

PCHR
Palestinian Centre
for Human Rights
Annual Report



2012



➤ Palestinian Centre for Human Rights

The Centre is an independent Palestinian human rights organization (registered as a non-profit Ltd. Company) 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) – Paris; 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

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:

NOVIB - Holland
Open Society Institute - U.S.A
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Dan Church Aid - Denmark
Grassroots International - U.S.A
European Commission
Representative Office of Norway
Irish Aid
Kvinna Till Kvinna – Sweden
Al Quds Association Malaga – Spain
Trócaire – Ireland
CARE International West Bank and Gaza
Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) - UK
The Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida)
Royal Danish Representative Office
Austrian Representative Office
Swiss Development and Cooperation Agency

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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.

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> Contents

Introduction	9
PART 1: HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY	11
Summary	12
Recommendations	30
<i>Section 1: Violations of international humanitarian and human rights law by Israeli forces</i>	35
Wilful killings and other violations of the right to life and personal security	36
Ongoing policy of closure, violations of the right to freedom of movement	47
Arrests, detention, torture, and other forms of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment	54
Destruction of civilian property	60
Settlement activities and settler attacks	65
The annexation wall in the West Bank	72
The absence of justice in the Israeli legal system	76
<i>Section 2: Palestinian violations of human rights and obstacles to democratic reform</i>	78
Violations of the right to life and personal security	83
Arrests, detention, torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment	84
Continued disruption of the legislature	87
Obstruction of general and local elections	92
Violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression	94
Violations of the right to peaceful assembly	96
Violations of the right to freedom of association	98
PART 2: PCHR ACTIVITIES IN 2012	101
Activities of PCHR Units	104
Democratic Development Unit	106
Women's Unit	108

Economic and Social Rights Unit	113
Training Unit	114
International Unit	123
Advocacy and Lobbying Activities	123
Participation in international and regional conferences and meetings	133
Visits by international delegations	158
Media interviews	158
PCHR publications in 2012	158
PCHR website (www.pchrgaza.org)	158
PCHR library	158



> Introduction

This report documents the outcome of the activities carried out by the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) in 2012. PCHR has been publishing Annual Reports since 1997.

The 2012 PCHR 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 2012. It is divided into two sub-sections:

1. Violations of human rights and international humanitarian law perpetrated by the Israeli forces in the oPt; and
2. Human rights violations perpetrated by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), and obstacles to democratic reform in the PNA.

Part Two documents all of PCHR's activities from 1 January to 31 December 2012. It includes activities by PCHR and its Units at both the local and international levels.

The 2012 PCHR Financial Report, which is prepared by an independent, professional auditing institution, will be published as a separate document.

PCHR hopes that this report, like previous reports, will contribute to the struggle for human rights by providing a comprehensive picture of the human rights situation in the oPt. We also hope that the relevant parties will follow the recommendations set out in this report, especially the recommendations which are meant specifically for the international community and the PNA.

This report serves as a guide for PCHR's future work. It reflects PCHR's strong belief in the importance of transparency for a non-profit, non-governmental organisation which provides services to the community. This report also serves as a call to Palestinian victims of human rights violations to approach PCHR for advice and assistance.





**PART 1:
HUMAN RIGHTS
SITUATION IN
THE OCCUPIED
PALESTINIAN
TERRITORY**



Summary >

The internal Palestinian political situation took a positive turn in the last weeks of 2012, which saw major developments in the context of efforts to achieve national reconciliation.

At the end of December 2012, the ruling Hamas movement in the Gaza Strip reversed its ban on public gatherings by its rival Fatah, allowing the party to celebrate its 48th anniversary. The Fatah celebration in Al-Saraya Square in the centre of Gaza City was the movement's first since 2007. A month earlier, the Fatah movement was also allowed to organise large-scale demonstrations throughout the Gaza Strip in support of President Mahmoud Abbas's efforts to obtain recognition for Palestine as a non-member observer State at the United Nations General Assembly.

Similarly, in December 2012 in the West Bank, the ruling Fatah movement allowed Hamas to celebrate its anniversary for the first time since the 2007 political split between the two factions. The Hamas movement organised events in Hebron, Ramallah, and Nablus. Notably, the Fatah movement participated in the Hamas-organised anniversary celebration in Gaza for the first time as well. Fatah's yellow flags were raised alongside Hamas' green flags.

At the end of November 2012, the Hamas government in Gaza granted amnesty to suspects and prisoners in cases related to the internal conflict with Fatah. Hamas established a committee to implement this decision, which marked a new stage of the internal Palestinian reconciliation.

These steps towards ending the six-year political split between the Fatah and Hamas movements occurred in the context of an overall atmosphere of reconciliation within the oPt following the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November 2012.

PCHR welcomes these positive developments, which have created opportunities for achieving national reconciliation. We hope that 2013 will usher in the national unity necessary to restore to power the three branches of the Palestinian government – the executive, the legislative and the judicial – which will, in turn, enable the struggle for the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state to continue.

In 2012, the oPt was affected by two major developments: the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip from 14 to 21 November, and the recognition of Palestine as a non-member observer State in the United Nations General Assembly on 29 November.

In the period from 14 to 21 November 2012, Israeli forces launched a large-scale offensive on the Gaza Strip, during which they committed war crimes against Palestinian civilians and their property. Bombardment from land, sea, and air targeted hundreds of civilians in densely-populated areas throughout the Gaza Strip.

The Israeli offensive involved systematic violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. Israel would not have dared to commit multiple crimes against Palestinian civilians and their property on such a large scale had the international community not consistently failed to enforce international law and put an end to Israeli war crimes over the years. The impunity Israel enjoys and its lack of international accountability for crimes committed have always been the major factors encouraging

it to commit yet more crimes against Palestinian civilians.

During the final drafting of this report, Israeli parliamentary elections were held on 22 January 2013. Right-wing parties won the majority of the seats in the Israeli parliament. This means it is likely that the next Israeli government will be right-wing with an agenda that will include:

- » Escalating settlement activities in the West Bank, and furthering measures aimed at creating a Jewish majority in Jerusalem;
- » Subjecting Palestinian civilians and their property to more crimes; and
- » Institutionalising the closure of the Gaza Strip, with some slight improvements at the humanitarian level aimed at creating the false impression that the closure has been lifted.

The other major development was the General Assembly's vote on 29 November 2012 to recognise Palestine as a non-member State in the UN. The significant support for the State of Palestine in the General Assembly has led to important strategic gains, which must be utilised to confront Israeli war crimes and hold suspected Israeli war criminals accountable. Recognition of statehood has given the State of Palestine, and its citizens, access to the International Criminal Court and other international legal institutions.

The Palestinian leadership must immediately accede to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and to all international human rights instruments. In fact, it is obligated to do so, according to Article 10(1) of the Palestinian Basic Law which stipulates: "The PNA shall work without delay to become a party to regional and international declarations and covenants that protect human rights." In particular, the Palestinian leadership is obliged to accede to the following:

- » Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 1998;
- » Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocols of 1977;
- » International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 and the Additional Protocols of 1966 and 1989;
- » International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966;
- » Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1977;
- » Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1984;
- » Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989; and
- » Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 2006.

PCHR welcomes the admission of Palestine to the United Nations as a non-member observer State. The move is a crucial step in the struggle for justice and accountability in relation to Israeli violations

of international humanitarian and human rights laws in the oPt throughout decades of occupation.

The human rights situation in the oPt has continued to deteriorate over the last six years. Three major factors have interacted to create this scenario:

The first factor is the grave breaches of international humanitarian law, many of which amount to war crimes, perpetrated on a large scale by Israel and its occupation forces against Palestinian civilians. These breaches will be detailed later in this report.

The second factor is the silence of international governments in reaction to these breaches of international humanitarian law and war crimes. Such silence encourages Israel to continue to challenge international law and to act as if it is above the law.

The third factor is the internal Palestinian division due to the conflict between Fatah and Hamas, which has persisted for more than six years. While the positive turn of events at the end of 2012 and the signing of the reconciliation agreement in Cairo on 4 May 2011 are signs of progress, there is still a long way to go before national reconciliation becomes reality.

Israeli violations of international humanitarian and human rights law >

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to commit violations of international human rights and humanitarian law against Palestinian civilians and their property throughout the oPt. The clearest example in the Gaza Strip is the closure of all its border crossings which has been ongoing for more than five years; in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, human rights violations are most clearly manifested in the form of persistent, and often violent, settlement activities and attacks by Israeli forces. Israeli forces have committed crimes of wilful killing and violations of the right to life. They have also continued to arrest Palestinians and subject them to torture and degrading treatment. PCHR has documented many cases of destruction of civilian property, including houses. Israeli forces have also continued the construction of the annexation wall inside the West Bank.

1. Wilful killings and other violations of the right to life and personal security

In 2012, Israeli forces committed more crimes and violations of the right to life and personal security against Palestinian civilians in the oPt. The most egregious crimes were carried out from 14 to 21 November when Israeli forces launched a large-scale offensive on the Gaza Strip, codenamed 'Pillar of Defense'. During the eight-day offensive, Israeli forces carried out thousands of airstrikes, attacks by gunboats, and artillery shelling.

Missiles with warheads weighing more than 1,000 kilograms were used in attacks on residential areas, flattening multi-storey homes and killing residents within the buildings. The extensive attacks targeted civilian facilities throughout the Gaza Strip, including civilian governmental institutions located in densely-populated areas. The impact of these attacks on property and victims, especially women and children, increased manifold, due to the targeting of civilian areas. Hundreds of airstrikes were launched at open spaces in residential areas to terrify civilians. In the last three days of the offensive, a marked increase in attacks on civilian places led to a corresponding increase in the proportion of civilians among the victims.

171 Palestinians were killed during the eight-day offensive. Of the victims, 102 were civilians, comprising 60% of the total number of victims. 35 of the civilian victims, or 34%, were children, while 14 of the civilian victims, or 14%, were women. The total number of people wounded was 648.¹ Of the wounded, 625 were civilians, including 214 children and 93 women. Among the wounded civilians were 16 people with various disabilities.

Throughout the oPt in 2012, PCHR documented the killing by Israeli forces and Israeli settlers of a total of 265 Palestinians, including 141 civilians (53%). The majority of the victims were killed in the Gaza Strip (129 people or 91%), while 12 civilians were killed in the West Bank (9%). Of the civilians killed, 44 were children (31% of all civilians killed), including 42 in the Gaza Strip and three in the West Bank. In 2012, 14 women were killed in the oPt (10% of all civilians killed), all of whom were killed in the Gaza Strip. Another 1,207 people were wounded in oPt, the majority of whom were civilians, including 1,006 in the Gaza Strip (83%) and 201 in the West Bank (7%).

Taking into account the 2012 casualties, the number of people killed since 2000 by Israeli forces and Israeli settlers rose to 6,986, of which 5,314 were civilians, comprising 76% of the victims. Of the people killed, 3,544 were in the Gaza Strip and 1,770 in the West Bank. The civilian victims included 1,304 children (25%), of whom 958 were in the Gaza Strip and 346 in the West Bank. Among those killed were 300 women (6%), of whom 231 were in the Gaza Strip and 69 in the West Bank. Tens of thousands were

1. According to PCHR's investigations, more than 1,250 Palestinians were injured during 'Operation Pillar of Defence'; out of those, 648 sustained moderate to severe injuries.

wounded during the Second Intifada, the majority of whom were civilians; hundreds of the wounded were left with permanent disabilities.

The circumstances surrounding attacks on civilians differ, but civilians were essentially targeted during the bombardment of houses, civilian facilities and open areas, all of which were located in densely-populated areas. As a result, many civilians were killed. Furthermore, Israeli forces have killed civilians near or within the Israeli-imposed 'buffer zone', along the eastern and northern borders of the Gaza Strip, and at sea, to which Palestinians are denied access. Israeli forces have also killed civilians when shelling the tunnels under the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt.

In the West Bank, crimes carried out by Israeli forces and Israeli settlers vary. Civilians were killed during incursions by Israeli forces into Palestinian communities. Other civilians were killed when Israeli forces used excessive force against peaceful demonstrators as they were protesting against the construction of the annexation wall in the West Bank. More civilians were killed when Israeli forces carried out extra-judicial killings of militants belonging to Palestinian armed groups. Additionally, a number of civilians were killed by Israeli settlers.

Investigations conducted by PCHR, testimonies of eyewitnesses, and evidence have proven that Israeli forces used excessive and disproportionate force against Palestinian civilians, who are protected under international humanitarian law. Israeli forces did not take the necessary precautions to distinguish between civilian and military targets, nor did they respond proportionately when using military force. It is also clear that Israeli forces carried out acts of reprisal against Palestinian civilians, who were killed in circumstances that did not pose any threat to the lives of Israeli soldiers.

2. Ongoing policy of closure and violations of the right to freedom of movement

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to impose prolonged border closures on the oPt, especially the Gaza Strip. This is the sixth consecutive year that Israeli forces have continued to impose a tight closure of the Gaza Strip, cutting it off from the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Several months have passed since Israeli forces announced an alleged easing of the closure on the

Gaza Strip and the increased facilitation of the entry of goods and commodities, yet the civilian people in the Gaza Strip have not experienced any significant improvements. Israeli forces have continued to impose a ban on strategic goods, especially construction materials and raw materials needed for production. In addition, Israeli forces have continued to impose a ban on agricultural and industrial exports from the Gaza Strip. It is evident that the announcement of a so-called easing of measures by Israeli forces with regard to the entry of goods into the Gaza Strip is no more than an attempt to delude the international community into believing that restrictions have been eased.

The ceasefire agreement, which was concluded following the latest Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip, came into effect on the evening of 21 November 2012. Since the implementation of the agreement, data collected by PCHR demonstrates that the Israeli-imposed closure of the Gaza Strip has continued at the same rate as before the offensive, including all movement at the crossing points. Statistics also show that the amount and nature of goods allowed to enter the Gaza Strip has not changed. The exception was the slight easing of the ban on exports from the Gaza Strip, but this was limited to a very small amount of agricultural products.

Throughout 2012, PCHR has expressed concerns, via its publications (such as the monthly 'State of the Border Crossings' updates), regarding the institutionalisation of the closure of the Gaza Strip. PCHR is concerned that inadvertent legitimisation by the international community may push the Gaza Strip into another stage of closure that would become internationally accepted. Palestinians in the Gaza Strip may not suffer from the lack of certain goods, yet their economic dependency and social, cultural, and academic isolation continue.

PCHR calls for a fundamental change in Israeli policies, which are currently causing the continued deterioration of humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip. These policies have seriously impacted the food security of the civilian people, especially children. Israel's longstanding policies and practices have drastically affected the economic and social rights of the civilian population in the Gaza Strip, undermining any real opportunities for the recovery of the Gaza Strip's economy. These systematic policies have consistently violated the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to adequate housing, education, and social security, and the right to the highest attainable standard of mental and physical health. PCHR asserts

that Israel's alleged measures to ease the closure do not deal with the essence of the crisis. PCHR stresses that the crisis can be ended only with the immediate lifting of the closure, the removal of the restrictions on movement to and from the Gaza Strip, and the reversal of the ban on exports.

In the West Bank, Israeli forces have continued to restrict the movement of civilians between cities as well as at international crossing points. Israel has continued its practice of closing off occupied East Jerusalem to Palestinian civilians from elsewhere in the oPt; entry to East Jerusalem is banned for Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As a result, Palestinians have been denied access to advanced medical care, their right to meet with family members, and access to education, work, and religious sites in East Jerusalem, in particular, the al-Aqsa Mosque.

The construction of the annexation wall around East Jerusalem further establishes a permanent barrier to Palestinians wishing to enter occupied East Jerusalem. The continued isolation of East Jerusalem, along with the establishment of new checkpoints and the construction of new sections of the annexation wall around the city, causes grave harm to the social life of the city. This is especially so for families living within East Jerusalem's municipal borders and its suburbs.

At the al-Karama ('Allenby') International Crossing Point on the Jordanian border with the West Bank, Israeli forces subject Palestinian civilians to humiliation and cruel interrogation. Israeli forces prohibit thousands of Palestinians from travelling, and those who attempt to cross the border are usually subjected to body searches and humiliation. Palestinians who are denied travel include patients, women, journalists, political activists, students, members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), and employees of international organisations.

Israel implements a discriminatory policy that curtails the freedom of Palestinian civilians to use public roads. There are about 500 kilometres of restricted roads across the West Bank, which are accessible only to Israeli settlers. Palestinians suffer as a result, as they are forced to use alternative roads that are unsuitable and add considerable time to their journeys. In addition, approximately one third of the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem, is inaccessible to Palestinians unless they have a permit issued by Israeli forces. These permits are extremely difficult to obtain. At least 200,000 Palestinians living in 70 villages are forced to use alternative roads that are longer, resulting in

additional financial burdens.

Military checkpoints are an obstacle to the movement of cargo. This increases the cost of transportation, which is consequently reflected in the prices of goods, and adds to the financial hardship of consumers. The policy of closure, as well as restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestinian civilians, has had a serious impact on their economic, social and cultural rights as well as their civil and political rights. The Palestinian people are experiencing a severe economic crisis that is affecting various economic sectors, including trade, manufacturing, agriculture, labour, tourism, transportation, investment, and development. The policy of closure affects the lives of every individual in the oPt by violating the right to work, to health, to education and to appropriate living conditions. Israel has also created a new system of discrimination in the oPt, whereby Palestinians live in geographically-isolated cantons and are deprived of the right to freedom of movement.

The construction of the annexation wall has brought about new restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestinians who live near the route of the wall. These new restrictions come on top of the widespread restrictions that have been in place since the outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2000. Farming is a primary source of income in the Palestinian communities located along the route of the wall. However, thousands of Palestinians have experienced difficulties accessing their fields and marketing their produce in other areas of the West Bank.

3. Arrests, detention, torture, and other forms of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment

At least 4,600 Palestinians are in Israeli custody in prisons and detention facilities, most of which are inside Israel. They are being held under inhuman conditions, despite many assurances that their living conditions would be improved, as was guaranteed as part of the prisoner exchange deal between Palestinian armed groups and Israel in late 2011.

The detention conditions of Palestinian prisoners had seriously deteriorated following the June 2006 capture of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit in the Gaza Strip. Palestinian prisoners from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank have been denied family visitation rights. Even when family visits are allowed, family members are subjected to strip searches. Palestinian prisoners have also been subjected to solitary confinement and medical negligence.

To protest against the continuous deterioration in living conditions and the severe restrictions imposed by Israeli forces, Palestinian prisoners began open-ended hunger strikes in the hope of improving their living conditions and regaining the rights for which they have struggled for years. The prisoners' demands were as follows:

1. Improve the living conditions of prisoners in Israeli jails and provide for their basic needs, such as access to proper healthcare and medical treatment, education, and television and newspapers;
2. Allow family visits for prisoners from the Gaza Strip, who have been denied family visits due to political decisions and unjust laws, such as the so-called "Shalit Law";
3. End the use of administrative detention and solitary confinement. Some Palestinians have been imprisoned for more than ten consecutive years in solitary cells that lack basic facilities;
4. Allow prisoners to receive an education; and
5. End the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) policy of humiliating Palestinian prisoners and their families via strip searches, collective punishment, and night raids.

Approximately 1,500 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails began an open-ended hunger strike on 17 April 2012. The mass strike was preceded by individual hunger strikes by a number of administrative detainees. The Palestinian prisoners ended their mass hunger strike on 14 May 2012, after reaching an agreement with the IPS, which stated that Israel would cease the use of solitary confinement for all prisoners and allow around 440 prisoners from the Gaza Strip to receive family visits.

In the West Bank, Israeli forces arrested hundreds of Palestinians during Israeli incursions, arrest campaigns at checkpoints, and campaigns conducted to arrest wanted people. In the Gaza Strip, Israeli forces continued to arrest more Palestinians in the 'buffer zone' along the eastern and northern borders of the Gaza Strip, at sea, and at the Beit Hanoun ('Erez') crossing point, in the north of the Gaza Strip. PCHR documented the arrest of 1,202 Palestinians by Israeli forces in 2012, the vast majority of whom were from the West Bank. 1,085 Palestinians were arrested in the West Bank, and 117 were arrested in the Gaza Strip.

In 2012, 14 members of the PLC were imprisoned in Israeli jails. Most of the PLC members were from the 'Change and Reform' bloc, which is affiliated with

Hamas, two were from Fatah, one was from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and three were former ministers.

By the end of 2012, at least 185 Palestinians were still in custody under administrative detention orders issued by Israeli forces. Israel has adopted the use of the policy of administrative detention against thousands of Palestinians since 1967, when Israel occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The use of administrative detention violates the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, particularly Article 78 which prohibits the use of this measure as a form of punishment, calling it an exceptional measure confined to use for "imperative reasons of security".

Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails are subjected to various forms of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment. They suffer violent beatings and insults, and endure various forms of torture during interrogation, including physical ill-treatment, sleep deprivation, denial of visitation rights and proper health care, and denial of their right to meet with their lawyers and receive legal counselling.

4. Attacks on journalists

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to attack journalists, disregarding the protection extended to journalists under international law. It is evident that attacks on journalists by Israeli forces, which violate the right of journalists to personal security as they carry out their work, are part of a campaign to isolate the oPt from the rest of the world and prevent the media from covering crimes committed against civilians by Israeli forces.

Most egregiously, Israeli forces were responsible for the killing of four journalists during the large-scale Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip, from 14 to 21 November 2012. Israeli forces also attacked media offices and wounded other journalists in Gaza City.

PCHR has documented other attacks on journalists during 2012, the most prominent of which were in the West Bank. The types of attacks included: firing at journalists; beating and other forms of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment; detention of journalists; denying journalists access to certain areas; confiscation of and/or damaging journalistic equipment; and raids on media offices and the homes of journalists.

5. Destruction of civilian property

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to systematically demolish Palestinian civilian property in the oPt, especially in East Jerusalem. The rate of these attacks escalated significantly during the latest Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip, which took place from 14 to 21 November 2012.

In the Gaza Strip, Israeli forces targeted 371 buildings, of which 126 were completely demolished. Those 126 buildings contained 191 residential units that housed 1,229 people, including 710 children. 243 more buildings were severely damaged. These included 463 residential units that housed 2,683 people, including 1,169 children. Israeli forces targeted 667 civilian establishments, 233 (35%) of which were targeted during the large-scale offensive on the Gaza Strip.

Israeli naval forces continued their attacks on Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip in 2012. During the large-scale Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November, these attacks escalated significantly. Since the beginning of 2012, the fishing sector has been subjected to intense Israeli attacks that resulted in killings, injuries, arrests, and the confiscation and destruction of fishing equipment. Israeli naval forces detained 26 fishing boats and destroyed 13 fishing boats, along with other fishing equipment.

Israeli forces continued to demolish Palestinian houses in 'Area C', which is under full Israeli control in accordance with the Oslo Accords, for the purpose of settlement expansion. In 2012, this policy affected houses throughout the West Bank, but demolitions were focused largely in occupied East Jerusalem. Demolitions in the Gaza Strip were largely carried out in aerial attacks without prior warning, while those in the West Bank were carried out under the pretext that the building owners lacked the required building licenses from the Planning and Building Department of the Israeli Civil Administration in the 'Beit El' settlement or, for houses in occupied East Jerusalem, the Israeli municipality in Jerusalem.

In 2012, Israeli forces demolished 304 houses in the West Bank, including 68 in East Jerusalem. 14 Palestinian civilians in East Jerusalem were forced to demolish their own homes. These civilians, under duress from Israeli forces, often demolish their homes themselves in order to avoid having to pay the extremely high costs that would be imposed if the demolition is carried out by Israeli forces.

6. Settlement activities and settler attacks

The Israeli government, its occupation forces, and settlers living on Palestinian land in violation of international law have continued the expansion of settlements in the West Bank. Armed Israeli settlers, protected by Israeli forces, have also continued to commit crimes against Palestinian civilians and property. In 2012, Israeli settlers escalated their attacks against Palestinian civilians and property. The settlers and Israeli forces also launched joint attacks against Palestinian civilians.

Israeli forces have continued to confiscate civilian property belonging to Palestinians to facilitate the expansion of settlements. This is in violation of international humanitarian law, which prohibits changing the nature of an occupied territory unless there is military necessity in the narrow sense of the term - a condition that is not fulfilled in this case. In 2012, Israeli forces confiscated and/or levelled at least 28,000 dunums (2,800 hectares) of land across the West Bank. Of the confiscated land, 20% is in occupied East Jerusalem. Part of the confiscated land was annexed by Israeli settlers.

In 2012, approximately 37,000 agricultural trees were uprooted, burned, water-logged, and/or cut down, of which 31,000 were olive trees. In Nablus alone, 10,260 trees were damaged. In Hebron, 5,600 trees were damaged, and in Jerusalem, 500.

In 2012, Israeli forces, under the instructions of the Municipality of Jerusalem, continued to demolish Palestinian houses throughout the city and its suburbs, citing unlicensed construction as the reason for demolition. The municipality continued to impose lengthy and complicated procedures on Palestinian civilians who attempted to obtain construction licenses. Thus, many Palestinians, under pressure to build new houses or expand existing homes due to natural population growth, do so without obtaining licenses. Meanwhile, Israel, 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 Jerusalem. PCHR stresses that such practices in Jerusalem are illegal and condemns the Municipality of Jerusalem's discriminatory approach to issuing building licenses to the Palestinian population.

Israeli forces have continued imposing harsh restrictions on the activities of Palestinian non-governmental

organisations (NGOs) in Jerusalem, claiming that these NGOs are linked to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and/or the PNA, even though the identity and activities of the NGOs indicate otherwise. Measures by Israeli forces include raiding the offices of NGOs, as well as prohibiting or shutting down official and public meetings, even if they are of a social nature, claiming that such activities are linked to the agendas of the PLO or the PNA.

Israeli forces have continued to violate the right to freedom of religion of Palestinians by denying them access to religious sites in Jerusalem, as well as by continuing excavations in the vicinity of the al-Aqsa Mosque, endangering the site and subjecting it to the threat of demolition.

The most worrying development in terms of settlement expansion is the E1 Plan to expand settlements in the E1 area. On 30 November 2012, the day after Palestine was voted a non-member observer State of the United Nations, the Cabinet of Israel decided to proceed with the planning of thousands of apartments near the settlement of 'Ma'ale Adumim', in the area connecting the settlement to Jerusalem. Implementation of the E1 Plan would further isolate Jerusalem from the West Bank, while cutting the northern West Bank off from its southern reaches.

Attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and property continued in 2012, and became more systematic. In many instances, Israeli settlers wrote the phrase "Price tag" on the mosques, houses, and cars that they attacked.

PCHR fieldworkers reported 219 assaults by settlers on Palestinians in 2012. The vast majority of these attacks occurred in Hebron and Nablus. This statistic does not represent the true number of settler attacks, reflecting only the attacks that PCHR fieldworkers were able to document.

Two Palestinian civilians were killed in settler attacks, increasing the number of Palestinians killed by settlers since the outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada in September 2000 to 63, including 14 children and one woman.

The nature of settler attacks were as follows: 12 attacks on houses; 96 attacks on farmers, shepherds, and their property; six shooting incidents; 11 attacks on religious buildings; 30 attacks on vehicles; 64 other attacks, such as riots, highway robbery, and throwing of stones at Palestinian civilian vehicles.

7. The annexation wall in the West Bank

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to confiscate Palestinian lands in order to continue construction work on the annexation wall. On 8 July 2012, Israeli forces issued a military order, confiscating 567.5 dunums of land from Sourif village, northwest of Hebron. The notice (No. T/15/12) was issued by the Israeli military and was signed by GOC Central Command, Nitzan Alon. Attached to the notice were a number of maps showing the lands to be confiscated and the route of the wall, which runs through confiscated lands in the village. The notice stated, "I announce herein that these lands have been confiscated for security purposes, i.e. for the construction of the annexation wall".

The Israeli judiciary continues to serve the policies of the Israeli occupation authorities. In this context, the Israeli High Court has rejected a number of petitions submitted by Palestinian civilians against the confiscation of their lands. In very rare cases, the court has ordered slight changes to the route of the wall, such as in relation to the lands in the Kherbat Jabara area, south of Tulkarm.

The construction of the wall has brought about new restrictions on the movement of Palestinians who live near the route of the wall. These restrictions are in addition to the widespread restrictions that have been in place since the outbreak of the Second Intifada. Farming is a primary source of income in the Palestinian communities located along the route of the wall. However, thousands of Palestinians have experienced difficulties accessing their fields and marketing their produce in other areas of the West Bank. This has a drastic impact on the economic prospects of the residents – whose economic situation is already very difficult – and drives many families into poverty.

The impact of restrictions on the movement of Palestinians living near the wall has not been limited to the agricultural sector, but includes numerous other aspects of life. Access to medical care, education, and relatives living in other parts of the oPt has been restricted. Palestinians are required to obtain permits to move through the gates which are built into the wall, and which are operated under a strict security system. Israeli forces often close these gates for no apparent reason.

In 2012, the Palestinian Ministry of Education in Ramallah issued a report, 'The effect of the annexation wall on the educational process', which discusses

the major obstacles to the educational process in communities that are isolated by the wall. The most significant problem highlighted in the report is the suffering of teachers who have to cross to the other side of the wall to reach communities where there are no schools. These teachers are subjected to humiliation by Israeli forces on a daily basis. On most days, they are denied access under a variety of pretexts. Teachers attempting to pass through the checkpoint in the annexation wall near the entrance of Barta'a village in Jenin are regularly denied permission to cross. Teachers are regularly delayed at checkpoint gates for hours before being denied access to the village, during which time they are subjected to profane language and body searches, especially on female teachers. Students of Ras Teira and al-Dab'a villages in Qalqilya, and the female teachers of Barta'a School for Girls, are regularly subjected to such treatment. Israeli soldiers also prohibit employees of the Ministry of Education from accessing the schools which have been cut off by the wall, which decreases the level of coordination between the schools and the offices of the Ministry of Education, and disrupts the educational process in general.

8. The absence of justice in the Israeli legal system

In 2012, Palestinians continued to be denied the right to justice and compensation by the Israeli legal system, which also shielded Israeli war criminals from being held responsible or prosecuted for committing crimes.

An amendment to the legislation, Amendment No. 8, which applies retroactively from 2000 onwards, exempts the State of Israel of any liability arising from damages caused to a resident of an enemy territory during a 'combat action' or 'military operation'. This amendment disregards the vital question of the legality of these attacks. It also ignores the damage caused to the victims as a result of such attacks, potentially violating rules governing the conduct of armed forces during military operations, as prescribed under international humanitarian law. Amendment No. 8 directly contravenes the norms of customary international law, which hold that a State is responsible for all acts committed by persons who are operating as part of its armed forces. The Israeli legal system is used to shield suspected Israeli war criminals from justice.

No senior Israeli officials have ever been questioned or prosecuted, despite the large number of reports issued by United Nations agencies and international investigation committees. The Goldstone Report was one of the most significant of these reports,

and in which the UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict documented the crimes committed by Israeli forces during the 23-day offensive on the Gaza Strip, 'Operation Cast Lead', which took place from 27 December 2008 to 18 January 2009. The report described them as serious crimes.

Based on our long-term experience of dealing with the Israeli justice system, PCHR is of the opinion that that it is a system which completely disregards justice for Palestinians while deliberately imposing barriers that deny them the opportunity to access the courts in their efforts to obtain justice. In her fourth report, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, emphasised the absence of accountability for crimes committed in the Gaza Strip. She also wrote about the monetary and physical obstacles which deprive the people of the Gaza Strip of access to justice. She called on Israel to conduct investigations which comply with due process, compensate victims, and halt discriminatory practices that deny Palestinians access to justice. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) expressed concern about the obstacles faced by Palestinians seeking access to justice, particularly the victims of 'Operation Cast Lead'. On 15 and 16 February 2012, in its 80th session, the Committee carried out a review of Israel's record, and emphasised the discriminatory nature of Israel's policy of creating monetary and physical obstacles which deny Palestinians access to justice.

PCHR often turns to the Israeli court system to seek redress for victims via a civil case, which must be filed within two years of the date of the incident. In 2012, PCHR lawyers were faced with the newly-passed Amendment No. 8 to the 1952 Israeli Torts Law (State Liability). In effect, this amendment grants full impunity to Israeli soldiers against claims for damages. It absolves Israel of liability for damages caused during military operations, denying the victims of such damages the right to compensation. Furthermore, the Israeli justice system lacks impartiality and integrity, and has repeatedly denied Israeli forces' responsibility for the deaths of Palestinian civilians. PCHR has followed up on 100 cases of Palestinians seeking compensation for the crimes committed during 'Operation Cast Lead'. Four years have passed since the offensive, yet PCHR has been able to obtain compensation for only two cases to date. In both cases, no judicial sentence was issued. Compensation was agreed upon only on the basis of a settlement with the Military Prosecutor's Office of the MAG.

PCHR's efforts to prosecute Israeli war criminals before

third country courts, under the principle of international jurisdiction, have resulted in self-imposed international travel restrictions for the accused. PCHR hopes that Palestine's admission as a non-member observer State to the UN will provide new momentum for our efforts to seek justice for victims at the international level. Palestine's new status offers the Palestinian leadership the opportunity to join the International Criminal Court (ICC), providing a new avenue for victims of Israeli violations to seek justice. Joining the ICC will also represent a very important step toward ending Israeli impunity against prosecution under the international law. PCHR calls upon the Palestinian leadership to join the ICC, the international conventions, and other human rights and international humanitarian law conventions without delay.

