNA based on the Field Work Unit's documentation.
- PCHR Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit wrote a report on the impacts of increasing prices in the Gaza Strip on the economic and social rights of the Palestinian population based on the Field Work Unit's documentation.
- The unit has an archive of field photographs.
- Information and photographs gathered by the unit were used by other local, regional and international organizations.
- The unit received at least 100 phone calls from interested people inquiring about certain violations.
- Information gathered by the unit was used in PCHR's annual report.
- The unit staff members were interviewed by the media about violations 7 times.

Risks and Obstacles

- Executive bodies impose severe punishment on whoever provides information about violations of human rights, which makes it difficult for field workers to obtain such information.
- There in official parties in the West Bank that can confirm political arrests of Hamas members by Palestinian security services.
- Field workers have received threats from some individuals for publishing field information.

Output (2)
Raising local and international awareness of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the OPT
1. Weekly Report on Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT
2. Press Releases on Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT
3. Strengthening Community Relations

1. Weekly Report on Israeli Violations of Human Rights in the OPT

The unit coordinator prepares weekly reports on Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT. The weekly reports are based on information collated each week by the field workers and aim to provide a comprehensive account of Israeli violations of human rights of Palestinians throughout the OPT each week. They are published on Thursday.

Means of Verification

- The unit prepared 50 weekly reports in 2008.
- Summaries of the reports are often published in local newspapers and some web sites.
- These reports are published on PCHR's web page and are distributed by email.
- There are increasing demands to obtain copies of these reports.
- Follow-up inquiries for further information on incidents described in the reports. The unit director received dozens of inquiries from a number of organizations working in the Gaza Strip.
- Some information included in the reports was used by PCHR's staff and governmental officials in their interventions at conferences and meetings abroad.

2. Press Releases on Israeli Violations of Human Rights in the OPT

The unit staff members prepare press releases on specific incidents as they occur. Press releases are issued on events that are of particular significance.

Means of Verification

- The unit prepared 21 press releases in 2008 on Israeli violations of human rights in the OPT and 14 ones on the internal Palestinian situation.
- Press releases are published on PCHR's web page and distributed by e-mail.
- Press releases are often covered by local and international media.

3. Strengthening Community Relations

A. Meetings and Contacts with Victims of Human Rights Violations

Field workers meet with victims of human rights violations, provide them with information about the services provided by PCHR and encourage them to go to PCHR's offices to receive appropriate legal aid and assistance.

B. Media Activities

The unit staff members were interviewed by the local and international media on violations of human rights perpetrated by IOF and on the deterioration of the internal situation in the OPT.

C. Contribution to the Circulation of PCHR's Publications

A number of field workers contributed to the circulation of PCHR's publications.

Indicators

- People's visists to PCHR's offices to receive legal consultations or to know more about PCHR's activities.
- Dissemination of Copies of the weekly reports in the Gaza Strip and most areas in the West Bank.
- Media interviews.
- Cooperation of people with field workers
- Cooperation of public institutions and security services with field workers.
- Cases investigated by PCHR and legal aid provided accordingly.
- Participation in community activities.
- Interventions by the unit's staff at conferences and workshops.
- Requests for information by scholars and universities for their research.

Means of Verification

- Many victims refer to PCHR's Legal Aid Unit through field workers.
- Hundreds of people participated in activities organized by PCHR, including conferences, workshops and training courses.
- Thousands of copies of weekly reports were circulated by field workers in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.
- 700 copies of PCHR's Annual Report 2007 were circulated in the West Bank.
- The interviews were reported in the media.
- Two field workers in the West Bank participated in a training course organized by al-Haq in Ramallah on international law and humanitarian law.
- PCHR Legal Aid Unit provided legal consultations to a number of victims and was able to ensure reparation for some of them.
- PCHR's field worker in Ramallah was able, through coordination with the Preventive Security Service, to allow families of two political prisoners.
- The unit director continued to a training course organized by the Independent Commission for Human Rights in Gaza for its staff on methods of preparing field reports.
- The unit provided a number of scholars and students with information and statistics for their research.

Media Interviews Conducted by the Unit in 2008

Date	Names of Journalists and Media Organizations	Subject
12 January	Palestine Daily, Gaza	Disruption of broadcasting of radio stations in Gaza by IOF
6 February	Al-Hayat Daily, London	Killing of Palestinian children by IOF
18 February	Palestine Radio (local)	Killing for «family honor»

8 March	Algeria Radio	International Women's Day and the impacts of the Israeli siege on Palestinian women
April	Aljazeera.net	Israeli violations of human rights
29 April	Watan Television (local)	Impacts of political fragmentation on civil and political rights
19 May	Nablus Television (local)	The death penalty
20 May	Al-Quds Radio, Gaza	Impacts of internal conflicts on women
21 May	Reuters	Restrictions on the freedom of movement
24 June	Al-Quds Television	Political arrests
27 June	Aljazeera.net	Border crossings in the Gaza Strip
14 July	Palestine Radio	Violations of human rights at Israeli military checkpoints
31 July	Watan Television	The human rights situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip
5 August	Alwan Radio, Gaza	Impacts of the Israeli siege on women in the Gaza Strip
5 October	BBC Television	The use of a material with a disgusting smell by IOF during the dispersion of peaceful demonstrations against the construction of the Annexation Wall
18 October	Al-Bayan Daily and al-Khaleej Daily, UAE	PCHR's documentation of inter-Palestinian human rights violations
4 November	Al-Quds Television	House demolitions by IOF
8 November	Ajyal Radia (local)	Cairo Conference on prosecution of Israeli war criminals
27 November	Al-'Aalam Television	Extra-judicial killings
28 December	Al-Quds Television	Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip
30 December	Ajyal Radio	Documentation of Israeli war crimes in the Gaza Strip

?. Escorting International Delegations on Field Visits

In 2008, the unit staff members escorted visiting international delegations and individuals on visits to locations throughout the Gaza Strip and provide on the spot briefings on recent incidents. They also organized meetings for international figures and PCHR international staff with victims.

Indicators

The unit staff members briefed the international delegations they escorted on the human rights situation in the OPT.

Means of Verification

In 2008, the unit staff members escorted 4 visiting international delegations and individuals on field visits throughout the Gaza Strip.

Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights Unit

In 2008, the Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights Unit continued to monitor and document violations of economic, social and cultural rights in the OPT, particularly the Gaza Strip, as set out in its annual plan. In 2008, the political, economic, and social conditions in the OPT dramatically deteriorated, as IOF escalated their violations of Palestinian human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, especially in the Gaza Strip. The total siege imposed by IOF on the OPT has left disastrous impacts on the humanitarian situation and has violated the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population, particularly the rights to appropriate living conditions, health and education. This reality posed itself on the unit's 2008 annual plan, and the unit focused some activities on developments related to the impacts of the closure imposed by IOF on the Palestinian economic, social and cultural rights. For this purpose, the unit continued to issue field updates documenting the impacts of the closure of border crossing of the Gaza Strip, especially Rafah International Crossing Point, on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, especially following Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip on 15 June 2007. The unit continued to write periodic reports and studies on violations of economic, social and cultural rights perpetrated by IOF. It also continued its efforts to promote economic, social and cultural rights in the Palestinian society.

The unit was able to continue its fundamental activities, including preparation of a number of regular reports on economic, social, and cultural rights; holding public workshops; and participation in other PCHR activities and activities organized by other civil society groups in the Gaza Strip. The unit also promoted its activities at the media and community levels. In addition, the unit took the initiative to establish a coordinating committee, in cooperation with the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and rehabilitation centers for disabled persons, to follow up the implementation of recommendations concluded by the conference organized on 3 December 2007 on the occasion of the International Day of Disabled Persons.

Output (1)
Contribution to the Promotion of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the OPT, Especially the Gaza Strip

Activities

The unit was forced to make some changes to such activities due to field developments in 2008 in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip, particularly the deterioration in the humanitarian situation in light the suspension of international financial aid, and the total siege and restrictions on the freedom of movement imposed by IOF.

1. Database on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the OPT

In 2008, the unit continued to crate a database on economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip. This database has the main source of information for the unit of violations of the rights of education, appropriate living conditions, work, health and development;

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

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

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

- Meetings with international delegations representing NGOs, relief organizations, solidarity movements and the World Bank.
- Meetings with representatives of UN agencies, including UNRWA, WHO, OCHA and OHCHR.
- Meetings with ministers in the government of Gaza and representatives of local institutions.

3. Report on the Policy of Closure and Its Impacts on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the OPT

As the living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population deteriorated and violations of their economic, social and cultural rights escalated, the unit was forced to focus most of its activities on this issue. In this context, the unit issued a report on the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip resulting from the total siege and closure of border crossings. The report covered the period 26 June – 31 October 2008.

4. Field Updates on the State of Border Crossings of the Gaza Strip

In light of the closure of border crossings of the Gaza Strip, the unit continued to issue monthly updates on the state of border crossings of the Gaza Strip and the impacts of their closure on the economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian civilian population.

In 2008, the unit issued 9 of these updates:

- 11 December 2007 – 19 January 2008: The update focused on the suffering of Palestinian pilgrims while traveling through Rafah International Crossing Point.
- 10 – 31 January 2008: The update focused on the reduction of fuel supplies to the Gaza Strip and its impacts on economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population.
- 1 – 17 February 2008: The update focused on the suffering of Palestinian patients at Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing while on their way to hospitals in Israel and the West Bank.
- 18 – 29 February 2008: The update focused on the impacts of the closure of border crossings on public health in the Gaza Strip.
- 1 – 31 March 2008: The update focused on the suffering of Palestinian fishermen as a result of the total siege and closure of border crossings.
- 1 April – 25 May 2008: The update focused on the suffering of families of prisoners detained in Israeli jails.

- 8 – 25 May 2008: The update focused on the impacts of the shortage in fuel supplies on the humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip.
- 26 May – 25 June 2008: The update focused on the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip as a result of continued closure of border crossings.
- 1 – 25 November 2008: The update focused on the impacts of the shortage in fuel supplies on the humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip.

5. Workshops and Conferences on Economic and Social Rights

- **A Workshop on the Civil Service Employees' Strike**

  On 18 September 2008, the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) organized a workshop in the Grand Palace Hotel in Gaza City on "the impacts of public sector employees' strike on the rights of health and education." Representatives of health and education syndic bodies, some workers in health, education and human rights sectors and representatives of media institutions attended the workshop. The participants discussed the serious impacts of the strike on the sectors of health and education. They concluded a number of recommendations:

  1. Suspending the ongoing strikes to allow constructive talks.
  2. Ceasing the policy of mutual media incitement that may complicate the situation.
  3. Forming a professional independent and unaligned committee to investigate the relocations of employees managed by the Ministry of High Education in Gaza.
  4. Resuming the payment of salaries that had been cut off for political reasons.
  5. Immediate release of all employees who had been arrested for committing to the strike.
  6. Return of all employees to their work places.
  7. Establishing a committee to settle all disputes of syndic nature.
  8. Organizing compensatory classes for students for the classes they had missed.
  9. Cancellation of decisions, including dismissal and relocations of employees, taken by the government of Gaza.

- **A Conference on Repercussions of the Siege on the Civilian Population of the Gaza Strip**

  On 6 March 2008, PCHR organized a conference on the repercussions of the siege on the civilian population of the Gaza Strip. Representatives of NGOs working in the field of health, education, economy and human rights and a number of academics and journalists participated in the conference. The first session of the conference focused on the impacts of the siege from the perspective of international humanitarian law and human rights law. The second session focused on the impacts of the siege on humanitarian services in the Gaza Strip. A number of working papers were submitted in the conference. The conference concluded a number of recommendations.

6. **Press Releases on Violations of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

   In 2008, the unit issued 22 press releases that called upon the international community to intervene to stop the policy of collective punishment practiced by IOF against the Palestinian civilian population, in violation of their economic, social and cultural rights.

Media and Public Relations Activities

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

- On 17 January 2008, the unit director was interviewed by journalist Saleh Hijazi, from Gaza in My Mind Campaign on the impacts of the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip.
- Also on 17 January 2008, the unit director was interviewed by journalist Diana al-Mughrabi, from Zahrat al-Khaleej Magazine on living conditions of Palestinian children in borders areas in the Gaza Strip.
- On 13 February 2008, the unit director provided Ms. Su'ad Abu Kamal, from UNIFEM's office in Jerusalem, with statistics on deaths resulting from the rightened siege imposed on the Gaza Strip.
- On 19 February 2008, the unit continued to an intervention at the UN Council of Human Rights on the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip.
- On 20 February 2008, the unit director was interviewed by journalist Shabtai Gold, from Jerusalem, on the impacts of the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip.
- On 24 February 2008, the unit director was interviewed by journalist Rajab al-Khuraibi, from Aljazeera.net, on the impacts of the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip.
- On 26 February 2008, the unit director provided Ms. Rana al-Hindi, from Save the Children, with statistics on deaths resulting from the rightened siege imposed on the Gaza Strip.
- On 27 February 2008, the unit director journalist Hatem Abu Daqqa, from Palestine News Agency (Wafa), on the conditions of Gazan patients under the Israeli siege.
- On 6 March 2008, the unit director was interviewed by journalist Mervat 'Ouf on the suffering of Gaza patients under the Israeli siege.
- On 13 March 2008, the unit director was interviewed by Dubai Television on the impacts of the Israeli siege and the reduction of fuel supplies on fishing in the Gaza Strip.
- On 26 March 2008, the unit director was interviewed by journalist Mervat 'Ouf on the role of international organizations in the promotion of the right of health and the provision of health services to Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip.
- On 2 April 2008, the unit director was interviewed by Peace Radio on the impacts of the Israeli siege on Gazan patients.
- On 8 April 2008, the unit director was interviewed by journalist Shabtai Gold on the impacts of reduction of fuel supplies to the Gaza Strip on the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip.

- On 16 April 2008, the unit director was interviewed by Dubai Television on the impacts of the Israeli siege on health conditions of children in the Gaza Strip, especially nutrition.
- On 18 April 2008, the unit director was interviewed by Beaty Television on the impacts of the Israeli siege on the environment in the Gaza Strip due to the shortage in drinking water.
- On 23 April 2008, the unit director was interviewed by journalist Lina Radwan, editor of the newsletter of al-Dameer Association for Human Rights, on health conditions of Gazan patients under the Israeli siege.
- On 8 May 2008, the unit director was interviewed by Lina Shaheen, Correspondent of Nile News, on the impacts of the Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip.
- On 20 May 2008, the unit director was interviewed by Maan Television and al-Masar Television on the impacts of the Israeli siege on health conditions of children in the Gaza Strip.
- On 2 June 2008, the unit director was interviewed by the International Association for Media and Production on the environment in the Gaza Strip.
- On 11 June 2008, the unit director was interviewed by journalist Shabtai Gold on the suffering of Palestinian civilians in the buffer zone in the Gaza Strip.
- On 18 June 2008, the unit director was interviewed by journalist Shabtai Gold on the suffering of Gazan students who study abroad as a result of the Israeli siege.