Violations of human rights by Palestinian authorities and obstacles to democratic reform >

For the sixth consecutive year, the internal Palestinian political division, in addition to the physical separation of the West Bank from the Gaza Strip, have caused the human rights situation to further deteriorate. The political division has negatively impacted all aspects of the Palestinian political system and of life in Palestinian society. Although the atmosphere surrounding the internal Palestinian political situation was positive in the wake of the Israeli offensive in November, no serious steps were taken to end the political division. PCHR looks forward to serious and effective steps being taken on the ground to accelerate Palestinian national reconciliation.

1. Violations of the right to life and personal security

In 2012, there were continued violations of the right to life and personal security due to the misuse of weapons, as well as violations of the rule of the law in the oPt. PCHR recorded the killing of at least 54 people (43 in the Gaza Strip and 11 in the West Bank), including five children and three women. More than 115 people were wounded.

Particularly serious were the extra-judicial killings of seven people by masked gunmen during the Israeli offensive in November. One of the men had been arrested by the Internal Security Service (ISS). The additional six men had been convicted by the military judiciary in the Gaza Strip of collaboration with hostile security services, namely the Israeli forces, and sentenced to death.

Other incidents related to the misuse or mishandling of weapons in the oPt included the use of weapons in personal and familial disputes, murders motivated by “family honour”, and the extra-judicial killing of civilians on grounds of collaboration with the Israeli forces.

2. Arrests, detention, torture, and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment

Following the Israeli offensive in November, the internal Palestinian political situation took a positive turn. Relations between the two rival movements, Fatah and Hamas, improved significantly. Respective media statements called for a push towards reconciliation and an end to the political division.

On 25 November 2012, the Hamas government in Gaza issued a press release after their weekly government meeting, granting an amnesty to people accused of criminal charges in relation to the 2006 Palestinian internal conflict. A special committee was formed to implement the government’s decision and to pave the way for a new era of Palestinian reconciliation. In a press release, PCHR welcomed the government’s decision, and expressed the hope that this decision will advance Palestinian reconciliation talks, marking the end of the six-year long political division.

The security services of both the Ramallah and Gaza governments continued to subject Palestinian civilians to illegal arrests, torture, and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment in 2012. Such practices were carried out in prisons and detention centres of Palestinian police and security services in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The use of torture can be attributed to the ongoing political division, criminal behaviour, and disputes arising between detainees and security officers. Torture methods include: insults; beating using batons, sharp tools, feet and hands; tying of detainees’ feet and hands to a chair and beating with batons or wires; among others. Detainees were also held in cells or small rooms, placed in solitary confinement, and forced to stand for long hours in the cold or under the sun.

In 2012, PCHR recorded four incidents in which the circumstances surrounding the death of a detainee raised suspicions that he might have been subjected to torture by the security services in Gaza or the West Bank.

3. Continued disruption of the legislature

The disruption of the PLC entered its sixth year in 2012. The complete absence of a mandated PLC, which is the legislative and monitoring authority of the PNA, is a result of actions taken against PLC members by Israel, and the fragmentation of the Palestinian executive which is ongoing since 2007.

The most recent measure by the Israeli government which targeted PLC members was the addition of the Hamas-affiliated 'Change and Reform' bloc to the list of terrorist entities. In July 2012, the Israeli Army Commander issued a decision that all Islamist blocs would be considered as "banned unions". The decision made reference to Article 84 (1) (b) of the Defense Regulations (State of Emergency) which were issued in 1945. The intention of the July decision was to legalise Israel's systematic oppression of PLC members from the 'Change and Reform' bloc in the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem. The decision also indicates that Israeli actions against PLC members from the 'Change and Reform' bloc will continue, in particular, arrests, shutting down of parliamentary offices, and harassment of anyone affiliated with these individuals.

Israeli forces adopted its policy against the PLC in 2006 after rejecting the results of the Palestinian parliamentary elections, which Hamas had won by a large percentage. Israel categorises Hamas as a terrorist organisation due to the role of the Al Qassam Brigades, the military wing of the Hamas movement, in resisting the Israeli occupation of Palestine. After the Palestinian elections, Israel decided to shut down the Palestinian government formed by the 'Change and Reform' parliamentary bloc. The Israeli government declared the 'Change and Reform' bloc to be a banned union in July 2009, forcing the bloc to change its name in the West Bank and Jerusalem to the 'Islamists Parliament Members' bloc. As outlined above, Israel responded by banning all Islamist blocs. These measures are part of an Israeli policy aimed at stifling Palestinian democratic development.

By the end of 2012, 14 PLC members remained in detention, including 11 members of the 'Change and Reform' bloc, two members of the Fatah bloc, and one member of the 'Abu Ali Mustafa' bloc, which is affiliated

with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The Palestinian legislature continues to be in a state of chaos. In Ramallah, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas issues presidential decrees which are enforced only in the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip, the 'Change and Reform' bloc issues laws on behalf of the PLC, and these are enforced solely in the Gaza Strip. The PLC's inability to convene has meant that it has not been able to fulfil its legislative role of monitoring and holding to account the executive authorities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Both the 'Change and Reform' bloc in Gaza and the Palestinian President in the West Bank are issuing laws unlawfully and in violation of the Palestinian Basic Law. In 2012, the 'Change and Reform' bloc debated, ratified, and issued four laws, without ratification by the President of the PNA. The bloc has issued a total of 32 laws on behalf of the PLC since the internal political division began. These laws, published in the Gaza Strip in the Palestinian Gazette, include 18 new laws, 10 amendments to former laws, and four laws relating to general budget approval. The 32 laws were issued on behalf of the PLC despite the lack of a quorum during their discussion or issuance, and without ratification by the President of the PNA.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has issued decrees that have the power of law without presenting them to the PLC. In 2012, the President issued nine decrees, bringing the number of decrees he has issued since the beginning of the internal political division to 68. These decrees consist of 23 new laws, 23 amendments or cancellation of former laws, seven related to general budget approval, and 15 decrees in the form of laws that fall under the specific mandate of the PLC. These decrees, which have the power of law, are in violation of Article 43 of the Palestinian Basic Law.

4. Erosion of the authority of the judiciary

In 2012, the PNA further abused its executive authority in its domination of the judiciary. This violates the principle of the separation of powers, as provided for in Article 2 of the Basic Palestinian Law. The political division and conflict within the PNA since June 2007 have affected the judiciary, as two separate judicial systems are currently enforced in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In violation of the Palestinian Basic Law, the government in Gaza established a separate judicial system, to which the people of the Gaza Strip are subject. The judicial system in the West Bank applies only to those who live there. PCHR has

repeatedly appealed to the concerned parties in Ramallah and Gaza to ensure the independence of the judiciary, despite the ongoing internal political division. PCHR has demanded that these parties take the necessary steps to preserve the independence of the judiciary, and refrain from politicising the judicial system in the interests of protecting the people. Regrettably, these pleas and warnings have not been heeded. The judiciary has been drawn into the conflict through a series of measures and decisions taken by the governments in Ramallah and Gaza.

The judiciary in the Gaza Strip

In the days following the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip in mid-June 2007, several hasty measures were taken which resulted in the obstruction of the judiciary's work, especially in the Gaza Strip. The most notable development was the decision of the Chief of Police to suspend the work of the civilian police force in the Gaza Strip. Simultaneously, the Attorney General suspended his work in the Gaza Strip. The Attorney General is responsible for public prosecution, receiving claims, investigating crimes, and filing criminal charges.

In 2012, the Gaza government made a number of appointments and changes to the judiciary. Judge 'Adel Khalifa was appointed as President of the Higher Judicial Council on 25 September 2012, succeeding Judge 'Abdul Ra'ouf al-Halabi, who was in turn appointed President of the Fatwa and Legislation Department in Gaza. The government appointed a number of judges. The most important appointment was that of Ahmed 'Attallah as a Higher Court Judge. PCHR reiterates that these appointments to the so-called 'Higher Judicial Council' raise concerns about the independence of the council, notwithstanding the fact that the council itself is an unconstitutional and illegal body. PCHR confirms that, as long as the internal political division persists, all appointments to the judiciary are illegal. Judges, prosecutors, and the Attorney General must be appointed by the President, based on nominations by the Higher Judicial Council, in accordance with Articles 18 and 63 of the Judiciary Law of 2002. These Articles lay out the requirements for the organisation of the judiciary in accordance with the Amended Basic Law of 2003. Thus, PCHR considers the Gaza judiciary to be a de facto authority.

The judiciary in the West Bank

In the West Bank, the Palestinian President continued to use legislative tools to control the judiciary,

particularly when the government chose not to execute some of the rulings of the Ramallah Higher Court. President Mahmoud Abbas has continued to issue presidential decrees that have the force of law. This is in violation of Article 43 of the Palestinian Basic Law of 2003, which states, "The President of the National Authority shall have the right, in cases of necessity that cannot be delayed, and when the Legislative Council is not in session, to issue decrees that have the power of law. These decrees shall be presented to the Legislative Council in the first session convened after their issuance; otherwise they will cease to have the power of law. If these decrees are presented to the Legislative Council, as mentioned above, but are not approved by the latter, then they shall cease to have the power of law." However, in 2012, the President issued two decrees related to the technical work of the judiciary: Presidential Decree with the Power of Law No. 3 (2012) on the *Shari'a* Judiciary; and Presidential Decree with the Power of Law (2012), on amending the Constitutional Court Act of 2006.

5. Obstruction of general and local elections

The fragmentation of the Palestinian executive continues to be the main obstacle to democratic reform. Presidential and legislative elections to renew the legitimacy of the Palestinian people's representatives, who were elected in 2005 and 2006 respectively, have been obstructed. At the end of 2012, three years had passed since the expiration of the legal terms in office of the Palestinian President and the PLC. The PNA remains unable to hold general elections.

The PNA held local elections only in the West Bank, but not in the Gaza Strip. PCHR criticises the holding of elections, as long as the internal political division persists. We demand that the Gaza and Ramallah governments provide an atmosphere conducive to the organisation of transparent and fair elections. This will allow people to freely choose their public representatives, who will be subject to accountability in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Most importantly, such an atmosphere will ensure protection for public freedoms and a respect for constitutionally-guaranteed human rights, including political rights, and the lifting of bans on different political factions. The legal term of the Gaza Strip's local councils, which were elected in December 2005, expired three years ago. Elections must be held to renew the legitimacy of all local councils.

After the Cairo talks in late 2011, as well as the

agreement to organise general (presidential and legislative) elections in the first half of 2012, relations between the rival Hamas and Fatah parties improved. A number of media statements indicated that reconciliation was not far off, especially in the wake of the Israeli offensive in November 2012. On the ground, however, nothing has been implemented.

By the end of 2012, there was still no progress in terms of holding or setting a date for the presidential and legislative elections in the oPt. According to Palestinian law, the Palestinian President must call for legislative elections three months prior to holding them. This did not happen.

The holding of local elections in the villages and cities of the West Bank on 20 October 2012 was the most significant development in terms of elections since the Palestinian political division began in 2007. PCHR considers that these unilateral elections by the Fatah-dominated government in the West Bank represent a setback to efforts at reaching national reconciliation. Local elections were not held in the Gaza Strip, and the Hamas government continued to appoint Hamas-affiliated individuals to the local councils.

6. Violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

In 2012, the two governments in Ramallah and Gaza, and the executive services in their respective areas of control, violated the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the freedom of the press. The Gaza and Ramallah governments committed violations of the rights of journalists, various media workers, editors, and others, who challenged mainstream opinions. The security services in the Gaza Strip continued to summon Fatah activists, detaining many of them for long periods of time. The security services in the West Bank continued to arrest and detain Hamas activists for long periods of time. The Gaza government has banned the distribution of West Bank-based newspapers, al-Quds, al-Hayat al-Jadeeda and al-Ayyam, while the West Bank government has banned the distribution and printing of Gaza-based newspapers, Palestine and al-Risala.

In the Gaza Strip, common violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression included: summoning, detaining and arresting journalists; assaulting journalists by members of the security services; preventing journalists from carrying out their work; the detention of journalists/citizens by the al-Qassam Brigades for submission to the security

services; and summoning, detaining and arresting citizens for their political opinions.

In the West Bank, common violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression include: arresting journalists/citizens for their political opinions; summoning, detaining, and arresting journalists, many of whom were assaulted; the assault of journalists by security services members; preventing journalists and media from carrying out their work; attacking journalists who were covering peaceful demonstrations; summoning, detaining, and arresting citizens for their political opinions; and blocking certain websites in the West Bank. Violations by unidentified persons in the West Bank have also continued, though the incidence of such violations has declined relative to the violations committed by the authorities.

7. Violations of the right to peaceful assembly

In the last weeks of 2012, there were important and positive developments with respect to the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. These developments occurred in the context of the positive attitude towards national reconciliation. At the end of 2012, the Fatah movement prepared to celebrate its 48th anniversary in al-Saraya Square, in Gaza City. It was the first time since 2007 that the Fatah movement was permitted by the Hamas government to commemorate its anniversary in the Gaza Strip. The Fatah movement was also permitted to organise rallies in various cities and governorates in the Gaza Strip in support of President Mahmoud Abbas' efforts to obtain recognition of Palestine as a non-member observer State of the United Nations.

In the West Bank, the Hamas movement was permitted, for the first time since the beginning of the Palestinian division in 2007, to commemorate its anniversary in Ramallah, Nablus, and Hebron. For the first time, the Fatah movement participated in the main rally organised by the Hamas movement in the Gaza Strip. PCHR welcomes these positive developments as opportunities for internal reconciliation. PCHR looks forward to an end to the restrictions imposed by the Ramallah and Gaza governments and their security services on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.

Before these developments, the situation in 2012 was characterised by restrictions imposed on the right to peaceful assembly by the two governments and their security services in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The most significant violations of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly are outlined in the following paragraphs.

In the Gaza Strip, security services continued to enforce bans on public meetings, dispersing a number of public gatherings throughout the year. The most egregious violations were committed by security services during the weekly women's sit-in, which called for Palestinian reconciliation, and during peaceful protests, which called for a resolution to the electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip. A number of participants were beaten and detained by the security services, during dispersal of the protests. The security services imposed additional measures restricting the right of citizens to organise public meetings. Most of these measures targeted Fatah activists, including during events organised to celebrate the 48th anniversary of the Fatah movement in January 2012 and the anniversary of Yasser 'Arafat on 11 November. These measures were applied inappropriately and beyond their original scope, affecting private meetings, which are conducted in closed places and not required by law to give notification to competent official bodies. The distinction is noted under Item 5, Article (26) of the 2003 Amended Basic Law: "[C]onducting private meetings without the presence of police members, and conducting public meetings, gatherings and processions, within the limits of the law."

The government in the West Bank and its security services continued to violate the right of citizens to peaceful assembly, particularly those who participated in gatherings which contradicted mainstream opinion. The worst example took place during a peaceful demonstration in Ramallah, which was organised to protest the visit of Shaoul Mofaz, the Israeli Vice Prime Minister at the time, to the Office of the President (al-Mokat'aa). Participants and journalists were subjected to beatings and arrests. On the other hand, PCHR documented a number of gatherings protesting the high cost of living, which were supported by the Fatah movement in the West Bank. From 3 to 11 September, protests and demonstrations in different cities in the West Bank were held in response to the Ramallah government's decision to raise fuel prices. Although some of these protests deviated from their originally-peaceful nature, their participants were not attacked by the security services. In 2012, the Hamas movement was reluctant to commemorate its anniversary in the West Bank, as its members had been subjected to arrests and summons in previous years.

8. Violations of the right to freedom of association


The governments in Gaza and Ramallah continued to violate the right to freedom of association in 2012. More restrictions were imposed on civil society organisations.

These restrictions are in violation of the PNA's obligation to respect, protect, and guarantee this right in accordance with the relevant international standards.

In the Gaza Strip, more violations of the right to form associations were reported. The Ministry of Interior increasingly intervened in the affairs of associations in attempts to control these associations. The Associations Registration Office at the Ministry of the Interior abused its authority by granting licences based on arbitrary standards, which is in clear violation of the law. The Ministry of Interior continued to shut down associations without any legal justification by withdrawing their licenses. It also prevented NGOs from holding activities and events.

The government in Gaza continued to develop administrative procedures and issue decisions which furthered the restrictions already imposed on the work of associations. Among these was a decision, issued on 31 May 2011, by the Council of Ministers in Gaza to amend the 2003 Executive Bill of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations. The amendment strengthened the authority of the Ministry of Interior with regard to the monitoring of associations, making its role equal to that of the relevant ministry. This clearly constitutes a violation of the Law of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations. In a press release, published on 11 August 2011,² PCHR highlighted the invalidity and unconstitutionality of the amendment and called on the Council of Ministers in Gaza to reconsider its decision. Due to the lack of response from the Council of Ministers, PCHR filed a petition on 7 June 2012, challenging the constitutionality of the decision. The petition was submitted to the Supreme Court in Gaza, calling on it to rule in its capacity as the constitutional court. On 18 June 2012, the Court declined to consider the petition, claiming that it did not have the necessary competence to consider the case.

Violations of the right to freedom of association persisted in the West Bank. Restrictions imposed on the right remained in effect, including those resulting from presidential decrees issued by the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas. Common violations in the



2. PCHR, "PCHR Calls for Reconsideration of Decision to Make Amendments to the Executive Bill of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations Law No. 1/2000", 11 August 2011.

West Bank included: the raiding and searching of the offices of associations; the appointing of new boards affiliated to the government or Fatah movement; and the refusal to issue new licenses to associations that are affiliated to Hamas.

Measures were taken as a prelude to dissolving legally-licensed civil society organisations, and restricting their work during the state of emergency declared in the oPt. The government in Ramallah refused to reconsider its decision to dissolve 103 societies with close affiliations to Hamas, despite demands by civil society organisations.

The PNA has also failed to implement the Palestinian courts' decisions regarding a number of associations in the West Bank.

9. Continued application of the death penalty

The Palestinian courts issued six death sentences in 2012. All of the death sentences were issued in the Gaza Strip. Four were issued by the military courts, while the remaining two were issued by civil courts. PCHR documented two instances of civilians being tried in military courts, in violation of the law. The number of death sentences issued by the Palestinian courts since the establishment of the PNA has risen to 131.

There was a significant increase in the implementation of death sentences in 2012. Six people were put to death in the Gaza Strip, one of whom had been sentenced to death by a military court. The total number of death sentences carried out in the Gaza Strip since the Hamas' takeover in 2007 has increased to 14. No death sentence has been executed in the West Bank.

In this context, PCHR highly appreciates the fact that the Palestinian President has not ratified any death sentences since 2005. We hope that he will continue to abstain from ratifying death sentences, and continue to move towards the abolition of the death penalty.

10. Impact of political division on economic and social rights in the Gaza Strip

The political crisis within the PNA, and the conflict between the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah, has negatively impacted the already difficult economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. Measures taken by the two governments, in addition to the closure of the Gaza Strip by Israeli

forces, have severely impacted people's living conditions and undermined their ability to provide for themselves and their families. In 2012, thousands of public service employees and their families suffered cuts to their salaries, which the Ramallah government initiated following the political division in 2007. Employees of the public and security services who receive salaries from the PNA, particularly those affiliated with the Fatah movement, are constantly monitored and harassed by the government in Gaza and its security services.

In 2012, all services provided to the people of the Gaza Strip were negatively affected by the ongoing political and power struggle between the two governments in Ramallah and Gaza. Health conditions deteriorated, as all public health facilities in the Gaza Strip suffered from acute shortages of medicines and medical necessities. In addition, the severe financial crisis in the PNA meant that hundreds of patients, including those with chronic diseases, psychological conditions, and financial problems, were no longer able to afford their medicine. The Ministry of Health in Ramallah prevented many patients, for whom medical treatment was not available in the Gaza Strip, from travelling abroad by refusing to renew their passports or allow passports to be issued in Gaza. The Ministry of Interior in Gaza also prevented many people, especially members of the Fatah movement, from travelling abroad either through the Rafah International Crossing Point or Beit Hanoun ('Erez') crossing.

The electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip is one of the most critical challenges, as a reliable electricity supply is crucial for various basic services. Finding a means of alternative energy has become a key concern for the people of Gaza. The use of power generators or candles to compensate for the shortage of electric services has caused many accidents, and resulted in a number of deaths.

PCHR has warned of the serious consequences of the total shutdown of the Gaza power plant, and the resulting impact on the ability of 1.8 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip to access vital services.





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Israeli violations of international humanitarian and human rights law >

In light of continued violations by the Israeli forces of the rights of Palestinian civilians, and the continued Palestinian political division, PCHR presents the following recommendations to the international community.

> *Recommendations to the international community*

PCHR draws attention to the position of the international community that the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, are still under Israeli occupation, despite the 2005 “disengagement” of the Israeli military from the Gaza Strip. Israeli forces have continued to impose collective punishment on the people of the Gaza Strip. Such punishment escalated after the 2006 Palestinian parliamentary elections, in which Hamas won the majority of seats in the PLC. PCHR stresses that, as the Occupying Power, Israel has an obligation to respect international human rights instruments and international humanitarian law, especially the Hague Regulations on the Laws and Customs of War on Land and the Geneva Conventions, an obligation which is internationally recognised. Israel is obliged to apply international human rights law and international humanitarian law, reciprocally or in parallel, in order to achieve the best protection for civilians and remedy for victims.

PCHR notes the continued arbitrary measures, land confiscation, and settlement activities in the West Bank, as well as the continued aggression against civilians in the Gaza Strip, especially the during the Israeli offensive in November. PCHR, therefore, calls upon the international community, particularly the United Nations, the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention, and the European Union - given their natural obligation to respect and enforce international law – to cooperate and act on the following recommendations:

1. PCHR calls upon the international community and the United Nations to use all available means to facilitate the Palestinian people to realise their right to self-determination through the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, which has been recognised by the vast majority of members of the UN General Assembly, and to use all international legal mechanisms, including sanctions, to end the occupation of the State of Palestine.
2. PCHR calls upon the United Nations to provide international protection to Palestinians in the oPt, and to ensure the non-recurrence of aggression against the oPt, especially in the Gaza Strip.
3. PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions to compel Israel, as a High Contracting Party to the Conventions, to apply the Conventions in the oPt.
4. PCHR calls upon the parties to international human rights instruments, especially the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to put pressure on Israel to comply with their obligations in the oPt, and to compel Israel to incorporate the human rights situation in the oPt into the reports it submits to the concerned committees.
5. PCHR calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions to fulfil their obligation to ensure the application of the Conventions, including extending the scope of their jurisdiction to prosecute suspected war criminals, regardless of the nationality of the perpetrator and the place of

crime, and to pave the way for prosecuting suspected Israeli war criminals and end the longstanding impunity they have enjoyed.

6. PCHR calls upon States that apply the principle of universal jurisdiction and not to surrender to Israeli pressure to limit universal jurisdiction, which would perpetuate the impunity enjoyed by suspected Israeli war criminals.
7. PCHR calls upon the international community to put an end to all Israeli settlement expansion activities in the oPt by imposing sanctions on Israeli settlements and criminalising trade with them.
8. PCHR calls upon the UN General Assembly to transfer the Goldstone Report to the UN Security Council for referral to the International Criminal Court in accordance with Article 13(b) of the Rome Statute.
9. PCHR calls upon the United Nations to confirm that holding war criminals responsible for their actions in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is a precondition to achieving stability and peace in the region, and that peace cannot be built at the expense of human rights and justice for victims.
10. PCHR calls upon the UN General Assembly and Human Rights Council to explicitly declare that the Israeli policy of closure of the Gaza Strip and the annexation wall in the West Bank are illegal, and to refer both issues to the UN Security Council so that sanctions can be imposed on Israel to compel it to lift the closure and remove the wall.
11. PCHR calls upon the international community, in light of its failure to stop aggression against the Palestinian people, to at least fulfil its obligation to reconstruct the Gaza Strip following the repeated hostilities launched by Israel, which often directly target civilian infrastructure.
12. PCHR calls upon the United Nations and the European Union to express a clear position on the annexation wall, based on international recognition of the State of Palestine along the 1967 borders, since the annexation wall seizes large parts of the State of Palestine.
13. PCHR calls upon the European Union to activate Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, which provides that both sides must respect human rights as a precondition for economic cooperation between the EU states and Israel. We reiterate that the EU must not ignore Israeli violation and crimes against Palestinian civilians.
14. PCHR calls upon the international community, especially the United Nations, to encourage the State of Palestine to accede to international human rights and humanitarian law instruments.
15. PCHR calls upon the international community to support efforts to achieve Palestinian national reconciliation by exerting political pressure on Hamas and Fatah to work towards reconciliation. The international community should accept the results of reconciliation, in order to avoid the recurrence of penal sanctions which were adopted by the international community against the first Palestinian national unity government.
16. PCHR calls upon the European Union and international human rights bodies to put pressure on Israeli forces to put an end to attacks on Palestinian fishermen and allow them to fish freely, as fishing is a major component of the economic sector in the Gaza Strip.

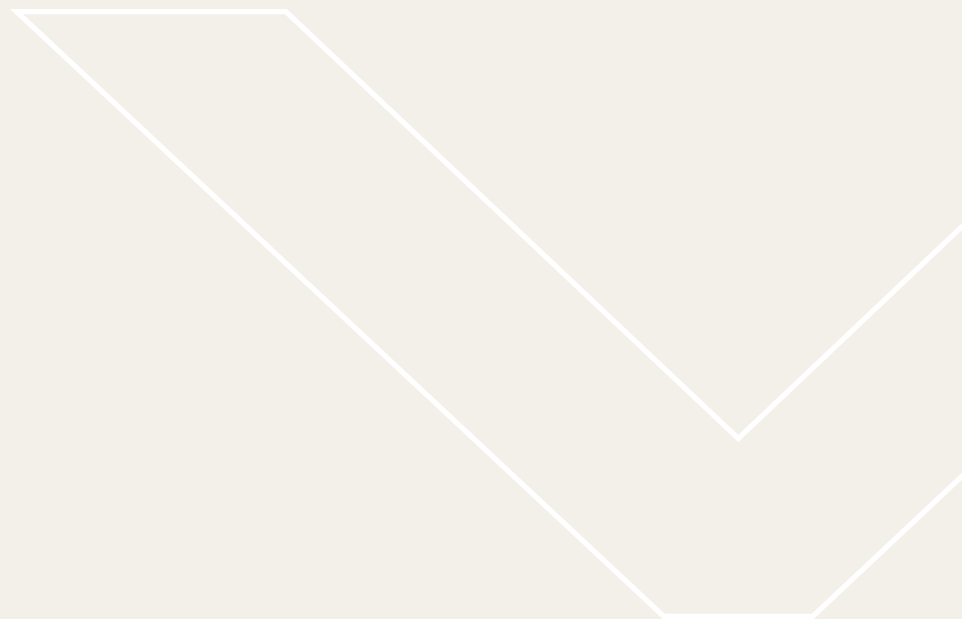
➤ *Recommendations to the PNA*

In 2012, the ongoing political division led to the deterioration of rights and liberties in PNA-controlled areas. The PLC could not fulfil its legislative and monitoring role. The rival political parties continued to involve the judiciary in the internal conflict, undermining the independence of the judiciary. In light of these facts, PCHR calls upon the Palestinian leadership to cooperate and jointly implement the following recommendations:

1. In light of Palestine's admission as a non-member observer State to the United Nations, PCHR calls upon the Palestinian President to ensure that Palestine accedes to all international human rights and humanitarian law instruments. PCHR calls for the immediate signing and ratification of the following instruments:
 - Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 1998;
 - Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocols of 1977;
 - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 and the two Optional Protocols of 1966 and 1989;
 - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966;
 - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979;
 - Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1984;
 - Convention of the Rights of the Child of 1989; and
 - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 2006.

2. PCHR calls upon the Fatah and Hamas movements to take immediate, practical steps on the ground to implement the national reconciliation agreement that was signed in Cairo on 4 May 2011.
3. PCHR calls upon Fatah and Hamas to make information related to their efforts to achieve reconciliation available to the public, ensuring transparency and accountability.
4. PCHR calls on the PNA to immediately begin preparations for Palestinian parliamentary and presidential elections, given that the legal terms in office of the PNA and the PLC expired in January 2009 and 2010 respectively. PCHR calls for elections to be held in an atmosphere of respect for all rights and liberties, especially the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly.
5. PCHR calls upon the Palestinian President to comply with the conditions for issuing presidential decrees that have the power of law as prescribed by Article 43 of the Palestinian Basic Law, including by exercising the right only in cases of necessity that cannot be delayed.
6. PCHR calls upon the Palestinian President to immediately reverse the presidential decree which he issued in November 2006, amending the Law on the Supreme Constitutional Court of 2006.
7. PCHR calls upon the 'Change and Reform' bloc to stop holding sessions in the name of the PLC, and to abstain from enacting any laws while the political division is ongoing.
8. PCHR calls upon the Council of Ministers in Gaza to reverse its unconstitutional decision of 2011, which amended the Executive Bill of 2003 of the Law of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations.
9. PCHR calls upon Hamas and Fatah to present all laws enacted during the political division to the Supreme Constitutional Court, once it is established, as it is the only body that has the authority to decide on the constitutionality of laws.
10. PCHR calls upon the Fatah government in the West Bank and the Hamas government in the Gaza Strip to take effective measures to end the state of lawlessness plaguing the oPt, and abstain from providing political cover to those who have caused this state of lawlessness.
11. PCHR calls upon the Fatah government in the West Bank and the Hamas government in the Gaza Strip to put an end to all violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly, and to hold the perpetrators of such violations accountable via appropriate legal means.
12. PCHR calls upon the Ministries of Interior in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to put an end to political arrests. PCHR emphasises that all victims have the right to claim compensation if it is proven that they were arrested illegally.
13. PCHR calls upon the Public Prosecutor to put an end to the practice of summoning people via security services without warrants, and confirms that the Public Prosecutor is the only body authorised to summon people.
14. PCHR calls upon the administrations of prisons and detention facilities to release all persons who were illegally detained, and confirms that directors of prisons and detention facilities have the authority, and even the duty, to release such persons; otherwise, they will be legally liable.
15. PCHR calls upon the Fatah government in the West Bank and the Hamas government in the Gaza Strip to immediately put to the use of torture in prisons and detention facilities, and hold suspected perpetrators accountable for their crimes, which remain punishable at all times according to the Palestinian Basic Law.
16. PCHR calls upon the Fatah government in the West Bank and the Hamas government in the Gaza Strip to stop intervening in the activities and affairs of associations beyond the limits of the Law of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations.
17. PCHR calls upon the Higher Judiciary Council to reunite the judiciary in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and to ensure its independence and impartiality.
18. PCHR calls upon the Palestinian President to refer without delay to the UN General Assembly to seek the referral of the Goldstone Report to the UN Security Council.
19. PCHR calls upon the Hamas government in Gaza and the Palestinian President to stop applying the death penalty, and to abstain from implementing death sentences that have been issued to date until such time as the death penalty is abolished in Palestinian law. In this context, PCHR emphasises that death sentences implemented in the Gaza Strip since 2007 constitute extra-judicial killings because they were implemented without the Palestinian President's ratification, as required under the Palestinian Basic Law and Penal Code.
20. PCHR calls upon the Fatah government in the West Bank and the Hamas government in the Gaza Strip to take strict measures against those who are involved in violations of public liberties.
21. PCHR calls upon the Fatah government in the West Bank and the Hamas government in the Gaza Strip to ensure the transparency of the PNA and allow access to information about public affairs, especially through the websites of ministries and various governmental bodies.

22. PCHR calls upon the Hamas government in Gaza to make serious efforts to solve the electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip and to make all information related to the crisis available to the public.
23. PCHR calls upon the Fatah government in the West Bank and the Hamas government in the Gaza Strip to implement the Palestinian Disability Law No. 4 of 1999, especially by providing adequate facilities to people with disabilities and guaranteeing their right to work.
24. PCHR calls upon the Fatah government in the West Bank and the Hamas government in the Gaza Strip to respect the right to freedom of movement, and emphasises that restrictions of this right are possible only by judicial order, according to the Palestinian Basic Law.







**Section 1:
Violations of
international
humanitarian
and human
rights law by
Israeli forces**



Wilful killings and other violations of the right to life and personal security



In 2012, Israeli forces committed more crimes and violations of the right to life and personal security against Palestinian civilians in the oPt. The most egregious crimes were carried out from 14 to 21 November, when Israeli forces launched a large-scale offensive on the Gaza Strip, an attack which Israeli forces referred to as 'Operation Pillar of Defence'. During the eight-day offensive, Israeli forces carried out thousands of airstrikes, attacks by gunboats, and artillery shelling.

Missiles with warheads weighing more than 1,000 kilograms were used in attacks on residential areas, flattening multi-storey homes and killing residents within the buildings. The extensive attacks targeted civilian facilities throughout the Gaza Strip, including civilian governmental institutions located in densely-populated areas. The impact of these attacks on property and victims, especially women and children, increased manifold, due to the targeting of civilian areas. Hundreds of airstrikes were launched at open spaces in residential areas to terrify civilians. In the last three days of the offensive, a marked increase in attacks on civilian places led to a corresponding increase in the proportion of civilians among the victims.

171 Palestinians were killed during the eight-day offensive. Of the victims, 102 were civilians, comprising 60% of the total number of victims. 35 of the civilian victims, or 34%, were children, while 14 of the civilian victims, of 14%, were women. The total number of people wounded was 648.³ Of the wounded, 625 were civilians, including 214 children and 93 women. Among the wounded civilians were 16 people with various disabilities. About a month before this large-scale offensive, there had been an Israeli escalation which killed 20 Palestinians including 10 civilians, three of whom were children.

During the eight-day offensive, more than 1.8 million Palestinians experienced fear and destruction, similar to that experience during 'Operation Cast Lead', the previous 23-day Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip, which took place from 27 December 2008 to 18 January 2009. No place in the Gaza Strip was safe. Every person throughout the Gaza Strip faced the threat of death or injury. Israeli forces increased the level of fear experienced by the people of the Gaza Strip by dropping thousands of flyers, ordering residents of certain parts of the northern Gaza Strip and Gaza City to leave those areas and move into the centre of the city. Hundreds of Palestinians families were forced to leave their houses against their will. Terror and fear spread among civilians. Thousands turned to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for help, moving into UNRWA schools for safety.

In 2012, residents of the Gaza Strip, in particular, were the victims of violations committed by Israeli forces. Many of the victims were civilians, and they included children, women, and the elderly. Throughout the year, there were regular instances of Israeli warplanes hovering over and targeting densely-populated areas and areas along the borders. Israeli forces also carried out extra-judicial killings by warplane. They targeted people accused of participating in "hostilities against Israel", including people who launched home-made rockets at Israeli areas adjacent to the border fence. In March 2012, following the extra-judicial killing of the General Leader of the Popular Resist-

3. According to PCHR's investigations, more than 1,250 Palestinians were injured during 'Operation Pillar of Defence'; out of those, 648 sustained moderate to severe injuries.



ance Committees in Gaza City, an ensuing escalation resulted in the deaths of 24 people. Crimes committed by Israeli forces from the beginning of 2012 until mid-November resulted in the killing of 80 Palestinians.

In the West Bank, Israeli forces and settlers committed more crimes and violations against Palestinian civilians, killing 12 people, the majority of whom were civilians. Two were killed in peaceful protests against the annexation wall and settlement activities in the West Bank. Two others were killed by Israeli settlers in Hebron.

Throughout the oPt in 2012, PCHR documented the killing by Israeli forces and Israeli settlers of a total of 265 Palestinians, including 141 civilians (53%). The majority of the victims were killed in the Gaza Strip (129 people or 91%), while 12 civilians were killed in the West Bank (9%). Of the civilians killed, 44 were children (31% of all civilians killed), including 42 in the Gaza Strip and three in the West Bank. In 2012, 14 women were killed in the oPt (10% of all civilians killed), all of whom were killed in the Gaza Strip. Another 1,207 people were wounded in oPt, the majority of whom were civilians, including 1,006 in the Gaza Strip (83%) and 201 in the West Bank (7%).

Taking into account the 2012 casualties, the number of people killed since 2000 by Israeli forces and Israeli settlers rose to 6,986, of which 5,314 were civilians, comprising 76% of the victims. Of the people killed, 3,544 were in the Gaza Strip and 1,770 in the West Bank. The civilian victims included 1,304 children (25%), of whom 958 were in the Gaza Strip and 346 in the West Bank. Among those killed were 300 women (6%), of whom 231 were in the Gaza Strip and 69 in the West Bank. Tens of thousands were wounded during the Second Intifada, the majority of whom were civilians; hundreds of the wounded were left with permanent disabilities.

Investigations conducted by PCHR, testimonies of eyewitnesses, and evidence have proven that Israeli forces used excessive and disproportionate force against Palestinian civilians, who are protected under international humanitarian law. Israeli forces did not take the necessary precautions to distinguish between civilian and military targets, nor did they respond proportionately when using military force. It is also clear that Israeli forces carried out acts of reprisal against Palestinian civilians, who were killed in circumstances that did not pose any threat to the lives of Israeli soldiers.



› Killings of Palestinian civilians

The circumstances surrounding attacks on civilians differ, but civilians were essentially targeted during the bombardment of houses, civilian facilities and open areas, all of which were located in densely-populated areas. As a result, many civilians were killed. Furthermore, Israeli forces have killed civilians near or within the Israeli-imposed 'buffer zone', along the eastern and northern borders of the Gaza Strip, and at sea, to which Palestinians are denied access. Israeli forces have also killed civilians when shelling the tunnels under the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt.

In the West Bank, crimes carried out by Israeli forces and Israeli settlers vary. Civilians were killed during incursions by Israeli forces into Palestinian communities. Other civilians were killed when Israeli forces used excessive force against peaceful demonstrators as they were protesting against the construction of the annexation wall in the West Bank. More civilians were killed when Israeli forces carried out extra-judicial killings of militants belonging to Palestinian armed groups. Additionally, a number of civilians were killed by Israeli settlers.

Bombardment of residential areas

There was a remarkable escalation in the targeting of houses and civilian facilities in the Gaza Strip in 2012. Extensive attacks during the Israeli offensive in November directly targeted and completely destroyed 55 houses. Dozens of other civilian buildings, including houses, government institutions, security services offices, civilian police stations, media offices, educational institutions, civilian facilities, charitable societies, mosques, and economic institutions, were also damaged. Hundreds of attacks targeted open spaces in residential areas. The bombardments, especially of houses in densely-populated areas, killed many civilians, including entire families. Bombardments by Israeli forces in 2012 killed 118 civilians, including 41 children and 14 women, and wounded 1,135 persons, including 327 children and 98 women.

The most serious violations were as follows:

- Killing of child in bombing of her home, southeast of Gaza City

On 14 November 2012, Israeli warplanes launched three missiles at a house belonging to Yusef Jalal Saleh Arafat (30) in Abu Daff farmland, southeast of Gaza City. His house was completely destroyed. The house of his brother, Saleh, 24, was also destroyed. The attack killed Ronan Yusef

Jalal Arafat (5). Her mother, Iman Jalal Arafat (35), sister, Maria (8), and brother, Jalal (7), were wounded.

- Killing of 10 members of the al-Dalou family in Gaza City

On 18 November 2012, Israeli warplanes launched a missile at a four-storey house belonging to Jamal Mahmoud Yassin al-Dalou (52). Three families, consisting of 11 people, lived in the house, which was located in al-Nasser Street opposite the Bank of Palestine in the north of Gaza City. The attack completely destroyed the house and killed 10 members of the family, including the mother and her four children:

1. Samah Abdul Hamid al-Dalou (27);
2. Jamal Mohammed Jamal al-Dalou (6);
3. His brother Yusef (4);
4. His sister Sara (7);
5. His brother Ibrahim (1);
6. Tahani Hassan al-Dalou (52);
7. Suhaila Mahmoud al-Dalou (73);
8. Ranin Jamal al-Dalou (22);
9. Mohammed al-Dalou (29); and
10. His sister Yara (17).

Due to the heavy bombardment, many neighbouring houses were destroyed. Two people were killed in the al-Mzannar family home, including an elderly woman:

1. Amina Matar al-Mzannar, 75, and
2. Abdullah Mohammed al-Mzannar, 19.

Nine civilians, including two children and three women, were wounded in the attack.

- **Killing of four civilians in bombing of Azzam family home in al-Zaitoun**

On 19 November 2012, Israeli warplanes launched a missile at a four-storey house belonging to the family of Mohammed Khalil Mohammed Azzam, 55, after an Israeli drone had launched three warning missiles. The house in the al-Zaitoun neighbourhood, east of Gaza City, was completely destroyed, but not before it had been evacuated. However, four neighbouring houses were also destroyed. The residents of those houses had not been able to evacuate in time. The bombardment killed four civilians, including one child. Three of those killed were from the same family:

1. Sahar Fadi Abu Zour (20);
2. Nisma Helmi Abu Zour (21);
3. Mohammed Iyad Abu Zour (5); and
4. 'Ahed Hamdi al-Qatati (34).

- **Killing of civilian and his two children in bombing of his home in Jabalia refugee camp**

On 19 November 2012, an Israeli warplane bombarded a house belonging to the family of Fo'ad Khalil Ibrahim Hejazi, which was located to the north of Abu Hussein Schools in Jabalia refugee camp. The house was completely destroyed, killing Fo'ad and his two children, Mohammed (4) and Suhaib (2). Seven people in the house were wounded, including four children and two women. Two of them were seriously wounded. Another 13 people in the area were wounded.

- **Killing of two brothers in bombing of their home in Rafah**

On 19 November 2012, an Israeli warplane launched a missile at a house belonging to Tawfiq Mamdouh al-Nasasra (50). The single-storey



Debris of the house of the al-Dalu family which was bombarded by Israeli warplanes in Gaza City.

house, roofed with tin plates, was inhabited by 11 family members and located in al-Nasser village, north of Rafah. The missile destroyed the house, leaving a big crater and throwing its inhabitants some distance from the site. Two brothers were killed - Ahmed Tawfiq al-Nasasra (17) and his brother Mohammed (19). Eight members of the family suffered moderate to serious wounds, including three women and five children.

Killings in the 'buffer zone' in the Gaza Strip

The 'buffer zone' is a closed military area within Palestinian territory which is located along the northern and eastern borders of the Gaza Strip, and at sea. What Israel calls the 'buffer zone' is not precisely demarcated, but Israeli forces impose restrictions on access to these areas, which they enforce through the use of live fire. At sea, Israeli forces prevent Palestinian fishermen from fishing beyond three nautical miles offshore.⁴

In 2012, the killing of civilians in the 'buffer zone' continued. Israeli forces killed 17 people, six of whom were civilians, including two children. Another 99 civilians were wounded. Palestinians were killed in various situations, including the bombardment of houses during periods of complete calm, and incidents of firing at civilians by Israeli snipers stationed in observation towers, even if the targeted civilians were further than 300 metres away from the border. In particular, Israeli snipers targeted workers who collect scraps of construction materials from the border areas, especially in the area near Beit Hanoun crossing. In some instances, Israeli forces have fired at Palestinian civilians who were more than 1,000 metres away from the border.

The most serious Israeli attacks in the 'buffer zone' were as follows:

- On 19 June 2012, Israeli forces stationed along the border fence, in the area east of al-Musaddar village in the east of Deir al-Balah, central Gaza Strip, fired artillery shells at three boys who were attempting to cross the border into Israel to look for employment. Two of the boys were killed and the third was wounded. The boys who were killed were:
 1. Mohammed Bassam Shokri Abu Me'leq (17) from al-Mussadar village. He was found with his head mutilated and shrapnel embedded throughout his body; and
 2. Yusef Saber Musallam al-Telbanim (19) from al-Maghazi, whose right leg was blown off and who had shrapnel embedded throughout his body.
- On 4 November 2012, Israeli forces along the border fence, in the area east of Wadi Gaza, opened fire at a Palestinian civilian and killed him. Residents in the area heard the gun shots and informed the International Committee of Red Crescent (ICRC). Two hours later, Israeli forces allowed the ICRC's ambulance to enter the area and collect the body of the dead man. According to the testimony of the ambulance officer, the body of a young man in civilian clothes was found 10 metres away from the border fence. His body was transported to al-Aqsa Martyrs' Hospital in Deir al-Balah, where he was identified as Ahmed Tawfiq Awad al-Nabahin (23) from Wadi Gaza village. Doctors said that the dead

4. Following the latest Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip (14 to 21 November 2012), the ceasefire agreement concluded between Palestinian armed groups and Israel stated that Palestinian fishermen are allowed to sail up to 6 nautical miles offshore.

man had bullet wounds in the chest, back, left leg and left hand. Al-Nabahin's relatives said that he suffered from epileptic seizures. He had gone to the border fence several times before, and had been arrested by Israeli forces two months previously and been held for a few days. They released him after they realised that he was sick.

Investigations conducted by PCHR confirmed that Israeli forces had used excessive force against the deceased, and had not attempted to arrest him, even though he was in civilian clothes and unarmed.

- Israeli naval forces continued their attacks on Palestinian fishermen and fishing boats in 2012. Their actions included the killing and wounding of fishermen, the confiscation of fishing boats, and harassment aimed at forcing the fishermen sail back to shore. PCHR documented dozens of attacks on fishermen and fishing boats in 2012, the most serious of which was the killing of a fisherman by firing at him while he a few metres offshore. Dozens of other fishermen were wounded in 2012.
- On 28 September 2012, Israeli naval forces killed the fisherman, Fahmi Saleh Fahmi Abu Ryash, and wounded his brother while both of them were fishing a few metres off the shore of the northern Gaza Strip. The two brothers were with other fishermen. They were trying to pull a fishing net out of the water.

According to investigations conducted by PCHR, an Israeli infantry unit had moved into the northwest of Beit Lahia, which is in the north of the Gaza Strip. The unit then opened fire at a group of fishermen, who were fishing a few metres offshore. The fishermen fled, except for Abu Ryash and his brother, who were approximately 15 metres away from the border fence and five metres into the sea. Fishermen, who were in the area, said that Israeli forces had fired directly at the two brothers, wounding them. The two fishermen are:

1. Fahmi Saleh Fahmi Abu Ryash (22), whose thigh and abdomen were wounded by bullets; and
2. His brother, Yusef (19), whose left hand was wounded by bullet shrapnel.

The other fishermen managed to transfer the two wounded brothers to a Civil Defence ambulance approximately 350 metres away from the scene. The brothers were then transferred to Kamal Odwan Hospital in Beit Lahia, where they received medical treatment. Later that day, Fahmi Saleh Fahmi Abu Ryash died of his injuries.

Shooting at participants in peaceful demonstrations

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to use excessive force against peaceful demonstrations organised by Palestinian civilians in protest against settlement activities and the construction of the annexation wall in the West Bank. Peaceful protests have been held weekly in the villages of Bil'in, Ni'lin and Nabi Saleh, all near Ramallah, al-Ma'sara village near Bethlehem, and Beit Ummar town near Hebron. Israeli forces fired live and rubber-coated metal bullets, tear gas canisters and sound bombs at the demonstrators. Similarly, demonstrations organised in the border area of the Gaza Strip against the imposition of the 'buffer zone' were

▼ A dog bites a Palestinian civilian during a peaceful protest in Kufor Qaddoum village near Nablus, 16 March 2012



subjected to the excessive use of force by Israeli forces. Five people were killed and wounded hundreds in shooting by Israel forces in 2012.

- On 24 February 2012, Israeli forces opened fire at Tal'at Abdul Rahman Diab Ramia (24) and killed him while he was participating in a peaceful protest. The demonstration was being held at the north-eastern entrance of al-Ram village, north of Jerusalem, to protest against Israeli attempts to storm the al-Aqsa mosque. The Israeli soldiers chased after and opened fire at some young men who had set fire to tyres placed by the fence of an Israeli military camp. Ramia was wounded as a result. Ramia was transferred to hospital, where he was pronounced dead. Eyewitnesses told a PCHR fieldworker that Ramia was shot by an Israeli officer, who had put on a black bullet-proof vest, which signalled the intent to kill. The Israeli officer was 50 metres away from Ramia.
- On 5 March 2012, Mohammed Taisir Abu Awwad (19) was killed when Israeli forces opened fire at a peaceful protest, which was organised by students of Prince Hassan School in Beer Zeit village near Attara checkpoint, north of Ramallah. The protest had been organised to mark the second anniversary of the deaths of six people in a car accident between a Palestinian vehicle and an Israeli jeep in Ramallah. Clashes erupted between the students and the Israeli soldiers at the checkpoint. The Israeli soldiers fired tear gas canisters and sound bombs at the students. Mohammed Taisir was hit in the head by a gas canister and fell to the ground. He was transferred to the Palestine Medical Complex in Ramallah, where he was pronounced dead. Eyewitnesses told a PCHR fieldworker that an Israeli soldier, who was less than 20 metres away from Mohammed Taisir, fired the canister at the student. They said that Mohammed Taisir had not posed any threat to the life of the Israeli soldier.
- After Friday prayer on 30 March 2012, hundreds of protestors gathered near the checkpoint west of Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip, 1,700 metres away from Beit Hanoun ('Erez') crossing, to commemorate Land Day. Some people approached the cement wall while others walked to the area between the crossing and Palestinian Liaison Office 55. Another group of people was in the industrial zone. Israeli forces sporadically opened fire and shot tear gas canisters at the protestors, killing Mahmoud Mohammed Zaqout (19) from Beit Lahia housing project with a bullet to his

neck. In addition, 33 other people, including 15 children, were wounded. Two people sustained serious injuries.



^ Clashes between Palestinian civilians and Israeli forces in Nabi Saleh village near Ramallah

- During the Israeli offensive in November, Palestinians held demonstrations throughout the West Bank to protest against the killing of Palestinians and the destruction of their property in the Gaza Strip. Israeli forces attacked participants in these demonstrations with excessive force, killing two civilians and wounding 115 others, including 28 children, an elderly woman, and a paramedic.
- On 17 November 2012, Israeli forces opened fire on a peaceful protest in Nabi Saleh village, west of Ramallah, during which Palestinian protestors threw stones. As a result, participant Roshdi Mahmoud Hassan al-Tamimi (28) was wounded by a bullet to the right thigh. He was transferred to the Palestine Medical Complex in Ramallah, where his wounds were described as serious. Al-Tamimi underwent surgery because the bullet had settled in his abdomen and damaged the viscera. On 19 November 2012, al-Tamimi underwent another surgery as he was suffering from internal haemorrhaging due to the serious injuries to his intestines. He succumbed to his injuries during the operation and was pronounced dead.

- On 19 November 2012, dozens of Palestinian youths gathered in the Beer al-Mahjar area, north-west of Hebron, and threw stones at Israeli forces stationed there. Israeli forces immediately opened fire. Ahmed Mohammed Jawad al-Falah (22) was hit by four bullets to the head, chest, heart, and leg.

He had been close to the clash that had erupted when he was hit. Eyewitnesses told a PCHR field-worker that Israeli forces let al-Falah bleed for 15 minutes before they allowed the Palestinian Red Crescent Society ambulance take him to a hospital, where he received treatment.

Killings by Israeli Settlers

In 2012, Israeli settlers continued to commit crimes against Palestinian civilians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Israeli settlers killed two Palestinian civilians in Hebron. The number of Palestinian civilians killed by Israeli settlers since the beginning of the Second Intifada in September 2000 has risen to 63, including 14 children and one woman.

- On 17 June 2012, an Israeli settler fired at three Palestinian civilians at the al-Simia intersection in al-Samou' village, south of Hebron. Two of the Palestinian civilians were killed and the third sustained serious injuries. Paramedics tried to reach the victims, but Israeli forces denied them access, claiming that there were no wounded persons and that the area was a closed military area. At approximately 11:00, a Palestinian civilian vehicle managed to take one of the wounded civilians to Abu al-Hassan al-Qasem Hospital in Yatta, south of Hebron, where he was pronounced dead. Medical personnel at the hospital said that the body had

six bullets in the left jaw, ear, head, chest, neck, and left thigh. The victim was identified as Na'im Salama Mohammed al-Najjar (34) from Ethna village, south of Hebron. At approximately 11:30, another civilian vehicle arrived at the hospital with another of the injured civilians. The victim was dead, as a bullet to his right shoulder had settled in his heart. The victim was identified as Anwar Khalil Abed Rabbu (27) from Yatta.

The settler, who had been driving a truck when the incident occurred, said that the three Palestinians had attacked him with an iron stick and he had fired at them in response. The Israeli police briefly questioned the truck driver before he was taken to Soroka Hospital in Beersheba to receive medical treatment for a minor injury. The settler claimed that, while he was driving his truck near al-Simia village, he was attacked by three Palestinian persons, and opened fire at them in response. As a result, two were killed and the third was wounded.

Killing and wounding of journalists

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to commit crimes against journalists, although the latter are protected under international humanitarian law. Israeli forces killed four Palestinian journalists who were providing media coverage of the Israeli offensive. The number of Palestinian journalists killed by Israeli forces since the beginning of the Second Intifada has risen to 13, including two international journalists who were killed while covering the Israeli offensive in November 2012. Dozens of journalists have been wounded while carrying out media work in the oPt. Media offices and crews were directly attacked during the Israeli offensive in November 2012. Several journalists were injured during the bombardment of media offices and other facilities in the Gaza Strip; one journalist lost his leg.

On 19 November 2012, journalists Hossam Mohamed Abdul Rahman Salama (30) and Mahmoud Ali Ahmed al-Koumi (29), who worked for al-Aqsa Satellite Channel, were killed when an Israeli warplane attacked their car near the al-Wehda building in central Gaza City.

- On 19 November 2012, journalist Ramez Najib Harb (34), who worked for the military media office of the al-Quds Brigades (the military wing of the Islamic Jihad Movement), was killed when an Israeli warplane attacked the al-Shorouq media building

in the centre of Gaza City. At the time of the attack, Harb, who lived in the al-Shuja'iya neighbourhood in Gaza City, was visiting the media office of the Islamic Jihad Movement.

- On 20 November 2012, Mohammed Abed Rabbu Bader (24), who lived in Deir al-Balah and worked for the military media office of al-Quds Brigades (the military wing of the Islamic Jihad Movement), was killed when an Israeli warplane attacked him near the Palestine Technical College in Deir al-Balah.

> The car in which two cameramen of al-Aqsa Satellite Channel were traveling, who were targeted and killed by Israeli warplanes



Killing of children

In 2012, Israeli forces killed 44 Palestinian children in total, two of whom were in the West Bank and 42 in the Gaza Strip. The majority of the children were killed during the Israeli offensive in November. They were killed under different circumstances, most seriously, the bombardment of houses and civilian facilities. In 2012, the total number of children killed in the oPt since September 2000 rose to 1,304, 346 in the West Bank and 958 in the Gaza Strip. During the same period, a total of 7,399 children have been wounded, 6,523 in the Gaza Strip and 876 in the West Bank. Hundreds of the wounded children have subsequently been left with permanent disabilities.

The following section lists the most serious attacks committed by Israeli forces against children in 2012:

- On 6 March 2012, two Palestinian children were killed and three others wounded when explosive material belonging to the Israeli forces exploded in the Wad al-Reem area in the east of Sa'ir village, northeast of Hebron. A group of boys were near their homes in a yard used to store scrap metal when a suspicious object exploded. Two children were killed immediately, Hamza Mohammed Zayed Jaradat (12) and Zayed Jom'a Zayed Jaradat (12). Three of their relatives suffered shrapnel wounds throughout their bodies. Their wounds ranged from moderate to severe. Zayed's brother, Nazir Jom'a Zayed Jaradat (16) sustained shrapnel wounds in the back of his head, shoulder, and right thigh. Palestinian police investigated the incident and found that the explosion had resulted from a mortar left behind by Israeli forces. As a result, Israeli forces moved into the area and inspected the scene.
- On 19 June 2012, Israeli forces stationed along the border fence in the east of al-Mussadar village, east of Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip, opened fire at three Palestinian boys, who were attempting to cross the border into Israel to seek employment. Two of the boys were killed, including Mohammed Bassam Shokri Abu M'eileq (17) from al-Mussadar village. The third boy was wounded and transferred to al-Aqsa Martyr Hospital in Deir al-Balah.
- On 20 June 2012, an Israeli warplane launched a missile at a family who were relaxing on their farmland behind the University College in Tal al-Hawa, in the south of Gaza City. The missile killed Ma'moun Mohammed Zohdi al-Dam (13) from al-Sha'af neighbourhood. Ma'moun was playing football on the farmland, which belongs to his mother, Amna Hassouna (50). Ma'moun's father, Mohammed Zohdi Mahmoud Abed al-Nabi al-Dam (67), sustained shrapnel wounds in his head and neck. Three children, who were on the neighbouring farmland belonging to Talal al-Dahshan, were also wounded.
- On 10 November 2012, Israeli forces positioned along the border fence in the east of Gaza City fired an artillery shell at a group of boys. The boys were playing football in Jabal al-Mentar, east of al-Shuja'iya neighbourhood in Gaza City, and were about 1,500 metres away from the fence. The attack instantly killed two children from the Harara family:
 1. Mohammed Osama Hassan Harara (16); and
 2. Ahmed Mostafa Khaled Harara (17).

Following the explosion, a number of Palestinian civilians, who were expressing their condolences at a wake at the Harara family home, hurried out to see what happened. Israeli forces fired three more shells at the group, killing an additional two civilians:

 1. Ahmed Kamel al-Dardasawi (18); and
 2. Matar Imad Abdul Rahman Abu al-Atta (19).

In total, 38 civilians were wounded, 10 of whom sustained serious injuries, and nine of whom were children.
- On 18 November 2012, Israeli warplanes bombarded the al-Dalou family home in Gaza City, killing five children.
- On 18 November 2012, Tasnim Zuhair al-Nahhal (10) was killed while standing in front of her home in al-Shati' refugee camp. She was killed during an attack by Israeli forces, which was targeting Ahmed Isam Sarhan al-Nahhal (25) of the al-Qassam Brigades as he sat in a tent near the Baghdad mosque in al-Shati' refugee camp. The targeted person was killed, along with five passers-by.
- On 20 November 2012, Mahmoud Khalil al-Arja (16) and Ibrahim Ahmed Hamad (16) were killed by an Israeli airstrike while they were near their homes in the al-Nahda neighbourhood in al-Shoka village, east of Rafah. They were 1,000 metres away from the border fence.

Killing of women

During the Israeli offensive in November 2012, Israeli forces killed 14 women in the Gaza Strip. At least 97 women were wounded. The majority of the women were killed in or around their homes, which were attacked by Israeli warplanes. The total number of women killed by Israeli forces since September 2000 has risen to 302, 69 in the West Bank and 233 in the Gaza Strip. Approximately 1,539 women have been wounded since the Second Intifada, 80 in the West Bank and 1,459 in the Gaza Strip.

- On 12 March 2012, Israeli warplanes attacked Mohammed Mostafa al-Hsoumi (65) and his daughter Fayza (30) while they were on their farmland in the vicinity of Tal al-Za'tar school in Beit Lahia, in the north of the Gaza Strip. Al-Hsoumi was blown to pieces by the bombardment, while his daughter died of her injuries upon arrival at Kamal Odwan Hospital in Beit Lahia.
- On 17 November 2012, Israeli warplanes launched a missile at a house on al-Man-soura Street in the al-Shuja'iya neighbourhood, in the east of Gaza City. An elderly woman, who was feeding poultry in the backyard of the house, Sa'diya Mohammed al-Aydi Deeb (62), was killed.
- On 17 November 2012, Israeli warplanes launched a missile at al-Tuffah police station. The police station and a neighbouring house belonging to the Abdul 'Al family were destroyed, and Nawal Abdul 'Al (53) was killed in her home.
- On 18 November 2012, 12 people, including five women, were killed during the Israeli bombardment of the al-Dalou family's three-storey house, which collapsed as a result of the attack. The women who were killed were:
 1. Suhaila Mahmoud al-Dalou (73);
 2. Samah Abdul Hamid al-Dalou (27);
 3. Tahani Hassan al-Dalou (52);
 4. Amina Mattar al-Mzannar (75); and
 5. Ranin Jamal al-Dalou (22).
- On the same day, four civilians, including two women from the Abu Zour family, were killed in an Israeli forces attack on the neighbouring house, which belonged to the Azzam family. The women killed were Sahar Fadi Abu Zour (20) and Nesma Helmi Abu Zour (21).

› Ongoing policy of closure, violations of the right to freedom of movement

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to impose a tight closure on the oPt, especially on the Gaza Strip. This was the sixth consecutive year that Israeli forces have imposed a policy of closure on the Gaza Strip, cutting the area off from the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

Several months have passed since Israeli forces announced an alleged easing of the closure on the Gaza Strip and the increased facilitation of the entry of goods and commodities, yet the civilian people in the Gaza Strip have not experienced any significant improvements. Israeli forces have continued to impose a ban on strategic goods, especially construction materials and raw materials needed for production. In addition, Israeli forces have continued to impose a ban on agricultural and industrial exports from the Gaza Strip. It is evident that the announcement of a so-called easing of measures by Israeli forces with regard to the entry of goods into the Gaza Strip is no more than an attempt to delude the international community into believing that restrictions have been eased.

The ceasefire agreement, which was concluded following the latest Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip, came into effect on the evening of 21 November 2012. Since the implementation of the agreement, data collected by PCHR demonstrates that the Israeli-imposed closure of the Gaza Strip has continued at the same rate as before the offensive, including all movement at the crossing points. Statistics also show that the amount and nature of goods allowed to enter the Gaza Strip has not changed. The exception was the slight easing of the ban on exports from the Gaza Strip, but this was limited to a very small amount of agricultural products.

Throughout 2012, PCHR has expressed concerns, via its publications (such as the monthly 'State of the Border Crossings' updates), regarding the institutionalisation of the closure of the Gaza Strip. PCHR is concerned that inadvertent legitimisation by the international community may push the Gaza Strip into

another stage of closure that would become internationally accepted. Palestinians in the Gaza Strip may not suffer from the lack of certain goods, yet their economic dependency and social, cultural, and academic isolation continue.

PCHR calls for a fundamental change in Israeli policies, which are currently causing the continued deterioration of humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip. These policies have seriously impacted the food security of the civilian people, especially children. Israel's longstanding policies and practices have drastically affected the economic and social rights of the civilian population in the Gaza Strip, undermining any real opportunities for the recovery of the Gaza Strip's economy. These systematic policies have consistently violated the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to adequate housing, education, and social security, and the right to the highest attainable standard of mental and physical health. PCHR asserts that Israel's alleged measures to ease the closure do not deal with the essence of the crisis. PCHR stresses that the crisis can be ended only with the immediate lifting of the closure, the removal of the restrictions on movement to and from the Gaza Strip, and the reversal of the ban on exports.

The international community, especially the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, have failed to take serious steps to ensure that Israeli forces fulfil their obligations under the Convention to respect human rights in the oPt, including by ending the closure and putting an end to the policy of collective punishment, which has led to serious violations of the economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights of the Palestinian people.

Commercial border crossings: Demolition of main commercial border crossing at al-Mentar

In 2012, Israeli forces designated Karm Abu Salem crossing, to the east of the Gaza Strip, as the territory's sole commercial crossing even though it is not equipped for commercial purposes.

In early 2012, Israeli forces began to destroy the facilities at al-Mentar crossing, which used to be the main commercial crossing of the Gaza Strip. Before it was closed on 2 March 2011, al-Mentar crossing had an operational capacity that allowed it to handle imports which met 75% of the Gaza Strip's needs. The border crossings agreement, which was signed in November 2005, states that the operational capacity of the al-Mentar crossing is equipped for the daily export of 400 truckloads of goods, including vegetables and fruits, as well as industrial and commercial products, and the daily import of 600 truckloads of goods. PCHR statistics show that, even before Israeli forces imposed the current tightened closure on the Gaza Strip, the operational capacity of al-Mentar crossing had not reached the capacity provided for in the agreement due to restrictions imposed by Israel. Al-Mentar commercial crossing is important because it is located within the main industrial zone of the Gaza Strip, which was heavily damaged during 'Operation Cast Lead'.

The closing of al-Mentar crossing, which resulted in sole dependence on Karm Abu Salem crossing, has exacerbated the hardship faced by the industrial, commercial, and agricultural sectors of the Gaza Strip. The reduction in the number of crossings has created additional obstacles to the movement of goods, which is severely restricted by Israeli forces. It has increased the cost of transportation which, in turn, affects the price of imports and results in additional financial burdens on the limited number of agricultural exporters from Gaza who are permitted by Israeli forces to export goods.

Due to the fees imposed by Israeli forces on goods entering the Gaza Strip, the cost of transporting a container from Ashdod seaport to Gaza exceeds that of transporting the same container from China to Ashdod seaport. Transporting a container 9,000 kilometres from China to Ashdod seaport costs 6,600 NIS, while transporting it 70 kilometres from Ashdod seaport to Gaza costs 10,400 NIS.

Karm Abu Salem crossing does not have adequate operational capacity for commercial purposes, but it has become, by default, the major crossing into and out of the Gaza Strip. Its low operational capacity means

the daily required imports into the Gaza Strip, about 570 truckloads before the closure was tightened, cannot be met. In 2012, the daily truckloads of imports allowed into the Gaza Strip decreased to 161. The reduction in imports has increased the suffering of the civilian population of the Gaza Strip. Israeli forces also impose a ban on exports from the Gaza Strip, except for very limited amounts of strawberries, tomatoes, and flowers, as well as very limited amounts of cloth, biscuits, and furniture.

It is worth noting that Israeli forces have taken a series of measures over the last few years to tighten the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip, and to make Karm Abu Salem the sole commercial crossing for the Gaza Strip. On 4 January 2010, Israeli forces declared the closure of Nahal Oz crossing, east of Gaza City, which was designed for the import of fuel into the Gaza Strip. Fuel imports were transferred to Karm Abu Salem crossing, which is not equipped to handle the import of fuels at a level sufficient to meet the needs of Gaza's population, especially cooking gas. This has led to a series of cooking gas crises over the last two years, the latest of which started in November 2012 and is ongoing. On 15 June 2007, Israeli forces closed Sofa crossing, which was designed for the import of construction materials. Israeli forces had allowed the entry of some humanitarian aid through Sofa crossing up until November 2008, after which the entry of humanitarian aid was diverted to Karm Abu Salem crossing.

Rising unemployment and poverty rates

According to an estimate by the Ministry of Labour, in the third quarter of 2012, the unemployment rate in the Gaza Strip rose to 33%. The unemployment rate increased significantly among male youths, peaking at 54.7%; among female youths, the unemployment rate rose to 78.1%. The 2012 Trade and Development Report, issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), found that the prospect of economic growth in the oPt are very limited. The report outlined a number of reasons for this situation, including restrictions on movement, the decrease in the flow of humanitarian aid, the incompetence of the private sector, and the budget crisis. The report also stated that the average salary in the Gaza Strip in 2012 had decreased by 6% as compared to 2010, and that the unemployment rate had increased, leading to a rise in the poverty rate. The report warned of the consequences of the high unemployment rate in the area, where more than 40% of the population live below the poverty line and more than 80% of the families depend entirely on humanitarian aid.