Means of Verification

- A report on the impacts of the Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip was published.
- 9 Field Updates on the closure of border crossings in the Gaza Strip were published.
- The unit issued a number special reports the impacts of the Israeli siege on the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip.
- The unit issued news reports on the publication of these reports.
- The reports were widely disseminated.
- The reports or parts of them were published on local and Arab web pages.
- The unit staff members were interviewed by the media on various issues related to economic, social and cultural rights.
- Governmental departments made use of the information included in the reports.
- A number of university students used the information included in the reports in preparing research papers.
- The unit issued 22 press releases on violations of economic, social and cultural rights.
- The press releases were widely disseminated.
- The press releases or parts of them were published on a number of local web pages.

Output (2)
Lobbying for the Enforcement of the Palestinian Law on the Rights of the Disabled (4) of 1999

The unit carried out several activities in the context of lobbying for the enforcement of the law. In this context, the unit organized a conference, in cooperation with the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the rehabilitation sector in the Palestinian NGOs Network in the Gaza Strip, on the rights of disabled persons, which made recommendations to promote such rights. Several interventions and working papers on the rights of disabled persons were submitted at the conference, which was concluded by a number of recommendations. During the conference, an exhibition of art works of disabled persons was organized. Additionally a competition was organized and awards were handed to winners.

1. **Establishing a Committee to Support Disabled Persons**
   On 20 February 2008, the unit took the initiative and invited a number of NGOs working in the field of rehabilitation of disabled persons, and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Gaza in order to establish a committee, whose main goal is to support disabled persons. The committee held 4 meetings in 2008, which were followed by 5 preparatory meetings for the conference on the rights of disabled persons, which was organized on 3 December 2008, and for other activities for the International Day of Disabled Persons.

2. **Monitoring and Documentation of the Rights of the Disabled**
   In 2008, the unit continued to monitor and document violations of the rights of the disabled in various fields, including work, educations, health and social insurance. The unit also made statistics of disabled who were killed or injured and rehabilitation centers which were destroyed by IOF. These statistics were prepared through meetings with victims or their families, and staff members of rehabilitation centers.

3. **Maintaining Contacts with Rehabilitation Centers**
   The unit made efforts to promote relations with rehabilitation centers of the disabled, such as al-Nour Center, Mithaq Association, General Union of the Disabled Persons, Atfaluna, the National Committee for the Defense of the Disabled and the Union of Disabled Graduates, through bilateral and multilateral meetings and providing legal consultations. The unit also established strong relation with al-Irada Radio, which serves disabled persons. The unit director also intervened with the Ministry of Information to allow al-Irada Radio to resume its operation after a period of suspension.

4. **Radio Programs on the Rights of Disabled Persons**

- On 6 April 2008, the unit director participated in a live radio program broadcasted by al-Irada Radion, which serves disabled persons in the Gaza Strip. The program focused on the International Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons and the importance of advocacy for the enforcement of the rights of disabled persons in Palestine.
- On 3 December 2008, the unit director was interviewed by al-Irada Radio on living conditions of disabled persons in Palestine and efforts

made to issue special cards for disabled persons according to the Palestinian law.

5. **Workshop on the Reinforcement of the Rights of Disabled Persons**
The unit was not able to organize this workshop as scheduled in May because of the transportation crisis resulting from the reduction of fuel supplies to the Gaza Strip by Israel. So, the unit agreed with the committee to support the rights of disabled person to address the issues on the agenda of the workshop in a conference that was held on 3 December 2008.

6. **Training Disabled Persons on Advocacy Activities**
The unit was not able to organize this activity for several reasons, including the deterioration in humanitarian conditions, the inability of candidate trainees to attend their organizations and the unit's involvement in other activities.

7. **Report on Achievements**
The unit did not carry out this activity, and instead, it issued a report on the impacts of the Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip on activities of rehabilitation centers and organizations for disabled persons.

8. **Poster on International Day of Disabled Persons**
The unit, in cooperation with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the rehabilitation department at the Palestinian NGOs Network, prepared a poster on the International Day of Disabled Persons. The poster was disseminated at the conference on the rights of disabled persons on 3 December 2008.

9. **Press Releases and Media Activities**

- On 3 December 2008, the unit issued a press release on the Occasion of the International Day of Disabled Persons. The press release called for respect for the rights of disabled Palestinians.
- On 4 December 2008, the unit issued a press release on the proceeding of the conference n the rights of disabled persons, which was organized in cooperation with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the rehabilitation department at the Palestinian NGOs Network.
- The unit director was interviewed by several media institutions on living conditions of disabled persons in Palestine and obstacles in the face of the application of the Palestinian Law on the Rights of Disabled Persons (4) of 1999.

Means of Verification

- There was an increase in demands by NGOs for information and statistics related to the rights of disabled persons.
- Local newspapers and web sites published several interviews with the unit director on the rights of disabled persons.
- The unit participated in a number of activities organized on the International Day of Disabled Persons.
- There was an increase in demands to obtain copies of the poster

issued by the unit, which was highly appreciated by disabled persons for its efforts to ensure protection for their rights.

Output (3)
Promotion of the Rights of Health

1. Meetings with Bodies Providing Health Services

- In 2008, the unit enhanced its relations with bodies that provide health services in the Gaza Strip, including international ones. The unit provided those bodies with detailed information about health services in the Gaza Strip, especially in light of shortages of medical supplies and the denial of access to medical care outside the Gaza Strip. The unit also visited hospitals and medical centers in the Gaza Strip and met with hundreds of patients.
- The unit constituted an important source of information about the shortages of medicines and deaths among patients who were denied access to medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip.
- The unit provided such information to UNRWA, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, World Health Organization, and OCHA.
- The unit provided the British Medical Aid for Palestinians with information on the impacts of the Israeli siege on health services in the Gaza Strip.

2. Workshop on Receiving Medical Treatment Abroad

The unit did not carry out this activity and instead, it carried out other activities related to the right of health.

3. Report on Medical Services in the Gaza Strip under the Israeli Siege

The unit wrote a draft report on the impacts of the Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip on medical services. It was scheduled to be presented to PCHR Program Committee to approve it by the end of December 2008, but developments in the field, particularly the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip forced PCHR to postpone its publication. The unit will update and publish the report in 2009.

4. Media Activities

The unit issued a number of press releases on the deterioration in health conditions resulting from the Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip. It also carried out a number of media activities on violations of the right of health.

Means of Verification

- There was an increase in demands for information and statistics related to the rights of disabled persons.
- Local newspapers and web sites published several interviews with the unit director on the right of health.
- The unit participated in a number of activities organized on the International Day of Disabled Persons.
- The unit was the major source of information and statistics with regard to deaths resulting form the Israeli denial of access of patients

to medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip.

- The field updates on the impacts of the Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip constituted a major source of information on health conditions in the Gaza Strip for international and local organizations.

Output (4)
Promotion of the Right to Adequate Housing

1. **Monitoring Violations of the Right to Adequate Housing**
   In 2008, the unit continued to monitor and document violations of the right to adequate housing, including house demolitions and land leveling by IOF in the Gaza Strip.

2. **Report on Land Leveling in the Gaza Strip**
   This activity was postponed to 2009.

3. **Media Activities**
   The unit director was interviewed by journalists on house demolitions and land leveling by IOF in the Gaza Strip. He also escorted several international delegation to field tours in the Gaza Strip in order for them to witness the impacts of such violations and meet with victims.

Other Activities Not Included in the Units' Annual Plan

The unit issued a number of reports, which were not included in its 2008 annual plan:

1. On 10 January 2008, the unit wrote a report on the impacts of Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip, which was incorporated into PCHR's Annual Report 2007.
2. On 23 January 2008, the unit wrote a report on the impacts of authority conflict on the public service and cutting off salaries of public employees.
3. On 3 February 2008, the unit issued a report in the impacts of the Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip on the exportation of strawberries and flowers.
4. On 5 February 2008, the unit issued a report on depriving Gazan students of studying abroad.
5. On 14 July 2008, the unit issued a report on increasing prices of goods in the Gaza Strip and their impacts on the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population. The report covered the period 1 July 2007 – 30 June 2008.
6. On 17 August 2008, the unit issued a report on the destruction of the economy of the Gaza Strip. It focused on the impacts of the Israeli siege on various economic sectors in the Gaza Strip, and covered the period 15 June 2007 – 14 June 2008.
7. The unit wrote a report on the deterioration in humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip under the Israeli military offensive, which was launched on 27 December 2008. The report was published on 3 January 2009.

Contribution to Training Courses Organized by PCHR Training Unit

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

No.	Subject	Target Group	Date	Place
1	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Staff members of NGOs	18 February	Khan Yunis
2	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Staff members of NGOs	11 March	Rafah
3	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Staff members of NGOs	31 March	North Gaza
4	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Media professionals	10 June	Gaza
5	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Staff members of NGOs	16 June	Deir al-Balah
6	Women's economic, social and cultural rights	Active feminists	1 July	Khan Yunis
7	Women's economic, social and cultural rights	Active feminists	15 July	Deir al-Balah
8	Women's economic, social and cultural rights	Active feminists	22 July	North Gaza
9	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Staff members of NGOs	19 August	Gaza
10	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Palestine Bar Association	27 October	Gaza
11	Universal Declaration of Human Rights	Teachers of human rights	28 October	Khan Yunis
12	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Teachers of human rights	28 October	Khan Yunis
13	Universal Declaration of Human Rights	Teachers of human rights	28 October	Khan Yunis
14	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Teachers of human rights	28 October	Khan Yunis
15	International humanitarian law	Teachers of human rights	29 October	Khan Yunis
16	International humanitarian law	Teachers of human rights	29 October	Khan Yunis
17	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Teachers of human rights	1 November	Central Gaza
18	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Teachers of human rights	1 November	Central Gaza
19	International humanitarian law	Teachers of human rights	3 November	Central Gaza

20	International humanitarian law	Teachers of human rights	3 November	Central Gaza
21	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Teachers of human rights	4 November	Gaza
22	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Teachers of human rights	4 November	Gaza
23	International humanitarian law	Teachers of human rights	5 November	Gaza
24	International humanitarian law	Teachers of human rights	5 November	Gaza

Participation in Activities Organized by Other NGOs

- On 14 January 2008, the unit director submitted an intervention on the impacts of the Israeli siege on the economic and social rights of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip in a workshop organized by Labor Development and Studies Center in Gaza.
- On 9 March 2008, the unit director delivered a lecture on international humanitarian law and human rights law and their relations with the Palestinian cause to students of the Faculty of Commerce at the Islamic University. The lecture was attended by 77 students.
- On 20 May 2008, the unit director submitted an intervention on the child's right of health according to international humanitarian law and human rights law in a workshop on the child's right of health organized by al-Daneer Association for Human Rights.
- On 21 May 2008, the unit director delivered a lecture on human rights concepts and activities of human rights organizations for 35 students from an UNRWA preparatory school.
- On 18 August 2008, the unit director submitted an intervention on protection of civilian borderers according to international humanitarian law and human rights law in a workshop organized by the Local Initiative to Lift the Siege. The workshop was attended by at least 70 persons.

Women's Rights Unit

In 2008, the unit carried out most activities set out in its annual plan. However, it was not able to carry out some activities related to advocacy die to the Palestinian political fragmentation, which has impacted the process of legislation. In 2008, there was a significant increase in the number of cases followed up by the unit, as the number of Sharia' lawyers working in the unit increased, and cooperation and coordination with Sharia' courts and women's organizations that provide legal assistance to women was promoted.

Output (1)
Legal Aid for Women
1. Representation of women before Sharia' courts
2. Providing legal consultation for women
3. Providing assistance to women who are victims of violence

The unit continued to represent women before Sharia' and provide legal consultations in coordination with Sharia' courts and women's organizations.

1. Representation of Women before Sharia' Courts

The unit continued to represent women before Sharia' courts. In 2008, the unit pursued 1,078 cases in Sharia' courts, including 94 ones from 2007.

Table (1): Sharia' Court Cases Pursued by the Unit in 2008

Case Type	Number
Alimony	572
Rights to household property	231
Custody rights	60
Access rights to children	23
Payment for childbirth	30
Delayed dowry	50
Separation	74
Obedience	9
Divorce assurance	3
Custody payment	24
Assurance of marriage	1
House rental	1
Total	**1,078**

Table (2): Results of Cases Followed by the Unit before Sharia' Courts in 2008

Rulings	Under-consideration	Reconciled	Cancelled	Postponed to 2009	Total
615	53	332	46	32	1,078

Table (3): Distribution of Cases at PCHR's Offices

Gaza Office	Jabalya Office	Khan Yunis Office	Total
429	378	271	1,078

2. Providing Legal Consultation for Women

In 2008, the unit provided 406 legal consultations to women in person or by telephone: 141 consultations in Gaza office; 158 ones in Jabalya office; and 107 ones in Khan Yunis office.

3. Providing Assistance to Women Who Are Victims of Violence

In 2008, the unit provided legal assistance through Sharia' Courts to 65 women who were victims of violence.

Indicators

- There was an increase of 55% in the number of cases received by the unit in 2008 in comparison with 2007. There was also an increase of 59% in the number of cases pursued by the unit in 2008 in comparison with 2007.Such increased could be attributed to the following:
  1. The number of Sharia' lawyers working at the unit was increased.
  2. There was an increase in the number of cases received by PCHR's offices in Khan Yunis and Jabalya.
  3. Cooperation and coordination with women's organizations, which are active in providing legal assistance to women in the Gaza Strip, was enhanced.
  4. Economic conditions in the Gaza Strip further deteriorated due to the siege imposed on it.
  5. Courts issued rulings in favor of woman in 52% of the cases pursued by the unit.
  6. The unit pursued a number of cases referred to it by other women's organizations.

Means of Verification

- The unit received 984 cases.
- Courts issued 615 rulings in favor of women.
- The unit provided 406 consultations to women.
- Sharia' court referred 123 cases to the unit.
- Women's institutions referred 70 cases to the unit.

Output (2)
Legal Awareness for Women: Raising Awareness of 2000 Women of Their Rights Ensured by Local Laws and Human Rights Instruments

1. Organizing legal awareness lectures on the rights of women and children in coordination with women's organizations
2. Awareness raising publications
3. Cooperation with the media
4. Contribution to training courses organized by PCHR Training Unit
5. Activities related to the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence

1. Organizing Legal Awareness Lectures on the Rights of Women and Children

- The unit organized 37 lectures on the Family Law (marriage contracts, divorce and the right to separation by a court ruling).
- The unit organized 48 lectures on violence against women.
- The unit organized 4 lectures on the rights of the child.
- The unit organized 8 lectures on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
- The unit cooperated with new civil society organizations and schools.
- The unit delivered a number of legal awareness lectures in response to invitations by other women's organizations.

Indicators

- In 2008, the unit received 10 invitations from women's organizations and 5 others from schools to deliver legal awareness lectures.
- The unit delivered a number of lectures at a number of women's organizations in response to demands by women, including Zkaher Association, Council of Churches and the General Union of Palestinian Women.
- The unit cooperated with new women's organizations in the Gaza Strip, including Zkaher Association in Gaza City, Community Development Society in 'Abassan village, Partnership Association for Development in Deir al-Balah, Deir al-Balah Rehabilitation Association and al-Wafaa' Charity in al-Qarara village.

Means of Verification

- In 2008, the unit organized 97 lectures to raise the legal awareness of women.
- 48 lectures focused on violence against women.
- 37 lectures focused on Family Law.
- 8 lectures focused on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
- 4 lectures focused on the rights of the child.
- 2,583 women attended these lectures.
- 67 women referred to the unit for legal aid after having attended these lectures.
- The unit provided 291 on-the-spot legal consultations to women during these lectures.
- These lectures were organized in cooperation with 36 institutions and 5 schools throughout the Gaza Strip.

- The unit cooperated with 7 organizations for the first time.

Hindrances

The unit was not able to hold a number of scheduled lectures due to the transportation crisis that emerged as a result of the Israeli siege imposed on the Gaza Strip

2. Awareness Raising Publications

The unit reprinted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and disseminated copies at awareness raising lectures in the context of activities related to the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence.

A Poster on International Women's Day

The unit prepared a poster on the occasion of International Women's Day on 8 March. The unit also issued a press release on this occasion focusing on the suffering of Palestinian women.

A Poster on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

The unit prepared a poster on the occasion of International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November, to raise awareness on the issue of violence against women.

Indicators

- Copies of the poster were circulated to governmental and non-governmental organizations, especially those which are interested in women's rights.

Means of Verification

- 1,000 copies of the poster on International Women's Day were published and circulated.
- 500 copies of the poster on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women were published and circulated.
- The poster on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was published on PCHR's web page.

3. Cooperation with the Media

The unit firmly believes that the media plays a vitally important role in raising awareness of women and children's legal rights in Palestinian society. Consequently, in 2008, the unit made efforts to further develop cooperation with the local media.

Press Interviews

1. On 15 March, unit lawyer Sameer Hassaniya was interviewed by journalist Anwar Haniya from al-Sa'ada Magazine on foundlings in the Palestinian legislation.

2. On 1 April, the unit director was interviewed by an Associated Press reporter on the conditions of women in the Gaza Strip.
3. On 29 May, the unit director was interviewed by a Swiss journalist on the conditions of women in the Gaza Strip following Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip.
4. On 26 November, the unit director was interviewed by an Associated Press reporter on marriage in the Gaza Strip.

Radio Interviews

1. On 8 March, the unit director was interviewed by Bethlehem 2000 Radio on the conditions of Palestinian women in the Gaza Strip on the occasion of International Women's Day.
2. On 26 March, the unit director participated in a radio program on violence against women in domestic laws, broadcasted by Alwan Radio in Gaza.
3. On 25 November, the unit director participated in Woman's Dream program broadcasted by Alwan Radio on the occasion of International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Indicators

- The unit director received many phone calls from locally and internationally inquiring about cases of killing for "family honor."

Means of Verification

- The unit made 4 press interviews.
- The unit made 3 radio interviews.

4. Contribution to Training Courses Organized by PCHR's Training Unit

The unit contributed to 17 training courses on democracy and human rights organized by PCHR's Training Unit. It also organized 3 training courses on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in cooperation with Training Unit.

5. Activities Related to the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence

During the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence (25 November – 10 December), the unit organized a number of activities:

Legal Awareness Lectures on Violence in Cooperation with Community and Women's Organizations

- 25 November: a lecture at al-Fukhari Society for Development, which was attended by 27 women.
- 26 November: a lecture at Women Activities Center in Rafah, which was attended by 20 women.
- 27 November: a lecture at Zakher Association in al-Zaytoun neighborhood in Gaza City, which was attended by 35 women.
- 30 November: a lecture at Palestinian Women Development Society in al-Boreij refugee camp, which was attended by 41 women.
- 1 December: a lecture at the General Union of Palestinian Women in Jabalya, which was attended by 35 women.
- 2 December: a lecture at Ghassan Kanafani Center in Beit Hanoun,

which was attended by 25 women.
- 3 December: a lecture at Zakher Association in al-Sha'af neighborhood in Gaza City, which was attended by 42 women.

A Workshop on Violence against Women and Mechanisms of Protection

On 4 December 2008, the unit organized a workshop on violence against women and mechanisms of protection at PCHR's office in Khan Yunis. The workshop was attended by 39 representatives of community and women's organizations in the southern Gaza Strip. During the workshop, Ms. Ibtissam al-Zurai'ei, Director of al-Sharq for Community Mental Health in Khan Yunis, talked about violence against women in the Palestinian society. Unit lawyer Hanan Matar talked about violence against women in international human rights instruments. Ms. Na'ima al-Rawaghj, Director of Women's Empowerment Project, talked about the role of NGOs in protecting women from violence.

A Poster on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

The unit prepared a poster on the occasion of International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November, to raise awareness on the issue of violence against women.

A Press Release on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

The unit issued a press release titled "On the Anniversary of the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women, the Suffering of Gaza Women Doubles due to the Siege and its Repercussions."

Output (3)
Lobbying

1. Lobbying for raising the age of marriage to 18 and over.
2. Lobbying for equality between women and men in testifying before Sharia' courts
3. Lobbying for raising the limit of age of child custody
4. Lobbying for enacting a law to protect victims of violence against women

The unit was not able to continue the activities it started in 2006 with regard to the draft Family Law due to the state of lawlessness in the Gaza Strip, which was followed by Hamas' takeover of the Strip and the suspension of legislation.

However, the unit held meetings with Sharia' judges to discuss with them works at Sharia' courts. On 23 October 2008, the Women's Rights Unit at the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) organized a workshop entitled "Problems Relative to Suing Cases before Sharia' Courts" in PCHR's main office in Gaza City. A number of judges, including Dr. Hasaan al-Jujo, several Sharia' lawyers and representatives from women's and human rights organizations that are active in defending women's rights participated in the workshop. Lawyer Hanan Matar, from PCHR Women's Rights Unit, talked in brief about the problems relative to suing cases

before Sharia' Courts. She attributed those problems to two main factors: the first factor is relative to Family Law; and the second one is relative to legal and practical procedures that lawyers go through during their work in the Sharia' Courts. The Sharia' lawyers who participated in the workshop submitted a set of queries and comments relative to the procedures of suing cases before the Sharia' Courts. Dr. Hasaan al-Jujo, Chief Justice of the High Sahria' Appeal Court, answered all queries, responded to comments related to problems of suing cases before Sharia' courts and promised to solve such problems in the future. The participants concluded by submitting a set of recommendations aiming at ensuring conducting work in the Sharia' Courts away from many obstacles and problems. The submitted recommendations included organizing periodic meetings among the Sharia' Courts, lawyers and organizations working in the field of women's rights.

Coordination and Cooperation with Local, Regional and International Women's Organizations

Meeting with Women's Organizations in the Gaza Strip

- On 20 January 2008, the unit organized a meeting for women's organizations in the southern Gaza Strip to discuss means of cooperation and coordination. The meeting was attended by 30 women representing 16 organizations.
- On 4 March 2008, the unit organized a meeting for women's organizations in the southern Gaza Strip to discuss activities for International Women's Day. The meeting was attended by 16 women.
- On 13 October 2008, the unit organized a meeting with organizations active in providing legal assistance in order to activate cooperation and coordination. The meeting was attended by 20 persons.

Contribution to Activities Organized by Other Women's Organizations

- On 6 March 2008, the unit director submitted a working paper on the role of human rights organizations in the protection of women from violence in a workshop organized by Women's Center for Legal Consultations.
- On 18 March 2008, the unit was honored by the Gaza Governorate for the services it provides to women.
- On 21 March 2008, the unit director delivered a speech at a reception organized by the Gaza Governorate for International Women's Day.
- On 26 March 2008, the unit director participated in a meeting organized by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to discuss the strategic plan of UNIFEM for 2008 – 2010.
- On 27 March 2008, the unit director participated in a conference organized by Cooperation Association to discuss its strategic plan for 2008 – 2010.
- On 3 April 2008, the unit director participated in a meeting organized by the General Union of Palestinian Women on amending Family Law.
- On 25 June 2008, the unit participated in a meeting for organizations that provide legal assistance to women to discuss mechanisms of cooperation and coordination. The meeting was invited to by

Women's Health Center in al-Boreij refugee camp.
- On 24 November 2008, the unit director participated in a workshop on violence against women organized by the Higher National Committee against Violence against Women at offices of al-'Ataa' Charity in Beit Hanoun town.
- On 26 November 2008, lawyer Hanan Matar submitted a working paper at a workshop on violence against women.

Joining the National Campaign against Violence against Women

The unit director is a member of the consultative committee of the National Campaign against Violence against Women, which was administered by the Palestinian Center for Conflict Resolution and Palestinian NGOs Network. The campaign was launched on 1 November and ended on 31 December 2008.

Output (4)
Documentation of Cases of Violence against Women and Violations of Their Rights

Activities

The unit cooperates with Field Work Unit and Democratic Development Unit in documenting violations of women's rights, especially murders for the so-called family honor. In 2008, 4 murders of family honor were documented (3 in the Gaza Strip and one in the West Bank).

Indicators

- The unit, in cooperation with the Field Work Unit, has documented murders related to "family honor" in the Gaza Strip.
- Documented cases were used by the unit director in media interviews.
- Murders for "family honor" were condemned in press releases issued by PCHR on International Women's Day and International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Activities not Included in the Annual Plan

Blood on Their Hands: Report on Child Killings by IOF in the Gaza Strip

In October 2008, PCHR issued a report on child killings by IOF in the Gaza Strip during the period June 2007 – June 2008. According to the report, during the reporting period, IOF killed 68 Palestinian children in the Gaza Strip. The report details killings and provides testimonies. It also highlights the psychological impacts of such killings on children who witnessed such attacks. Although the report focuses on the Gaza Strip, it also details killings of 12 Palestinian children by IOF in the West Bank. The report was widely covered by the media, especially in The Guardian on 21 October 2008. It is available in English on PCHR's web page.

Training Unit

In 2008, the unit carried out activities detailed in its annual plan, but with slight changes to activities to adapt to emergent security and political developments, especially the tightened siege imposed by IOF on the Gaza Strip.

In 2008, the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip dramatically deteriorated due to the tightened siege imposed by IOF, including the reduction of fuel supplies allowed into the Gaza Strip, which in effect disrupted transportation. Additionally, the Palestinian government in Gaza closed dozens of civil society organizations throughout the Gaza Strip. These factors negatively impacted human rights and democracy education. In light of these developments, the unit was forced to make slight changes to its activities included in its annual plan.

Output (1)
Provision of Training Courses on Human Rights and Democracy,

In 2008, the unit distributed this output to 18 activities. Due to the severe situation resulting from the Israeli siege imposed on Gaza Strip, the unit was forced to make changes without dramatically affecting this output.

Table (1): Training Courses Organized by the Unit in 2008

No.	Number of Courses	Number of Participants	Number of Training Hours	Women's Participation
1	7 courses for school staff members	173	66	50%
2	3 courses for women's rights activists	60	60	100%
3	5 courses for members of NGOs	116	100	53%
4	One course for young lawyers	20	20	35%
5	3 courses for media graduates and professionals	70	58	61%

In total, the unit trained 439 persons instead of 400 as included in its annual plan. The participation of women in training courses organized by the unit was estimated at 59%. Average attendance was estimated at 80%. The number of training hours in 19 courses was 304.

The unit carried out its activities in cooperation and coordination with a number of regional and local non-governmental and governmental organizations, including Palestine Bar Association, UNRWA and Law Institute at Bir Zeit University. The number of participants in these courses was 439 persons representing at least 75 centers, societies and unions throughout the Gaza Strip. A number of specialized trainers from all PCHR units and from outside PCHR deliver lectures at training courses.

Table (2): Training Courses Organized by the Unit in 2008

No.	Target Group	Number of Trainees	Place	Training Hours	Period	Female Participation
1	Members of the Student Parliament at UNRWA Gaza Training Center	28	UNRWA Gaza Training Center	12	4 – 7 Feb.	42%
2	Members of civil society groups in Khan Yunis	25	PCHR's office in Khan Yunis	20	17 – 21 Feb.	20%
3	Members of civil society groups in Rafah	30	National Association of Democracy and Law in Rafah	20	9 – 13 Mar.	27%
4	Members of civil society groups in Northern Gaza	27	PCHR's office in Jabalya	20	30 Mar. – 3 Apr.	60%
5	Media professionals and graduates in Deir al-Balah	27	Offices of Media Compound in Nussairat	20	8 – 12 Jun.	26%
6	Members of civil society groups in Deir al-Balah	19	Al-Maghazi Cultural Center	20	15 – 19 Jun.	58%
7	Women's rights activists in Khan Yunis	24	PCHR's office in Khan Yunis	20	29 Jun. – 3 Jul.	100%
8	Women's rights activists in Deir al-Balah	19	Al-Maghazi Cultural Center	20	13 – 17 Jul.	100%
9	Women's rights activists in Northern Gaza	17	PCHR's officein Jabalya	20	20 – 24 Jul.	100%
10	Women's rights activists in Gaza	17	Palestinian Friendship Center for Development	20	17 – 21 Aug.	100%
11	Female media professionals and graduates	21	Creative Women Association	20	12 – 16 Oct.	100%
12	Young lawyers	20	Palestine Bar Association	20	26 – 30 Oct.	35%
13	Teachers of human rights at UNRWA schools in Khan Yunis	21	Khan Yunis Elementary School «A»	9	28 – 30 Oct.	42%
14	Teachers of human rights at UNRWA schools in Khan Yunis	22	Khan Yunis Elementary School «A»	20	28 – 30 Oct.	54%
15	Teachers of human rights at UNRWA schools in Central Gaza	16	Nussairat Preparatory School «A»	9	1 – 3 Nov.	42%
16	Teachers of human rights at UNRWA schools in Central Gaza	26	Nusairat Preparatory School "A"	9	1 – 3 Nov.	53%
17	Teachers of human rights at UNRWA schools in Gaza	31	Gaza New Preparatory School	9	4 – 6 Nov.	58%
18	Teachers of human rights at UNRWA schools in Gaza	31	Gaza New Preparatory School	9	4 – 6 Nov.	54%
19	Young media professionals	22	Law Institute at Bir Zeit University	18	16 – 18 Dec.	68%

In 2008, the unit was able to carry out the 18 activities aimed at achieving this output. Additionally, the unit organized an additional course for young media professionals.

Due to developments on the ground resulting from the Israeli siege and attacks on the Gaza Strip, the unit was forced to make some changes to activities included in its annual plan as shown in the following table:

Table (3): Activities Subjected to Changes

No.	Output	Change	Reasons of non-implementation
1	5 training curses for school staff members	Two additional courses were added	UNRWA's decision to incorporate human rights in the school curricula, so it was necessary to train teachers of human rights
2	Training courses for youth	No change	
3	3 training courses on women's rights and gender	No change	
4	3 training courses for young lawyers	The number of courses was reduced to one	The reduction was for the sake of training courses designed for teachers of human rights
5	One course for young media professional	Two additional courses were organized	The role played by factional media in incitement
6	One course on monitoring and documentation of human rights	Not implemented	Cancelled for the sake of courses designed for media professionals

The unit also cancelled or postponed 3 courses agreed upon with partner organizations although preparations for them were completed. It also cancelled a 4th training course because the timing was not convenient the partner organization.