The report also mentioned that the Palestinian economy remains unable to utilise 40% of its territory and 82% of its groundwater. It also criticised the disastrous impacts of the Israeli occupation on the Palestinian agricultural sector, pointing out that it has been difficult to reap any benefits from half of the arable lands in the Gaza Strip and 85% of its groundwater. The report expressed concern about Palestinian commercial and economic dependency on Israel, noting that 80% of all Palestinian trade is with Israel, and that the trade deficit with Israel comprised 84% of the total Palestinian trade deficit and 31% of its overall national production.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) consid-

ered the unemployment rate in the Gaza Strip, which is the highest regionally, to be very disturbing. A 2012 ILO report stated that the unemployment rate in the Gaza Strip is three times higher than the regional average. It called for the adoption of swift measures to solve the problem. The ILO pointed out that the situation faced by workers in the Gaza Strip is considered the worst in the region and the world. It affirmed that it is a right for the growing young population in Gaza to have better job opportunities, noting that, at a minimum, they need proper jobs, social security, and respect for their basic rights. The ILO also called for close attention to be paid to youths by providing them with professional training and development, and creating job opportunities.

Restrictions on the freedom of movement of the Gaza Strip population

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to prevent Palestinian civilians, including patients seeking medical treatment and individuals with emergency humanitarian needs, from entering Israel. Over the course of the year, Israeli forces imposed additional restrictions on movement within the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, utilising military checkpoints and barriers to turn the Palestinian communities into isolated Bantustans.

Israeli forces also imposed further restrictions on travelling through al-Karama International Crossing Point (also known as 'Allenby' or King Hussein Bridge) on the Jordanian border. They reduced the operation hours of the crossing point, and practiced inhuman and degrading treatment against Palestinian civilians.

Beit Hanoun: the sole crossing to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and/or Israel

Palestinians in the Gaza Strip continue to be denied the right to freedom of movement. They suffer greatly from the restrictions imposed on their passage through Beit Hanoun ('Erez') crossing. In 2012, Israeli forces continued to close Beit Hanoun crossing to Palestinian civilians, thus preventing people in Gaza from accessing holy sites in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, studying in universities in the West Bank, and visiting their families and relatives in the West Bank, and vice versa. Since the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip on 15 June 2007, only a small number of medical patients have been permitted to travel to the West Bank and Israel for medical treatment. International journalists, diplomats, and employees of international organisations wanting to pass through Beit Hanoun crossing often have to undergo thorough searches, while travellers face strict travel restrictions and complicated and humiliating procedures.

Movement of patients seeking treatment in hospitals in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and/or Israel

In 2012, there was a sharp decline in the number of patients from the Gaza Strip who were allowed to travel via Beit Hanoun crossing. The number of patients allowed to travel via Beit Hanoun crossing in 2012 was 8,596, or an average of 23 patients daily, which was equivalent to 46% of the average number of patients allowed to cross Beit Hanoun crossing in the first half of 2006. According to sources at the Ministry of Health in the Gaza Strip, there was a total of 9,330 applications by patients seeking to travel to hospitals in Israel and/or the West Bank for treatment in 2012. Israeli authorities approved 8,596 applications and rejected 734 applications. Of the rejected applications, 84 patients were rejected for security reasons, 94 were asked to choose a different travel companion, 84 had to re-schedule, and 472 others faced delays, like having to wait for an answer following their security interviews, being told that their applications were under consideration, and being told to go for security interviews.

Family visits for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails

On 14 May 2012, the Israeli Prison Service concluded a deal with Palestinian prisoners to end their 30-day mass hunger strike, agreed to allow family visits for the approximately 440 prisoners from Gaza, just as prisoners from the West Bank are each entitled to two visits a month for 45 minutes per visit. However, checks by PCHR found that Israel did not abide by the agreement. Instead, Israel organised limited family visits for prisoners from the Gaza Strip. Groups of 23 family members were allowed to visit at a time, the children of prisoners were not permitted to visit, and family members were barred from giving personal items to prisoners. More than once, Israeli forces suspended the family visits programme without providing any explanation.

In 2012, 869 families were allowed to visit their relatives in Israeli prisons.⁵ The visiting families were subjected to arbitrary procedures, humiliating and unethical search practices, and other obstacles. They also endured constant threats to cancel their future visitation rights if they did not adhere to orders by Israeli forces.

It should be mentioned that Israeli forces had banned family visitation for prisoners from Gaza since 6 June 2007. This is in violation of international humanitarian law, in particular Article 116 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which is related to the protection of civilians in times of war. Article 116 states: "Every internee shall be allowed to receive visitors, especially near relatives, at regular intervals and as frequently as possible. As far as is possible, internees shall be permitted to visit their homes in urgent cases, particularly in cases of death or serious illness of relatives."

5. 220 persons from the Gaza Strip were allowed to visit their family members in Israeli jails in July 2012. In August 2012, the number decreased to 120. In September, it was 135. In October 2012, 118 persons were allowed to visit while, in November 2012, the number dropped to 35 persons.

6. On 5 August 2012, the Egyptian authorities closed the crossing for 8 days following the death of 8 Egyptian soldiers in an attack. The crossing was opened temporarily on 10 August 2012 for Palestinians wishing to return to the Gaza Strip, humanitarian cases, and persons wishing to travel on pilgrimage. On 26 August 2012, the Egyptian authorities re-opened the crossing, in both directions, under the previous working hours.

Movement of traders from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and/or Israel

In 2012, Israeli forces reduced the number of traders permitted to travel via Beit Hanoun crossing to 68 daily. This is dramatically less than the 150 traders who were permitted to travel daily via the crossing prior to June 2007.

Rafah International Crossing Point

The Egyptian authorities have recently made changes at Rafah International Crossing Point, which eased restrictions on people from the Gaza Strip who wish to travel. For many from Gaza, Rafah crossing is the sole crossing point through which they can travel. In 2012, the Egyptian authorities reverted to the procedures regulating the entry of Palestinians to Egypt which had been in effect prior to 2007. Under these procedures, the following categories are exempted from ap-

plying for entry visas:

- All Palestinian women;
- Male Palestinians aged below 18 and above 40;
- Patients who have medical transfers;
- Children accompanying their parents, who are already exempted from applying for visas; and
- Palestinian families passing via Egyptian territory to travel to and from the Gaza Strip, provided that they have their Palestinian passports, identity cards, and visas to enter the country of destination.

PCHR observed that the travel of hundreds of people through Rafah crossing was delayed during the months of June, July, August, and September 2012, although they fell under the above categories.⁶ This was due to the limited number of people permitted

to travel via the crossing point daily. The Palestinian authorities had hoped to ease congestion at the crossing point, as summer vacations over the past five years have seen an increase in the number of people wishing to travel. Consequently, Palestinians wishing to travel were obliged to register at the Ministry of In-

terior before travelling.

In various press releases and publications, PCHR expressed its hope that additional measures would be taken in order to allow Palestinian males aged between 18 and 39 to travel freely.

Restrictions on freedom of movement in the West Bank

In the West Bank, Israeli forces have continued to restrict the movement of civilians between cities, as well as at international crossing points. Israel has continued its practice of closing off occupied East Jerusalem to Palestinian civilians from elsewhere in the oPt; entry to East Jerusalem is banned for Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As a result, Palestinians have been denied access to advanced medical care, their right to meet with family members, and access to education, work, and religious sites in East Jerusalem, in particular, the al-Aqsa Mosque.

In 2012, Israeli forces and Civil Administration eased the restrictions imposed on freedom of movement throughout the West Bank; however, in reality this did little to change the situation on the ground. In January, a 100-metre section of road was opened for use by Palestinians; this section connects Palestinian villages in the Ramallah area to areas west and east of Bypass Road 60. In March, Israeli forces opened the gate separating Mount Gerizim and Nablus. In the same month, they opened the Shoufa – Tulkarm road and the main entrance of Beit Dajan village, east of Nablus (Road 557). However, two other sections of the road are still closed to Palestinians. These are the roads from the entrance of Beit Dajan to ‘Elon Moreh’ settlement, and from ‘Ouerta checkpoint to Beit Fourik checkpoint. On 30 April 2012, Israeli forces opened the northern section of Road 466 to Palestinians. This section of road is approximately two kilometres long and is part of the old Nablus road which links Jalazoun refugee camp to Ramallah and al-Bireh. In April, the Ariel – Salfit road was partially opened and, in June, Israeli forces removed concrete blocks that were installed in northern Jericho at the beginning of the Second Intifada. On 3 October 2012, Israeli forces cancelled restrictions imposed on freedom of movement between the Jordan Valley and the rest of the West Bank.

However, Israel continues to treat freedom of movement for the Palestinian people as a privilege rather than a right. While many checkpoints are now open for free passage, the infrastructure of many checkpoints

has been left in place, allowing for their reactivation on short notice. In addition to these checkpoints, which are intermittently manned, 16 permanently manned checkpoints remain in place throughout the West Bank, in addition to 16 checkpoints which restrict the movement of Palestinians in the centre of Hebron. Hundreds of physical obstacles remain, and Israeli forces also periodically erect ‘flying checkpoints’ at random locations. The random activation of checkpoints across the West Bank makes it impossible for Palestinians wishing to travel between towns and villages to predict where they may come across a checkpoint and how long a journey may take.

In addition, Israel denies access to specific areas of the West Bank, such as East Jerusalem and the land west of the annexation wall, for all Palestinians, except those who hold special permits, and severely restricts their access to other areas, such as the centre of Hebron.⁷ Israeli forces have continued to impose a tightened closure on occupied East Jerusalem, cutting it off completely from the West Bank, and bar-

7. Source: http://www.btselem.org/freedom_of_movement/20121217_restrictions_lifted

ring entry to the city for Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. By denying access to East Jerusalem, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have been denied access to religious sites, thousands of patients have been denied access to medical treatment, students have been denied access to schools and universities, and thousands of workers have been deprived of employment opportunities. The continuing isolation of the city, along with the establishment of new checkpoints and the construction of new sections of the annexation wall around the city, is detrimental to the social fabric of the city. This is especially so for families living within East Jerusalem's municipal borders and its suburbs.

On 19 September 2012, Israeli forces closed Ras Khamis checkpoint, northeast of Jerusalem, and began building a new section of the annexation wall in its place. This action aims to increase the isolation of occupied East Jerusalem from the rest of Palestine, and to contribute to the creation of a Jewish majority in the city. The measure is also aimed at isolating the Ras Khamis neighbourhood from the rest of the city, forcing its population of an estimated 10,000 civilians who hold Jerusalemite identity cards to commute via Shu'fat crossing, which was transformed from a checkpoint to an international crossing on 12 December 2011. Since the removal of Ras Khamis checkpoint, the people of Ras Khamis have had to walk a distance of two kilometres to reach Shu'fat crossing, which was established with the purpose of separating areas of Shu'fat camp, Ras Khamis, and al-Salam suburb from the rest of occupied East Jerusalem. It is estimated that around 50,000 Jerusalemites live in the aforementioned areas. PCHR is concerned that the Israeli authorities will strip the inhabitants of those areas of their Jerusalemite identity cards and replace them with PNA identity cards.

Israeli forces continue to use checkpoints as border crossings with the purpose of isolating large areas in the West Bank, for example, by making travel from the Jordan Valley to the West Bank difficult. Israeli forces control the access of Palestinian civilians to the Jordan Valley through four checkpoints: Tayaseer; al-Hamra; Ma'ale Efraim; and al-'Ouja. Most Palestinians are denied access to the area unless they hold the required permits. At the end of 2012, Israeli forces allowed Palestinians who are not residents of the Jordan Valley to enter through al-Hamra checkpoint for the first time since the Second Intifada; however, Israeli forces remained in position, controlling the movement of Palestinian civilians and prohibiting them from sleeping in the area. Israeli forces often storm houses and agricultural lands in the area and expel Palestinian farmers who do not have permits to remain there. It is worth noting that the Jordan Valley is one of the most fertile areas in the West Bank. Israeli forces have established several settlements in the area and have confiscated large areas of agricultural land. They have also isolated thousands of dunums of land along the Jordan River, preventing the owners from accessing their lands. It is estimated that Israeli forces and settlers control over 75% of the total area of the Jordan Valley.

Israeli forces use checkpoints and border crossings in the West Bank in order to arrest Palestinians who are accused of committing crimes. Civilians are often subjected to degrading and inhuman treatment at these checkpoints, such as physical assaults or humiliation. In 2012, according to PCHR's documentation, Israeli forces arrested at least 143 Palestinian civilians at various checkpoints in the West Bank, including 24 children, four women and a member of the PLC.

At the al-Karama ('Allenby') International Crossing Point on the Jordanian border with the West Bank, Israeli forces subject Palestinian civilians to humiliation and cruel interrogation. Israeli forces prohibit thousands of Palestinians from travelling, and those who attempt to cross the border are usually subjected to body searches and humiliation. Palestinians who are denied travel include patients, women, journalists, political



activists, students, members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), and employees of international organisations.

The construction of the annexation wall has resulted in new restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestinians who live near the route of the wall. These new restrictions come on top of the widespread restrictions that have been in place since the outbreak of the Second Intifada in September 2000. Farming is a primary source of income in the Palestinian communities located along the route of the wall. However, thousands of Palestinians have experienced difficulties accessing their fields and marketing their produce in other areas of the West Bank.

According to testimonies provided by a number of farmers to PCHR fieldworkers, Israeli soldiers stationed at the gates regularly prohibit them from accessing their lands under the pretext that they have obtained a permit. The farmers believe that these measures aim to deprive them of their source of livelihood and force them to leave or neglect their lands so that Israeli forces can confiscate them. The olive harvest is considered as the sole source of income for hundreds of Palestinian families, whose economic situation is already very difficult due to the Israeli policy of closure.

Israel implements a discriminatory policy that curtails the freedom of Palestinian civilians to use public roads. Around 500 kilometres of restricted roads across the West Bank are accessible only to Israeli settlers. Palestinians suffer as a result, as they are forced to use alternative roads that are unsuitable and add considerable time to their journeys. In addition, approximately one third of the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem, is inaccessible to Palestinians unless they have a permit issued by Israeli forces. These permits are extremely difficult to obtain. At least 200,000 Palestinians living in 70 villages are forced to use alternative roads that are longer, resulting in additional financial burdens.

Military checkpoints are an obstacle to the movement of cargo. This increases the cost of transportation, which is consequently reflected in the prices of goods, and adds to the financial hardship of consumers. The policy of closure, as well as restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestinian civilians, has had a serious impact on their economic, social and cultural rights as well as their civil and political rights. The Palestinian people are experiencing a severe economic crisis that is affecting various economic sectors, including trade, manufacturing, agriculture, labour, tourism, trans-

portation, investment, and development. The policy of closure affects the lives of every individual in the oPt by violating the right to work, to health, to education and to appropriate living conditions. Israel has also created a new system of discrimination in the oPt, whereby Palestinians live in geographically-isolated cantons and are deprived of the right to freedom of movement.

The policy of closure is a form of collective punishment prohibited by international humanitarian law. Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention specifically prohibits the punishment of protected persons for offences they have not personally committed. It also prohibits collective penalties, measures of intimidation or terrorism, and reprisals against protected persons and their property. Israeli forces have implemented the policy of closure in an entirely disproportionate and excessive manner. Restrictions have been implemented as a means of punishment, intimidation, and retaliation against Palestinian civilians. Israel isolates the Gaza Strip from the West Bank, hindering the movement of people, exports, and imports, and paralysing the Palestinian workforce. Israeli forces also impose curfews and regularly close main and sub-roads in the West Bank. The prohibition on measures of collective punishment is absolute; violations cannot be justified for reasons of military necessity. The right to freedom of movement is affirmed in all of the key international human rights instruments. For example, Article 12(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights stipulates 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, detention, torture, and other forms of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment

At least 4,600 Palestinians are in Israeli custody in prisons and detention facilities, most of which are inside Israel. They are being held under inhuman conditions, despite many assurances that their living conditions would be improved, as was guaranteed as part of the prisoner exchange deal between Palestinian armed groups and Israel in late 2011.⁸

The detention conditions of Palestinian prisoners had seriously deteriorated following the June 2006 capture of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit in the Gaza Strip.⁹ Palestinian prisoners from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank have been denied family visitation rights. Even when family visits are allowed, family members are subjected to strip searches. Palestinian prisoners have also been subjected to solitary confinement and medical negligence.¹⁰

To protest against the continuous deterioration in living conditions and the severe restrictions imposed by Israeli forces, Palestinian prisoners began open-ended hunger strikes in the hope of improving their living conditions and regaining the rights for which they have struggled for years.¹¹ The prisoners' demands were as follows:

1. Improve the living conditions of prisoners in Israeli jails and provide for their basic needs, such as access to proper healthcare and medical treatment, education, and television and newspapers;
2. Allow family visits for prisoners from the Gaza Strip, who have been denied family visits due to political decisions and unjust laws, such as the so-called "Shalit Law";
3. End the use of administrative detention and solitary confinement. Some Palestinians have been imprisoned for more than ten consecutive years in solitary cells that lack basic facilities;
4. Allow prisoners to receive an education; and
5. End the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) policy of humiliating Palestinian prisoners and their families via strip searches, collective punishment, and night raids.

Approximately 1,500 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails began an open-ended hunger strike on 17 April 2012. The mass strike was preceded by individual hunger strikes by a number of administrative detainees. The Palestinian prisoners ended their mass hunger strike on 14 May 2012, after reaching an agreement with the IPS, which stated that Israel would cease the use of solitary confinement for all prisoners and allow around 440 prisoners from the Gaza Strip to receive family visits.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Israeli Prison Service agreed to allow family visits for the approximately 440 prisoners from Gaza, just as prisoners from the West Bank are each entitled to two visits a month for 45 minutes per visit. However, checks by PCHR found that Israel did not abide by the agreement. Instead, Israel organised limited family

8. In 2011, the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Israel agreed on a prisoner exchange deal. The deal saw more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners released in exchange for the release of an Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit, who had been held captive by members of a Palestinian armed group for more than five years. The first phase of the deal was implemented on 18 October 2011, when Palestinian armed groups handed Shalit over to the Egyptian authorities at Rafah International Crossing Point, who, in turn, transferred him to the Israeli authorities. At the same time, Israel released 450 Palestinian prisoners, including 27 women, who had been sentenced to long periods of imprisonment. Under the deal, 203 prisoners were forcibly transferred from their areas of residence: 40 were sent abroad and 163 to the Gaza Strip. The second phase of the deal was implemented on 18 December 2011 with the release of 550 prisoners (40 from the Gaza Strip and 510 from the West Bank), most of whom had been sentenced to relatively short periods of imprisonment.

9. In 2012, a series of additional punitive measures against Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails were implemented, following Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's orders to the Israeli Prison Service in late June 2011 to toughen prison conditions. The measures included intensifying strip searches of the prisoners and putting their leaders in solitary confinement. This led the prisoners to protest against these measures by beginning a number of hunger strikes.

10. Approximately 1,300 prisoners suffer from various chronic and serious diseases. Some of them are in critical condition. 18 of them are currently held in al-Ramleh Prison Hospital.

11. Israeli forces re-imprisoned many of the prisoners released in the prisoner exchange deal.

visits for prisoners from the Gaza Strip. Groups of 23 family members were allowed to visit at a time, the children of prisoners were not permitted to visit, and family members were barred from giving personal items to prisoners. More than once, Israeli forces suspended the family visits programme without providing any explanation.

In 2012, 869 families were allowed to visit their relatives in Israeli prisons. The visiting families were subjected to arbitrary procedures, humiliating and unethical search practices, and other obstacles. They also endured constant threats to cancel their future visitation rights if they did not adhere to orders by Israeli forces.

It should be mentioned that Israeli forces had banned family visitation for prisoners from Gaza since 6 June 2007. This is in violation of international humanitarian law, in particular Article 116 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which is related to the protection of civilians in times of war. Article 116 states: "Every internee shall be allowed to receive visitors, especially near relatives, at regular intervals and as frequently as possible. As far as is possible, internees shall be permitted to visit their homes in urgent cases, particularly in cases of death or serious illness of relatives."

In the West Bank, Israeli forces arrested hundreds of Palestinians during Israeli incursions, arrest campaigns at checkpoints, and campaigns conducted to arrest wanted people. In the Gaza Strip, Israeli forces continued to arrest more Palestinians in the 'buffer zone' along the eastern and northern borders of the Gaza Strip, at sea, and at the Beit Hanoun ('Erez') crossing point, in the north of the Gaza Strip. PCHR documented the arrest of 1,202 Palestinians by Israeli forces in 2012, the vast majority of whom were from the West Bank. 1,085 Palestinians were arrested in the West Bank, and 117 were arrested in the Gaza Strip.¹²

By the end of 2012, approximately 4,600 Palestinians are still in Israeli custody in prisons and detention facilities mostly inside Israel in an obvious violation of Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which stipulates: "Protected persons accused of offence shall be detained in the occupied country, and if convicted they shall serve their sentences therein." The vast majority of the prisoners are from the West Bank (approximately 4,130 prisoners), while approximately 470 are from the Gaza Strip, including 170 children and 11 women. Most of these prisoners were arrested during the second (al-Aqsa) Intifada which started on 28 September 2000 and up to this date. The arrests took place during incursions into Palestinian villages, cities and refugee camps, especially in the West Bank, while the rest were arrested before the al-Aqsa Intifada; 70 of them spent more than 20 years in jail.¹³

Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails are subjected to various forms of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment. They suffer violent beatings and insults, and endure various forms of torture during interrogation, including physical ill-treatment, sleep deprivation, denial of visitation rights and proper health care, and denial of their right to meet with their lawyers and receive legal counselling.

By the end of 2012, 14 members of the PLC were imprisoned in Israeli jails. Most of the PLC members were from the 'Change and Reform' bloc, which is affiliated with Hamas, two were from Fatah, one was from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and three were former ministers.¹⁴

Israeli forces arrested 12 PLC members during the year, all from the 'Change and Reform' bloc; including the Speaker of the PLC, Dr Aziz Duwaik, and Secretary of the PLC, Dr Mahmoud al-Ramahi. Israeli forces released four PLC members, continued to hold eight in prison, and transferred three to administrative detention.



▲ Israeli forces arrest a Palestinian during clashes near Ofar Prison, west of Ramallah

12. This statistic includes hundreds of civilians who were arrested for short periods and released hours after their arrest.

13. Statistics Department - Ministry of Prisoners, Ramallah.

14. They are: Khaled Abu-Arafa, Minister for Jerusalem Affairs; Wasfi Qabha, Minister of Prisoners' Affairs; Issa al-Jabari, Minister of Local Government.

PLC members still in detention, or released in 2012						
	Name	Constituency	Parliamentary bloc	Date of most recent arrest	Date of release	Previous imprisonments during term in office
1	Aziz Salem Duwaik	Ramallah	'Change and Reform' bloc	19/01/12	20/07/12	3 years
2	Mohammed Omran Totah	Jerusalem	'Change and Reform' bloc	23/01/12	06/09/12 (Still transferred from Jerusalem to Ramallah)	3 years
3	Naif Mahmoud al-Rjoub	Hebron	'Change and Reform' bloc	01/12/10	Still in detention	3 years and 5 months
4	Mohammed Jamal al-Natscha	Hebron	'Change and Reform' bloc	31/01/11	Still in detention	5 years
5	Khaled Ibrahim Tafesh	Bethlehem	'Change and Reform' bloc	20/01/12	19/08/12	2 years and 4 months
6	Hassan Youssif Khail	Ramallah	'Change and Reform' bloc	11/01/11	Still in detention	5 years
7	Abdel-Jaber Musatfa Foqaha1	Ramallah	'Change and Reform' bloc	23/01/12	30/09/12	5 years and 3 months
8	Jamal Abdel Hamid al-Tirawi	Jenin	Fatah bloc	29/05/07	Still in detention (Sentenced to 30 years)	-
9	Marwan Hasib Barghouti ¹	Ramallah	Fatah bloc	15/04/02	Still in detention (Sentenced to 26 life sentences)	-
10	Ahmed Sa'adat Abd al-Rasoul	Ramallah	'Abu Ali Mustafa' bloc	14/03/06	Still in detention (Sentenced to 30 years)	-
11	Ahmed Abdel-Aziz Mubarak	Ramallah	'Change and Reform' bloc	15/07/12	Still in detention	3 years
12	Mohammed Ismail al-Tal	Hebron	'Change and Reform' bloc	12/11/12	Still in detention	6 years
13	Mahmoud Ahmed al-Ramahi	Ramallah	'Change and Reform' bloc	23/11/12	Still in detention	5 years
14	Bassem Ahmed al-Za'areer	Hebron	'Change and Reform' bloc	23/11/12	Still in detention	22 months
15	Imad Mahmoud Nofal	Qalqilya	'Change and Reform' bloc	23/11/12	Still in detention	2 years, 10 months
16	Reyad Mahmoud Radad	Tulkarm	'Change and Reform' bloc	23/11/12	Still in detention	2 years, 10 months
17	Fathi Mohammed Qarawi	Tulkarm	'Change and Reform' bloc	23/11/12	Still in detention	2 years, 10 months
18	Yassir Daoud Mansour	Nablus	'Change and Reform' bloc	24/11/12	Still in detention	2 years, 10 months

Israeli forces continued to arrest Palestinians as they attempted to travel through Beit Hanoun ('Erez') crossing, including medical patients on their way to hospitals in the West Bank and Israel. Located in the northeast of the Gaza Strip, Beit Hanoun is the sole crossing point for the movement of people between the Gaza Strip and Israel and/or the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, since all other crossings have been closed by Israel.

On 19 January 2012, Israeli forces arrested Bassam Sha'ban Fou'ad Reyhan (24) from Jabalya in the north of the Gaza Strip, at Beit Hanoun crossing while he was on his way to al-Mizan Hospital in Hebron for surgery. According to the patient's aunt and travel companion, Na'ima Fou'ad Sha'ban Reyhan (49), an Israeli officer at the crossing informed her that Bassam had been arrested, handed her his personal belongings, and ordered her to go back to the Gaza Strip.

On 2 July 2012, Israeli forces arrested Ahmed Khela, from Jabalya, while he was on his way to work inside Israel.

On 6 September 2012, Israeli forces arrested lawyer Maher Abu Jibba, from Gaza City.

2012 witnessed an escalation in arrests of Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip by Israeli naval forces. According to PCHR documentation, there was a significant increase in the number of arrests, with 59 arrests documented in 2012.

Administrative detention

Administrative detention has been used by Israeli forces in order to arrest and detain Palestinians without charge or trial for long periods of time. Current administrative detention orders permit periods of detention of between 3 and 6 months, and are indefinitely renewable without reference to charge or trial. These orders are issued by Israeli district military commanders with responsibility for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

By the end of 2012, at least 185 Palestinians were still in custody under administrative detention orders issued by Israeli forces.¹⁵ Israel has adopted the use of the policy of administrative detention against thousands of Palestinians since 1967, when Israel occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The use of administrative detention violates the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, particularly Article 78 which prohibits the use of this measure as a form of punishment, calling it an exceptional measure confined to use for "imperative reasons of security".

Israeli forces arrested 12 PLC members during the year, all from the 'Change and Reform' bloc; including the Speaker of the PLC, Dr Aziz Duwaik, and Secretary of the PLC, Dr Mahmoud al-Ramahi. Israeli forces released four PLC members, continued to hold eight in prison, and transferred three to administrative detention.

In 2012, Israeli forces transferred dozens of Palestinian prisoners to administrative detention, including PLC members. During 2012, three PLC members were transferred to administrative detention: Dr Aziz Duwaik, Speaker of the PLC;¹⁶ Dr Mahmoud al-Ramahi, Secretary of the PLC; and Bassem al-Za'areer. They are all members of the 'Change and Reform' parliamentary bloc.

At the end of 2012, seven PLC members remained under administrative detention: Mohammed Jamal al-Natsche, from Hebron; Naif al-Rjoub, from Hebron; Hassasn Yousif, from Ramallah; Ahmed Mubarak, from Ramallah; Mohammed Totah, from Jerusalem. Three former ministers also remain under administrative detention: Khaled Abu-Arafa, former Minister for Jerusalem Affairs; Wasfi Qabha, former Minister for Prisoners' Affairs;

15. According to statistics of the Palestinian Prisoners Club Association.

16. Dr Duwaik was released 6 months later.

Issa al-Ja'bari, former Minister for Local Government.

A significant development was the decision taken by a number of administrative detainees to engage in mass open-ended hunger strikes in protest at their detention conditions and to force the Israeli authorities to release them. Some of those prisoners had been released in the prisoner exchange deal between Palestinian armed groups and Israeli authorities in October 2011, under which 1,027 Palestinian prisoners were released in exchange for the release of the captured Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit.

However, many were later re-arrested by Israeli forces. The first administrative detainee to take this decision was Khader Adnan, who began his hunger strike on 18 December 2011, the day after Israeli forces raided his home in Arraba village, in Jenin, and detained him. Adnan was protesting his repeated administrative detention. He ended his hunger strike on 22 February 2012, after 66 days, upon reaching a deal with the Military Prosecutor's Office of the MAG to be released on 17 April 2012. On 16 February 2012, Hana Shablabi, 30, announced an open-ended hunger strike, after being arrested from her home in Bourqin village near Jenin, and transferred to administrative detention for six months. Shalabi had been released in the prisoner exchange deal in October 2011, after spending more than two years in prison. Shalabi ended her hunger strike on 1 April 2012, after 44 days, having concluded an agreement, the details of which had not been disclosed. However, it is known that, under the terms of the agreement, she was transferred to the Gaza Strip for three years before she may return to her home in Jenin.

Bilal Sa'eed Diab (27), from Kafr Ra'ei village near Jenin, and Tha'er 'Aziz Halahla (34), from Kharas village near Hebron, who had been detained in Negev prison in Israel, announced an open-ended hunger strike on 29 February 2012. Diab and Halahla had been held under administrative detention since 17 August 2011 and 29 June 2010 respectively. They were both released from prison on 12 May 2012, after 74 days of hunger strike.

On 19 March 2012, Mahmoud Kamel al-Sarsak (25), from Rafah, a member of the Palestinian National Football Team, began an open hunger strike in protest at his 3-year detention. Al-Sarsak was detained, without trial, as an 'unlawful combatant'. On 19 June 2012, 95 days after he began his hunger strike, al-Sarsak's lawyer reached an agreement with Israeli forces, under which he would be released on 10 July 2012, in exchange for ending his hunger strike.

At the end of 2012, Ayman al-Sharawna (36), from Hebron, and Samer al-Eissawi (33), from Jerusalem, were on ongoing hunger strike for 173 days and 143 days respectively. al-Sharawna began his hunger strike on 1 July, while al-Eissawi began on 1 August, in protest at being re-arrested and placed under administrative detention, despite being released in the prisoner exchange deal in 2011. According to various human rights sources, the health conditions of the two detainees are constantly deteriorating due to the protracted length of their hunger strikes, and because they have recently abstained from drinking water. They suffer from various health problems, including malnutrition, general weakness, anaemia, protein deficiency, sugar deficiency, deteriorated vision, and others.

Many advocacy activities were organised by international and local human rights organisations and activists with the aim of exerting pressure on the Israeli authorities and to compel Israel to release the prisoners, due to serious concerns for their lives. In a press release issued on Friday, 14 September 2012, the International Committee of

the Red Cross (ICRC) stated that it was “extremely concerned about the deteriorating health of three Palestinian detainees who are on long-term hunger strike.” Mahmoud al-Sarsak’s case received special sympathy; the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights, Mr Richard Falk, expressed deep concern over al-Sarsak’s condition, while FIFA President Mr Sepp Blatter criticised the ongoing detention of a national footballer.



Torture and ill-treatment

Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails are subjected to various forms of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment. They suffer violent beatings and insults, and endure various forms of torture during interrogation, including physical ill-treatment, sleep deprivation, denial of visitation rights and proper health care, and denial of their right to meet with their lawyers and receive legal counselling. In 2012, PCHR received reports regarding various methods of interrogation used against Palestinian detainees, including minors, in Israeli jails and detention centres, which constitute torture and/or ill-treatment as defined in the Convention against Torture and other international instruments. These methods include:

1. Blindfolding and hitting the detainee, especially in the face and abdomen;
2. Strangling the detainee, causing extreme difficulty breathing;
3. Insulting the detainee and insulting Allah;
4. Forcibly removing the detainee’s beard;
5. Hanging the detainee upside-down by his feet, and hitting him in sensitive parts of the body, such as the testicles;
6. Bridging, a method in which three interrogators use chains to carry the detainee, with his face down. In one documented case, this led a detainee to urinate blood;
7. Sexually abusing and raping detainees, in some cases using iron bars;
8. Shabeh¹⁷ for long periods, sometimes up to 48 hours;
9. Tight handcuffing, tying the hands and legs with plastic ties that cause severe pain; and
10. Sleep deprivation for long periods.

17. Shabeh entails shackling the detainee’s hands and legs to a small chair, which is angled to slant forward so that the detainee cannot sit in a stable position.

> Targeting of journalists

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to attack journalists, disregarding the protection extended to journalists under international law. It is evident that attacks on journalists by Israeli forces, which violate the right of journalists to personal security as they carry out their work, are part of a campaign to isolate the oPt from the rest of the world and prevent the media from covering crimes committed against civilians by Israeli forces.