Table (4): Courses That Were Cancelled rr Postponed

No.	Target Group	Place	Reason for Cancellation
1	Staff members of institutions in Rafah	National Association of Democracy and Law, Rafah	It was scheduled to be held in the period 2-6 March, but it was postponed for one week due to the Israeli bombardment of a mosque in Rafah
2	Staff members of institutions in Deir al-Balah	Al-Mghazi Cultural Center	It was scheduled to be held in the period 13-17 April, but it was postponed due to the transportation crisis. It was implemented in June.
3	Women's rights activists in Northern Gaza	PCHR's office in Jabalya	It was scheduled to be held in the period 26-30 April, but it was postponed due to the transportation crisis. It was implemented in July.
4	Students of al-Quds Open University	Al-Quds Open University, Rafah	It was scheduled to be held in the period May, but it was cancelled as the timing was not appropriate to the university.

It is worth noting that the unit developed tools to measure the effects of training

Table (5): Effects of Training

No.	Tool	Indicators
1	Observation	The unit director, who attended all lectures, noticed the following: • Trainees demonstrated increased respect for discussion and other opinions. • Trainees demonstrated increased abilities to express themselves. • Attendance increased on the last days of courses.
2	Comparison between the participants' expectations at the beginning of training courses and the outcome and suggestions and at the end of the courses through questionnaires	The participants identified the following expectations at the beginning of the course: • Acquiring new information on human rights and democracy, noting that details varies from one segment to another depending on their needs. • Making new contacts. • Obtaining certificates of participation. • Knowing about the role of human rights organizations, especially PCHR. The participants evaluated the courses as follows: • They acquired new information on human rights and international humanitarian law. • They made new contacts. • They obtained certificates of participation. • They would think of organizing joint activities. • They highly appreciated the training guide published by the unit. • They knew more about PCHR and its role. The participants suggested the following: • Holding more similar training courses. • Holding specialized training courses on the rights of women and children. • Organizing training courses for trainers of human rights and democracy. The questionnaire explained the following: • The contents of lectures were appropriate to the trainees' expectations. • The trainers were qualified and efficient. • Training methods varied. • Interaction between trainers and trainees and between the trainees and the contents of training courses enhanced. • Attendance was high. • Commitment to the rules of discussion and respect for others' opinions were good.
3	Tracing effects of training at the personal and professional levels	Although it's difficult to trace effects of training on trainers at the personal and professional levels, the unit director was able to notice the following: • The unit director was able through his personal contacts with directors of organizations, whose members often receive training at PCHR, to find out that their skills and interaction with colleagues notably developed. • 5 trainees participated in activities organized by NGOs active in their areas of residence. • 4 of the trainees joined projects related to human rights and development. • At least 60 persons who received training visited PCHR in 2008. • 21 school teachers who received training at PCHR organized visits to PCHR's offices for at least 900 school children.

4	Informing about human rights violations and referring victims to PCHR	In 2008, the unit director received information from trainees on human rights violations at least 36 times, and 4 trainees accompanied victims to PCHR.
5	Participation in PCHR's activities	Many trainees participated in PCHR's activities: • A number of trainees participated in workshops organized by PCHR. • A number of trainees assisted PCHR in organizing 5 training courses through encouraging their colleagues to participate in courses. • A number of trainees assisted in the organization of 9 public meetings on death penalty, the rights of the child and the right to peaceful assembly. • A number of trainees informed PCHR about human rights violations and some of them accompanied victims to PCHR. • The unit used 3 media professionals who had received training at PCHR to express their experience with human rights organizations as sources of information.
6	Trainees' initiatives	Trainees made a number of initiatives: • Organizing 3 lectures for mothers and female teachers on the rights of the child, and inviting the unit director to deliver a number of lectures. • Organizing 21 visits for school children to PCHR's offices. • A number of trainees delivered preliminary lectures on human rights and democracy. • A number of trainees invited a number of PCHR staff members to participate in workshops organized by their organizations. • A number of trainees assisted in organizing summer camps for children. • 6 trainees joined projects focusing on human rights and development. • A number of trainees informed PCHR on human rights violations and escorted victims to PCHR's offices. • A number of trainees wished to work as volunteers at PCHR.
7	Requests for organizing training courses	In 2008, the unit received 20 requests from a number of civil society organizations to organize training courses for their members on human rights and democracy, and to be invited to participate in activities organized by PCHR.

Issuing News Releases Related to the Unit's Activities

In 2008, the unit issued 14 news releases covering its activities. Local newspapers reported on these activities.

Output (2)
Rising Awareness of 250 Individuals of Rights Ensured by International Human Rights Law

Through this activity, the unit seeks to introduce human rights issues, establish relations with civil society groups and increase the number of people who benefit from training activities organized by PCHR, as the unit is not able to meet all invitations by civil society groups to organize training courses for their members.

Table (6): Activities to Raise Awareness

Activity	Implementation	Means of Verification	Indicators
Raising awareness of 250 individuals of rights ensured by international human rights law	The unit organized 9 lectures throughout the Gaza Strip on rights included in the International Bill of Human Rights	▪ Gaining more knowledge about human rights issues. ▪ Attendance. ▪ The increase in the number of requests to organize or to be invited to attend lectures.	▪ The participants expressed that they gained more knowledge about human rights issues. ▪ 312 individuals attended the lectures. ▪ The unit received 4 requests.

Table (7): Details of Lectures

No.	Organizing Body	Place	Date	Number of Attendants	Subject of the Lecture
1	PCHR and Community Media Center	Office of Community Media Center	14 January	14	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
2	PCHR and Community Media Center	Office of Community Media Center	15 January	13	Civil and political rights
3	PCHR and the Local Initiative in Beit Hanoun	Office of Family Development Association	9 April	50 women	Promotion of human rights culture
4	PCHR and the Local Initiative in Beit Hanoun	Izbat Beit Hanoun	14 June	55 women	Promotion of human rights culture
5	PCHR and Creative Women Association	Office of Creative Women Association	23 October	30	Death penalty
6	PCHR and Nussairat Preparatory School «A» for Girls	Nussairat Preparatory School «A» for Girls		60 women	The rights of the child
7	PCHR and Khan Yunis elementary schools «D» and «F»		18 November	28 teachers	The rights of the child
8	PCHR and Beach Elementary School for Girls	Beach Elementary School for Girls	21 December	42 women	The rights of the child
9	PCHR and the Palestinian Youth Media Community	Office of the Palestinian Youth Media Community	24 December	20	The rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of association

Output (3)
Providing PCHR Training Staff with Updated Information on Techniques of Training

This activity sought to develop skills of PCHR training staff members and provide them with updated information on techniques of training.

Table (8): Activities to Develop Skills of PCHR Training Staff

No.	Activity	Implementation	Means of Verification	Indicators
1	Providing PCHR training staff with updated information on techniques of training	• Training materials covering many subjects of human rights have notably increased. • Modern technology has been used by a number of PCHR training staff members.	Holding meetings with training staff members to evaluate how much they benefit from the use of modern technology in training.	The unit director held meetings with PCHR training staff members who used modern technology in training, and they asserted that it saves time and efforts and makes it easy to provide appropriate training.
2	Nominating a number of PCHR training staff members to participate in training courses of trainers	PCHR did not received any invitations to participate in courses for training of trainers		

Output (4)
Maintaining Contacts with Trainees and Establishing an Alumni Organization

The unit continued its efforts to establish an alumni body that combines individuals who receive training at PCHR. The unit received dozens of persons who received training at PCHR and presented the idea of the alumni body to them. They welcomed the idea. However, the unit was not able, for reasons out of its control related to field developments in the Gaza Strip, to officially declare the establishment of the alumni body in spite of its de facto existence. The unit laid foundations for establishing this body through a number of steps. The unit prepared in 2006 a brochure to introduce the alumni body, including its goals, membership conditions and advantages, etc. However, the deterioration in the security situation precluded the official declaration of the establishment of this body.

In 2008, the unit filed contract details of 439 trainees. The list includes names, places of residence, work places, telephone and fax numbers, e-mails, the coordinating institutions, and the dates and places of courses.

In 2008, persons who received training at PCHR contributed to a number of activities organized by PCHR and other organizations:

- A number of trainees attended workshops organized by PCHR.
- A number of trainees assisted in the organization of 5 training courses through encouraging their colleagues to attend courses.
- A number of trainees assisted in the organization of 9 public meetings on death penalty, the rights of the child and the right to peaceful assembly.
- A trainee volunteered at the Field Work Unit.
- A number of trainees informed PCHR about human rights violations

and some of them accompanied victims to PCHR.
- The unit used 3 journalists who had received training at PCHR to express their experience with human rights organizations as sources of information.
- A number of PCHR staff members were invited to workshops organized by organizations where trainees work.
- A number of trainees organized 21 visits for school children to PCHR's offices.
- Many trainees often visit PCHR's office and meet with the unit director for guidance.

Output (5)
Maintaining Relations with Civil Society Organizations through Training Activities

The unit contributes to promote PCHR's relations with civil society organizations through participating in training activities organized by these organizations. The unit receives many invitations from governmental and non-governmental organizations to organize training courses for their members, delivering lectures or designing training programs due to the unit's high professionalism.

However, activities in this context were limited as many civil society organizations were forced to stop their activities due to the Israeli siege and its impacts of the freedom of movement, or because the government in Gaza closed dozens of these organizations.

Table (9): Activities Conducted by the Unit to Enhance Relations with Other Civil Society Organizations

No.	Activity	Implementation	Means of Verification	Indicators
1	Participation in training activities organized by other civil society organizations, especially those focusing on women and the disabled	The unit organized two training courses, the unit director delivered 7 lectures and colleagues delivered 7 others in training activities organized by other civil society organizations	An increase in the number of invitations sent by other civil society organizations to PCHR to participate in training activities	• The unit received 20 requests from other civil society organizations to organize training courses for their members or deliver lectures in training courses they organized and at least 6 organizations sought to establish relations with PCHR. • The unit director received 3 letters thanking him for participating in training activities organized by other civil society organizations.
2	Hosting activities or small civil society organizations, especially those focusing on women and the disabled	PCHR hosted two activities for Panorama Center at its office in Khan Yunis	Requests send to the unit to host such activities	• On 25 February 2008, PCHR hosted at its office in Khan Yunis a meeting organized by the Panorama Center on the rights of the child. • On 10 March 2008, PCHR hosted at its office in Khan Yunis a meeting organized by Panorama Center on the role of human rights organizations in the protection of human rights.

3	Assisting small civil society organizations, especially those focusing on the rights of women and the disabled, in designing training courses	Not implemented	An increase in the number of organizations requesting the unit's assistance in designing training courses	The unit did not receive any request in this regard
4	Inviting trainers from other organizations to contribute to training activities organized by the unit	3 trainers contributed to training activities organized by PCHR.	The number of trainers who contributed to the unit's training activities	The unit invited 3 external trainers, including two female ones, to contribute to training activities.

Table (10): Lectures Delivered by the Unit at Training Courses Organized by Other Organizations

No.	Organization	Place	Date	Number of Participants	Subject
1	Tami Training Institute	Tami Training Institute	19 Jan.	25	Introduction to democracy
2	Tami Training Institute	Tami Training Institute	22 Jan.	25	The rights of the child in international and national laws
3	Panorama Center	PCHR's office in Khan Yunis	25 Feb.	19	The rights of the child in international and national laws
4	Panorama Center	Khan Yunis Governorate	10 Mar.	25	The role of human rights organizations in the protection of human rights
5	Future Sun Charity	Khan Yunis	18 Jun.	28	Early marriage and violence against women
6	Al-Qdus Association for al-Mawasi Development	Al-Mawasi area, Khan Yunis	24 Jun.	50	Violence against women
7	Independent Commission of Human Rights	Al-Deera Hotel, Gaza	25 Nov.	15	Sources of information and field work
8	Independent Commission of Human Rights	Al-Deera Hotel, Gaza	25 Nov.	15	Collating evidence of violations of economic, social and cultural rights
9	Independent Commission of Human Rights	Al-Deera Hotel, Gaza	25 Nov.	15	Reporting on human rights violations
10	Refugees and Human Rights Committee of the World Union of Students of Medicine at al-Azhar University	Al-Azhar University	27 Nov.	14	Human rights concepts
11	National Association of Democracy and Law	Office of the National Association of Democracy and Law in Rafah	17 Dec.	25	The right to freedom of movement

Activities Not Included in the Unit's Annual Plan

At the beginning of the school year 20082009-, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) decided to incorporate human rights in the school curricula. This decision came as an outcome of joint persistent efforts between UNRWA and human rights organizations, especially PCHR. The Training Unit has cooperated with UNRWA for more than 6 years in the context of a joint project aiming at making the school environment appropriate for children to enjoy their rights. In this context, the unit has organized training courses in human rights, tolerance and mediation for directors of schools, teachers and administrative staff at UNRWA schools. The unit has also delivered lectures to parents on the rights of the child. Additionally, the unit receives visiting school children at its three offices. Such persistent efforts were matured by a special agreement between PCHR and UNRWA in February 2008. According to the agreement:

1. PCHR would conduct a survey of school curricula from the 1st to the 9th grades at UNRWA schools, whose students count 196,000, to verify their conformity to the principles of human rights and good citizenship.
2. PCHR would design a tool to measure the effects of teaching human rights for all grades at UNRWA schools.
3. PCHR would prepare a report analyzing the results and providing recommendations.

The project was implemented in stages:

Stage 1:

A team to implement the project was formed of: Deputy Director of PCHR; the unit director; UNRWA Human Rights Supervisor; 3 experts in education from al-Aqsa University in Gaza; an expert in statistics; and an artist.

Stage 2:

The team conducted a survey on the curricula at UNRWA schools from the 1st to the 9th grades.

Stage 3:

The team prepared enriching materials to incorporate human rights in the school curricula, and designed forms of exams, whose number was 36 (4 for each grade) during the period 8 March – 10 April 2008.

Stage 4:

The team organized 11 training meetings for educational supervisors and teachers at UNRWA on how to deal with the forms of exams. The number of educational supervisors and teachers who participated in these meetings was 225 representing all schools. This stage lasted for 8 days.

Stage 5:

After receiving training, the teachers shall provide their colleagues at their respective schools with all information in two days following the training. This stage lasted for two days.

Stage 6:

During the period 24 to 29 May 2008, the teachers trained students on the similar forms of exams after receiving them from trainers. For further enhancement, the teachers selected similar activities from the curricula of civil education to train students on them.

At the same time, the team supervised filling in questionnaires on the human rights project by students of 7th, 8th and 9th grades. The sample for the questionnaires included 701. This process lasted for 3 days.

Stage 7:

This stage included a number of steps:

On 2 June 2008, 196,000 students attended the exams, each in his/her classroom. UNRWA printed or photocopied the exams, and organized and arranged the process of examination according to the procedures it often follows, including designing seat numbers and secret number during correction and a central control body, etc.

On the day that followed the exams, the teachers who received training started correct the exams. The correction was finished on 18 June 2008.

On the day that followed the correction of exams, the control staff at UNRWA started to enter the results into the database. This process was concluded on 25 June 2008.

UNRWA handed over a copy of the result to PCHR for analysis and reporting.

Stage 8:

In July 2008, PCHR submitted a final report to UNRWA analyzing the results and providing recommendation.

Advocacy and Lobbying Activities

Advocacy and lobbying activities occupy a major part of PCHR's activities at both international and local levels. Through such activities, PCHR seeks to achieve its basic goal – Protection of human rights and respect for international humanitarian law. PCHR carry out such activities in coordination with dozens of international, regional and Palestinian NGOs to exert pressure and influence authorities to stop violations of human rights and respect the international humanitarian law.

Participation in International and Regional Conferences and Meetings

In 2008, PCHR received invitations to participate in many international and regional conferences and meetings. PCHR's participation in such events was restricted by the ongoing tough restrictions on freedom of movement imposed by IOF on the Gaza Strip. PCHR staff members have not been able to travel outside the Gaza Strip, like other Palestinian civilians, as IOF have closed Rafah International Crossing Point, excluding Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who was able to travel through Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing on 27 October 2008. His travel was coordinated by the French Consulate General.

Alexandria Conference on the Middle East - Egypt

In the period 10 – 21 January 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in Alexandria Conference on the Middle East, which was organized by Library of Alexandria and the French government.

Meetings in - Geneva

On 23 and 24 January, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, attended the meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva to discuss the current situation in the Gaza Strip. During his visit to Switzerland, Sourani met with the delegation of International Commission of Jurists, the Dutch Ambassador, EU Representative to the Human Rights Council, and Palestinian Ambassador.

A Meeting at the French Foreign Ministry - Paris

On 24 January, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, held a meeting at the French Foreign Ministry, which was attended by the staff of the office of the French Minister of Human Rights. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the OPT.

A Colloquium of the Union of Arab Lawyers - Cairo

On 28 Jan. 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in a colloquium in Egypt about the human rights situation & living conditions in the Gaza Strip. The colloquium was organized by the Union of Arab Lawyers. Souarni talked about the impacts of the unjust siege imposed on the Gaza Strip.

A Colloquium on the Death Penalty - Cairo

On 30 January 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in a colloquium organized by the Arab Organization for Human Rights in Cairo. In his intervention, Sourani talked about the death penalty asserting that PCHR is against it as it violates the right of life and does not deter crimes. He further explained PCHR's position towards national treason, field trials, and courts martial.

International Meetings- Barcelona

In the period 4 – 6 February 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, held two meetings with journalists and members of the Arab community to inform about

the human rights situation in the OPT, especially the Gaza Strip. In addition, Sourani met with officials in the International Cooperation Department in the Municipality of Barcelona. He also met with the international director of the International Cooperation Association and three of his aides.

A Colloquium on the Human Rights Situation in the Gaza Strip – Barcelona

On 6 February, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in a colloquium organized for 100 solidarity activists and supporters of the Palestinian cause, and talked in detail about the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip. He cited various examples of Israeli violations of human rights and international silence coinciding with the brutal siege imposed on the Gaza Strip's population.

A Meeting with Director-General of Ascot Project – Madrid

On 7 February 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, met with the director-general of the Ascot Project to discuss joint projects and prospects of further cooperation.

A Conference Organized by the Arab House Association – Madrid

On 7 February 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in a conference organized by the Arab House Association in the International Center of Arts. He delivered a lecture to more than 200 activists and politicians about Israeli human rights violations, pointing to the suffering of the civilian population due to the policies of closure, killing, and destruction.

A Public Meeting on the Humanitarian Situation in the Gaza Strip – Malaga

On 8 February 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in a public meeting organized by al-Quds Association for more than 200 solidarity activists with Palestine. In the meeting, Sourani talked about the catastrophic humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip on the 40th anniversary of the occupation, which comes at a time of international silence over Israeli crimes against Palestinians. He pointed out that these crimes include ethnic cleansing, Judaization of Jerusalem, the construction of the Annexation Wall, settlement building and expansion, closure, killing, and systematic destruction of all aspects of civilian life.

A Meeting with NGOs – Andalusia

On 9 February 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, met with representatives of 15 NGOs in Andalusia to discuss breaking the international conspiracy of silence and activate international solidarity visits to the OPT. In addition, the meeting discussed the situation in the Gaza Strip.

A Meeting with Secretary General of the Swedish Olof Palme International Center – Jordan

On 19 February 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, met with Ms. Viola Furubjelke, Secretary General of the Olof Palme International Center (OPIC), in Amman. The meetings discussed cooperation between PCHR and OPIC.

Three Lectures in a Training Course Organized by OPIC – Jordan

In the period 1922- February 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, contributed to a training

course organized by the Olof Palme International Center in Amman for leaders of local councils, political parties and student councils. He delivered 3 lectures on the international law and human rights.

A Symposium on the Rights of the Palestinian People – Cairo

On 27 February 2008, the Arab Organization for Human Rights organized a regional symposium to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the 1948 Nakba (the uprooting of the Palestinian people from their land). The symposium was entitled, "60 years of the Nakba: Palestinian People's Rights….to where?" Approximately 100 experts, academics, and human rights activists participated in the event and discussed human rights issues in the OPT. In his intervention, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, listed serious Israeli violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law. He stated that these violations need international action to hold the perpetrators accountable.

Meeting of International Federation of Human Rights – Paris

In the period 68- March 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, attended meeting of the International Secretariat of the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) in Paris. Sourani is the Vice Presidents of FIDH.

International Meetings – Madrid, London and Dublin

In the period 30 March – 6 April 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, held a series of meetings with academics, politicians and journalists in Madrid, London and Dublin. These meeting discussed the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip.

Meeting of the General Assembly of the Arab Organization for Human Rights – Cairo

On 16 April 2008, Yahia Abu Safi and Marwa Abu Daqqa, delegated by PCHR, attended the meeting of the General Assembly of the Arab Organization for Human Rights in Cairo. During the meeting, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, was reelected to the Executive Board of the Organization.

ECOSOC Meetings – Geneva

On 18 and 19 April 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, attended the meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council in Geneva.

Annual Meeting of International Legal Assistance Consortium – Rome

In the period 79- May 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in the annual meeting of the International Legal Assistance Consortium in Rome.

Annual Charity Dinner of MAP – London

On 16 May 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, was invited to an annual charity dinner by Medical Aid for Palestine (MAP) in London. He delivered a keynote speech on the human rights situation in the OPT. Baroness Helena Kennedy and former US Secretary of State James Baker also addressed the event.

National Campaign for Peace in Palestine – Paris

On 17 May, the French NGO's Network in Support of the Palestinian Issue invited Sourani to address the National Campaign for Peace in Palestine 2008 in France. Approximately 5000 participants

from all over France attended, including a large number of officials, parliament members, ambassadors, municipality officials, civil society activists, and intellectuals attended the event.

Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Ensuring Respect for Human Rights through Anti-Terrorism – Prague

In a response to an invitation from the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European Commission, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, attended the Euro-Mediterranean Seminar on Ensuring Respect for Human Rights through Anti-Terrorism measures in accordance with international law, which was held in Prague on 16 and 17 June 2008. The 2-day conference included one plenary session & 4 workshops.

Conference of International Human Rights Law Experts – Brussels

On behalf of Director of PCHR, who was not able to travel as he was denied permission by IOF to travel from the Gaza Strip, Ms. Louisa Waugh represented PCHR in a conference for international human rights law experts organized by the Swedish Diakonia in Brussels. She submitted an intervention at the conference.

Parallel Conference of Future Forum - UAE

PCHR participated in the Parallel Conference of the Future Forum in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates between 14 and 20 of October 2008. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, was scheduled to participate in the conference, but he was not able to travel. PCHR's coordinator in the West Bank, Samih Mohsen, represented PCHR instead of Sourani. The agenda of the conference focused two main points: the progress of democratic reform, and review of the Forum's activities and initiatives and the role played by civil society groups within the Forum.

Regional Conference of the Independence of Higher Judicial Councils – Jordan

In the period 57- December 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in the regional conference organized by the International Federation of Human Rights and Amman Center for Human Rights Studies on the independence of higher judicial councils. Sourani chaired the concluding session of the conference.

Commemoration of the Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Paris

On 8 December 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in a ceremony organized by the International Federation of Human Rights in Paris on the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Visiting International Delegations and Figures

PCHR pays special attention to activities related to receiving international delegations and figures, as part of its efforts to provide the international community with a comprehensive overview and explanation of violations of human rights perpetrated by IOF in the OPT. PCHR organizes visits for these delegations and figures throughout the Gaza Strip, and allows them to meet victims of human rights violations. These delegations and figures include politicians, diplomats, representatives of the United Nations bodies and human rights organizations and journalists.

In 2008, PCHR received several visiting delegations and figures that were able to enter the Gaza Strip in spite of complicated procedures of access to the Gaza Strip. During some of these visits, PCHR escorted delegations and figures on field visits to areas in the Gaza Strip and briefed them on the human rights situation.

UNRWA Director of Operations

On 16 January 2008, PCHR received Mr. John Ging, UNRWA Director of Operations. Mr. Ging met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip.

ILAC Delegation

On 18 February 2008, PCHR received a delegation from the International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC). The delegation met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, and Iyad Alami, Director of PCHR Legal Aid Unit. PCHR organized a number of meetings for the delegation with Palestinian judges.

Head of Gaza Sub-Delegation of ICRC

On 18 February 2008, PCHR received Mr. Anthony Dalciel, Head of Gaza Sub- Delegation of the ICRC. He met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, and Iyad Alami, Director of PCHR Legal Aid Unit. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the OPT and detention conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

UNRWA Deputy Director of Operations in Gaza

On 11 March 2008, PCHR received Mr. Aidan O'Leary, UNRWA Deputy Director of Operations. The visitor met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR. The meeting discussed human rights education at UNRWA schools and cooperation between PCHR and UNRWA in this field.

Middle East Desk Officer of the Swedish Diakonia

On 11 March 2008, PCHR received Middle East Desk Officer of the Swedish Diakonia. The visitor met with Mr. Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR. The meeting discussed cooperation between PCHR and Diakonia.

Delegation from the Dutch Representative Office

On 27 March 2008, PCHR received a delegation from the Dutch Representative Office comprised of Mr. Harry Putker, First Secretary, and Ms. Nelly Blokker, Desk Officer for Middle East – Humanitarian Affairs Department. The visitors met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, who briefed them on the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip.

Political Officer of the German Representative Office

On 7 April 2008, PCHR received Mr. Philip Holzapfel, Political Officer of the German Representative Office. The visitor met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, who briefed him on the human rights situation and humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip.

UNRWA Director of Operations

On 7 April 2008, PCHR received Mr. John Ging, UNRWA Director of Operations. Mr. Ging met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR. The meeting discussed cooperation between PCHR and UNRWA in the field of human rights education.

International Fact-Finding Mission

On 28 May 2008, a PCHR delegation met Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who headed the UNHRC High Level Fact-Finding Mission to investigate the Israeli crime against the al-'Athamna family in Beit Hanoun on 8 November 2006. The PCHR delegation consisted of: Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR; Hamdi Shaqura, Director of Democratic Development Unit; and Iyad Alami, Director of Legal Aid Unit. PCHR's presented the mission with documented evidence about the crime that resulted in the death of 18 members of the same family.

A Delegation from Irish Charity Trocaire and Catholic Development Organizations

On 29 May 2008, Jaber Weshah, Deputy Director of PCHR, met with a delegation from the Irish Charity & Development Agency (Trocaire) & representatives of French and Belgian member organizations of the International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip and the deteriorated humanitarian situation in the territory. On 30 May, PCHR organized a field visit for the visiting delegation in Khan Yunis and Rafah. They witnessed the destruction of civilian property & farms by IOF. The delegation met a number of victims of Israeli military operations & listened to their accounts.

A Delegation from the National Council of Interests

On 1 June 2008, a 9-member delegation from the National Council of Interests from the US visited PCHR and met with Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR. The delegation was headed by the Chairman of the Council and former US Ambassador to Jordan, Richard Viets. The meeting discussed the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and systematic violations of human rights of the Strip's civilian population.

A Delegation from the European Parliament

On 1 June 2008, Jaber Wishah met with a 5-memer delegation from the European Parliament delegation headed by Luisa Morgantini, Deputy

Speaker of the European Parliament. Weshah briefed the visitors on the human rights situation in the OPT, especially the catastrophic humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip as a result of the Israeli siege.

A Delegation from the European Commission

On 24 June 2008, PCHR received in its main office in Gaza City Mr. John Kjaer, Representative of the European Commission, Mr. Jerome Bellion, Political Officer, and Ms. Maja Sverbrup, Political Advisor. The visitors met with Mr. Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, and Mr. Hamdi Shaqqura, Director of PCHR Democratic Development Unit. PCHR's representatives detailed the visitor on the human rights situation in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip.

A Delegation from the Spanish Cooperation Program in Jerusalem

On Wednesday, 25 June 2008, PCHR received in its main office in Gaza City a delegation from Spanish Cooperation Program in Jerusalem, which included PCHR's partner, ACSUR – an assembly of Spanish human rights NGOs – and a number of university professors. Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, briefed the visitors on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), especially in the Gaza Strip. He also explained efforts made by PCHR to ensure the prosecution of Israeli war criminals at international courts. On the second day of their visit to PCHR, members of the Spanish delegation met with Ms. Muna Shawa, Director of PCHR Women's Rights Unit, and the staff of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit. Members of the delegations were briefed on the mandates and activities of the two units.

Consultant Legal Advisor of Diakonia Regional Office

On 6 July 2008, PCHR received Grietje Baars, Consultant Legal Adviser in Diakonia Regional Office, Jerusalem. Baars met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR. The meeting discussed efforts to make use of universal jurisdiction to prosecute suspect Israeli war criminals.

A Parliamentary French Delegation

On 8 July 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, met with a Parliamentary French delegation from the International Information Group on the Palestinian Territories that included: Ms. Monique Creisier – Ben Guiga (MP); Ms. Bernadette Dupont (MP); Ms. Delphine Mancel (administrator); and Ms. Jacquiline Coulon-Lascaux, the Attaché for Social and Humanitarian Cooperation in the French Consulate General in Jerusalem. Sourani discussed the human rights situation in the OPT with the delegation, with emphasis on the catastrophic impact of Israeli siege of Gaza on the civilian population. During the meeting, Sourani condemned the European position regarding the siege and the crimes perpetrated against the Palestinian civilian population.

A Delegation from MSF – France

On 9 July 2008, Sourani met Duncan McLean, the Head of Mission of Medecins Sans Frontieres – France (MSF) and the directors of MSF offices in Jerusalem and Gaza. Sourani briefed the delegation on the human rights situation in the OPT in general and the health situation in the Gaza Strip in particular.

A Delegation from OCHA

On 13 July 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, received at PCHR's office in Gaza a delegation from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) comprised of: Mr. Carlos Monteiro-Pereira, Chief of Americans and the Caribbean, Central Asia and Middle East Section, Coordination and Response Division, OCHA; Ms. Aurelien Buffler, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Coordination and Response Division, OCHA; and Mr. Hamada al-Bayari, Director Gaza Offices, OCHA. Mr. Sourani briefed the delegation on the human rights situation in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip.

British Political Consul

On 15 July 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, met with Mr. Chris Merritt, British HM Consul (Political), at PCHR's office in Gaza City. During the meeting, Mr. Sourani briefed Mr. Merritt on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the Gaza Strip, focusing on the living conditions and suffering of the civilian population due to the Israeli denial of their human rights which are ensured by the international law and international humanitarian law.