Most egregiously, Israeli forces were responsible for the killing of four journalists during the large-scale Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip, from 14 to 21 November 2012. Israeli forces also attacked media offices and wounded other journalists in Gaza City.

PCHR has documented other attacks on journalists during 2012, the most prominent of which were in the West Bank. The types of attacks included: firing at journalists; beating and other forms of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment; detention of journalists; denying journalists access to certain areas; confiscation of and/or damaging journalistic equipment; and raids on media offices and the homes of journalists.¹⁸

Israeli violations during the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November 2012

Targeting of journalists

- On 19 November 2012, Israeli forces launched two missiles at the third floor of al-Shorouq building, in the west of Gaza City, in which a number of media offices are located. The media office of the Islamic Jihad Movement was targeted, resulting in the death of Ramez Najib Harb, Media Officer for the al-Quds Brigades (the military wing of the Islamic Jihad Movement). On the following day, Israeli forces posted an announcement on their official website about the targeting and killing of Ramez Harb. Two other journalists - Mohammed al-Ashqar, who works at Huna al-Quds Satellite Channel, and Ahmed al-Rizi, who works at al-Arabiya Satellite Channel - suffered from smoke inhalation due to a fire that broke out in the building following the attack. The office was destroyed and a number of media offices and institutions in the building were damaged. According to investigations conducted by PCHR, Harb's only involvement in the al-Quds Brigades was carrying out media work, which means that he is recognised as a journalist, and therefore a protected person, under international humanitarian law.
- On 20 November 2012, journalists Hussam Mohammed Abdul Rahman Salama (30) and Mahmoud Ali Ahmed al-Koumi (29), who both worked for al-Aqsa Satellite Channel, were killed when a missile targeted their car. The attack carried out while they were driving a black Renault, which was clearly marked 'TV'. They were en route to al-Shifa hospital to cover the arrival of victims to the hospital.
- On the same day, Mohammed Abed Rabbu Bader (24), a employee of the al-Quds Brigades media office, was killed while photographing a group of persons near Palestine Technical College in Deir al-Balah, in the central Gaza Strip. The group had been targeted with a missile from an Israeli warplane. According to investigations conducted by PCHR, Bader's only involvement in the al-Quds Brigades was carrying out media work, which means that he is recognised as a journalist, and therefore a protected person, under international humanitarian law.
- On the same day, Israeli forces launched a missile at the office of al-Aqsa TV on the fifth floor of al-Shorouq building in al-Remal neighbourhood in the centre of Gaza City. The office was destroyed and other media offices on the same floor and the fourteenth floor were damaged. The damaged offices belonged to Palestine Media

18. For more details on attacks against journalists in the oPt, see 'Silencing the Press', a series of reports published by PCHR.

Production Company, Mayadeen TV, TV Press, Abu Dhabi TV, Sky News, and Dubai TV. Three journalists working in Palestine Media Production Company sustained minor injuries.

- On 20 November 2012, Israeli forces launched two missiles at an apartment on the sixth floor of the Ne'ma building belonging to the well-known writer Ghazi Sourani. The apartment is located on al-Kanz Street in al-Remal neighbourhood in the centre of Gaza City. The building was partially damaged.
- On 21 November 2012, Israeli forces launched two missiles at an area of open land adjacent to the Orient/Beach Hotel in the west of Gaza City. Dozens of international journalists and reporters were staying in the hotel while covering the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip.
- Israeli forces jammed the broadcast signals of a number of local radios and sent Israeli messages through the airwaves. At least four newspaper websites were hacked by Israeli forces during the same period.
- PCHR documented other Israeli attacks on journalists, the majority of which took place in the West Bank:

Firing at Journalists

- On 27 January 2012, Moheeb al-Barghouthi, a photographer for al-Ayyam newspaper, was shot in his legs with two rubber-coated metal bullets fired by Israeli forces. Al-Barghouthi was covering the weekly protest against the annexation wall in Bil'in village near Ramallah, in the central West Bank.
- On 11 February 2012, three journalists were wounded by rubber-coated metal bullets fired by Israeli forces. The journalists were covering the dispersal by Israeli forces of a peaceful protest organised near Ofer checkpoint in support of the prisoner Khader 'Adnan. They were attacked although they were wearing clearly-marked media vests. The wounded journalists were:
 1. Issam al-Rimawi, a cameraman at al-Hayat newspaper, who was wounded by a bullet to the right leg;
 2. Mohammed Turkman, a freelance journalist, who was wounded by a bullet to the right thigh; and
 3. Bernat Arna'out, a freelance journalist, who was wounded by a bullet to the left leg.



Media offices in al-Shorouq building in the center of Gaza City which was bombarded by Israeli warplanes

- On 6 April 2012, Ahmed Dughlus, a freelance journalist, sustained head wounds when he was hit by a tear gas canister as Israeli forces dispersed a weekly protest against the annexation wall in al-Nabi Saleh village near Ramallah. Dughlus was wearing a clearly-marked media vest. He was transferred to Ramallah governmental hospital to receive medical treatment, where he received stitches in his head.
- On 18 September 2012, Mahmoud 'Elyan, who works for al-Quds newspaper, was wounded in his side by a rubber-coated metal bullets. 'Elyan was covering the clashes between Palestinians and Israeli forces in Shu'fat refugee camp near occupied East Jerusalem.
- On 5 October 2012, three journalists sustained several wounds when Israeli forces fired tear gas canisters at them from a close range. The journalists were covering the raid of the al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem by Israeli religious men. The injured journalists were:
 1. Mo'ammam Awad, a cameraman for a Chinese news agency, who was hit in the abdomen and legs by two tear gas canisters and sustained burns;
 2. 'Ammam Awadm, a cameraman for Reuters news agency, was hit in the right leg by a tear gas canister. His leg was broken as a result; and
 3. Maisa' Abu Ghazala, a freelance journalist, suffered from tear gas inhalation.

Beating and other forms of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment

- On 30 March 2012, three cameramen sustained bruises after being subjected to harsh beating with batons by Israeli forces. The cameramen were covering the dispersal by Israeli forces of persons gathered near Bab al-'Amoud in occupied east Jerusalem on Land Day. The injured journalists were:
 1. Mahfouz Abu Turk, a freelance cameraman, who sustained bruises to the face and limbs;
 2. Dyala Jweihan, who works for Quds Net news website, who sustained wounds in the chest; and
 3. 'Afif Abu 'Amira, a cameraman at Wafa news agency, who sustained wounds in the head and bruises throughout his body.
- On 17 August 2012, Ja'fer Ishtaiya, a cameraman

for AFP, was harshly beaten with batons while he was covering Israeli attacks on a weekly protest against the annexation wall in Kofur Qaddoum village near Nablus. Israeli forces detained Ishtaiya and five other journalists and transferred them to 'Qadumim' military camp where they were held for several hours. After his release, Ishtaiya was transferred to the Arab Specialised Hospital to receive the necessary medical treatment, as he had sustained a fracture in his right hand and bruises to his limbs.

Detention of journalists

- In 2012, Israeli forces held five Palestinian journalists under administrative detention. Under administrative detention, Israeli forces can hold an individual for up to six months and can renew the detention period for another six months indefinitely on the basis of a secret file. The detained journalists were:
 1. Nawwaf al-'Amer, Programme Coordinator at al-Quds Satellite Channel;
 2. Amin Abu Warda, a reporter for Emirates newspaper and PNN news agency;
 3. 'Amer Abu 'Arafa, a reporter for Shehab news agency;
 4. Ra'ed al-Sharif, a radio announcer for Marah; and
 5. Walid Khaled, Director of Palestine newspaper in the West Bank.
- On 3 February 2012, Najib Ferwana and Ali Dar Ali, reporters for Palestine TV, were detained by Israeli forces for four hours while they were covering Israeli attacks on protestors during the weekly demonstration against the annexation wall in al-Nabi Saleh village near Ramallah. Israeli forces detained the two reporters under the pretext that they were photographing in a 'closed military zone'.
- On 17 August, Israeli forces detained six journalists who were covering Israeli attacks on the weekly demonstration against the annexation wall in Kofur Qaddoum village near Nablus. The Israeli soldiers ordered the journalists to stop photographing, but the journalists refused to do so. As a result, the Israeli soldiers beat the journalists, handcuffed them and transferred them to 'Qadumim' military camp. While they were detained, the journalists were forced to sign a pledge not to enter the area in question as it is a 'closed military zone' before they were released. The detained journalists were:



1. Ja'far Ishtaya, a cameraman for AFP, who sustained a fracture in the right hand;
2. Baker Abdul Haqq, a cameraman for Palestine TV;
3. Fares Fares, who works for Palestine TV;
4. Nidal Ishtaya, who works for Wafa news agency;
5. Odai al-Qaddoumi, a freelance journalist; and
6. Noah al-Qaddoumi, a freelance journalist.

Denial of access to certain areas

- On 31 January 2012, Israeli forces issued a military order denying journalist Rasem 'Ebeidat, from occupied East Jerusalem, access to the West Bank under the pretext of maintaining security. The military order was signed by the Israeli Commander of the Middle District and stated that access to the West Bank would be denied until 9 July 2012.
- On 3 February 2012, Israeli forces prevented Linda Shalash, a reporter with al-Quds Satellite Channel, from covering Israeli attacks on the weekly demonstration against the annexation wall in al-Nabi Saleh village near Ramallah. They forced her to stop her work and leave.
- On 8 June 2012, Israeli forces prevented journalists from Palestinian media offices from accessing al-Nabi Saleh village near Ramallah in order to cover the weekly demonstration against the annexation wall in the village.

Confiscation and/or destruction of media equipment

- On 16 March 2012, an Israeli soldier used a baton to damage a camera belonging to Mousa al-Sha'er, a cameraman for the Associated French Press (AFP), in al-Ma'sara village near Bethlehem. Al-Sha'er was covering Israeli attacks on the weekly demonstration against the wall when an Israeli soldier approached him and hit his camera with a baton, breaking the camera lens.
- On 9 July 2012, Israeli forces stopped Ibrahim al-Husseini, a reporter for Press TV, and Ayman 'Elian, a cameraman for Pal Media for Media Production, while they were preparing a report on excavation works near Bab al-Maghareba in occupied East Jerusalem. Israeli forces confiscated their journalist cards and media equipment, and transferred them to a security centre near al-Buraq yard to examine the filmed material. Both journalists were later released.

Raids on media offices

- On 29 February 2012, Israeli forces raided the office of Watan TV on the fourth and fifth floor of the Agricultural Relief building in Qaddoura refugee camp in the centre of Ramallah. They searched the offices, and confiscated PCs, files, tapes, and the main transmitter. They placed the confiscated items in cardboard boxes before removing them.
- On the same day, Israeli forces raided the office of al-Quds al-Tarbawi TV on al-Quds Street, opposite al-Bireh Hotel in al-Bireh. They confiscated the main TV transmitter and damaged some of the contents of the office.
- On 2 April 2012, Israeli forces stationed themselves inside the office of Huna al-Quds Network for Social Media in Oqbet al-Khaldiya neighbourhood in occupied East Jerusalem. As a result, the office was unable to open on that day.

House raids

House raids coincided with the arrests of journalists and confiscation of media equipment:

- On 5 February 2012, Israeli forces moved into a house belonging to Suhaib Aziz al-'Assa, a reporter for Bethlehem 2000 radio, in al-'Ebeida village near Bethlehem. The Israeli soldiers searched the house and damaged some of the contents. They also confiscated a camera memory card and his cell phones, and arrested him.
- On 3 April 2012, Israeli forces raided and searched a house belonging to Mohammed Anwar Mona, a reporter for Quds Press news agency in Nablus. Mona was arrested.
- On 17 May 2012, Israeli forces raided and searched a house belonging to Baha' Khairi Mosa, Director of al-Asir Satellite Channel in Jenin, in the north of the West Bank. They confiscated the transmitter and other media equipment, in addition to arresting Mosa.

➤ Destruction of civilian property

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to systematically demolish Palestinian civilian property in the oPt, especially in East Jerusalem. The rate of demolitions escalated significantly during the latest Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip (14 – 21 November 2012). Israeli forces demolished or destroyed civilian facilities, including houses, industrial and commercial establishments, government, health, and education facilities, places of worship, and media institutions. They also destroyed agricultural lands and crops, wells and irrigation systems, fishing ports, boats, and fishing equipment.

The suffering of the Palestinian civilian population is aggravated by such attacks, especially in the Gaza Strip, where there is a serious shortage of the construction materials required for the reconstruction of destroyed houses. The import of construction materials for the private sector has been banned by Israeli forces for more than six years. Israeli forces have also continued to demolish and destroy Palestinian civilian property in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Demolitions in East Jerusalem have continued to escalate, and are carried out as part of the Israeli policy aimed at creating a Jewish majority in the city. This is a form of ethnic cleansing against the Palestinian population of East Jerusalem, forcing them to evacuate their houses against their will under a variety of pretexts.

Demolition and destruction of civilian property in the Gaza Strip

1. Demolition and destruction of residential buildings

Israel's policy of demolishing and destroying residential buildings is a flagrant violation of international human rights and humanitarian law, including a violation of the right to adequate housing.

In the Gaza Strip, Israeli forces destroyed 371 buildings in total in 2012. 243 more buildings were severely damaged. These included 463 residential units that housed 2,683 people, including 1,169 children. Israeli forces targeted 667 civilian establishments, 233 (35%) of which were targeted during the large-scale offensive on the Gaza Strip.

The rate of such attacks increased during the Israeli offensive against the Gaza Strip, which took place from 14 until 21 November 2012. Israeli military attacks completely demolished 126 residential buildings, containing 191 apartments that housed 1,229 people, including 710 children.

Debris of a house that was bombed by Israeli warplanes in Rafah, 10 November 2012



Number of residential buildings completely demolished during the Israeli offensive in November 2012

Governorate	Number of residential buildings	Apartments	Number of families	Number of individuals	Number of children
North	49	83	97	526	323
Gaza	51	28	31	142	106
Central	22	34	23	151	88
Khan Younis	19	21	28	168	56
Rafah	21	25	37	242	137
Total	126	191	216	1,229	710

Israeli attacks during the offensive led to the partial destruction of 160 residential buildings, including 314 apartments that housed 1,779 people, including 778 children.

Number of houses partially destroyed during the during the Israeli offensive in November 2012

Governorate	Number of residential buildings	Apartments	Number of families	Number of individuals	Number of children
North	29	48	40	256	183
Gaza	33	92	58	368	99
Central	15	31	67	190	98
Khan Younis	51	105	92	484	154
Rafah	32	38	72	481	244
Total	160	314	329	1,779	778



^ Civilians have shelter in an UNRWA school to avoid being hurt by Israeli shelling

Israeli attacks and demolitions resulted in the displacement and migration of thousands of Palestinian families during the offensive. Large groups of people fled from the 'buffer zone' along the north, central and south of the Gaza Strip after Israeli forces distributed thousands of pamphlets ordering the population in these areas to evacuate from their homes and move to other areas of the Gaza Strip. Hundreds of families took refuge in 13 UNRWA schools, four in northern Gaza Strip, eight in Gaza, and one in al-Bureij refugee camp, which were opened for displaced families.

It is estimated that, in the northern Gaza Strip alone, the number of displaced families taking refuge in UNRWA schools comprised 20,000 civilians, half of them children. During the offensive, thousands of civilians were psychologically affected by experiences of fear and terror, especially children, women, disabled per-

sons, and the elderly. Civilians who lost their homes and were displaced as a result of the Israeli offensive are still dispersed, having lost their property and personal belongings.

2. Destruction of civilian property

In 2012, Israeli forces targeted 667 civilian establishments, 233 (35%) of which were targeted during the latest offensive on the Gaza Strip. Israeli military attacks and incursions resulted in serious damage to civilian property, including government facilities, industrial, commercial, and agricultural establishments, syndicate offices, and health, education, sports and entertainment service facilities.

Types of civilian establishments targeted by Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip in 2012

Educational	155
Religious	83
Cemeteries	3
Syndicate offices	5
Health	35
Sports	7
Service	41
Entertainment	6
Media	8
Banks	4
Industrial, commercial and agricultural	320
Total	667



◀ Debris of the building of the Council of Ministers in Gaza City

Jabalya police station which was attacked by Israeli forces ▼



Educational institutions: In 2012, 155 educational institutions were severely damaged in attacks by Israeli forces. During the latest Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip 88 schools (55 governmental and 33 UNRWA schools) were attacked.

Places of worship and cemeteries: In 2012, 83 mosques were severely damaged in attacks by Israeli forces. In addition, five cemeteries were bombed by Israeli warplanes during the Israeli offensive in November.

Syndicate offices: Three syndicate offices were targeted by Israeli forces during the Israeli offensive in November.

Health facilities: In 2012, 35 health facilities were targeted by Israeli forces. 19 health facilities (15 governmental health institutes and four UNRWA) were targeted during the Israeli offensive in November.

Sports facilities: In 2012, Israeli forces targeted seven sports facilities, two of which were targeted during the Israeli offensive in November.



^ A school that was bombed by Israeli forces in al-Shjaiya neighborhood in Gaza City



^ Al-Rahman Mosque that was bombed by Israeli forces in al-Boreij refugee camp



^ Al-Yarmouk Stadium in Gaza City which was bombed by Israeli forces



^ Palestine Stadium in Gaza City which was bombed by Israeli forces



^ The building of the civil section of the Ministry of Interior in Gaza City which was bombed by Israeli warplanes

Service facilities: In 2012, 41 service facilities were targeted by Israeli forces, including government and local institutions, such as ministry headquarters and .municipal service facilities

Destruction of bridges: In 2012, Israeli forces destroyed two bridges in the Gaza Strip during the Israeli offensive in November. The main bridge on the coastal road, west of Gaza Valley, was targeted on 21 November 2012. Al-Sikka Bridge, which connects al-Nussairat refugee camp with al-Mughraga in the Middle Area of the Gaza Strip, was targeted on the same day.

Tourism facilities: In 2012, six tourism facilities were .attacked by Israeli forces

Media institutes: Israeli forces targeted four media institutes during the Israeli offensive in November

v Gaza Valley Bridge which was bombed by Israeli warplanes



Banks: Israeli forces targeted and destroyed four banks during the Israeli offensive in November

Industrial, commercial, and agricultural facilities:

In 2012, Israeli forces targeted 320 industrial, commercial, and agricultural facilities in the Gaza Strip. 182 were targeted during the Israeli offensive in November. These facilities included factories, industrial workshops, companies, and commercial and agricultural projects.

Fishing sector: In 2012, Israeli naval forces continued to attack Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip. Continuous Israeli attacks resulted in killings, injuries, arrests, confiscation, and destruction of fishing equipment. Israeli naval forces detained 26 fishing boats, and destroyed 13 fishing boats and other fishing equipment. During the Israeli offensive in November, these attacks escalated significantly, resulting in the destruction of 80 boats, dozens of engines, and fishing equipment. The vast majority of these attacks occurred in Khan Yunis and the Central Gaza Strip.

Destruction of civilian property in the West Bank

Israeli forces continued to demolish Palestinian houses in 'Area C', which is under full Israeli control in accordance with the Oslo Accords, for the purpose of settlement expansion. In 2012, this policy affected houses throughout the West Bank, but demolitions were focused largely in occupied East Jerusalem.¹⁹ Demolitions in the Gaza Strip were largely carried out in aerial attacks without prior warning, while those in the West Bank were carried out under the pretext that the building owners lacked the required building licenses from the Planning and Building Department of the Israeli



^ Khan Yunis fishing harbor which was bombed by Israeli warplanes



^ A factory of dairy products in Gaza City which was bombed by Israeli warplanes on 3 June 2012



^ A naval police station in Gaza City which was bombed by Israeli forces

19. This policy cannot be isolated from the policy of settlement expansion and the construction of the annexation wall, which are highlighted below.

Civil Administration in the 'Beit El' settlement or, for houses in occupied East Jerusalem, the Israeli municipality in Jerusalem.

In 2012, approximately 37,000 agricultural trees were uprooted, burned, water-logged, and/or cut down, of which 31,000 were olive trees. In Nablus alone, 10,260 trees were damaged. In Hebron, 5,600 trees were damaged, and in Jerusalem, 500.²⁰

In 2012, Israeli forces demolished 304 houses in the West Bank, including 68 in East Jerusalem. 14 Palestinian civilians in East Jerusalem were forced to demolish their own homes. These civilians, under duress from Israeli forces, often demolish their homes themselves in order to avoid having to pay the extremely high costs that would be imposed if the demolition is carried out by Israeli forces.

The demolition of houses, as well as industrial, commercial, and agricultural facilities in 'Area C', forms part of the policy of settlement expansion and the Israeli plan to create a Jewish majority in Palestinian territory. These operations are accompanied by the continuous harassment of the civilian population by Israeli forces and settlers, particularly in the southern areas of Hebron, and the eastern and north-eastern areas of Jerusalem, which are inhabited by hundreds of Bedouin families.

➤ Settlement activities and attacks by settlers against Palestinian civilians and property

The Israeli government, its occupation forces and settlers living in the oPt in violation of international law have continued the expansion of settlements in the West Bank. Armed Israeli settlers, protected by Israeli forces, have continued to commit crimes against Palestinian civilians and property. In 2012, Israeli settlers escalated their attacks against Palestinian civilians and property, launching some joint attacks with the Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians.

Settlement expansion

At the same time, the Israeli government, its occupation forces, and settlers living on Palestinian land in violation of international law have continued the expansion of settlements in the West Bank, under the pretext that expansion is necessary to accommodate the natural population growth of settlers. This is in spite of increasing criticism from the international community. The most worrying development in terms of settlement expansion is the E1 Plan to expand settlements in the E1 area. On 30 November 2012, the day after Palestine was voted a non-member observer State of the United Nations, the Cabinet of Israel decided to proceed with the planning of thousands of apartments near the settlement of 'Ma'ale Adumim', in the area connecting the settlement to Jerusalem. Implementation of the E1 Plan would further isolate Jerusalem from the West Bank, while cutting the northern West Bank off from its southern reaches.

Israeli settlement activities in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, clearly violate international humanitarian law and international resolutions. PCHR calls upon the international community to immediately intervene to compel the Israeli government to stop all settlement activities in the oPt, especially in East Jerusalem, and dismantle Israeli settlements, which constitute a war crime under international humanitarian law.

Confiscation of Palestinian civilian property

Israeli forces have continued to confiscate civilian property belonging to Palestinians to facilitate the expansion of settlements. This is in violation of international humanitarian law, which prohibits changing the nature of an occupied territory unless there is military necessity in the narrow sense of the term - a condition that is not fulfilled in this case. In 2012, Israeli forces confiscated and/or levelled at least 28,000 dunums (2,800 hectares) of land across the West Bank. Of the confiscated land, 20% is in occupied East Jeru-

salem. Part of the confiscated land was annexed by Israeli settlers.

In the reporting period, the area categorised as 'Area C' in the Oslo Accords, as agreed between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Israeli government in 1993, was the main target of Israeli confiscation operations in 2012. The aim is to evacuate the Palestinian population to make way for settlement expansion projects. Communities in the area were subjected to wide-scale demolition operations against houses and agricultural facilities, such as water wells, rainwater harvesting pools and cattle barns. Israeli forces submitted hundreds of demolition notices for these facilities. The Land Research Centre in Jerusalem, a branch of the Arab Studies Society, documented over 300 submitted to 1,231 houses and facilities, 223 of which were in Jerusalem and 320 in Hebron. These included demolition notices, evacuation notices and notices ordering a halt to construction activities. This constitutes an increase of approximately 60% from last year.

A report by B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, pointed out that, at the end of 2011, the Israeli Civil Administration announced its intention to expel the 27,000 Bedouins living in 'Area C' localities throughout the West Bank. In its first phase, this plan was scheduled for implementation in January 2012. The Civil Administration planned the forcible transfer of some 20 Bedouin communities, approximately 2,300 people, about half of whom live in E1, from the area of 'Ma'ale Adumim' and adjoining settlements.

Originally, the Civil Administration had planned to move these communities to a site near the Abu Dis landfill, the main waste disposal site for Jerusalem. In the early 1990s, members of the Jahalin Bedouin tribe were relocated to this area to enable the expansion of 'Ma'ale Adumim'. However, following a High Court petition against that decision and broad international protests, the Civil Administration announced that it

was withdrawing the plan. The Civil Administration promised that the process of permanent resettlement for these communities would proceed only after consultation with the communities themselves and after making a risk assessment and environmental impact study on residence near the waste disposal site. However, Israeli forces have not abided by the administration's decision, as they have continued to target these communities.

Efforts to create a Jewish demographic majority in Jerusalem

The Israeli government and its occupation forces have continued the construction of settlements in East Jerusalem and its suburbs in an effort to create a Jewish majority in the city. They have cut off East Jerusalem from the West Bank, constructed new sections of the annexation wall, and continued activities of settlement expansion in and around the city. The Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem has continued to demolish Palestinian houses under the pretext of that construction was carried out without the relevant permits. In 2012, there was an escalation in the demolition of homes and civilian property, and an increasing number of demolition notices were delivered to Palestinian civilians in East Jerusalem and its suburbs. Palestinian civilians have even been forced to demolish their homes themselves.

In addition to these illegal measures, the Israeli Ministry of Interior continued to withdraw identity cards from Palestinian civilians living in the city and expel them from the city to areas in the West Bank. The Ministry withdraws identity cards under various pretexts, including political allegiances or the fact that the individual works outside the boundaries of the city. One of the many examples was the expulsion of Mohammed 'Omran Saleh Totah (43), a PLC member from the 'Change and Reform' bloc affiliated to Hamas, and former Minister Khaled Abu 'Arafa (51) from Jerusalem to Ramallah. Israeli forces raided the ICRC headquarters in al-Shaikh Jarrah neighbourhood in occupied East Jerusalem on 23 January 2012, arrested Totah and 'Arafa, transferred them to al-Maskoubya interrogation centre, and expelled them to Ramallah.

In 2012, Israeli forces, under the instructions of the Municipality of Jerusalem, continued to demolish Palestinian houses throughout the city and its suburbs, citing unlicensed construction as the reason for demolition. The municipality continued to impose lengthy and complicated procedures on Palestinian civilians who attempted to obtain construction licenses.

Thus, many Palestinians, under pressure to build new houses or expand existing homes due to natural population growth, do so without obtaining licenses. Meanwhile, Israel, 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 Jerusalem. PCHR stresses that such practices in Jerusalem are illegal and condemns the Municipality of Jerusalem's discriminatory approach to issuing building licenses to the Palestinian population. The policy adopted by Israeli forces regarding the granting of building licenses is discriminatory in nature, as Palestinian civilians have to follow very complicated procedures to obtain licenses, whereas Israelis can obtain such licenses easily.

Israeli forces have continued imposing harsh restrictions on the activities of Palestinian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Jerusalem, claiming that these NGOs are linked to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and/or the PNA (PNA), even though the identity and activities of the NGOs indicate otherwise. Measures by Israeli forces include raiding the offices of NGOs, as well as prohibiting or shutting down official and public meetings, even if they are of a social nature, claiming that such activities are linked to the agendas of the PLO or the PNA.

Israeli forces have continued to violate the right to freedom of religion of Palestinians by denying them access to religious sites in Jerusalem, as well as by continuing excavations in the vicinity of the al-Aqsa Mosque, endangering the site and subjecting it to the threat of demolition.

The most worrying development in terms of settlement expansion is the E1 Plan to expand settlements in the E1 area. On 30 November 2012, the day after Palestine was voted a non-member observer State of the United Nations, the Cabinet of Israel decided to proceed with the planning of thousands of apartments near the settlement of 'Ma'ale Adumim', in the area connecting the settlement to Jerusalem. Implementation of the E1 Plan would further isolate Jerusalem from the West Bank, while cutting the northern West Bank off from its southern reaches.

The E1 Plan was approved in 1999. It covers approximately 12,000 of the approximately 48,000 dunums under the jurisdiction of 'Ma'ale Adumim', most of which was declared by Israel to be state land. The plan mainly includes areas north of the Jerusalem-Jericho road (Route 1), as well as some land south of it, near the junction of Route 1 and Route 417 and west of Route 417.

The planned construction in E1 will further increase the forced isolation between the West Bank and East Jerusalem. It will close East Jerusalem off from the east, connect to the Israeli neighbourhoods built north of Jerusalem's Old City, and create a physical and functional barrier between East Jerusalem and the Palestinian population in adjacent West Bank communities for which the city serves as the main metropolitan and religious centre. Israel is planning an alternative road for Palestinians that will link the southern and northern parts of the West Bank. However, this will be nothing more than a link for traffic and does not represent territorial continuity. In addition, channelling all traffic between the southern and northern West Bank into a single road will make it easier for Israel to halt traffic between the two areas.²⁰

Also in 2012, 'Moriah' Jerusalem Development Company began building a bridge for pedestrians and cars linking the 'City of David' settlement visitors' centre, established at the entrance of Silwan village in the south of the occupied East Jerusalem, with a tunnel in al-Buraq Yard, passing by Wadi Hilweh Square. According to Wadi Hilweh Information Centre, the inhabitants of Silwan village received a leaflet in September 2012 informing them of the changes. The leaflet outlined how the main street will be transformed into a bridge linking the settlement outpost to the al-Buraq Wall, and that the construction work will go on for several months, during the hours of 23:00 and 05:00, during which time the Israeli police will close the road for traffic. The construction of the bridge will be carried out by 'Moriah', the Israeli Municipality in Jerusalem, the Israeli police, and the Antiquities Authority.

By proceeding with these plans, the concerned authorities are acting in violation of a Supreme Court ruling. According to Wadi Hilweh Information Centre, in 2011, the Israeli Supreme Court issued a ruling prohibiting changes to the nature of the main road of Wadi Hilweh, in response to a petition submitted by the village inhabitants to the Supreme Court.

Efforts to create a Jewish demographic majority in Arab Jerusalem began with the occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967, and continued with the confiscation of Palestinian property, the establishment of Jewish settlements, construction of the annexation wall, the prevention of the construction of new houses and demolition of existing ones, the issuance of discriminatory orders aimed at expelling the Palestinian population, and the isolation of the city by cutting it off from its socio-economic surroundings. PCHR believes that encouraging or orchestrating the forced migration of Palestinian civilians from Jerusalem is one of the methods by which Israel creates a new reality on the ground, whereby Jews constitute the overwhelming majority of the city's population. Successive Israeli governments have made efforts to ensure that the number of Palestinians never exceeds 22% of the city's total population. To achieve this goal, the government has taken a series of measures, the latest of which have been the confiscation of Jerusalem identity cards from Palestinians, the integration of Israeli settlement blocs as part of the city, and the construction of the annexation wall, which has effectively left thousands of Palestinian Jerusalemites outside the city boundaries.

Attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and property

Armed Israeli settlers, protected by Israeli forces, have also continued to commit crimes against Palestinian civilians and property. In 2012, Israeli settlers escalated their attacks against Palestinian civilians and property. The settlers and Israeli forces also launched joint attacks against Palestinian civilians.

Attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and property continued in 2012, and became more systematic. In many instances, Israeli settlers wrote the phrase "Price tag" on the mosques, houses, and cars that they attacked.

21. A report by B'tselem, issued on 2 December 2012.

PCHR fieldworkers reported 219 assaults by settlers on Palestinians in 2012. The vast majority of these attacks occurred in Hebron and Nablus. The following table shows the distribution of settler attacks in the West Bank:

Governorate	Number of attacks
Hebron	82
Nablus	47
Ramallah and al-Bireh	27
Qalqilya	13
Jerusalem	15
Salfit	10
Bethlehem	18
Jenin	3
Tulkarm	2
Jericho	1
Tubas	1

This statistic does not represent the true number of settler attacks, reflecting only the attacks that PCHR fieldworkers were able to document.

The nature of settler attacks were as follows: 12 attacks on houses; 96 attacks on farmers, shepherds, and their property; six shooting incidents; 11 attacks on religious buildings; 30 attacks on vehicles; 64 other attacks, such as riots, highway robbery, and throwing of stones at Palestinian civilian vehicles.

Two Palestinian civilians were killed in settler attacks, increasing the number of Palestinians killed by settlers since the outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada in September 2000 to 63, including 14 children and one woman.

On 17 June 2012, an Israeli settler fired at three Palestinian civilians at the al-Simia intersection in al-Samou' village, south of Hebron. Two of the Palestinian civilians were killed and the third sustained serious injuries. Paramedics tried to reach the victims, but Israeli forces denied them access, claiming that there were no wounded persons and that the area was a closed military area. At approximately 11:00, a Palestinian civilian vehicle managed to take one of the wounded civilians to Abu al-Hassan al-Qasem Hospital in Yatta, south of Hebron, where he was pronounced dead. Medical personnel at the hospital said that the body had six bullets in the left jaw, ear, head, chest, neck, and left thigh. The victim was identified as Na'im Salama Mohammed al-Najjar (34) from Ethna village, south of Hebron. At approximately 11:30, another civilian vehicle arrived at the hospital with another of the injured civilians. The victim was dead, as a bullet to his right shoulder had settled in his heart. The victim was identified as Anwar Khalil Abed Rabbu (27) from Yatta.

The settler, who had been driving a truck when the incident occurred, said that the three Palestinians had attacked him with an iron stick and he had fired at them in response. The Israeli police briefly questioned the truck driver before he was taken to Soroka Hospital in Beersheba to receive medical treatment for a minor injury. The settler claimed that, while he was driving his truck near al-Simia village, he was attacked by three Palestinian persons, and opened fire at them in response. As a result, two were killed and the third was wounded.