A Delegation from the Basque – Spain

In the period 2123- July 2008, PCHR hosted a delegation from the Basque-Spain comprised of 9 human rights defenders, who were in a solidarity visit to the OPT. Members of the delegation met with representatives of political factions and with Mr. Joh Ging, Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza. They also visited offices of a number of civil society organizations and some summer camps in the Gaza Strip.

Head of OCHA Office in the OPT

On 23 July 2008, Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, met at PCHR's office in Gaza with Mr. Philippe Lazzarini, Head the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and staff members of the office. Mr. Sourani briefed the guest on the human rights situation in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip.

Head of Carter Center in the West Bank and Gaza

On 19 August 2008, PCHR received Mr. Tamothy Rothemel, Head of Carter Centre in the West Bank and Gaza. The visitor met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed him on the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip.

Coordinator of the Israeli Committee against House Demolition

On 26 August 2008, PCHR received in its main office in Gaza City Mr. Jeff Halper, Coordinator of the Israeli Committee against House Demolition UK. Mr. Halper met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, who welcomed. They briefed him on the human rights situation and the deteriorating humanitarian and economic conditions on the Palestinian civilian population because of the total siege imposed on the Gaza Strip, which had had negative impacts on the living conditions of the civilian population.

Deputy Representative of South Africa

On 9 September 2008, PCHR received Royce Kuzwayo, Deputy Representative of South Africa. He met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed him on the human rights situation and the deteriorating economic conditions of the Palestinian civilian population because of the total siege imposed on the Gaza Strip.

A Delegation from the Austrian Representative Office

On 18 September 2008, Roland Treitler, Deputy Head of the Austrian Representative to the PNA, Nikolaus Egger, from the Austrian Embassy in Israel, and Sami Abu Sultan, from the Austrian Representative Office) visited PCHR today. They met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Hamdi Shaqqura, Director of PCHR Democratic Development Unit. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the OPT, especially in the Gaza Strip.

French Ambassador with Special Status

On 22 October 2008, PCHR received Ambassador Stephan Hessel, Member of the Higher French Council of International Cooperation. The visitor met with Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who highly appreciated his visit to the Gaza Strip to share its population the suffering under the Israeli siege.

A Delegation from the European Parliament

On 3 November, 2008, PCHR received a delegation from the European Parliament (EP) at its office in Gaza City. The delegation included European Parliamentarian Kyriacos Triantaphyllides, and EP Vice President Louisa Morgantini. Hamdi Shaqqura, Deirector of PCHR Democratic Development Unit, received the visitors and briefed them on the situation in the Gaza Strip. He attributed the deteriorating human rights situation to three main factors: continued Israeli occupation, including the illegal siege of the Gaza Strip; the international boycott and sanctions imposed on Palestinian civilians; and the internal fighting and subsequent fragmentation of the Palestinian political system..

Director of UNRWA Office in New York and Special Assistant to the Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza

On 23 November 2008, PCHR received Andrew Whitley, Director of UNRWA Office in New York, and Oustin Okazaki, Special Assistant to the Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza. The visitors met with Hamdi Shaqqura, Director of PCHR Democratic Development Unit, and Iyad Alami, Director of PCHR Legal Aid Unit, who briefed him on the humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip under the Israeli siege.

Visitors of PCHR in 2008

Date	Visitors	Number of Visitors
16 January	John Ging, Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza	1
19 January	Sami Alhaw, UNRWA	4
24 January	A meeting with a delegation from the Norwegian Representative Office at UNDP Headquarters	
28 January	Bitte Hammargren Foreign Correspondent – Sevenska Dagbladet Rimi Sadoun, Protection Delegate to Northern Gaza, the ICRC	2
31 January	Mike Napier, the Scottish Solidarity Movement	
2 February	John Ging, Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza	
6 February	Kamal al-Gharbawi, UK Department of International Development, UK Consulate General	
14 February	Christian Aid and partners in Gaza and a French delegation from the International Solidarity Movement	
18 February	A delegation from the International Legal Assistance Consortium: ▪ Agneta Johanson ▪ Annika Lindgren	
20 February	Aidan O'Leary, Deputy Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza	
23 February	Nicholas Morris, UNRWA Consultant	
28 February	▪ Magali Thill, Director, ACSUR ▪ Asier Rodríguez Villa, ACSUR Las Segovias	
2 March	▪ Aidan O'Leary, Deputy Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza ▪ 'Abdul Karim 'Awadh, Department of Development and Plannning, UNRWA	
4 March	Anthony Dalciel – Head of Gaza Sub- Delegation of the ICRC	
5 March	Donatella Rovera, Amnesty International	
9 March	Laura Couderc, Program Officer Middle East and Maghreb Novib	
10 March	Working Group of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network	
11 March	Aidan O'Leary , Deputy Director of UNRWA Operations	
11 March	▪ Tom Abrahamsson, Head of Asia and Middle East Department, Diakonia's Head Office in Stockholm ▪ Grietje Baars, Legal Adviser, International Humanitarian Law Programme, Diakonia Regional Middle East Office	
13 March	Stuart Reigelath, Spanish Foundation	
19 March	▪ Head of the National Council of Churches, USA ▪ Suhaila Tarazi, Director of the Arab National Hospital in Gaza	
26 March	Are Hovdenak, a Norwegian researcher	
27 March	A delegation from the Dutch Representative Office: ▪ Harry Putker, First Secretary ▪ Nelly Blokker, Desk officer for Middle East – Humanitarian Affairs Department	
1 April	▪ Kenneth Brown ▪ Laure Fourest ▪ Ambassador Stephan Hessel, France ▪ Are Hovdenak, a Norwegian researcher	

1 April	▪ Dr. Mahmoud al-Himdiyat, Director of UNRWA Education Department ▪ Mazen Timraz, UNRWA	
1 April	Students from Ibn Rashod Preparatory School	40
3 April	▪ Marjolaine Edouard, Emergency Desk Deputy Head, Caritas – France ▪ Kahlil Zachariah, Caritas, Jerusalem ▪ Dr. Bandali al-Sayegh, Caritas, Gaza	
3 April	Students from 'Izbat Beit Hanoun Preparatory School	50
7 April	Philip Holzapfel, Political Officer, German Representative Office	
7 April	John Ging, Director of UNRWA Operations	
7 April	▪ Nicholas Wood, Researcher, Human Rights Watch (HRW) ▪ Fred Abrahams, Researcher, HRW ▪ Joe Strorel, Deputy Director , Middle East, HRW ▪ Fares al-Ghoul, HRW	3
7 April	Students from Jabalya Preparatory School	50
8 April	Students from Bani Suhaila Preparatory School	30
9 April	Students from Khan Yunis Preparatory School	30
9 April	Students from al-Zaytoun Preparatory School	5
10 April	A delegation from Medical Aid for Palestinians	
10 April	A delegation from Human Development Association, al-Qarara	
23 April	Students from al-Zaytoun Preparatory School	12
27 April	Grietije Baors, Legal Advisor, Diakonia	
30 April	Safa' Jouda, Consultant, Grassroots International	
30 April	A delegation from the Council of Foreign Relations	
6 May	A delegation from the Spanish ACSUR	
6 May	An Italian delegation of 8 UNRWA experts accompanied by Hussam Hamdouna	
7 May	Randa Sanyoura, Commissioner-General of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights	
12 May	▪ Charlotte Ashley, Pouline toiler Mckeown, Middle East Programme Officer, CAFOD, London ▪ Aidan O'Leary , Deputy Director of UNRWA Operations	2
15 May	A meeting with al-Mezan Center for Human Rights, Gaza	
19 May	Subhiya Jom'a, Palestinian Independent Commission of Human Rights	
19-25 May	Cristina Ruiz, President of Al-Quds Association for Solidarity with People in Arab Countries	
20 May	Mark Moothews, Correspondent, Managing Editor, PRISM American Society for Engineering Education	2
25 May	David Halpin, FRCS	
28 May	▪ Lara Deramaix, Desk Officer Israel Palestine, Avocate Sans Frontieres ▪ Eyad Nasser, Media Officer, ICRC, Gaza	
29 May – 1 June	A delegation through Trocaire, Ireland: Eoin Murray; Hilary Minch; Anne Dorian; Brigitte Herremens; Brodelijlk Delen; Katelejne sutens; Koen De Groof; and Emmanuelle Bennanie	8

1 June	A delegation from the US Council of National Interests through UNRWA	9
1 June	Members of the European Parliament	6
2 June	Francesc Claret, Assistant to the Director of the Executive Office, UNRWA	
9 June	▪ Asier Rodríguez Villa, ACSUR Las Segovias ▪ Arianna Taddei, Pedagogue EducAid, Social and Educational Work for Children	1
19 June	Michael Jordan, Yugoslavia	
19 June	A delegation from the Dutch Pax Christy	
22 June	A delegation from the Palestinian Student Forum	30
24 June	A delegation from the European Commission: ▪ Mr. John Kjaer, Representative of the European Commission ▪ Mr. Jerome Bellion, Political Officer ▪ Ms. Maja Sverbrup, Political Advisor.	
25 June	A delegation from the Spanish ACSUR Las Segovias headed by Asier Rodríguez Villa	15
26 June	A meeting with Mr. Raymond Johansen, Deputy Foreign Minister of Norway, and an accompanying delegation at UNDP headquarters in Gaza	
28 June	A delegation from South Africa	
29 June	A delegation from the Foreign Relations Committee at the Palestinian Legislative Council	
1 July	▪ Dr. Iain Chalmers, Coordinator, James Lind Alliance Secretariat ▪ Andra Bekar, MAP	
6 July	Grietje Baars, Consultant Legal Adviser, International Humanitarian Law Programme, Diakonia Regional Office, Jerusalem	
8 July	▪ Mme Monique Cerisier, Ben Guiga, Sénatrice ▪ Mme Bernadette Dupont, Sénatrice ▪ Mme Delphine Mancel, Administratrice, Groupe d'information internationale sur les Territoires palestiniens ▪ Jacqueline Coulon-Lascaux, Attachée de coopération sociale et humanitaire, Consulat Général de France à Jérusalem	1
9 July	Duncan McLean, the Head of Mission of Medecins Sans Frontieres – France (MSF) and the directors of MSF offices in Jerusalem and Gaza	
13 July	A delegation from OCHA	
15 July	▪ Chis Merriti – HM Consul Political, UK Consulate General ▪ Kamal al-Gharbawi, UK Consulate General	
16 July	Morten Ronenburg Muller, Dan Church Aid	
21-23 July	A delegation from the Basque, Spain	
24 July	'Imad 'Afana, Director of Change and Reform Bloc in the Palestinian Legislative Council	
26 July	▪ Dr. Ahmed Bahar, Acting Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) ▪ Imsa'il al-Ashqar, Head of the Interior and Security Committee, PLC	
28 July	▪ Fred Abrahams – Senior Emergencies Res. ▪ Joe Stork, Deputy Director, Middle East and North Africa Division – HRW	
6 August	Sara Hamood, Oxfam Novib	

13 August	A delegation from Medical Aid for Palestinians	
17 August	Takuya Sasaki, Campaign for Children of Palestine	
19 August	Tamothy Rothemel, Head of Carter Center, West Bank and Gaza	
24 August	A delegation from the Spanish ACSUR	
26 August	Jeff Halper, Director, The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions	
26 August	A delegation from the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights	
2 September	Jamie Balfour-Paul, Middle East Policy Adviser, Oxfam GB	
3 September	▪ Filippo Grandi, Depty Commsioner General, UNRWA HQ. ▪ Christopher Gunness, Spokesman, UNRWA HQ	
3 September	▪ Kate Wild, Hoping Foundation ▪ Siham Abu Nasr, OSO Office	
7 September	▪ James Dinslu, MAP, London ▪ Fikr Shaltout, MAP, Gaza	
8 September	A delegation from Oxfam Novib: ▪ Marieke Feits ▪ Bettina Huber	
8 September	A delegation from Christian Aid: ▪ Tabitha Ross ▪ William Bell, Advocacy officer ▪ Jeffery Jonkers, Programme officer	
8 September	Takuya Sasaki, CCP	
9 September	▪ Royce Kuzwayo, Deputy Representative of South Africa ▪ Bishara Shaheen, Representative Office of South Africa	
18 September	▪ Roland Treitler, MA, Deputy Head and Head of Administration – Austrian Representative Office ▪ Colonel Nikolaus Egger, MSD, Austrian Defence Attache in Israel and Cyprus ▪ Sami Abu Sultan, Coordinator, Gaza Community Mental Health Programme	
18 September	A delegation from the International Legal Assistance Consortium: ▪ Agnita Johanson ▪ Annika Lundgreen	
5 October	Alaa' al-Ghalyini, Palestinian NGO Development Center	
6 October	A delegation from OCHA: ▪ Cristina Blunt, Director of OCHA Office, Gaza ▪ Hamada al-Bayari, OCHA Office, Gaza ▪ Ahmed Abu Shammala, OCHA Office, Gaza	
9 October	A delegation from Quakers	4
15 October	An Irish delegation through UNRWA	6
19 October	A delegation form Oxfam Novib: ▪ Marieke Feitsma, Middle East Desk Officer ▪ Bettina Huber, Humanitarian Coordinator	
22 October	Ambassador Stephan Hessel, Member of the Higher French Council of International Cooperation	
30 October	Audrey Bomse, US Lawyer	

1 November	A delegation from the International Solidarity Campaign that came to Gaza in a ship to break the siege	25
3 November	A delegation from the European Parliament	
19 November	Students from an UNRWA school	40
23 November	▪ Andrew Whitley, Director, UN New York ▪ Oustin Okazaki, Special Assistant to the Director of UNRWA Operations, Gaza	
27 November	Students from al-Rimal Elementary School	10
30 November	Students from Jabalya Preparatory School	60
30 November	Students from Gaza New School	25
2 December	A delegation from the Spanish ACSUR	
3 December	Students from Nussairat Preparatory School	25
17 December	Students from Beach Preparatory School	25
18 December	A delegation of media professionals participating in a training course organized by PCHR and the Law Institute at Bir Zeit University	25

Interviews with Local and International Media in 2008

PCHR continues promote cooperation with local and international media. PCHR considers that the media plays a vital role in disseminating information on the human rights and humanitarian situation in the OPTs. In 2008, PCHR continued to conduct interviews with local and international media and respond to requests for information on human rights in the OPT.