A car burnt by Israeli settlers >

> The annexation wall in the West Bank

In late June 2002, the Israeli government, then led by Ariel Sharon, decided to construct a separation barrier between Israel and the West Bank in order to prevent Palestinians from entering Israeli territory except through an established security system. The Israeli government claimed that the barrier was being constructed as a security measure and without any political implications. Over time, as new facts were created on the ground, some Israeli politicians stated that the barrier would constitute the border line between Israel and a future Palestinian state.

Over the years, Israel has completed the construction of many sections of the wall, which is being constructed inside West Bank territory rather than along the Green Line (the pre-1967 border) separating the West Bank from Israel. Citing security concerns in order to unilaterally create new facts on the ground, Israel has used the wall in its negotiations with Palestinians, who aspire to establish their state within the 4 June 1967 boundaries. The wall, with its effective annexation of Palestinian land, has created a new reality on the ground that makes it difficult to discuss the establishment of a viable, contiguous Palestinian state.

On 9 July 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued an Advisory Opinion regarding the legal consequences of the wall, in response to a request by a UN General Assembly resolution of 3 December 2003. The Court ruled that the wall's construction inside the oPt, including East Jerusalem, violates international

law. The court also found that Israel is obliged to put an end to its violations of international law, stop the construction of the wall, dismantle the sections already constructed, abolish all relevant legislation and orders, and compensate Palestinians harmed by the construction of the wall.

In spite of the ICJ Advisory Opinion, Israeli forces have continued to construct the annexation wall. In 2012, construction was mainly focused around Jerusalem. Israeli forces have completed the construction of the majority of the wall around the city according to the plans of the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem. The main principle determining the route in the Jerusalem area is that the route follows the city's municipal borders. In 1967, Israel annexed substantial parts of the West Bank to the municipality of Jerusalem, a total of approximately 70,000 dunums. The Palestinian population of these annexed areas is now approximately 220,000. Two sections of the wall do not run along the municipal border. One is in the Kufr 'Aqab neighbourhood, and the other is in the area of the Shu'afat refugee camp. These areas are separated from the rest of the city by the wall, even though they lie within the city's municipal area.

In 2012, Israeli forces continued to confiscate Palestinian lands in order to continue construction work on the annexation wall. On 8 July 2012, Israeli forces issued a military order, confiscating 567.5 dunums of

land from Sourif village, northwest of Hebron. The notice (No. T/15/12) was issued by the Israeli military and was signed by GOC Central Command, Nitzan Alon. Attached to the notice were a number of maps showing the lands to be confiscated and the route of the wall, which runs through confiscated lands in the village. The notice stated, "I announce herein that these lands have been confiscated for security purposes, i.e. for the construction of the annexation wall".

The lands to be confiscated are as follows:

1. Al-Jab'a village, area no. 3, al-Khanzeer Wadi, Abdu-Twain and al-Habla;
2. Area no. 4, the al-Hour area; and
3. Sourif village: area no. 2, Deir Mousa area, Qurinat Ghazala, Khat Abu-Ghonaim area and Thahret al-Mansra.

According to the announcement by the Municipality of Sourif, the planned route of the annexation wall is on the northern lands of Sourif. The wall will run from the Thaher al-Mansra area in the east, which is located near the 'Beit 'Ain' settlement, to Khat al-Baraka and Deir Mousa in the west, near an Israeli forces watchtower. The wall will be constructed near civilian houses. Israeli forces have already submitted notices ordering Palestinians to halt the construction work of civilian houses in some of the areas.

The Israeli judiciary continues to serve the policies of the Israeli occupation authorities. In this context, the Israeli High Court has rejected a number of petitions submitted by Palestinian civilians against the confiscation of their lands. In very rare cases, the court has ordered slight changes to the route of the wall, such as in relation to the lands in the Kherbat Jabara area, south of Tulkarm.

In July 2002, Israeli forces began to construct a section of the annexation wall surrounding the Kherbat Jabara from three sides: the north, east, and south. Consequently, the area was completely separated from other Palestinian areas. Following a number of legal challenges by the inhabitants of the area, the Israeli Supreme Court issued a ruling amending the route of the wall, confining it to the northern and western sides of the area. It should be mentioned that the length of this revised section of the wall, the implementation of which began in May 2011, is 6.01 kilometres. The previous section was 4.15 kilometres. This means more agricultural land will be destroyed to make way for the construction of the wall. According to available data, 1,750 dunums of Kherbat Jabara and the houses built on it, as well as 2,000 dunums of al-Ra'es, Kuffor Sour and Kuffor Jamal, adjacent to the eastern side of the wall, will remain on the Palestinian side of the new section of the wall. As a result, the total of the lands on the Palestinian side of the wall will amount to 3,750 dunums. In addition, approximately 300 Palestinians from Kherbat Jabara remain isolated from other Palestinian areas. The wall will continue to isolate approximately 2,500 dunums of land belonging to the aforementioned villages, which fall on the western side of the wall.²²

Restrictions on movement on both sides of the annexation wall

Israeli forces have imposed severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinians on both sides of the wall. In 2012, Israeli forces imposed additional restrictions on the movement of Palestinians.

Israeli forces reduced the hours during which gates established along the wall are opened, restricting access of Palestinian farmers to their agricultural lands, which are isolated behind the wall. Such measures are aimed at reducing the working hours of farmers, thus depriving them of their source of income.

22. Source: Areej Institute.

During the olive harvest, Israeli forces imposed a strict system on Palestinian farmers, ordering them to obtain permits issued by the Israeli Civil Administration in order to reach their lands, which have been isolated by the annexation wall. Farmers are forced to present evidence of their ownership of the land in order to obtain permits, which is extremely difficult as many of these lands are still registered in the names of people who have died or left the country.

The construction of the wall has resulted in new restrictions on the movement of Palestinians living near the route of the wall, in addition to the widespread restrictions that have been in place since the outbreak of the Second Intifada in September 2000. Farming is a primary source of income in the Palestinian communities located along the route of the wall. However, thousands of Palestinians have experienced difficulties accessing their fields and marketing their produce in other areas of the West Bank. This has a drastic impact on the economic prospects of the residents – whose economic situation is already very difficult – and drives many families into poverty.

The impact of restrictions on the movement of Palestinians living near the wall has not been limited to the agricultural sector, but includes numerous other aspects of life. Access to medical care, education, and relatives living in other parts of the oPt has been restricted. Palestinians are required to obtain permits to move through

the gates which are built into the wall, and which are operated under a strict security system. Israeli forces often close these gates for no apparent reason.

In 2012, the Palestinian Ministry of Education in Ramallah issued a report, 'The effect of the annexation wall on the educational process', which discusses the major obstacles to the educational process in communities that are isolated by the wall. The most significant problem highlighted in the report is the suffering of teachers who have to cross to the other side of the wall to reach communities where there are no schools. These teachers are subjected to humiliation by Israeli forces on a daily basis. On most days, they are denied access under a variety of pretexts. Teachers attempting to pass through the checkpoint in the annexation wall near the entrance of Barta'a village in Jenin are regularly denied permission to cross. Teachers are regularly delayed at checkpoint gates for hours before being denied access to the village, during which time they are subjected to profane language and body searches, especially on female teachers. Students of Ras Teira and al-Dab'a villages in Qalqilya, and the female teachers of Barta'a School for Girls, are regularly subjected to such treatment. Israeli soldiers also prohibit employees of the Ministry of Education from accessing the schools which have been cut off by the wall, which decreases the level of coordination between the schools and the offices of the Ministry of Education, and disrupts the educational process in general.

➤ The absence of justice in the Israeli legal system

In 2012, Palestinians continued to be denied the right to justice and compensation by the Israeli legal system, which also shielded Israeli war criminals from being held responsible or prosecuted for committing crimes.

An amendment to the legislation, Amendment No. 8, which applies retroactively from 2000 onwards, exempts the State of Israel of any liability arising from damages caused to a resident of an enemy territory during a 'combat action' or 'military operation'. This amendment disregards the vital question of the legality of these attacks. It also ignores the damage caused to the victims as a result of such attacks, potentially violating rules governing the conduct of armed forces during military operations, as prescribed under international humanitarian law. Amendment No. 8 directly contravenes the norms of customary international law, which hold that a State is responsible for all acts committed by persons who are operating as part of its armed forces. The Israeli legal system is used to shield suspected Israeli war criminals from justice. No senior Israeli officials have ever been questioned or prosecuted, despite the large number of reports issued by United Nations agencies and international investigation committees. The Goldstone Report was one of the most significant of these reports, and in which the UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict documented the crimes committed by Israeli forces during the 23-day offensive on the Gaza Strip, 'Operation Cast Lead', which took place from 27 December 2008 to 18 January 2009. The report described them as serious crimes.

Most prominent cases of denial of justice by the Israeli justice system

1. The al-Samouni family

On 1 May 2012, the MAG responded to the criminal complaint filed by PCHR on 18 May 2009 regarding the killing and injury of civilian members of the al-Samouni family during an Israeli attack.²³ The MAG informed PCHR of its decision to close the case, stating that Israeli forces had not made any error by targeting the house and that the State of Israel was not liable for any damages caused as the incident occurred in the context of a military operation in the Gaza Strip. On 10 May 2012, PCHR lodged an appeal of this decision, and sent a reminder letter on 15 July 2012. PCHR continues to closely follow the case. PCHR believes that the MAG's decision to close the case makes a mockery of international law. Moreover, the decision proves that the Israeli judiciary and investigative system are not impartial and that, therefore, it is not possible to rely on the results of their investigations.

23. This attack resulted in the willful killing of 27 civilians and the injury of 35. Israeli forces targeted the house in which the family was gathered. This incident, which took place over a number of days, was one of the most horrific events of Israel's 27 December 2008 – 18 January 2009 offensive on the Gaza Strip, 'Operation Cast Lead'.

2. The Abu Selmiya family

On 6 September 2012, the Israeli District Court in Jaffa issued a decision rejecting the civil case filed on behalf of the Abu Selmiya family, nine of whom were killed when the family home was shelled by Israeli forces on 12 July 2006. Although the court admitted that the house had been targeted with one missile by an Israeli warplane, it claimed that the incident had occurred in the context of a military operation and, therefore, no liability arises for the State of Israel. This finding was notwithstanding the fact that the attack was carried out without due consideration for the principle of proportionality, and ignoring the fact that the victims were protected persons under the Fourth Geneva Convention. PCHR intends to continue its efforts on this case by appealing the court's decision. Furthermore, PCHR will continue its efforts to bring Israeli war criminals to justice, by securing their prosecution in international and national courts based on the principles of universal jurisdiction.

3. The al-Daya Family

On 5 September 2012, the Israeli Central Court in Nazareth issued a decision dismissing a claim filed on behalf of the al-Daya family, 22 of whom were killed during 'Operation Cast Lead'. PCHR filed a compensation claim before the Israeli courts on 19 August 2010, following the lack of response to a criminal complaint submitted to the Israeli Military Prosecutor's Office of the MAG and a compensation claim submitted to the Compensation Officer of the Israeli Ministry of Defence. Israeli newspapers quoted the Israeli judge as stating that "the victims were killed in the course of a military operation. In wars, each party is fully responsible for the damage incurred to its members or to civilians". PCHR points out that these statements are in clear contradiction of the Geneva Conventions and international law conventions, as the victims of this crime were all civilians and the targeted house was a civilian building. PCHR will continue its efforts to obtain justice for the victims of this crime by appealing the decision. Furthermore, PCHR will continue its efforts to bring Israeli war criminals to justice, by securing their prosecution in international and national courts based on the principles of universal jurisdiction.

4. The Hajjaj family

In 2012, the Israeli Military Court issued a 45-day sentence against an Israeli soldier, who was implicated in the killing of Raya Salamah Abdel Karim Abu Hajjaj and Ma-jeda Abdel Karim Abu Hajjaj. Eyewitness statements indicated that the condemned soldier shot the two women in cold blood while they were leaving their home, despite the fact that they were waving a white flag. The attack took place during the Israeli ground incursion into the Gaza Strip as part of 'Operation Cast Lead'. PCHR believes that the aforementioned sentence constitutes a mockery of victims' rights under international law, granting Israeli soldiers the impunity to commit further crimes.

5. Rachel Corrie

On 28 August 2012, the Israeli court issued a decision stating that Israeli forces were not responsible for the killing of Rachel Corrie. On 16 March 2003, Rachel was killed while she was trying, along with several other foreign activists from the International Solidarity Movement, to prevent demolition of homes in the al-Salam neighbourhood of Rafah, southern Gaza Strip. PCHR submitted a request to Israel to question the eyewitnesses who witnessed the incident and who confirmed in their testimony to PCHR that Israeli soldiers had deliberately driven over her with a bulldozer. However, the court did not consider that the incident had involved negligence by the Israeli soldiers. The Israeli judge declared that there was no justification for requesting compensation from the State of Israel since the incident had not involved wrongdoing by the Israeli forces. PCHR supported the Corrie family in a compensation claim which was filed in 2005, after the MAG and the Compensation Office of the Israeli Ministry of Defence rejected the criminal and civil complaints submitted by PCHR.

The ongoing imposition of obstacles denying Palestinians access to justice

Based on our long-term experience of dealing with the Israeli justice system, PCHR is of the opinion that that it is a system which completely disregards justice for Palestinians while deliberately imposing barriers that deny them the opportunity to access the courts in their efforts to obtain justice. In her fourth report, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, emphasised the absence of accountability for crimes committed in the Gaza Strip. She also wrote about the monetary and physical obstacles which deprive the people of the Gaza Strip of access to justice. She called on Israel to conduct investigations which comply with due process, compensate victims, and halt discriminatory practices that deny Palestinians access to justice. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) expressed concern about the obstacles faced by Palestinians seeking access to justice, particularly the victims of 'Operation Cast Lead'. On 15 and 16 February 2012, in its 80th session, the Committee carried out a review of Israel's record, and emphasised the discriminatory nature of Israel's policy of creating monetary and physical obstacles which deny Palestinians access to justice.

PCHR monitored the three most significant monetary and physical obstacles placed in the way of Palestinians, particularly the population of the Gaza Strip, who attempt to access justice.

1. Statute of limitations

According to Israeli law, civil complaints must be filed to the compensation officer in the Israeli Ministry of Defence within 60 days of the date of the incident. Compensation claims must be filed before the Israeli civil courts within two years of the date of the event. Otherwise, victims lose their right to an effective remedy. These periods constitute a significant obstacle in light of the restrictions placed on freedom of movement by the policy of closure imposed on the Gaza Strip, under which Palestinians are deprived of access to the Israeli investigation authorities and courts.

2. Court fees and court guarantees

Israeli courts impose high court fees and court guarantees on Palestinians who file cases. Calculating the fees is left to the discretion of the court. In PCHR's experience, court guarantees are at least 10,000 NIS (approximately 2,800 USD) and can be much higher. In a recent case filed by PCHR, the plaintiffs were required to pay 20,000 NIS (approximately 5,600 USD) in court guarantees for each of the victims on behalf of whom the claims were filed. These requirements constitute a significant monetary barrier to access to justice.

3. Physical access to lawyers and the courts

Under Israeli law, for a testimony or an affidavit to be legal, an eyewitness or a victim must physically appear before a court. Since 1967, in spite of decisions by courts summoning victims or eyewitnesses, Israeli forces have generally prevented them from travelling outside the Gaza Strip. As a result, victims' claims are dismissed and dropped. In addition, due to restrictions imposed on the movement of its lawyers, PCHR has been forced to appoint lawyers inside Israel, which results in additional financial burdens. All applications submitted by Israeli lawyers requesting permission to travel to the Gaza Strip to meet with their clients have been rejected, negatively impacting their ability to adequately represent victims.

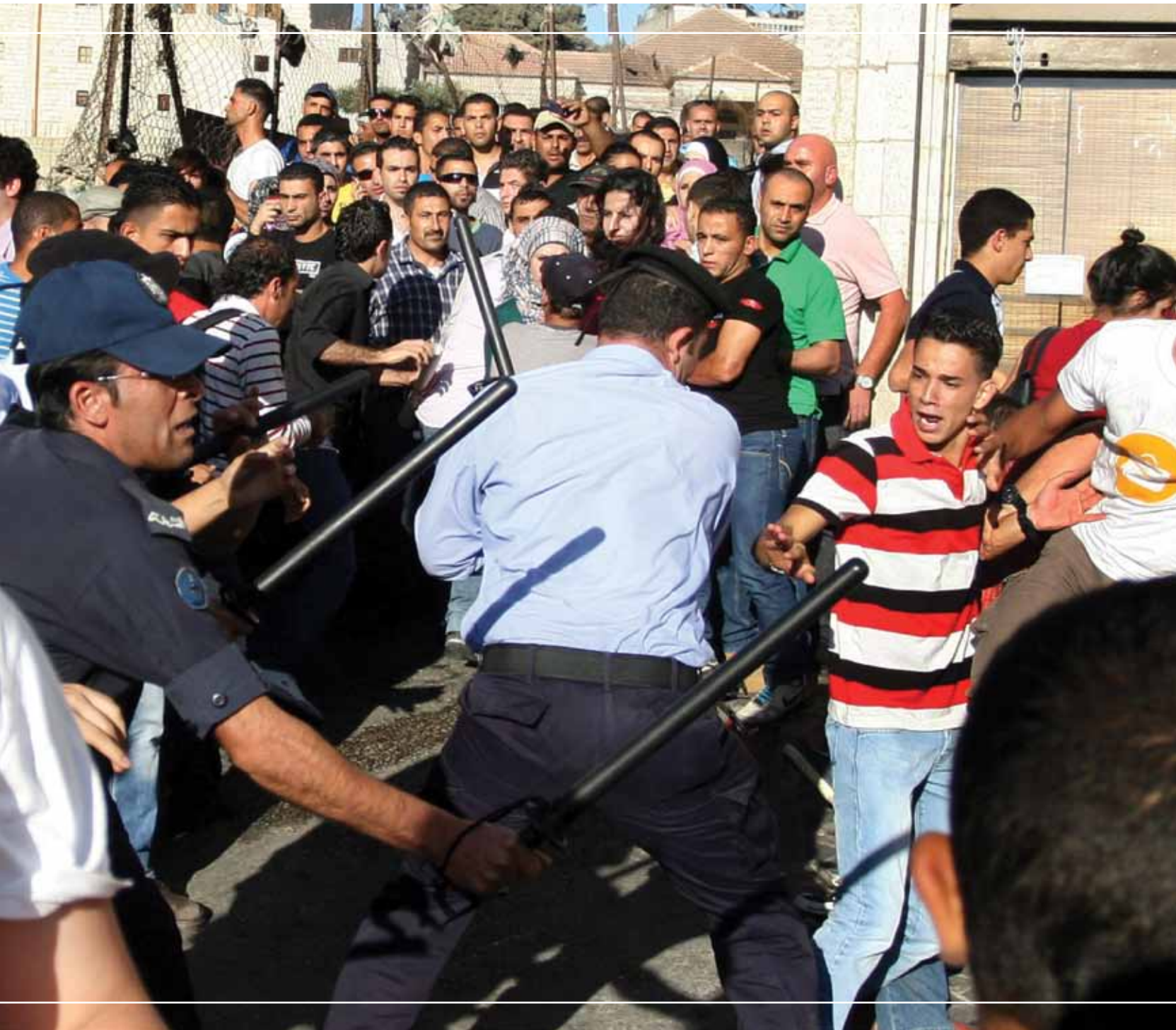
In addition, the Military Prosecutor's Office of the Military Advocate General (MAG) and the Compensation Office of the Israeli Ministry of Defence often ignore criminal civil complaints filed to them on behalf of Palestinian victims. For example, since 2009, PCHR has submitted 1,046 civil complaints to the compensation officer in the Ministry of Defence, but has received only 16 responses in relation to 26 cases. During the same period, PCHR submitted 490 criminal complaints to the MAG, but it has received only 19 responses regarding 23 cases. Responses were limited to acknowledging receipt of the complaint, claiming that the complaint would be investigated and that PCHR would be informed of the findings.

OPCHR often turns to the Israeli court system to seek redress for victims via a civil case, which must be filed within two years of the date of the incident. In 2012, PCHR lawyers were faced with the newly-passed Amendment No. 8 to the 1952 Israeli Torts Law (State Liability). In effect, this amendment grants full impunity to Israeli soldiers against claims for damages. It absolves Israel of liability for damages caused during military operations, denying the victims of such damages the right to compensation. Furthermore, the Israeli justice system lacks impartiality and integrity, and has repeatedly denied Israeli forces' responsibility for the deaths of Palestinian civilians. PCHR has followed up on 100 cases of Palestinians seeking compensation for the crimes committed during 'Operation Cast Lead'. Four years have passed since the offensive, yet PCHR has been able to obtain compensation for only two cases to date. In both cases, no judicial sentence was issued. Compensation was agreed upon only on the basis of a settlement with the Israeli Military Prosecutor's Office of the MAG.

Specific achievements of PCHR

PCHR managed to secure compensation for the family of Kassab and Ibrahim Shurrab, who were both killed by Israeli forces on 16 January 2009 during 'Operation Cast Lead', by reaching a settlement with representatives of the Military Prosecutor's Office of the MAG. PCHR had submitted a criminal complaint to the Israeli Military Prosecutor's Office of the MAG, and a civil complaint to the Compensation Office in the Israeli Ministry of Defence on 8 March 2009. Both complaints were ignored. Therefore, PCHR submitted a compensation claim to the Magistrate Court in Haifa on 19 August 2010, eventually leading to the settlement in 2012.

PCHR's efforts to prosecute Israeli war criminals before third country courts, under the principle of international jurisdiction, have resulted in self-imposed international travel restrictions for the accused. PCHR hopes that Palestine's admission as a non-member observer State to the UN will provide new momentum for our efforts to seek justice for victims at the international level. Palestine's new status offers the Palestinian leadership the opportunity to join the International Criminal Court (ICC), providing a new avenue for victims of Israeli violations to seek justice. Joining the ICC will also represent a very important step toward ending Israeli impunity against prosecution under the international law. PCHR calls upon the Palestinian leadership to join the ICC, the international conventions, and other human rights and international humanitarian law conventions without delay.





Section 2: Violations of human rights by the PNA, and obstacles to democratic reform



> Violations of the right to life and personal security

In 2012, there were continued violations of the right to life and personal security due to the misuse of weapons, as well as violations of the rule of the law in the oPt. PCHR recorded the killing of at least 54 people (43 in the Gaza Strip and 11 in the West Bank), including five children and three women. More than 115 people were wounded.

Particularly serious were the extra-judicial killings of seven people by masked gunmen during the Israeli offensive in November. One of the men had been arrested by the Internal Security Service (ISS). The additional six men had been convicted by the military judiciary in the Gaza Strip of collaboration with hostile security services, namely the Israeli forces, and sentenced to death.

Other incidents related to the misuse or mishandling of weapons in the oPt included the use of weapons in personal and familial disputes, murders motivated by “family honour”, and the extra-judicial killing of civilians on grounds of collaboration with the Israeli forces.

Misuse of weapons

In 2012, 26 persons, including five children, were killed in incidents involving the misuse or mishandling of weapons in the oPt. Four of those were killed in the West Bank. The most prominent cases were as follows:



- On 6 February, unknown gunmen opened fire at Yusef Mahdi Abu ‘Ebeid (20) and Othman Mohammed Mansour (38), while they were standing near their homes, which are adjacent to al-Amal Society of the Disabled in Yebna refugee camp in Rafah, in the south of the Gaza Strip. Abu ‘Ebeid was immediately killed by bullets throughout his body, and Mansour was wounded.
- On 8 February, two brothers, Monadel Hassan Manasra (38) and Mohammed (21) from Beit Foreek village near Nablus, in the north of the West Bank, were killed when a person in civilian clothes opened fire at them. The brothers were at Dweikat Office for Public Services on Faysal Street, east of Nablus, when they were shot.
- On 10 March, Baraka Ghassan al-Mughrabi (2) was at home in al-Zaitoun neighbourhood in the east of Gaza City when the funeral of two victims of Israeli attacks passed by. He was struck in the head with a live bullet from celebratory gunfire. On 13



March, Al-Mughrabi was pronounced dead by medical sources at Shifa hospital.

- On 5 April, Mohammed Yasser Mohammed Saleh (17), from Jabalia refugee camp, was killed at home when he sustained entry and exit wounds from a bullet to the chest due to the mishandling of a weapon belonging to a family member.
 - On 19 June, Hadeel Ahmed Sa'eed al-Haddad (1.5) died from shrapnel wounds in the head, which she sustained when a home-made rocket landed on the home of her grandfather, Sa'eed Mohammed al-Haddad, in al-Zaitoun neighbourhood in the east of Gaza City. She was standing at the entrance of the house when the rocket landed. In the same incident, her cousin, Zakariya Mohammed Sa'eed al-Haddad (9), sustained shrapnel wounds in the head and was transferred to Shifa hospital in Gaza City. Medical sources described his wounds as moderate.
 - On 24 June, Mohammed Samir 'Eliañ Qeshta (25) was killed by a bullet to the head while he was riding his motorcycle near his house in al-Salam neighbourhood, south of Rafah. He was killed as a result of heavy celebratory gunfire, celebrating the victory of Dr Mohammed Mursi, the Freedom and Justice Party candidate, in the Egyptian presidential elections. Another 19 people were wounded throughout the Gaza Strip as a result of celebratory gunfire on the same day.
 - On 1 July, an unknown gunman fired at Shami Yusef al-Shami (47), a member of the PLC from the Fatah bloc, while he was standing in front of his home in Wadi Bruqin neighbourhood in the west of Jenin, in the north of the West Bank. Al-Shami was wounded by two bullets to the right thigh and was transferred to Jenin governmental hospital to receive medical treatment. His wounds were described as moderate.
 - On 29 July, Hassan Majdi al-Hawani (19) was killed when he was shot by a gunman affiliated to a military wing of a Palestinian faction. A quarrel had erupted between the two men near al-Hawani's house in al-Maghgazi refugee camp, in the central Gaza Strip.
 - On 15 August, an explosive device planted by unknown persons exploded in front of Hawwa Women's Hairdresser in al-Nusairat refugee camp, in the central Gaza Strip. The shop belongs to Wasfiya Mohammed Nejem, who also lives in the camp.
- Material damage was caused to the entrance and contents of the shop. The windows of neighbouring houses were also damaged.
- On 5 September, unknown gunmen opened fire at Colonel Hesham al-Rakh, Deputy Director of the Preventive Palestinian Services (PSS) in Jenin, as he was driving in his KIA Forte car towards his home in al-Hadaf housing project in Jenin. Al-Rakh was struck with seven bullets throughout his body, with several bullets lodging in the chest. He was transferred to Martyr Khalil Suleiman hospital to receive medical treatment. However, doctors failed to save his life and pronounced him dead.
 - On 21 October, an unknown gunman opened fire at Abdullah Khalil Istayeh (40), while he was driving his white BMW car on Salah Eddin Street near al-Qarara village in Khan Yunis, Gaza Strip. Istayeh was wounded by several bullets to the chest and neck. He was immediately transferred to Nasser hospital in Khan Yunis to receive medical treatment, but he was pronounced dead following his arrival to the hospital.
 - On 22 October, Khalil al-Kafarna sustained serious wounds when a home-made rocket landed near him as he was walking in al-Madakha area, north of Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip. Al-Kafarna was immediately transferred to Beit Hanoun governmental hospital, where it was found that he had sustained shrapnel wounds to the abdomen and pelvis. His right arm was amputated. He was transferred to Shifa hospital in Gaza City due to the seriousness of his condition. At approximately 19:30 on the same day, al-Kafarna was pronounced dead by medical sources in Shifa hospital.
 - On 24 December, Walid Abdul Khaliq Shakhsa (24) from al-Shuja'iya neighbourhood, in the east of Gaza City, was admitted to Shifa hospital. He was dead on arrival. Shakhsa was killed by a bullet to the head while he was mishandling his weapon.

Personal and family disputes

In 2012, 17 persons, including five in the West Bank, were killed as a result of the use of weapons in personal and familial disputes. The most prominent cases were as follows:

- On 27 April, Mo'men Marid Shamalakh (23) from al-Sheikh 'Ejleen neighbourhood, southwest of Gaza City, was killed while attempting to intervene to end a family dispute that erupted between the Abdul Jawwad and al-Bobou families.
- On 6 August, Khaled Taher Abu Kmeil (36) from al-Bureij refugee camp was pronounced dead by medical sources at al-Aqsa Martyrs' hospital in Deir al-Balah. He had been wounded by a bullet to the abdomen the previous day when he was shot by a relative during a family dispute. Imad Ahmed Abu Kmeil (22) was wounded by a bullet to the right leg.
- On 12 December, a family dispute erupted between the Qerqez and Shehada families on al-Nazla Street in Jabalia. The dispute escalated and an automatic weapon (a Kalashnikov) was used by one of the parties to the dispute. As a result, Ramadan Yusef Qerqez (34) was killed by two bullets to the chest and face. Six others who were present in the area were wounded, including two children and a woman.

Murders for "family honour"

In 2012, PCHR documented the murders of three women and a man in Gaza "to protect family honour". PCHR is gravely concerned about the occurrence of such crimes and calls on the Palestinian authorities to take more measures to confront them.

Last year, in 2011, PCHR had observed a remarkable improvement in terms of the measures taken to put an end to violence in the community, especially murders on the grounds of so-called "family honour". On 15 May 2011, President Mahmoud Abbas issued a decision with the force of law putting an end to the issuance of lenient sentences against the perpetrators of so-called "honour killings". PCHR hoped that this decision would signify a step forward in confronting these crimes, whose perpetrators enjoyed impunity due to the application of lenient sentences that did not exceed three years. These lenient sentences contributed to the increase of these crimes in the Palestinian society in recent decades, undermining the rule of law. These crimes were as follows:

- On 22 March, Kh. Kh. (22), a woman from Khan Yunis, was admitted to the hospital. Her condition was very serious as she had ingested a toxic substance under the pretext of attempting to commit suicide. The girl was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to undergo a gastric lavage. As a result, she showed slight improvement. At approximately 01:30, on 23 March 2012, a relative of the girl came to the hospital and entered the ICU. The doctor in charge told him that the girl's condition was improving. The girl's relative pointed a gun at her, threatening to kill her. The doctor and a nurse tried to prevent him. He threatened to shoot them, and then shot the girl in the head. The girl died immediately. The perpetrator later handed himself into the police.
- On 18 July, W. M. Q (19), a woman from al-Shati' refugee camp, west of Gaza City, was admitted to Shifa hospital in Gaza City. She was dead on arrival. Medical sources in the Forensics Department stated that the victim had been strangled to death. Ayman al-Batniji, spokesperson for the Palestinian police, informed PCHR that police had opened an investigation into the crime and arrested the girl's father and brother, who confessed that they had committed the crime on the grounds of "family honour".
- On 19 August, Palestinian police found the body of Z. Kh. 'A (44), a man from al-Nusairat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, on the beach in Deir al-Balah. The victim had been arrested by the General Intelligence Service (GIS) six months before his killing on the grounds of "family honour". He had been released on 17 August to spend six days with his family on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr.

Extra-judicial killings on the grounds of collaboration with Israeli forces

During the latest Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip (14-21 November 2012), gunmen killed seven persons. One of the men had been detained by the Internal Security

Service and the six others had been convicted by the military judiciary of collaboration with hostile security services (Israeli forces) and sentenced to death.

- On 16 November, A. 'A. 'A (41) was killed by six bullets to the head and chest when four masked gunmen shot him on al-Jala' Street, in the north of Gaza City. The victim had been arrested by the ISS on 21 December 2011 and was held in detention until the date on which he was killed.
- On 20 November, a number of gunmen driving cars and riding motorcycles arrived at the intersection near Bahloul Gas Station in Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood, in the north of Gaza City. They pulled six persons out of the cars, and shot and killed them. The bodies of some of the dead men

were subjected to ill-treatment. Some of the gunmen were seen dragging the body of one of the victims along the street behind a motorcycle. The killed men were:

1. Z. A. H., who was sentenced to death on 21 September 2012;
2. R. A. B., who was sentenced to death on 11 October 2012;
3. Gh. F. 'A., who was sentenced to death on 8 February 2012;
4. 'A. M. 'A., who was sentenced to death on 11 January 2012;
5. F. M. Sh., who was sentenced to death on 31 May 2011; and
6. N. 'A., who was sentenced to death on 3 March 2010.

➤ Arrests, detention, torture, and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment

Following the Israeli offensive in November, the internal Palestinian political situation took a positive turn. Relations between the two rival movements, Fatah and Hamas, improved significantly. Respective media statements called for a push towards reconciliation and an end to the political division.

On 25 November 2012, the Hamas government in Gaza issued a press release after their weekly government meeting, granting an amnesty to people accused of criminal charges in relation to the 2006 Palestinian internal conflict. A special committee was formed to implement the government's decision and to pave the way for a new era of Palestinian reconciliation. In a press release, PCHR welcomed the government's decision, and expressed the hope that this decision will advance Palestinian reconciliation talks, marking the end of the six-year long political division.

This section of the report highlights illegal arrests, including political arrests, and the issuance of repeated summons against members and supporters of the Fatah movement in the Gaza Strip, and the Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and *Hizb ut Tahrir* (Liberation Party) movements in the West Bank. Such actions have been accompanied by house searches and the confiscation of personal belongings. The report also focuses on the failure of the Palestinian authorities to implement a court ruling ordering the release of political prisoners, particularly in the West Bank. It further addresses the use of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment in detention centres in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which is carried out on political or criminal grounds or, in some cases, as a result of personal disputes with security officers.