Media Interviews Conducted by PCHR Staff in 2008

Date	Names of Journalists and Media Organizations
20 January	Aljazeera.net
20 January	Al-Aqsa Radio, Gaza
20 January	Al-Hiwar Media Network
21 January	Radio France
21 January	Palestine Radio
23 January	Europe Radio, France
23 January	Bitte Hammargren, Foreign Affairs Reporter, Svenska Dagbladet, Sweden
24 January	Roula Khalaf, Middle East Editor, Financial Times Xan Smiley, Middle East Editor, The Economist Tobias Buch, Financial Times Tim McGirk, Bureau Chief, Time, Life News Service
28 January	Bitte Hammargren, Foreign Affairs Reporter, Svenska Dagbladet, Sweden The Spanish Le Imparcial
30 January	Al-Watan Daily, Saudi Arabia
31 January	Lenoir Gwenaelle, Banerjee Joy and Santi Philippe, from France 3
2 February	Al-Sha'ba (People) Radio, gaza
13 February	Al-Aqsa Radio, Gaza
19 February	Baudouin Loos, Journalist, Le Soir, Brussels
1 March	Palestine Radio
1 March	Aljazeera.net
2 March	Oakland Ross, Middle East Bureau Chief, Toronto Star
2 March	Donald McCountry, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, The Independent

6 March	Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel
9 March	Michael Jansen, Ireland
10 March	Tlaru Kerredans, Cameraman, RTE. Spanish TV News
10 March	Charlie Bird, Chief News Correspondent, Irish TV
10 March	Al-Quds Television
12 March	Sana Nigos, Correspondent, Finnish Radio
12 March	Louise Steijsardnsen, Berlingske Tidende, Copenhagen
1 April	Al-Aqsa Radio, Gaza
2 April	Alquds.net
2 April	Erica Silverman, The Washington Post
2 April	Al-Rowad Radio
3 April	Al-Aqsa Television
8 April	Dr. Clemens Verenkotte – Bureau Chief ARD, Germany
16 April	Aljazeera.net
21 April	German Television
27 April	Sweden Radio
28 April	Al-Quds Daily, Palestine
29 April	Al-Aqsa Radio, Gaza
30 April	South Africa Radio
4 May	Shihab Media Association
6 May	Eva, a Dutch journalist
15 May	Al-Irada Radio, Gaza
20 May	Baltimore Sun
26 May	Palestine News Network
3 June	Palestine Television
7 June	Al-Aqsa Television
11 June	Tobias Buck, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, Financial Times
12 June	Shinichi Murakami, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, Japan's Leading Newspaper
16 June	Diaa' Hadeed, Associated Press
17 June	Oakland Ross, Correspondent, Toronto Star
18 June	Voice of America
19 June	Adriaan Bcoemendaal, Correspondent, Netherlands Press Association
19 June	Jannie Kuih, MSC, IKV Paxchristi
19 June	Mient jan Fabes, Free University of Amsterdam
26 June	Al-Aqsa Radio, Gaza

30 June	Saudi Television, Channel 2
30 June	Netherlands Radio
23 July	Al-Aqsa Radio, Gaza
27 July	Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel
6 August	Sana Nigos, Correspondent, Finnish Radio
13 August	Radio Paris
14 August	Al-Aqsa Radio, Gaza
21 August	Jeremy Bowen, Middle East Chief Correspondent, BBC News
27 August	Ali al-Agha, al-Hal Newsletter, Bir Zeit University
8 September	Takuya Sasaki, CCP
13 October	Financial Times
21 October	Eric Beauchemin, Senior Producer, Radio Netherlands Worldwide
20 November	Alwan Radio, Gaza
22 December	Libya Television
22 December	Saudi Television
22 December	Kuwait Television 2

PCHR's Publications in 2008

In 2008, PCHR issued many publications as set out in the annual plans of its units. PCHR's publications include: press releases; field updates on the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons; filed updates on the Israeli closure; al-Mentar (PCHR's newsletter; studies; periodic and special reports; leaflets; position papers; interventions to UN and other international bodies; working papers at international and local conferences; and posters.

Press Releases

PCHR regularly issues press releases providing detailed and timely information regarding specific incidents, violations of human rights and international humanitarian law or other important developments. In 2008, PCHR issued 130 press releases, including 78 ones that highlighted events relevant to human rights violations related to the PNA and internal Palestinian issues, and 49 ones that focused on human rights violations perpetrated by IOF. The remaining 3 press releases were focused on general violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

PCHR's Press Releases on Israeli Violations of Palestinian Human Rights in 2008

No.	Date	Unit	Title
1	02 January	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Gaza Pilgrims Remain on Board of Ferries and in the Open in El-Arish Waiting for their Return Home
2	15 January	Filed Work Unit	IOF Escalate Attacks against the Gaza Strip: 17 Palestinians Killed and at Least 30 Others Wounded in Gaza City in Less Than 4 Hours
3	16 January	Filed Work Unit	IOF Kill 3 Palestinian Civilians and Wound 3 Others in Gaza
4	19 January	Filed Work Unit	Israeli Occupation Forces Escalate War Crimes in Gaza: 9 Killed and 57 Injured
5	23 January	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Palestinian Centre for Human Rights and Al-Dameer Association for Human Rights Call Upon Israel, Egypt and the International Community to Resolve the Crisis at the Rafah Border Crossing
6	28 January	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	PCHR Calls for International Resolution over Rafah Crossing Crisis
7	06 February	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Human Rights Groups: «Israel Is Depriving Civilians in Gaza of Basic Needs – in Violation of International Law»
8	07 February	Filed Work Unit	IOF Bomb School in Beit Hanoun, Killing one Teacher and Injuring 3 Students: IOF Escalation Kills a Total of 7 Palestinians in 4 Hours
9	17 February	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Patient Dies due to Inability to each a Hospital, IOF Impose Stringent Restrictions on the Movement of Palestinian Civilians in the West Bank
10	19 February	PCHR and Hickman & Rose – London	British Police Feared a "Real Threat of an Armed Confrontation" with Armed Israelis at Heathrow Airport
11	21 February	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Further Deterioration to Health Conditions in the Gaza Strip: 3 Patients Dies and Ambulances Stopped Operation Due to the Lack of Fuels
12	24 February	Field Work Unit	In the Latest Israeli War Crime: Three Palestinians on a Picnic Killed by Israeli Bombardment in Beit Hanoun
13	27 February	Field Work Unit	IOF Extra-Judicially Execute 5 Palestinians in Khan Yunis

14	29 February	Field Work Unit	IOF Continue Perpetration of War Crimes in the Gaza Strip: 18 Palestinians, Including 6 Children, Killed in 24 Hours
15	01 March	Field Work Unit	Bloody Day in Gaza….. 30 Palestinians Killed, Including 14 Civilians, and 80 Injured
16	02 March	Field Work Unit	Another Bloody Day in Gaza: IOF Launches Fifth Day of Open War on the Gaza Strip Death Toll Rises to 101, with Hundreds of Injuries
17	03 March	Field Work Unit	IOF Commit more War Crimes over the Past 24 Hours: 8 New Victims Killed Raising the Total to 108 Killed, 54 of them Civilians
18	03 March	Legal Aid Unit	As There Are Indications of Medical Negligence, PCHR Calls for Investigation into the Death of a Palestinian Prisoner in an Israeli Jail
19	10 April	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Gaza Strip is on the Verge of Humanitarian Catastrophe: Israeli Occupation Authorities Continue to Impose Collective Punishment Measures and Reduction of Fuel Supplies
20	12 April	Field Work Unit	Israel Escalates War Crimes inside the Gaza Strip, 9 Palestinians Killed, 6 of Them Civilians, Including 2 Children
21	14 April	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Fuel Crisis Paralyzes 85% of the Transportation Sector and 50% of Education and Health Services
22	17 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Strongly Condemns Willful Killing of a Journalist by IOF; Reuters Cameraman Killed by an Israeli Tank Shell
23	17 April	Field Work Unit	IOF Kill 13 Palestinian Civilians, Including a Journalist and 8 Children, in Juhor al-Dik Village in Central Gaza Strip
24	28 April	Field Work Unit	Mother and Four Children Killed by Israel Bombardment of their Home in Beit Hanoun
25	08 May	Field Work Unit	IOF Kill Mother in Front of Her Children inside Their House in Khan Yunis
26	13 May	PCHR and other human rights organizations	Human Rights Groups Petition Supreme Court: Israel is Preventing Fuel Supply to Gaza Strip, Violating Supreme Court Decision
27	15 May	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	60 Years of the Palestinian Nakba… 60 Years of Ethnic Cleansing
28	23 June	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Welcomes UNICEF Stance Against Illegal OPT Settlements
29	25 June	Legal Aid Unit	PCHR Submits Lawsuit against Israeli Officials via Spanish National Court
30	08 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns IOF Measures against Nablus Charities
31	24 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Detention of PLC Member Mona Mansour
32	14 August	Democratic Development Unit	Israeli Response to Death of Reuters Cameraman Makes Journalists Legitimate IOF Targets
33	18 September	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	PCHR Director Denied Permit to Exit Gaza for International Human Rights Conference
34	28 September	Field Work Unit	Palestinian Shepherd Killed by Settlers in Nablus

35	06 October	Legal Aid Unit	Torture Victim Seeks Prosecution of Former Head of Israeli General Security Services
36	26 October	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	IOF Prevent 100 International Academics and Human Rights Activists from Entering Gaza
37	05 November	Field Work Unit	IOF Violate Gaza Tahdi'a, Killing 6 Palestinians and Destroying a House
38	11 November	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Gaza Border Crossings Have Been Closed for the 6th Consecutive Day; 30% of Gaza's Neighborhoods Plunges into Deep Darkness While Shortage of Flour Presages Closure of Gaza's Bakeries
39	19 November	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	PCHR Warns of Further Deterioration to Humanitarian Conditions in the Gaza Strip
40	20 November	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	IOF Prevent Representatives of 20 International Humanitarian Organizations from Entering Gaza to Witness Humanitarian Conditions
41	30 November	Legal Aid Unit	After PCHR Filed a Lawsuit to the Israeli Supreme Court, IOF Release Three Confiscated Fishing Boats
42	02 December	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Gaza Border Crossings Are Closed for 27th Consecutive Day
43	15 December	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Israeli Occupation Authorities Denies Entry of UN Special Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territories
44	21 December	Field Work Unit	PCHR Strongly Condemns Assault against Palestinian Detainees in Oufar Detention Center
45	27 December	Field Work Unit	On the Bloodiest Day in the History of Occupation, Hundreds of Palestinian Civilian Deaths and Casualties in an Israeli Aerial Offensive against the Gaza Strip
46	28 December	Field Work Unit	251 Palestinians, Mostly Civilians, Including 20 Children and 9 Women, Killed and 584 Others, Including 130 Children and 28 Women, Wounded
47	29 December	Field Work Unit	9 Palestinian Children Killed Raising the Number of Children Killed Since the Beginning of the Current IOF Offensive against the Gaza Strip to 31
48	30 December	Field Work Unit	On the 4th Day of IOF Offensive on the Gaza Strip, the Number of Palestinians Killed Mount to 310, Mostly Civilians, Including 37 Children and 9 Women
49	31 December	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Israeli Military Raids on Gaza Civilian Population Continues, and Humanitarian Crisis Exacerbates in the Midst of Shameful Silence of the International Community

PCHR's Press Releases on Palestinian Violations of Human Rights in 2008

No.	Date	Unit	Title
1	02 January	Democratic Development Unit	Seven Killed and Dozens Injured in the Gaza Strip: Gaza Human Rights Organizations Condemn Violence between Fatah Supporters and Palestinian Police in the Gaza Strip
2	13 January	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Use of Excessive Force to Disperse Peaceful Demonstration in Ramallah
3	17 January	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Concerned over the Detention of Munir Riziq, Director of Al-Hayat Newspaper in Gaza
4	15 February	Democratic Development Unit	Unidentified Militants Attack YMCA Headquarters in Gaza City
5	18 February	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR & Al-Mezan Call for Investigating the Explosion in El-Bureij Refugee Camp
6	19 February	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Takeover of the Offices of the Financial and Administrative Control Bureau in Gaza
7	25 February	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Independent Investigation into Death of Detainee Subjected to Torture and Medical Negligence
8	05 March	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Assault on Director of Gaza Community Mental Health Programme in Central Gaza
9	05 March	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Decision by Dismissed Government in Gaza to Prevent Correspondents of Palestine Television from Working in Gaza
10	13 March	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Is Deeply Concerned Over Storming the Headquarters of Ramattan Press Agency by the PSS in Ramallah
11	01 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Keeping Universities and Educational Institutions Out of the Ongoing Power Struggle
12	03 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Police Attack against One of Its Field Workers and a Number of Journalists in Gaza
13	07 April	Democratic Development Unit	High Military Court Sentences a Man to Death, PCHR Calls upon Palestinian President Not to Ratify the Sentence and Demands the Abolishment of Death Penalty from Palestinian Law
14	15 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigation into the Death of a Palestinian Following Abduction by Unknown Militants
15	16 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigation into Wounding 4 Civilians by Security Forces in Nablus
16	20 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR is Concerned over the Ban of its Lawyers from Visiting Prisons in the Gaza Strip
17	20 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Attacking a Journalist and Preventing Supporters of Fatah Movement from Organizing a Peaceful Demonstration in Rafah
18	27 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls upon the Police to Rescind the Decision to Obtain Permits for Public Assemblies and Activities
19	28 April	Democratic Development Unit	Palestinian Military Court Sentences Emad Sa'ed to Death, PCHR Calls upon President Abbas to reject the Ruling, and Calls for Abolishing the Death Penalty in Palestinian Law
20	04 May	Democratic Development Unit	Armed Clashes between El-Qassam Battalions and National Resistance Battalions Kill 1 Civilian in Rafah

21	05 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Student Clashes in Al-Azhar University Yesterday
22	07 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigating Arbitrary Arrests and Torture by Security Forces in the West Bank
23	07 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigating the Injury of 3 Palestinians in Qabatya, including 2 Injured in an Armed Clash between Al-Quds Brigades and Security Forces
24	11 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Detention of 3 Journalists and a Columnist by the Palestinian General Intelligence in the West Bank
25	11 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR and Al-Dameer Condemn Gaza Police Ban on Annual Bada'el Centre Conference
26	18 May	Democratic Development Unit	Human Rights Groups In Gaza Condemns Restrictions Imposed by the Government in Gaza on the Right to Peaceful Assembly
27	19 May	Democratic Development Unit	Man Killed by Palestinian Police in Rafah
28	20 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Concerned by Detention of Khan Yunis Governor and Fatah Activists by Gaza Internal Security Apparatus
29	21 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Seriously Concerned by Abductions and Interrogations of Palestinians by Al-Quds Battalions
30	25 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Warns against the Continued Militarizing of Society, Hamas Members Takeover the Khan Yunis Youth Club
31	25 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Detention of 2 Journalists by Police in Gaza
32	03 June	Democratic Development Unit	7 Injured, including 2 Children, by Palestinian Security Forces in Beit Foriek near Nablus
33	04 June	Democratic Development Unit	Woman Murdered by Relatives to "Maintain Family Honor"
34	08 June	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Opposes Anti-Democratic Council Appointments Policy in the Gaza Strip
35	15 June	Democratic Development Unit	Stop This Tragedy! PCHR Concerned Over Casualties Caused by Continuing Internal Explosions: 8 Palestinians, Including a Child, Killed and More than 40 Injured After Explosion in Beit Lahia
36	16 June	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Dispersing a Peaceful Assembly in Rafah by Police and Hamas Activists Using Force
37	29 June	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigation into the Death of an Old Man in Suspicious Circumstances in a Police Station in Deir al-Balah
38	08 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Attack on PNA Attorney-General
39	14 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Interference of the Ministry of Interior and Security Forces in Election Affairs of the Women's Arab Union in Nablus
40	16 July	Democratic Development Unit	As Palestinian Military Court Sentences 2 People to Death, PCHR Calls upon President Abbas to reject Ruling, and for Abolition of Death Penalty in OPT

41	21 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigation into Police Shooting of a Young Man
42	22 July	Democratic Development Unit	Gaza Military Court Sentences Man to Death
43	26 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Gaza Beach Crime and the Response of the Government
44	27 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Arrest Campaign against Hamas Supporters in the West Bank
45	30 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Gravely Concerned over the Deterioration of the Human Rights Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory
46	03 August	Democratic Development Unit	11 Palestinians, Including 8 Members of the Helles Clan and 2 Police Officers, Killed and 103, including 17 children and 6 Women, Wounded in Armed Clashes between the Police and the Clan in Gaza
47	04 August	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Dispersion of a Peaceful Assembly of the Hizb Ut Tahrir by Security Services in Tulkarm
48	06 August	Legal Aid Unit	PCHR Concerned over Preventing its Lawyers from Visiting Clients in Gaza Prisons
49	07 August	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Dismayed by the Handling of Partisan Media of its Publications
50	10 August	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Attacks on Civil Society Organizations and the Continued of Arrests against Hamas Members in the West Bank
51	24 August	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Violence at al-Azhar University in Gaza
52	24 August	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	PCHR Calls for Schools to Be Allowed to Operate without Destructive Political Conflicts
53	28 August	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls upon the Two Palestinian Governments to Put an End for Political Arrests
54	31 August	Democratic Development Unit	Girl Murdered by Relatives in Khan Yunis to "Maintain Family Honor"
55	02 September	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	PCHR Concerned over Ongoing Gaza Strikes
56	11 September	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigation into Wounding a Palestinian Child by the Security Services in Bethlehem
57	14 September	Democratic Development Unit	General Intelligence Service Is Not above Law
58	16 September	Democratic Development Unit	11 Palestinians, Including 2 Children and a Police Officer, Killed and 42 Others Wounded in Clashes between the Police and Wanted Persons in the Gaza Strip
59	18 September	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigation into the Death of a Palestinian Following Abduction by Unknown Militants
60	23 September	Democratic Development Unit	General Intelligence Service Raids Hebron Office of PLC Member Samira al-Halaiqa

61	05 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Attack against Former PLC Member Ra'fat al-Najjar and Family by Palestinian Police
62	05 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigation into the Killing of Mohammed al-Masri in Khan Yunis
63	07 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Disclosure of Circumstances of Palestinian Death in Custody in Jericho
64	19 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Eruption of Violence at Gaza City's al-Azhar University
65	23 October	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	Student Falls from 3rd Floor of a School; PCHR Calls for the Results of Investigation into the Incident to be Published
66	27 October	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	PCHR Calls upon the Palestinian Government to Reverse Decision to Dismiss Dozens of West Bank Teachers
67	29 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Campaign of Arrests against Hamas Supporters in the West Bank
68	29 October	Democratic Development Unit	Gaza Court Upholds 4 Death Sentences: PCHR Calls upon Palestinian President to Act, and for Abolition of Death Penalty in Palestinian Law
69	02 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Welcomes Release of 18 Political Prisoners in Gaza
70	04 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Welcomes Invitation to Dr. Ahmed Bahar to Visit European Parliament
71	09 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR deplores Raiding the House of PLC Member Ashraf Juma'a and Arresting More than 30 Members of Fatah Movement By Members of the Internal Security Force in Rafah
72	10 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigations into Wounding 5 Palestinian Civilians by the Palestinian Police in Hebron
73	13 November	Democratic Development Unit	Military Court in Bethlehem Sentences a Palestinian to Death; PCHR Calls upon Palestinian President Not to Approve the Sentence, and for Abolition of Death Penalty in Palestinian Law
74	27 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Is Concerned Over Regrettable Incidents at Al-Aqsa University in Khan Yunis and Al-Azhar University in Gaza City
75	30 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Attacking Journalists and Media Institutions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip
76	30 November	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	The Two Governments in Gaza & Ramallah Must Work to Ensure Pilgrims' Immediate Travel to Saudi Arabia
77	01 December	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigating the Death of Kamel Noufal by Police in al-Maghazi Refugee Camp
78	17 December	Democratic Development Unit	The Military Court in Gaza Sentences a Palestinian to Death; PCHR Calls upon President Mahmoud Abbas Not to Ratify the Sentence and Demands the Abolishment of Death Penalty from Palestinian Law

Other PCHR's Press Releases in 2008

No.	Date	Unit	Title
1	08 March	Women's Rights Unit	On International Women's Day, the Suffering of Palestinian Women Continues
2	25 November	Women's Rights Unit	On the Anniversary of the International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Suffering of Gaza Women Doubles due to the Siege and its Repercussions
3	03 December	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit	On the Anniversary of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, The Humanitarian Conditions of the Disabled in the OPT Are Deteriorating

Field Updates on the State of Lawlessness and Proliferation of Weapons

The Democratic Development Unit started to issue field updates in 2006 to highlight the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons in the OPT. Writing these updates rely on information gathered by the Field Work Unit. In 2008, PCHR issued 44 of these updates, all of which are available on PCHR's web page.

Field Updates on the State of Lawlessness and Proliferation of Weapons in 2008

No.	Date	Title
1	9 January	Woman Killed and 3 Persons Injured in a Clan Clash in Central Gaza
2	10 January	Unknown Assailants Attack the American School and the State Information Service in Gaza
3	13 January	Security Chaos Continues in the Gaza Strip
4	17 January	Teen and Child Killed Misused Weapons in Gaza City
5	21 January	Palestinian Killed and 2 Injured in Armed Clan Clashes
6	03 February	Man and Child Killed and Five others injured in Gaza Strip
7	10 February	Lawyer Kidnapped in Ramallah
8	27 February	PCHR Documents 5 New Attacks in the Context of Security Chaos
9	06 March	An Old Woman Killed Mistakenly by the Police in Gaza
10	12 March	2 Palestinians Killed and 8 Others Wounded in a Clan Dispute in Gaza
11	19 March	2 Persons Killed by Unknown Gunmen in Khan Yunis and Qalqilya
12	23 March	3 Members of the 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades Killed and 2 Others Wounded During Training Activities in Khan Yunis and Gaza
13	24 March	2 Persons Wounded in Khan Yunis by Gunmen Thought to Be Members of the 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades
14	30 March	3 Palestinians, Including a Child, Killed and 10 Others Wounded in Kufor Thuluth Village near Qalqilya
15	06 April	Palestinian Killed and Policeman Injured in 2 Security Chaos Incidents
16	08 April	A Child Killed and His Brother Wounded in al-Boreij

17	09 April	2 Palestinians Wounded During Armed Clashes between Security Forces and Militants from the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in Nablus
18	14 April	A Palestinian Killed and 2 Others Seriously wounded in a Mysterious Explosion in Northern Gaza
19	14 April	The Car of the Governor of Nablus Fired at and Burnt
20	16 April	An Activist of al-Quds Brigades Killed in Mysterious Circumstances
21	21 April	Explosion near Hotel on Gaza Beach
22	05 May	Civilian Killed and another Injured in Gaza City
23	19 May	'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades Gunmen Attack Several People in a Mosque in Jabalya
24	22 May	Physician Abducted and Injured by Unknown Gunmen in Khan Yunis
25	01 June	10 Injured, including 4 Women and 3 Children, in Explosion in Gaza City
26	01 June	Unknown Assailants Attack on El-Manara School in Gaza City for the 2nd Time
27	05 June	A Man and a Child Killed and 5 Others Wounded Due to the Use of Weapons in a Clan Dispute in Hebron
28	15 June	A Child Killed and a Man Wounded in Incidents of Misuse of Weapons
29	13 July	Explosive Device Detonated in Yabous Benevolent Society and Rafah Service club in Southern Gaza
30	22 July	Member of the 'Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades Killed and two injured, Including a Child, by Bomb in Gaza
31	03 August	Two Killed by Misuse of Weapon in Nuseirat and Khan Yunis
32	04 August	2 Palestinians, Including a Child, Killed in Armed Clashes in Ramallah
33	18 August	One of the Nativity Church Deportees Kidnapped and Beaten in Gaza
34	24 August	A Man Killed and a Child Wounded by Aimless Gunshots in Khan Yunis and Rafah
35	26 August	Child Wounded by Aimless Gunshot
36	27 August	Bomb Explodes in al-Azhar University Campus in Gaza
37	01 September	A Girl and a Child Wounded as an RBJ Projectile Hit Their Home in Jabalya
38	04 September	Car of PLC Member Fired upon by Unknown Persons in Nablus
39	14 September	A Woman and a Child Killed Due to Misuse of Weapons in the OPT
40	28 September	A Palestinian Woman Killed by a Member of the Preventive Security Service in Ramallah
41	15 October	A Member of the al-Qassam Brigades Killed by Mistake in Gaza
42	09 November	5 Civilians Injured in an Internal Explosion in Deir al-Balah
43	16 November	Unknown Masked Persons Attack a Wedding Party in Khuza'a Village near Khan Yunis
44	23 December	6 Palestinians, Including 4 Children, Injured in Gaza Due to Misuse of Weapons

Field Updates on the State of the Gaza Strip Border Crossings

In light of the unprecedented closure measures imposed by IOF on the Gaza Strip, the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights started to issue field updates documenting the state of the Gaza Strip border crossings. In 2008, PCHR issued 11 of these updates on 10 January, 04 February, 18 February, 04 March, 02 April, 11 May, 28 May, 02 July, 10 November, 25 November and 24 December.

Narratives under Siege

In order to highlight the impact of the siege and closure of the Gaza Strip on the civilian population, PCHR started in 2008 to publish a series of "Narratives under Siege." These short articles are based on personal testimonies and experiences of life in the Gaza Strip. In 2008, PCHR published 23 narratives as shown in the following table.

No.	Date	Subject
1	27 January	Shifa Hospital in Gaza City
2	29 January	Beit Hanoun, northern Gaza Strip
3	04 February	Rafah Fishermen's Syndicate
4	12 February	Ard El Insan Child Nutrition Centre
5	24 February	Hassan Sheikh Hijazi Flower Farm
6	04 March	Abed Rabbo St., Easy Jabalya
7	25 March	Abu Alkas Mini Market, Gaza City
8	06 May	Al-Gherbawi Taxi Office, Gaza City
9	13 May	Rafah Ambulance Drivers Struggle Amidst «Miserable» Work Conditions
10	15 May	Remembering the Nakhba
11	19 May	Special Needs Children in Gaza Denied Their Education Because of Chronic Fuel Shortages
12	27 May	Eighteen years of Work Destroyed in Less than four Hours
13	01 June	We are Still Waiting to Visit Our Sons and Daughters in Jail
14	04 June	Gaza's 700 Stranded Students
15	15 June	"We Could not Even Bury our Daughter"
16	19 June	Drivers at Sofa Crossing Wait in Hope
17	26 June	Swimming in Sewage
18	21 August	Gaza patients continue painful wait for urgent medical treatment
19	28 August	"I still cannot farm my own land"
20	04 September	Deadline looms for another student trapped inside Gaza
21	11 September	harvesting in hope
22	09 October	Gaza Factories Continue Enforced Downsize as Imports Remain Banned
23	05 November	'The Israelis Attack us Every Day'

Reports, Studies and Other Publications

The following table shows reports and other publications by PCHR in 2008:

Publication	Kind	Nu.	Language
Annual Report 2007	Annual report	1	Arabic and English
The Right to Free Expression and the Right to Peaceful Assembly: 1 November 2006 – 31 July 2008	Study	1	
Extra-Judicial Executions Committed by the Israeli Occupation Forces against Palestinians: August 2006 – May 2008	Series Report: Extra-Judicial Executions as Israeli Government Policy	1	
Impact of the Closure on Gaza Strip Exports of Strawberries and Cut Flowers	Report	1	
Suffering behind Bars – April	A special report on the suffering of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails	1	
Increasing Prices in the Gaza Strip (1 July 2007 – 30 June 2008)	A special report	1	
Destruction of the Economy of the Gaza Strip (15 June 2007 – 14 June 2008)	Report	1	
Weekly Report on Israeli Human Rights Violations in the OPT	Series report	51	Arabic and English
Death Penalty between the Human Rights System and Palestinian Legislation[1]	Comparative study	1	
Al-Mentar	Monthly newsletter	12	Arabic
Controversy over End of Presidential Term in Office	Position paper	1	
Execution for Alleged Collaboration	Position paper - updated	1	
Death Penalty under the Palestinian National Authority	Position paper - updated		
'Blood on Their Hands': Report on Child Killings by Israeli Occupation Forces in the Gaza Strip. June 2007 – June 2008	Special report	1	
International Day of Persons with Disabilities	Poster		Published jointly with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Palestinian NGO Network – Gaza
World Day against the Death Penalty	Poster		
Extra-Judicial Executions (assassinations)	Poster		
Palestinian Prisoners' Day	Poster		

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

PCHR realizes and appreciates the increasing importance of information technology in our contemporary world. PCHR increasingly depends on its website as a means of disseminating human rights information. PCHR updates its web site daily with publications and information on its activities and events on the ground. The material on the website is available in both Arabic and English. PCHR also distributes its publications via e-mail; at least 6,000 of those who register their email addresses with us receive PCHR's publications via e-mail.

In 2008, PCHR's web site received 830,380 hits with an average of 69,198 visits monthly and 2,306 visits daily.

Visits to PCHR's Web Site in 2008

Month	Number of Visits	Number of Pages Seen	Access
January	54,870	132,548	712,548
February	70,766	190,907	709,844
March	101,761	239,591	886,744
April	121,376	342,530	892,620
May	129,044	361,221	1,012,753
June	59,508	346,568	784,400
July	54,362	313,337	728,079
August	43,459	282,767	765,544
September	40,245	290,969	680,013
October	47,583	336,640	816,937
November	47,873	304,602	799,859
December	43,855	292,955	961,760
Total	830,380	3,434,635	9,751,101

PCHR's Activities in Photos

A scene workshop entitled "Problems Relative to Suing Cases before Sharia' Courts" in PCHR's main office in Gaza City
23 October 2008.

A scene of a conference organized by PCHR Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Unit on the repercussions of the siege on the civilian population of the Gaza Strip
6 March 2008.

A scene of a training course organized by PCHR Training Unit in cooperation with Creative Women Society in international human rights law for female Palestinian media professionals
14 October 2008.

A scene of a colloquium organized by PCHR Democratic Development Unit on the controversy over the Palestinian presidential term
22 September 2008.

PCHR lawyers taking affidavits from a victim of Israeli violations of human rights.

A scene of a conference organized by PCHR, in conjunction with the Arab Centre for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession and the Arab Organization for Human Rights in Cairo, which focused on extra-judicial executions and prosecution of Israelis suspected of committing war crimes
8 and 9 November 2008.

Mr. Hamdi Shaqqura, Director of PCHR Democratic Development Unit, in a meeting with a visiting European parliamentary delegation
3 November 2008.

Ms. Ghadeer al-'Emari, Editor of PCHR's Newsletter, briefing a number of school children on PCHR and its activities
30 November 2008.

Mr. Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, speaking on behalf of PCHR in the first festival organized by PCHR and Union of Student Parliaments at UNRWA schools on the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
21 December 2008.

Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, speaking ing a colloquium organized by al-Quds Association for Solidarity with the People in Arab Countries in Spain
28 January 2008.

Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, in a meeting with a Spanish delegation that visited PCHR
24 July 2008.

Mr. Jaber Wishah, Deputy Director of PCHR, in a meeting with a visiting European parliamentary delegation
2 June 2008.

PCHR

Palestinian Centre
for Human Rights

Annual Report 2008