Arrests and summons on political grounds

In 2012, security services in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank intensified campaigns of repeated summons and detentions of political rivals, often under the pretext of security reasons. Such campaigns often failed to follow legal procedures for arrests according to the Palestinian law and international human rights law. Moreover, detainees were

held under conditions that violated their human dignity. Palestinian lawyers, including PCHR lawyers, have faced difficulties visiting their clients in prisons and detention facilities in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Since August 2011, PCHR lawyers have been prevented from visiting clients detained by the ISS in Gaza.²⁴

Gaza Strip

Dozens of members of the Fatah movement, including a number of women, were repeatedly summoned to appear at ISS offices throughout the Gaza Strip, and a number of them were arrested. They were subjected to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment, such as being detained in cells or small rooms, and being forced to stand for long hours in cold weather or under the sun. They were also obliged to appear in ISS offices after being released.

In March 2012, during one of the biggest of these campaigns, members of the Fatah movement in the Gaza Strip were repeatedly summoned and detained. According to information available to PCHR, the ISS delivered summons to members of the Fatah movement, ordering them to refer to the ISS centre in his area of residence. They reported that they were held from the morning until the evening, and that they were summoned more than once, sometimes on consecutive days. A number reported that they were held under degrading conditions, including detention in small cells. Interrogations focused on their activities in the Fatah movement in the Gaza Strip and their alleged role in incitement against the Gaza government.

West Bank

The PSS and the GIS in the West Bank carried out campaigns of illegal summons and arrests against members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, including a number of academics. In some cases, they used excessive force against families of the detainees. They also searched houses and confiscated personal belongings of the detainees. The most significant cases in 2012 were:

- In late March and early April, the PSS and the GIS summoned dozens of Hamas members in the West Bank. The majority received summons to appear at the PSS or GIS office in his area of residence. PSS and GIS officers broke into the homes of some Hamas members and arrested them. According to the testimonies of some of those summoned and arrested, they were detained for several hours in the PSS or GIS office, questioned, and then released. Others reported receiving additional notices, ordering them to refer to the security services. PSS and GIS have released most of those detained, while some remain in custody. Of those detained, one person was brought to trial on 27 March after three days of detention. This person had been arrested by the GIS while he was leaving a mosque.
- On 19 September, a widespread campaign of arrests was carried out by PSS and GIS in the West Bank, targeting dozens of members of Hamas. 71 civilians, who are members of Hamas, were arrested. Most of those detainees were first summoned by phone to appear at a PSS or GIS office, where they were then arrested. Others were arrested from their homes or workplaces. The detainees included a number of Hamas leaders, reconciliation figures, former prisoners, journalists, youth activists, and university students.
- Six detainees in PNA prisons went on hunger strike to protest the fact that the PNA has kept them in custody, despite Palestinian court rulings ordering their release, and to protest against their detention conditions. Othman al-Qawasmi, Mohammed

24 For more information, see PCHR press release, «PCHR Warns Against the Continuing Obstruction of Detainees: Visitation at Detention Centres of ISS», issued on 25 April 2012.

Abu Hadeed, Mo'tasem al-Natsheh, and Mohammed al-Atrash, all from Hebron, announced an open-ended hunger strike on 20 June 2012. They were transferred to the GIS prison in Bethlehem after being detained in Jericho central prison.²⁵ Two more political detainees joined the hunger strike on 22 June 2012: Anas Abu Markhiya, from Hebron, who has been detained at the GIS prison in Ramallah since 19 December 2011; and Islam al-Arouri, from Ramallah, who has been detained at the PSS prison since 7 October 2010, having been sentenced to three years of imprisonment.

Torture and ill-treatment

The security services of both the Ramallah and Gaza governments continued to subject Palestinian civilians to illegal arrests, torture, and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment in 2012. Such practices were carried out in prisons and detention centres of Palestinian police and security services in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The use of torture can be attributed to the ongoing political division, criminal behaviour, and disputes arising between detainees and security officers. Torture methods include: insults; beating using batons, sharp tools, feet and hands; tying of detainees' feet and hands to a chair and beating with batons or wires; among others. Detainees were also held in cells or small rooms, placed in solitary confinement, and forced to stand for long hours in the cold or under the sun.

Gaza Strip

In 2012, PCHR documented many cases in which dozens of individuals were subjected to torture and other forms of cruel treatment by the ISS and the police in the Gaza Strip, during their detention on political grounds. Others were also subjected to torture during their detention on criminal grounds. PCHR documented a number of testimonies of victims and their relatives²⁶ on being subjected to torture inside detention centres of the PNA in the Gaza Strip. The following are examples of such cases:

West Bank

In 2012, Palestinian security services in the West Bank continued to practice torture and other forms of cruel treatment against detainees. PCHR also received testimony from released detainees that many of those who were arrested during repeated campaigns of arrests against activists of Hamas and Islamic Jihad were detained under cruel and degrading conditions. Evidence shows that torture was practiced – in the vast majority of cases – against those detained on the grounds of political affiliation, despite media statements denying these incidents and affirming that there are no cases of political detention in PNA prisons. Methods of torture were also practiced against individuals detained for criminal reasons.

The following are examples of such cases:

Deaths in prisons and detention facilities

In 2012, PCHR recorded four incidents in which the circumstances surrounding the death of a detainee raised suspicions that he might have been subjected to torture by the security services in Gaza or the West Bank. According to the findings of PCHR investigations:

1. In July 2012, retired officer Usama Mansour (49) died in mysterious circumstances inside a Military Intelligence Service (MIS) detention centre in Ramallah. Mansour was arrested on 19 June 2012, and convicted of "corruption" charges, following

25. These individuals were arrested in September 2010 when the PSS launched a widespread arrest campaign against Hamas members in Hebron and Ramallah. They were detained on political grounds, accused of harming efforts to achieve national unity. Palestinian courts, including the Palestinian High Court of Justice, have issued rulings ordering the release of these detainees, as well as others who were previously arrested on the same grounds. However, the PA has failed to implement the court rulings.

26. PCHR keeps the names of the victims and their relatives confidential at their request, and they shall be referred to by their initials.

allegations by the Palestinian security services. After his death, security services claimed that Mansour had committed suicide, allegedly jumping from the second floor of the prison. Two official committees were formed to investigate the circumstances of Mansour's death in detention: an MIS committee and a committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ramallah. According to testimony from the victim's wife, the body underwent an autopsy in the Abu Dees Forensic Centre. The preliminary report showed that the body had sustained bruising. The cause of death was to be announced once the laboratory tests results were available. The victim's wife called for another autopsy, which was held at the Abu Kbeer Forensic Centre in Jerusalem. The autopsy results were similar to those of the first autopsy and the cause of death was not mentioned, also pending laboratory test results. According to the wife's testimony, by the end of 2012, the family's lawyer was yet to receive these results. Mr Za'al Ramya, the family's lawyer, confirmed to PCHR that he had not been presented with the test results or the findings of the committees' investigations.

2. On 4 August 2012, Raed Mahmoud Diab al-Halta (27), from Tulkarm refugee camp, died inside Tulkarm rehabilitation centre, where he was serving a sentence that had been issued on 8 July 2012. According to PCHR documentation, on the day of his death, al-Halta, who is schizophrenic, had become involved in a fight with one of the officers at the rehabilitation centre. Consequently, he was put into solitary confinement, with his hands and feet cuffed, and tied him with metal chains. According to other inmates of the rehabilitation centre, al-Halta was severely beaten. This was confirmed by the forensic medical report, which found that al-Halta's body had sustained 24 different injuries, including bruises, scratches, cuts, and marks on the body indicating that it had been tied and hit with solid objects. Al-Halta also sustained a minor tear in the kidney. At breakfast-time (the incident occurred during Ramadan), al-Halta was found unconscious. He was transferred to Thabet Thabet hospital in Tulkarm where he was pronounced dead at 21:00. His body was transferred to the Forensic Medical Centre of al-Najah University for autopsy.
3. On 16 October 2012, Mohammad Said Abdul-Motaleb al-Zaqzouq (27), from al-Qarara, was pronounced dead in Khan Younis police station. The Ministry of Interior and National Security in

Gaza stated, in a press release on their website, that al-Zaqzouq had committed suicide while being held in Khan Younis Central Prison pending investigation of criminal charges. The press release stated that the victim had hung himself using his blanket, and that he was immediately transferred to the hospital in a critical condition, where he later died. PCHR has followed al-Zaqzouq's case, and a PCHR fieldworker visited the Khan Younis police station. According to a police source, al-Zaqzouq arrived at the centre in an angered state at approximately 13:00, having been issued a warrant by the Attorney General. He was left in the hallway in order to calm down, since he was shouting loudly. The source added that al-Zaqzouq calmed down later in the afternoon but had another outburst after that, during which he took his clothes off, soiled himself and scattered faeces on himself and on the surrounding walls. The police called the Civil Defence to clean the man and the place. Al-Zaqzouq was placed in solitary confinement and was given a blanket to protect him from the cold. In the evening hours, he was found hanging in his cell. Police staff took him to another room and one of the detainees, who is a nurse, tried to resuscitate him while they waited for the ambulance to arrive. The ambulance transferred Mohammed to Nasser hospital in Khan Younis, where he was pronounced dead.

4. On 27 December 2012, Atef Khamis Derbas (52), a resident of Jabalya in the Gaza Strip, was pronounced dead while in detention in Ansar Central prison. Shawki Derbas, a brother of the deceased, told a PCHR fieldworker that Atef had been arrested three months previously by Palestinian police on the grounds of financial obligations (reimbursing cheques), and was detained in Jabalya police station. He was later transferred to Ansar central prison. Shawki added that Atef had suffered from a number of medical conditions, including an arterial blockage in the heart, bronchial asthma, and hypertension. His family had informed the police about his medical condition. According to medical sources in the Forensic Medicine Department in Shifa Hospital, Atef died due to complications arising from his heart and chest condition.

➤ Continued disruption of the legislature

The disruption of the PLC entered its sixth year in 2012. The complete absence of a mandated PLC, which is the legislative and monitoring authority of the PNA, is a result of actions taken against PLC members by Israel, and the fragmentation of the Palestinian executive which is ongoing since 2007.

The most recent measure by the Israeli government which targeted PLC members was the addition of the Hamas-affiliated 'Change and Reform' bloc to the list of terrorist entities. In July 2012, the Israeli Army Commander issued a decision that all Islamist blocs would be considered as "banned unions". The decision made reference to Article 84 (1) (b) of the Defense Regulations (State of Emergency) which were issued in 1945. The intention of the July decision was to legalise Israel's systematic oppression of PLC members from the 'Change and Reform' bloc in the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem. The decision also indicates that Israeli actions against PLC members from the 'Change and Reform' bloc will continue, in particular, arrests, shutting down of parliamentary offices, and harassment of anyone affiliated with these individuals.

Israeli forces adopted its policy against the PLC in 2006 after rejecting the results of the Palestinian parliamentary elections, which Hamas had won by a large percentage. Israel categorises Hamas as a terrorist organisation due to the role of the Al Qassam Brigades, the military wing of the Hamas movement, in resisting the Israeli occupation of Palestine. After the Palestinian elections, Israel decided to shut down the Palestinian government formed by the 'Change and Reform' parliamentary bloc. The Israeli government declared the 'Change and Reform' bloc to be a banned union in July 2009, forcing the bloc to change its name in the West Bank and Jerusalem to the 'Islamists Parliament Members' bloc. As outlined above, Israel responded by banning all Islamist blocs. These measures are part of an Israeli policy aimed at stifling Palestinian democratic development.

By the end of 2012, 14 PLC members remained in detention, including 11 members of the 'Change and Reform' bloc, two members of the Fatah bloc, and one member of the 'Abu Ali Mustafa' bloc, which is affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Jerusalemite PLC member Mohammed Abu Tair was deported to Ramallah in July 2010 according to an Israeli Magistrate Court ruling, where he remains. Two other Jerusalemite PLC members, Ahmed 'Attoun and Mohammed Toutah, are also in Ramallah, where they were deported after their Jerusalemite IDs were withdrawn. On 6 September 2012, Israeli forces arrested Mr 'Attoun from a sit-in at the ICRC in Jerusalem. The sit-in was organised in protest at the decision to withdraw his ID. He was later deported to Ramallah. On 23 January 2012, Toutah was arrested from a protest outside ICRC headquarters after it was raided by armed Israeli forces. Toutah is still in detention.

In 2012, 14 members of the PLC were imprisoned in Israeli jails. Most of the PLC members were from the 'Change and Reform' bloc, which is affiliated with Hamas, two were from Fatah, one was from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and three were former ministers. Those affiliated with Fatah and the PFLP were given life sentences, due to their alleged involvement in resistance against the occupation.

During 2012, 12 members of the 'Change and Reform' bloc, including the Speaker of PLC, Aziz Duwaik, were put into administrative detention. Four of them were released during the year, as well as another eight PLC members who had been arrested in previous years.

Israeli forces have arrested 47 PLC members during the past six years. Some have been arrested repeatedly and held for varying periods. Others have been released after spending years in detention without charge or trial, including two members of the 'Change and Reform' bloc, Mariem Mahmoud Salah and Muna Salim Masnour.

Continued legislative chaos in the PNA

The Palestinian legislature continues to be in a state of chaos. In Ramallah, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas issues presidential decrees which are enforced only in the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip, the 'Change and Reform' bloc issues laws on behalf of the PLC, and these are enforced solely in the Gaza Strip. The PLC's inability to convene has meant that it has not been able to fulfil its legislative role of monitoring and holding to account the executive authorities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Both the 'Change and Reform' bloc in Gaza and the Palestinian President in the West Bank are issuing laws unlawfully and in violation of the Palestinian Basic Law. In 2012, the 'Change and Reform' bloc debated, ratified, and issued four laws, without ratification by the President of the PNA. The bloc has issued a total of 32 laws on behalf of the PLC since the internal political division began. These laws, published in the Gaza Strip in the Palestinian Gazette, include 18 new laws, 10 amendments to former laws, and four laws relating to general budget approval. The 32 laws were issued on behalf of the PLC despite the lack of a quorum during their discussion or issuance, and without ratification by the President of the PNA.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has issued decrees that have the power of law without presenting them to the PLC. In 2012, the President issued nine decrees, bringing the number of decrees he has issued since the beginning of the internal political division to 68. These decrees consist of 23 new laws, 23 amendments or cancellation of former laws, seven related to general budget approval, and 15 decrees in the form of laws that fall under the specific mandate of the PLC. These decrees, which have the power of law, are in violation of Article 43 of the Palestinian Basic Law.

The most notable of these decrees during 2012 were Presidential Decree No. 3 related to the judiciary authority and Presidential Decree No. 4 to withdraw parliamentary immunity for PLC member, Mohammed Dahalan of the Fatah parliamentary bloc. The latter decree prompted a storm of criticism, because the is-

sue did not meet the requirement of extreme necessity, and because withdrawing immunity from a member of the PLC was seen as an abuse of the privileges of PLC members.

The disruption of the PLC has undermined the democratic process in the oPt, undermined the rule of law, and compromises the separation of power, which represent the fundamental tenets of a democratic society. The crisis is deepened by the development of two parallel legislative systems in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. These actions constitute a flagrant violation of the law and undermine previous efforts to reform the Palestinian legal system. This further impacts prospects for democratic transformation in the PNA. PCHR stresses the importance of reviewing all new legislation in a national dialogue because they are a product of the political division.

PLC members attacked by unidentified persons

On 1 June 2012, PLC member Shami al-Shami, a member of the 'Change and Reform' bloc, was shot while stepping out of his car in front of his house in Jenin in the West Bank. As a result of the attack, he sustained two bullet wounds in his right thigh and was transferred to Jenin hospital for treatment. According to PCHR investigations, Palestinian police have not yet arrested the perpetrators.

Replacing PLC members after their death or resignation

In 2012, three PLC members died. Hussam al-Tawil died on 31 October 2012, Jamal Skaik died on 7 July 2012 and Hamed al-Bitawy died on 4 April 2012. This increased the number of deceased members of the current PLC to five,²⁷ four of whom were elected by their constituencies in accordance with proper procedures.

27. PLC members Emil Jarjouli died on 23 November 2012 and Sufian Abdallah al-Agha died on 26 April 2007.

The issue of filling vacancies in the PLC arose after the legal term of the PLC expired. According to Article 99 (4) of the Palestinian Elections Law of 2005 on the Vacancy of Council Membership, “in the event that the council electoral list seat becomes vacant three months prior to the end of the council term, the vacant seat shall be occupied by the candidate who is next in line according to the order of the winning list of candidates.” According to Article 99 (2), in the case of constituencies, “if the period remaining for a member’s term in the constituency is greater than one year, by-elections shall be held in accordance with the provisions of this law with respect to the election of Palestinian Legislative Council members. However, if the term is less than one year, the seat shall remain

vacant until the end of the term and election of a new council”.

The PLC’s term has already expired since 2010 but, in the current context, replacing members of the PLC as vacancies arise is not possible, resulting in a lack of parliamentary representation in some constituencies. This has a particular impact for the constituency when the deceased PLC member represents a certain group that shares a common interest, whether political or religious. The most significant example is the death of PLC member Hussam al Tawil, who represented Christians in the Gaza Strip; his death has meant that the interests of Christians in the Gaza Strip are no longer represented in the PLC.

➤ Erosion of the authority of the judiciary

In 2012, the PNA further abused its executive authority in its domination of the judiciary. This violates the principle of the separation of powers, as provided for in Article 2 of the Basic Palestinian Law. The political division and conflict within the PNA since June 2007 have affected the judiciary, as two separate judicial systems are currently enforced in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In violation of the Palestinian Basic Law, the government in Gaza established a separate judicial system, to which the people of the Gaza Strip are subject. The judicial system in the West Bank applies only to those who live there. PCHR has repeatedly appealed to the concerned parties in Ramallah and Gaza to ensure the independence of the judiciary, despite the ongoing internal political division. PCHR has demanded that these parties take the necessary steps to preserve the independence of the judiciary, and refrain from politicising the judicial system in the interests of protecting the people. Regrettably, these pleas and warnings have not been heeded. The judiciary has been drawn into the conflict through a series of measures and decisions taken by the governments in Ramallah and Gaza.

The judiciary in the Gaza Strip

In the days following the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip in mid-June 2007, several hasty measures were taken which resulted in the obstruction of the judiciary’s work, especially in the Gaza Strip. The most notable development was the decision of the Chief of Police to suspend the work of the civilian police force in the Gaza Strip. Simultaneously, the Attorney General suspended his work in the Gaza Strip. The Attorney General is responsible for public prosecution, receiving claims, investigating crimes, and filing criminal charges.

28. In full understanding of the seriousness of the situation, PCHR, in conjunction with other human rights organisations and the Palestine Bar Association, has exerted extensive efforts to save the civil court system from total collapse, to return to the situation prior to the takeover, and to exclude the judicial system from the ongoing power struggle. Regrettably, these efforts have failed. It was clear that the government in Gaza did not intend to reach any alternative solution, and was not willing to rescind its illegal decisions. In a press conference on 6 December 2007, human rights organisations demanded that the Gaza government immediately overturn this illegal measure that will destroy judicial authority. These organisations expressed full support for the decision of the Higher Judicial Council to suspend its work in the civilian courts, and for the decision of the Bar Association to suspend the work of lawyers. Human rights organisations held the government in Gaza fully responsible for the consequences of the collapse of the judicial authority, and the resulting impact on the interests of the populace.

On 14 August 2007, Dr Yousef al-Mansi, acting Minister of Justice for the government in Gaza, suspended the Attorney General, claiming that the legal procedures for appointment had not been followed. Two days later, on 16 August 2007, special forces raided the Attorney General's office in Gaza, assaulted the Attorney General, and detained him and his assistants. On 29 August, the Gaza government appointed an Assistant Attorney General and several prosecutors to fulfil the functions of the Attorney General in the Gaza Strip.

On 4 September 2007, the Gaza government issued a decision establishing a 'Higher Justice Council', and charged the Minister for Justice with nominating its members. On 11 September 2007, the Gaza government approved the nomination of six members to the council. On 26 November 2007 members of the so-called 'Higher Justice Council' broke into the offices of the President of the Higher Judicial Council and President of the High Court. The court compound was illegally brought under the authority of the 'Higher Justice Council', which announced the indefinite suspension of the work of the civil court system in the Gaza Strip.²⁸ The Gaza government appointed new judges and members of the prosecution in place of those whose work had been suspended.

On 27 October 2009, the Gaza government issued a decision, changing the name of the 'Higher Justice Council' to the 'Higher Judicial Council'. Hence, there are now two Higher Judicial Councils operating in the PNA, which are administratively and financially separate.

In 2012, the Gaza government made a number of appointments and changes to the judiciary. Judge 'Adel Khalifa was appointed as President of the Higher Judicial Council on 25 September 2012, succeeding Judge 'Abdul Ra'ouf al-Halabi, who was in turn appointed President of the Fatwa and Legislation Department in Gaza. The government appointed a number of judges. The most important appointment was that of Ahmed 'Attallah as a Higher Court Judge. PCHR reiterates that these appointments to the so-called 'Higher Judicial Council' raise concerns about the independence of the council, notwithstanding the fact that the council itself is an unconstitutional and illegal body. PCHR confirms that, as long as the internal political division persists, all appointments to the judiciary are illegal. Judges, prosecutors, and the Attorney General must be appointed by the President, based on nominations by the Higher Judicial Council, in accordance with Articles 18 and 63 of the Judiciary Law of 2002. These Articles lay out the requirements for the organisation of the judiciary in accordance with the Amended Basic Law of 2003. Thus, PCHR considers the Gaza judiciary to be a de facto authority.

The judiciary in the West Bank

In the West Bank, the Palestinian President continued to use legislative tools to control the judiciary, particularly when the government chose not to execute some of the rulings of the Ramallah Higher Court. President Mahmoud Abbas has continued to issue presidential decrees that have the force of law. This is in violation of Article 43 of the Palestinian Basic Law of 2003, which states, "The President of the National Authority shall have the right, in cases of necessity that cannot be delayed, and when the Legislative Council is not in session, to issue decrees that have the power of law. These decrees shall be presented to the Legislative Council in the first session convened after their issuance; otherwise they will cease to have the power of law. If these decrees are presented to the Legislative Council, as mentioned above, but are not approved by the latter, then they shall cease to have the power of law." However, in 2012, the President issued two decrees related to the technical work of the judiciary:

- **Presidential Decree with the Power of Law No. 3 (2012) on the Shari'a judiciary**

This decree formed a new body called the 'Highest Council for the *Shari'a* Judiciary', similar to the Higher Judicial Council which heads the judiciary. PCHR asserts that there was no pressing legal need for the issuance of this presidential decree, which calls into question its constitutionality. PCHR stresses that the Palestinian President must refrain from issuing any decision related to the judiciary in the context of the political division, in order to avoid chaos in the judiciary.

- **Presidential Decree with the Power of Law (2012) on amending the Constitutional Court Act of 2006**

This law represents a dangerous deterioration of the democratic process. With this law, the President has limited the independence of the Constitutional Court, which is yet to be formed, by removing some of its powers. The decree also limits the power of the Higher Judicial Council, in terms of appointments to the Court, its internal organisation, and financial administration. The decree also limits the right to resort to the Constitutional Court by submitting a direct claim, which is now only permissible for a few categories. This has prevented NGOs from resorting to the court to challenge the constitutionality of laws.²⁹ This law constitutes an abuse of the President's power in that PCHR sees no urgent reason for issuing this amendment.

➤ Obstruction of elections

General and local elections

The fragmentation of the Palestinian executive continues to be the main obstacle to democratic reform. Presidential and legislative elections to renew the legitimacy of the Palestinian people's representatives, who were elected in 2005 and 2006 respectively, have been obstructed. At the end of 2012, three years had passed since the expiration of the legal terms in office of the Palestinian President and the PLC. The PNA remains unable to hold general elections.

The PNA held local elections only in the West Bank, but not in the Gaza Strip. PCHR criticises the holding of elections, as long as the internal political division persists. We demand that the Gaza and Ramallah governments provide an atmosphere conducive to the organisation of transparent and fair elections. This will allow people to freely choose their public representatives, who will be subject to accountability in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Most importantly, such an atmosphere will ensure protection for public freedoms and a respect for constitutionally-guaranteed human rights, including political rights, and the lifting of bans on different political factions. The legal term of the Gaza Strip's local councils, which were elected in December 2005, expired three years ago. Elections must be held to renew the legitimacy of all local councils.

Presidential and legislative elections

After the Cairo talks in late 2011, as well as the agreement to organise general (presidential and legislative) elections in the first half of 2012, relations between the rival Hamas and Fatah parties improved. A number of media statements indicated that reconciliation was not far off, especially in the wake of the Israeli offensive in November 2012. On the ground, however, nothing has been implemented.

29. It should be mentioned that PCHR made significant progress in terms of annulling unconstitutional laws in 2005. The Palestinian High Constitutional Court decided, in response to challenge #4/2005 submitted by PCHR, to abolish the Judiciary Law (Law 15) of 2005, on the grounds that this law is unconstitutional. The challenge was made, as a number of aspects of the new Judiciary Law contradicted the Basic Law, which practically serves as the PNA's constitution. Thus, PCHR has reservations regarding the PNA's policy of deliberately marginalising the role of human rights organisations, which aim to protect and support the rule of law.

By the end of 2012, there was still no progress in terms of holding or setting a date for the presidential and legislative elections in the oPt. According to Palestinian law, the Palestinian President must call for legislative elections three months prior to holding them. This did not happen.

Although elections are demanded by all national powers and civil society groups, including PCHR, they are not possible without first reaching a comprehensive national reconciliation that can bring an end to the division and restore the integrity of the legislative, executive and judicial institutions. Holding elections requires an appropriate electoral environment, including respect for public liberties, the release of political prisoners, and lifting the bans imposed on political activities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Local elections in the West Bank despite the division

The holding of local elections in the villages and cities of the West Bank on 20 October 2012 was the most significant development in terms of elections since the Palestinian political division began in 2007. PCHR considers that these unilateral elections by the Fatah-dominated government in the West Bank represent a setback to efforts at reaching national reconciliation. Local elections were not held in the Gaza Strip, and the Hamas government continued to appoint Hamas-affiliated individuals to the local councils.

The Central Elections Commission (CEC) resumed its work in the Gaza Strip in late May 2012 in preparation for presidential and legislative elections, under the framework of Palestinian reconciliation. As part of the process of reconciliation, Fatah and Hamas had agreed on the CEC's mandate, and to reform the commission by presidential decree. PCHR applied to the CEC for accreditations as a local monitoring body on 2 June 2012, in light of the CEC's announcement that it would begin updating the voter registry on 3 July 2012, and that local monitoring bodies were welcome to register for accreditation.

On 2 July 2012, the day before registration was scheduled to begin, Hamas took the surprising decision to suspend the registration of voters in the Gaza Strip. Sami Abu Zuhri, spokesman for Hamas, stated that Hamas had decided "to temporarily suspend the registration process". PCHR considered this an unjustifiable intervention by political powers into the CEC's technical work. Voter registration is an entirely technical process, which falls under the mandate of the CEC. On 10 July 2012, the CEC was instructed by the Council of Ministers in Ramallah to make the necessary arrangements in order to organise local elections in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. However, on 24 July 2012, citing Hamas' suspension of the work of the CEC in the Gaza Strip, the Council of Ministers annulled their previous decision, deciding to organise local council elections in the West Bank only.

› Violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

In 2012, the two governments in Ramallah and Gaza, and the executive services in their respective areas of control, violated the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the freedom of the press. The Gaza and Ramallah governments committed violations of the rights of journalists, various media workers, editors, and others, who challenged mainstream opinions.³⁰ The security services in the Gaza Strip continued to summon Fatah activists, detaining many of them for long periods of time. The security services in the West Bank continued to arrest and detain Hamas activists for long periods of time.

In the Gaza Strip, common violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression included: summoning, detaining and arresting journalists; assaulting journalists by members of the security services; preventing journalists from carrying out their work; the detention of journalists/citizens by the al-Qassam Brigades for submission to the security services; and summoning, detaining and arresting citizens for their political opinions. The Gaza government has banned the distribution of West Bank-based newspapers, al-Quds, al-Hayat al-Jadeeda and al-Ayyam.

The most significant violations in the Gaza Strip were as follows:

- On 13 January, the Government Media Office in Gaza prevented broadcasting by the 'New Star' programme for Mix/Ma'an Channel in Bethlehem, in the south of the West Bank.
- On 14 January, a large unit of Palestinian security services, wearing military uniforms and helmets, and some wearing masks, stormed a private home in Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip. They found 20 citizens gathered to perform Shi'ite rituals. The security forces immediately began to severely beat the group of people with sticks and batons, and then transferred them to the police station in the northern governorate. The detainees were questioned about their personal information and the reason for being in the house, and were beaten again. A number of them sustained fractures and bruises throughout the body.
- On 3 February, a member of the al-Qassam Brigades arrested Omar Mohammed Abu Karim, who is a freelance journalist, and his wife Dorota Boujina/Abu Karim, a Polish national, while they were taking photographs during a walk on farmlands near the car market, east of al-Zaitoun neighbourhood in Gaza City. Abu Karim and his wife were transferred to al-Jawazat, the general services office of the Palestinian police, where he was questioned about taking photographs in a security zone. Abu Karim and his wife were then transferred to the internal security office in Ansar security compound, in the west of the city. He was questioned again and beaten by the interrogators. Abu Karim and his wife were released later that evening.
- On 8 March, Mohammed Zuhdi al-Mashharawi, who works for Sky News Arabic, was arrested by security members and held in Ansar security compound, after he objected to the verbal abuse of journalists while they were covering a mass wedding ceremony in Palestine stadium, which had been organised by the government in Gaza. Al-Mashharawi was severely beaten by security members during his transfer to Ansar security compound.

30. For more information and details on the violations of the rights to freedom of opinion and expression in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, see the PCHR report, 'The right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly under the Palestinian Authority during the period (01 December 2010 - 31 August 2011)'.


- On 28 March, members of the al-Qassam Brigades arrested Sami Abu Salim, correspondent for the Palestinian News Agency (WAFA), Cselia Odin, correspondent for Swedish Radio, and Alexandra Sandal, a freelance journalist, near 'Paris' gardens, in the east of Gaza City, while they were preparing a report on the impact of the Israeli-imposed closure on agriculture in the Gaza Strip. The al-Qassam members transferred the aforementioned journalists to the custody of the ISS in Ansar security compound, in the west of Gaza City, where they were questioned and later released.
- On 30 March, Yousif Bashir Hammad, who works for 'Quds Net' news website and Watan local radio station, was severely beaten with batons by members of the Palestinian security services near the entrance of Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip. The aforementioned journalist was covering a peaceful demonstration to commemorate Earth Day in which dozens of citizens participated.
- On 7 May, staff of al-Quds Channel, including Hanadi Nasrallah, correspondent, Rami Abu Shamalah, photographer, and Yousif al-Telbani, sound technician, were arrested at Shifa hospital, in the west of Gaza City, by hospital security staff and prevented from carrying out their work.
- On 10 June, the ISS in Gaza City arrested Mohammed Nemer Qanita (27), a freelance journalist from al-Tofah neighbourhood, in the east of Gaza City, and confiscated his laptop. Qanita was questioned on the nature of his work as a journalist, and on his studies. He was kept in detention until his release on 4 July.
- On 17 July, Ousama Jaber Kuheil, Chairman of the Palestinian Contractors' Union, was questioned by the Public Prosecution about a statement, reported by a number of media agencies, regarding the quality of cement smuggled through the tunnels to the Gaza Strip markets and the extent to which the governmental authorities monitor this quality. The Public Prosecution summoned Kuheil and charged him with inciting public opinion and spreading misinformation. Kuheil was interrogated for three days and a travel ban was issued against him on 20 July as long as the investigation was ongoing.

In the West Bank, common violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression include: arresting journalists/citizens for their political opinions; summoning, detaining, and arresting journalists, many

of whom were assaulted; the assault of journalists by security services members; preventing journalists and media from carrying out their work; attacking journalists who were covering peaceful demonstrations; summoning, detaining, and arresting citizens for their political opinions; and blocking certain websites in the West Bank. Violations by unidentified persons in the West Bank have also continued, though the incidence of such violations has declined relative to the violations committed by the authorities. The West Bank government has been banning distribution and printing of the Gaza-based newspapers of Palestine and al-Risala.

The most prominent violations were the following:

- On 31 January, the intelligence services arrested Rami Nabil Samarah, editor for the Palestinian News Agency (WAFA) and Ajyal Radio, from his workplace in the UNRWA headquarters in Ramallah. They detained Samarah for three hours and questioned him. Samarah was questioned about a comment he had posted on his Facebook page in which he criticised a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).
- In February, many news and political websites were blocked to internet users in the West Bank. The websites included 'Amad' news website, 'Milad' news agency, 'Firas' news, 'Fateh press voice', 'In Light Press', 'Al-Karamah Press', 'al-Koufiya Press', and 'Felestin Baytona'.
- On 28 March, the Public Prosecution in Ramallah arrested Dr Esmat Ahmed Abdel Khaliq, a media professional and lecturer at al-Quds University in Abu Dis in Jerusalem, and held her for 48 hours in response to a complaint submitted against her by the PSS regarding comments she had posted on her Facebook page. The Public Prosecution charged her with slander, libel, and sedition. On 29 March, she was transferred to the Magistrate Court where the Judge decided to extend her detention for 15 days pending further investigations. On 6 April 2012, the court decided to release Abdel Khaliq on bail of 2,000 Jordanian Dinars pending further developments in her case.
- On 1 April, the PSS in Ramallah arrested Jamal Mohammed Abu Reihan, from al-Jaftlak village in Jericho, a blogger and Registrar in the Public Prosecution in the Ministry of Justice. Abu Reihan was

questioned about the Facebook page, titled 'People want an end to corruption', of which he is an administrator. On 2 April, the Public Prosecution issued a decision to detain Abu Reihan for 24 hours in PSS headquarters. On 3 April, Abu Reihan was transferred to the Public Prosecution headquarters where he was questioned on the same subject, charged with slander, libel, and defamation against public figures. His detention was extended for another 24 hours. On 4 April, the Magistrate Court decided to extend the detention of Abu Reihan for 15 days pending further investigations. The court extended the detention of Abu Reihan three more times, each for a period of 15 days. He was detained in the PSS detention centre. On 6 May, the Magistrate Court released Abu Reihan on bail.

- On 14 June, in the evening, unidentified persons stormed an office belonging to Najib Farraj, reporter for the Palestinian Jerusalem newspaper. The office is located in Bethlehem, in the south of the West Bank. The unidentified persons searched his office and damaged documents from his archive related to his work as a journalist.
- On 26 June, security forces stationed at al-Moqata'a, the place in Bethlehem where visiting dignitaries are received, barred Mamdouh Hamamrah, correspondent for al-Quds Channel, from entering to cover the visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to the oPt.
- On 30 June, members of the General Intelligence Services (GIS) in Ramallah severely attacked the journalist Mohammed Jaradat while he was covering a peaceful demonstration in the city protesting against the expected visit of Sha'oul Mofaz, the Israeli Vice Prime Minister, to meet with President Mahmoud Abbas in the presidential office (al-Mokat'aa) in Ramallah. The GIS members confiscated Jaradat's camera and transferred him to the police station near al-Manarah Square. After his release, Jaradat went to Palestine medical hospital (the Kuwaiti hospital) to receive medical treatment. Following examination, doctors found that Jaradat had sustained bruises on his face and on his back, chest, knees, and legs.



Journalist Mohammed Jaradat who was attacked by security forces during a peaceful protest against Shaul Mofaz's visit to Ramallah, 1 July 2012

- On 1 July, five journalists were severely attacked in Ramallah, in the central West Bank. They were arrested and their cameras were confiscated by Palestinian security officers. The journalists were covering a peaceful demonstration protesting against the suppression and dispersal of previous peaceful demonstrations organised on 30 June. These journalists were:
 1. Saed Hawari, cameraman for Reuters news agency;
 2. Essam al-Rimawi, photographer for al-Hayat newspaper;
 3. Mahmoud Hreibat, a freelance journalist;
 4. Ahmed Odah, who works for al-Quds Media Centre; and
 5. Ahmed Mesleh, a freelance journalist.
- On 22 July, the PSS in Nablus, north of the West Bank, arrested Mahmoud Matter, a Media and Journalism student at al-Najah National University. Matter was questioned on political opinion pieces that he had previously published.

» Violations of the right to peaceful assembly

In the last weeks of 2012, there were important and positive developments with respect to the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. These developments occurred in the context of the positive attitude towards national reconciliation. At the end of 2012, the Fatah movement prepared to celebrate its 48th anniversary in al-Saraya Square, in Gaza City. It was the first time since 2007 that the Fatah movement was permitted by the Hamas government to commemorate its anniversary in the Gaza Strip. The Fatah movement was also permitted to organise rallies in various cities and governorates in the Gaza Strip in support of President Mahmoud Abbas' efforts to obtain recognition of Palestine as a non-member observer State of the United Nations.

In the West Bank, the Hamas movement was permitted, for the first time since the beginning of the Palestinian division in 2007, to commemorate its anniversary in Ramallah, Nablus, and Hebron. For the first time, the Fatah movement participated in the main rally organised by the Hamas movement in the Gaza Strip. PCHR welcomes these positive developments as opportunities for internal reconciliation. PCHR looks forward to an end to the restrictions imposed by the Ramallah and Gaza governments and their security services on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.

Before these developments, the situation in 2012 was characterised by restrictions imposed on the right to peaceful assembly by the two governments and their security services in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

In 2012, the most significant violations of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly were the following:

Gaza Strip

In the Gaza Strip, security services continued to enforce bans on public meetings, dispersing a number of public gatherings throughout the year. The most egregious violations were committed by security services during the weekly women's sit-in, which called for Palestinian reconciliation, and during peaceful protests, which called for a resolution to the electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip. A number of participants were beaten and detained by the security services, during dispersal of the protests. The security services imposed additional measures restricting the right of citizens to organise public meetings. Most of these measures targeted Fatah activists, including during events organised to celebrate the 48th anniversary of the Fatah movement in January 2012 and the anniversary of Yasser 'Arafat on 11 November. These measures were applied inappropriately and beyond their original scope, affecting private meetings, which are conducted in closed places and not required by law to give notification to competent official bodies. The distinction is noted under Item 5, Article (26) of the 2003 Amended Basic Law: "[C]onducting private meetings

without the presence of police members, and conducting public meetings, gatherings and processions, within the limits of the law.”

The most notable violations were:

- On 19 February, Palestinian police used force to disperse a peaceful sit-in near the municipality of al-Nusairat, in the central Gaza Strip. Dozens of young men participated in the protest at the invitation of the PFLP to protest against the ongoing electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip. Security forces beat a number of participants, three of whom sustained bruises. Security forces also detained five participants who were released later on the same day.
- On 31 August, police banned a mass wedding ceremony organised by the Fatah movement in al-Shalihah resort, on the coast in the west of Gaza City. Large numbers of security forces deployed in the vicinity of the resort. A number of checkpoints were established to prevent the invitees from reaching the location to attend the ceremony.
- On 25 September, police used force to disperse a spontaneous demonstration in al-Bureij refugee camp, in the central Gaza Strip, protesting against the ongoing electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip. The protest was prompted by the death of Fathi Abdel Fattah al-Baghdadi (3), and the injury of his sister, Tala (8 months), following a fire that broke out in their home due to the electricity blackout.³¹ Police officers beat a number of participants with batons and sticks, and arrested a number due to their participation in the demonstration. One of the participants who were arrested by the ISS stated, after his release, that he had been beaten and tortured while security forces were questioning him regarding his participation in the demonstration. Ismail Jamal Badah, press photographer for ‘Falastin al-Yom’ channel, was beaten while covering the demonstration by individuals who identified themselves as ISS members.
- On 10 November, the ISS in Rafah, in the south of the Gaza Strip, summoned six students of al-Quds Open University and confiscated their ID cards. One of the students informed a PCHR staff member that they were not questioned as the deterioration of the security situation in the Gaza Strip led to the evacuation of the security headquarters. Instead, they were provided with appointments to attend interviews in the following days.
- On 11 November, a unit of six Palestinian police officers raided the campus of al-Quds Open University, Rafah branch, in al-Junainah neighbourhood in Rafah. Police officers removed and damaged portraits of the late President Yasser Arafat which were displayed on the university campus. They dispersed approximately 40 students who were gathered in the yard to commemorate the anniversary of Arafat’s death. They arrested Hassan ‘Aabed ‘Aabed and took him to a detention centre in the town. ‘Aabed was released on the afternoon of the same day. Palestinian police prevented a similar event from taking place on al-Azhar University campus on the same day.

Intervening in private meetings that do not require notification of the competent official bodies

- On 29 November, the GIS prevented the Palestinian Centre for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession, ‘Musawa’, from organising a conference in Gaza City to coincide with a similar event in the West Bank on 29-30 November

31. On 10 October 2012, Tala al-Baghdadi was pronounced dead by medical sources at al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City.

2012. Musawa planned to hold the 'Fourth Justice Conference', titled 'The rights of working women and the mechanisms available to guarantee them' via videoconference, and reserved the hall of the Red Crescent Association for this purpose. However, the event was shut down by the GIS moments after it began.

- On 9 May, GIS members dispersed the concluding session of the Palestine Festival for Literature (PalFest), which was being held in al-Basha archaeological palace, in the east of Gaza City.
- On 14 May, the ISS in Khan Younis presented the organisers of a student trip for al-Aqsa University students with an order banning the student trip.
- On 18 July, Wafaa' Essam al-'Arqan and Safaa' Abdel Rahman Farahat were subjected to beating and arrest by female police officers while they were participating in a peaceful demonstration organised in Rafah, in the south of the Gaza Strip. 15 persons participated in the demonstration, including 10 children, protesting against the exacerbation of the electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip.
- On 9 August, the ISS in Khan Younis, in the south of the Gaza Strip, detained three Fatah leaders in the governorate, as the Fatah movement had organised a Ramadan evening in Canada Hall. They were released the following day.
- On 12 September, the ISS in Gaza City prevented the Association of Detainees and Ex-Detainees, 'HOSSAM', from organising a seminar, titled 'Veteran Detainees on the Signed Agreements and their Right to Freedom', which was scheduled to be held on 13 September 2012 in the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR) headquarters in the city.

West Bank

The government in the West Bank and its security services continued to violate the right of citizens to peaceful assembly, particularly those who participated in gatherings which contradicted mainstream opinion. The worst example took place during a peaceful demonstration in Ramallah, which was organised to protest the visit of Shaoul Mofaz, the Israeli Vice Prime Minister at the time, to the Office of the President (al-Mokat'aa). Participants and journalists were subjected to beatings and arrests. On the other hand, PCHR documented a number of gatherings protesting the high cost of living, which were supported by the Fatah movement in the West Bank. From 3 to 11 September, protests and demonstrations in different cities in the West Bank were

✓ A peaceful protest in Ramallah against Shaul Mofaz's visit to Ramallah, 1 July 2012



held in response to the Ramallah government's decision to raise fuel prices. Although some of these protests deviated from their originally-peaceful nature, their participants were not attacked by the security services. In 2012, the Hamas movement was reluctant to commemorate its anniversary in the West Bank, as its members had been subjected to arrests and summons in previous years.

The most prominent violations were the following:



- On 30 June and 1 July, Palestinian police, accompanied by security services, forcefully dispersed peaceful demonstrations organised by dozens of young Palestinian women and men in Ramallah, protesting against the expected visit of Shaoul Mofaz, the Israeli Vice Prime Minister and Kadima Chairman, to the presidential office.³² The dispersal of the demonstrations was accompanied by attacks by security officers against a number of journalists.
- On 13 November, female police officers beat protestors from the al-Sharbati family and their children in front of PSS headquarters in Hebron in order to disperse them. Around 20 women and children from the al-Sharbati family, accompanied by columnist Lama Abdel Mutaleb Khater, were protesting against the ongoing detention by PSS of Raa'ed Hmeidani al-Sharbati (43), from Hebron. A recent court order had extended his detention.

Public gatherings that deviated from their peaceful nature

From 3 to 11 September, protests and demonstrations in different cities in the West Bank were held in response to the Ramallah government's decision to raise fuel prices. The protests began with a partial taxi strike, followed by demonstrations and gatherings in different cities calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Dr Salam Fayyad. The demonstrations were supported by the Fatah leadership in the West Bank. A number of the protests were of a violent nature, as protestors burned tires and garbage containers and blocked the main streets with cars and boulders. Neither Palestinian police nor security services intervened to impose law and order. The police's role was to regulate traffic. A number of protestors deliberately damaged public property and attacked official offices. The most significant protests were in Nablus and Hebron, where protestors attacked police stations and a municipality office. Dozens of policemen and citizens were injured by thrown stones and empty bottles. The protests ended on 11 September when the Ramallah government declared a return to the previous fuel prices and a reduction to the Value Added Tax.

➤ Violations of the right to freedom of association

The governments in Gaza and Ramallah continued to violate the right to freedom of association in 2012. More restrictions were imposed on civil society organisations. These restrictions are in violation of the PNA's obligation to respect, protect, and guarantee this right in accordance with the relevant international standards.

In the Gaza Strip, more violations of the right to form associations were reported. The Ministry of Interior increasingly intervened in the affairs of associations in attempts to control these associations. The Associations Registration Office at the Ministry of the Interior abused its authority by granting licences based on arbitrary standards, which is in clear violation of the law.³³ The Ministry of Interior continued to shut down associations without any legal justification by withdrawing their licenses. It also prevented NGOs from holding activities and events.³⁴

The case of the dissolution of the Sharek Youth Forum constitutes one of the main examples of abuse of authority and the absence of independent judicial mechanisms which sufficiently ensure the protection for this right. Sharek submitted an application to the High Court of Justice, requesting the court to cancel the decision, issued by the Ministry of Interior, and allow the association to reopen. After two years of procrastination, on 4 December 2012, the court issued a decision rejecting the application. According to judgment, the appeal was rejected as it had been proven that indecent acts

32. PCHR notes that Shaoul Mofaz was the IDF Chief of Staff between 9 July 1998 and 9 July 2002. Under his command, Israeli forces carried out 'Operation Defensive Shield', which began on 29 March 2002 in the West Bank. The operation resulted in the massacre in Jenin refugee camp, in the north of the West Bank. On 4 November 2012, Mofaz was appointed as Minister of Defence. While he was occupying the aforementioned positions, Israeli forces committed several war crimes in which hundreds of innocent Palestinian civilians were killed in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. PCHR submitted a number of cases against Mofaz before various European courts related to those crimes.

33. The Palestinian Ministry of Interior in Gaza, "Elwan: We work according to the principle of transparency and legal liability when registering the associations", 13 February 2012, <http://www.moi.gov.ps/Page.aspx?page=details&nid=31723%20%3E>.

34. PCHR documented that the government in Gaza prevented NGOs from holding activities without any legal justification. On 29 February 2012, GIS in Gaza prevented the Palestinian Centre for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession (MUSWa) from organising the forth justice conference, titled 'The rights of working women and available mechanisms to ensure them'. On 12 December 2012, security services prevented the Association of Palestinian Prisoners and Ex-Prisoners 'Hussam', from holding a symposium titled 'Ex-prisoners between the signed agreements and their right to freedom'. On 2 October, a silent march calling for an end to the Palestinian political division, organised by a number of women's organizations, was forcibly dispersed after its organisers sent an official notice to the police advising them where and when it would take place.

had taken place in the association, and because the association did not have a licence to practice their activities. During the two years that the court was considering the application, it violated Article 38 of the 2000 Law of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations, according to which the association had the right to continue its work until the decision on appeal. In issuing its decision, the court ignored the invalidity of the measures taken by the Ministry of Interior when closing the association.

PCHR continued to closely follow the case of the Sharek Youth Forum. On 22 December 2010, PCHR sent a legal memorandum to the Prime Minister in Gaza. The memorandum outlined the legal issues relating to the invalidity of the decision to close the association.³⁵

The government in Gaza continued to develop administrative procedures and issue decisions which furthered the restrictions already imposed on the work of associations. Among these was a decision, issued on 31 May 2011, by the Council of Ministers in Gaza to amend the 2003 Executive Bill of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations. The amendment strengthened the authority of the Ministry of Interior with regard to the monitoring of associations, making its role equal to that of the relevant ministry. This clearly constitutes a violation of the Law of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations. In a press release, published on 11 August 2011,³⁴ PCHR highlighted the invalidity and unconstitutionality of the amendment and called on the Council of Ministers in Gaza to reconsider its decision. Due to the lack of response from the Council of Ministers, PCHR filed a petition on ³⁶ June 2012, challenging the constitutionality of the decision. The petition was submitted to the Supreme Court in Gaza, calling on it to rule in its capacity as the constitutional court.³⁷ On 18 June 2012, the Court declined to consider the petition, claiming that it did not have the necessary competence to consider the case.

Violations of the right to freedom of association persisted in the West Bank. Restrictions imposed on the right remained in effect, including those resulting from presidential decrees issued by the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas. Common violations in the West Bank included: the raiding and searching of the offices of associations; the appointing of new boards affiliated to the government or Fatah movement; and the refusal to issue new licenses to associations that are affiliated to Hamas.

Restrictions imposed on the right to freedom of association following the incidents of June 2007 and the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip remained effective. These measures were taken as a prelude to dissolving legally-licensed civil society organisations, and restricting their work during the state of emergency declared in the oPt. The government in Ramallah refused to reconsider its decision to dissolve 103 societies with close affiliations to Hamas, despite demands by civil society organisations.

The PNA has also failed to implement the Palestinian courts' decisions regarding a number of associations in the West Bank. On 24 June 2009, the Palestinian High Court of Justice issued a decision abolishing the Ministry of Interior decision to appoint a temporary preparatory committee to administrate the Islamic Charity Society for Orphans in Yatta. The committee replaced the elected administrative body. The Ministry of Interior decision to appoint the committee violated Article 38 of the 2000 Law of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations. However, the court decision has not yet been implemented.

35.PCHR, 'PCHR Sends Memorandum to Prime Minister in Gaza Regarding Closure of Sharek Youth Forum by Attorney General', http://www.pchrgaza.org/portal/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7178:pchr-sends-memorandum-to-prime-minister-in-gaza-regarding-closure-of-sharek-youth-forum-by-attorney-general-&catid=36:pchrpress-releases&Itemid=194.

36.PCHR, 'PCHR Calls for Reconsideration of Decision to Make Amendments to the Executive Bill of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations Law No. 1/2000', 11 August 2011.

37.PCHR, 'Constitutional Court Rejects PCHR's Petition Challenging the Constitutionality of the Ministerial Amendment Made to the Executive Bill of Charitable Associations and Community Organizations Law for Non-Competence'.

Continued application of the death penalty

The Palestinian courts issued six death sentences in 2012. All of the death sentences were issued in the Gaza Strip. Four were issued by the military courts, while the remaining two were issued by civil courts. PCHR documented two instances of civilians being tried in military courts, in violation of the law.³⁸ The number of death sentences issued by the Palestinian courts since the establishment of the PNA has risen to 131.³⁹

There was a significant increase in the implementation of death sentences in 2012. Six people were put to death in the Gaza Strip, one of whom had been sentenced to death by a military court. The total number of death sentences carried out in the Gaza Strip since the Hamas' takeover in 2007 has increased to 14. No death sentence has been executed in the West Bank.

The government in Gaza has continued, since the beginning of the political division, to issue death sentences without ratification by the President of the PA, in violation of Article 109 of the Palestinian Basic Law and Article 409 of the Code of Criminal Procedures. Death sentences issued by military courts were based on the Palestine Liberation Organisation Revolutionary Code of 1979, which is unconstitutional and was not promulgated by the Palestinian Legislative Council. PCHR has repeatedly called for an end to the application of this law, which is in conflict with international standards related to fair trials.

In this context, PCHR highly appreciates the fact that the Palestinian President has not ratified any death sentences since 2005. We hope that he will continue to abstain from ratifying death sentences, and continue to move towards the abolition of the death penalty.

PCHR is extremely concerned by the continued application of the death penalty in PNA-controlled areas, and calls for the abolishment of such cruel, inhuman, and degrading punishment. The death penalty violates the right to life and international human rights instruments, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (1966), and the UN Convention against Torture (1984). PCHR reiterates that abolishing the death penalty does imply leniency towards criminals, who must be subjected to punishment that act as a deterrent, but also maintain human dignity. PCHR calls upon the PNA to review all legislation related 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 with the spirit of international human rights instruments.

38. Article 30(1) of the Palestinian Basic Law stipulates: "Submitting a case to court is a protected and guaranteed right for all people. Each Palestinian shall have the right to seek redress in the judicial system...". Therefore, civilians must not be tried before military courts.

39. On 20 November 2012, gunmen shot six persons dead and maltreated the bodies of a number of them. One of the gunmen was seen dragging a body behind a motorcycle in the street. PCHR learned that the persons killed had previously been detained by the Palestinian Authority, accused of collaboration with Israeli forces. On 21 November 2012, PCHR issued a press release expressing its shock at this crime. PCHR emphasised that it was waiting for the results of the investigation, which the government in Gaza declared it would conduct into this incident, stressing the need to bring its perpetrators before justice.

Death sentences issued in 2012

.No	Name	Area	District	Sentencing body	Date	Charge
1.	A. M. A'	Gaza Strip	Gaza	Military court	11 January	Collaboration with Israeli security services
2.	D. Y. Q	Gaza Strip	Gaza	Civil court	16 January	Murdering his brother in 2005
3.	Gh. F. 'A	Gaza Strip	Gaza	Military court	8 February	Collaboration with Israeli security services
4.	Z. A. H	Gaza Strip	Northern Gaza	Military court	12 September	Collaboration with Israeli security services
5.	H. M. 'A	Gaza Strip	Khan Yunis	Civil court	16 September	2 murders; the first one was when he was a minor in 2000 (he was not found guilty until the investigations for the second crime were conducted), and the second one was in 2009 against H. H. B
6.	H. Y. Kh.	Gaza Strip	Khan Yunis	Military court	27 December	Collaboration with Israeli security services

Death sentences executed in 2012

No.	Name	Area	District	Sentencing body	Date of sentence	Date of execution	Charge
1.	M. A. B	Gaza Strip	Central Gaza	Civil court	30 May 2010	7 April 2012	Murdering his cousin
2.	M. G. 'A	Gaza Strip	Khan Yunis	Civil court	24 November 2010	7 April 2012	Murdering the child 'A. M. M in 2010
3.	W. Kh.G	Gaza Strip	Central Gaza	Military court	28 March 2011	7 April 2012	Collaboration with Israeli security services
4.	F. T. A	Gaza Strip	Gaza	Civil court	29 December 2010	17 July 2012	Murdering his cousin in 2004
5.	H. H. H	Gaza Strip	Gaza	Civil court	12 April 2011	17 July 2012	Murdering H. M. H
6.	N. G. D	Gaza Strip	Gaza	Civil court	28 April 2011	July 2012 17	Murdering 'A. 'A

> Impact of the political division on economic and social rights in the Gaza Strip

The political crisis within the PNA, and the conflict between the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah, has negatively impacted the already difficult economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. Measures taken by the two governments, in addition to the closure of the Gaza Strip by Israeli forces, have severely impacted people's living conditions and undermined their ability to provide for themselves and their families. In 2012, thousands of public service employees and their families suffered cuts to their salaries, which the Ramallah government initiated following the political division in 2007. Employees of the public and security services who receive salaries from the PNA, particularly those affiliated with the Fatah movement, are constantly monitored and harassed by the government in Gaza and its security services.

Additionally, widespread measures taken by the two governments against dozens of charities and NGOs in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have impacted the rights of thousands of individuals who used to benefit from their services. The government in Ramallah and Gaza closed dozens of charities and NGOs under various pretexts, preventing them from providing health, agricultural, relief, and development services. Workers in the affected charities and NGOs have joined the unemployed community.

Health conditions in the Gaza Strip

In 2012, all services provided to the people of the Gaza Strip were negatively affected by the ongoing political and power struggle between the two governments in Ramallah and Gaza. Health conditions deteriorated, as all public health facilities in the Gaza Strip suffered from acute shortages of medicines and medical necessities. In addition, the severe financial crisis in the PNA meant that hundreds of patients, including those with chronic diseases, psychological conditions, and financial problems, were no longer able to afford their medicine. The Ministry of Health in Ramallah prevented many patients, for whom medical treatment was not available in the Gaza Strip, from travelling abroad by refusing to renew their passports or allow passports to be issued in Gaza. The Ministry of Interior in Gaza also prevented many people, especially members of the Fatah movement, from travelling abroad either through the Rafah International Crossing Point or Beit Hanoun ('Erez') crossing.

Electricity crisis and its impact on basic services in the Gaza Strip

The electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip is one of the most critical challenges, as a reliable electricity supply is crucial for various basic services. Finding a means of alternative energy has become a key concern for the people of Gaza. The use of power generators or candles to compensate for the shortage of electric services has caused many accidents, and resulted in a number of deaths.

The Palestinian political division has impacted the electricity crisis, as each party blamed one another for the crisis. On 14 February 2012, the operation of Gaza power plant was stopped because the fuel required to operate the Plant ran out. This impacted the access of 1.8 million Palestinians to vital services, including drinking water, and health, sanitation, and education services. Initially, the Energy Authority in Gaza used the fuel in its reserve stock to cover the deficit, which amounted to 340,000 litres of fuel. This quantity of fuel can only operate the power plant for half a day, as the plant consumes 600,000 litres of fuel daily. The reserve stocks ran out and the Energy Authority announced the total shutdown of the power plant. The Energy Authority alleged

that the lack of fuel was due to intentional measures taken to prevent the delivery of fuel to Gaza. The Energy Authority in Gaza noted that, even when the power plant is running at full capacity, it only meets 35% of the needs of the Gaza Strip.

Mr Jamal al-Dardasawi, Director of Public Relations in the Gaza Electricity Distribution Company (GEDCO) in Gaza, stated at the time that 137 megawatts of electricity are provided to the Gaza Strip from external sources. 120 megawatts are supplied by Israel and 17 megawatts are supplied by Egypt. The Gaza Strip requires approximately 360 megawatts of electricity daily. Al-Dardasawi announced that GEDCO would apply a schedule based on which power would be distributed for six hours and then cut off for the following 12 hours. In press statements, Eng. Walid Saad Sayel, Executive Manager of the Gaza power plant accused GEDCO and the Energy Authority of failing to fulfil their responsibilities. He noted that the plant can technically provide between 130 and 140 megawatts of electricity, but that the limited quantities of fuel supplied to the plant affects its capacity. Sayel stated that the power crisis has seriously affected the Gaza Strip since the beginning of the political division. He called upon all parties concerned to maintain neutrality in relation to the power sector and not to involve it in the political crisis.

It should be noted that, before November 2009, the EU paid 50 million NIS monthly for the cost of industrial fuel supplied from Israel to the Gaza power plant. In November 2009, the EU announced the suspension of these funds. The EU began to pay the funds to the PNA which, in turn, pledged to pay for the cost of the industrial fuel needed for the operation of the power plant. The Palestinian Energy Authority in Ramallah used funds from its budget to pay for the cost of the needed industrial fuel while, for its part, GEDCO transferred the money it collected from power consumers in the Gaza Strip to the Energy Authority in Ramallah. However, the Energy Authority in Ramallah reduced financial coverage for the industrial fuel, claiming that the money sent by GEDCO was not sufficient to cover the cost of the industrial fuel needed for Gaza power plant. Over the two past years, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip have suffered power outages for between six and 12 hours a day. In April 2010, the Energy Authority in Gaza and the Energy Authority in Ramallah reached an agreement that GEDCO would transfer \$4 million to the Energy Authority in Ramallah to cover the cost of the industrial fuel. In January 2011, the Energy Authority in Gaza stopped importing industrial fuel from

Israel, and imported fuel from Egypt through the tunnels. The electricity crisis continued throughout the year, despite Egypt and Qatar's announcement that they would supply the Gaza Power plant with the necessary fuel.

The Ministry of Health in Gaza declared it has been in a state of crisis since the operation of Gaza power plant stopped, suffering from an acute shortage of the fuel supplies needed to operate electricity generators at hospitals and health care facilities. The Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU) has warned of its inability to supply water to people in appropriate amounts if the outages continue. It pointed out that, in spite of CMWU's ongoing efforts to operate wells and pumping plants during periods of outages, they cannot solve the problem because it is impossible to establish consistency between water distribution schedules and electricity distribution schedules in various areas in the Gaza Strip. Long periods of electricity outages cause disruption to the water distribution schedule, causing great difficulties for people in the Gaza Strip.

PCHR has warned of the serious consequences of the total shutdown of the Gaza power plant, and the resulting impact on the ability of 1.8 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip to access vital services. It also stressed the responsibility and obligations of the State of Israel, as the Occupying Power of the Gaza Strip, according to international humanitarian law, in regards to the wellbeing of the civilian population in the occupied territory, and accordingly, it is required to allow the passage of basic materials, included the fuel needed for the operation of Gaza power plant, and is prohibited from imposing restrictions on the entry of basic materials into the occupied territory and using such restrictions as a form of collective punishment against the civilian population. Moreover, PCHR called upon all the concerned parties, including the two Palestinian governments in Gaza and Ramallah and the Gaza Electricity Distribution Company, to exert all possible and necessary efforts to provide fuel needed to re-operate the Gaza power plant, and to ensure the continued operation of the plant. It also reiterated that it is necessary to immediately look for strategic solutions for ending the ongoing power crisis which has been affecting the Gaza Strip for approximately six years and stressed that Palestinian civilians must not bear the brunt of the failure of the parties responsible for this crisis. Thus, these parties must be committed to provide Palestinian civilians with power services under all circumstances.

Conditions for disabled persons in the Gaza Strip

Disabled persons in the Gaza Strip have continued to suffer from severe deterioration in the enjoyment of their rights, due to the ongoing political division, the existence of two Palestinian governments in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and the non-application of Law No. 4 of 1999 on the Rights of Disabled Palestinians, which provides for rights related to health, education, rehabilitation, employment, recreation, and sports. The law also provides for the issuance of a disability card, entitling the holder to a variety of services. Implementation of the law has been delayed for more than 12 years. The irregular payment of the aid provided by the Ministry of Social Affairs to disabled persons has resulted in the deterioration of their economic and social conditions. As a result, many disabled persons and their families suffer from poverty and lack of rehabilitation services, including the provision of necessary equipment.

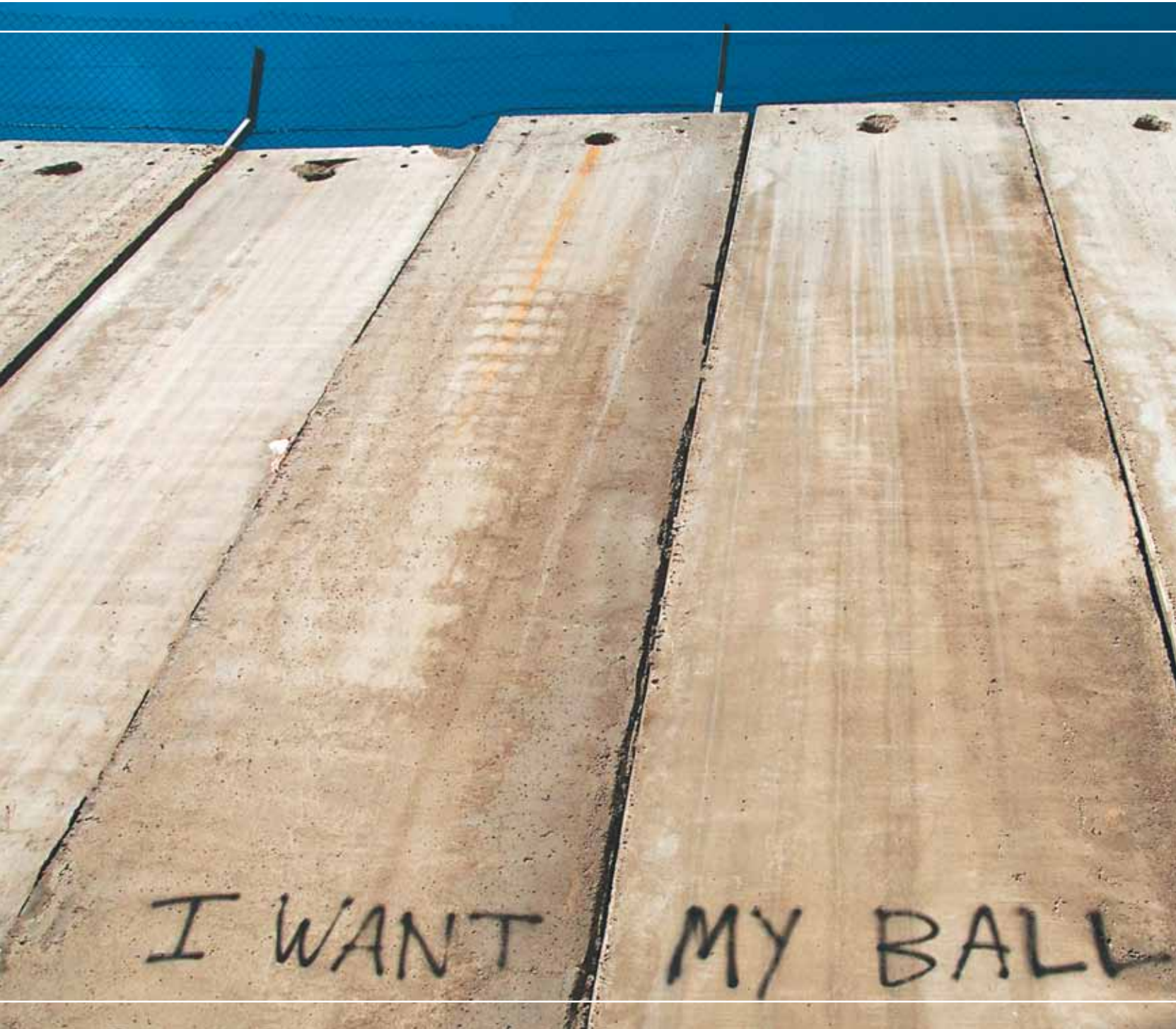
PCHR calls for an immediate end to the ongoing political division which has had catastrophic effects on the rights of Palestinians in general, and on the rights of disabled persons in particular. It also calls upon ministries and governmental organisations to respect the disabled persons quota, as required by law, according to which at least 5% of employees in these institutions should be persons with a disability.

Restrictions on freedom of movement on people from the Gaza Strip

In 2012, many Palestinian civilians from the Gaza Strip suffered from measures taken by both Palestinian governments, which violated their right to freedom of movement, including travel from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank or abroad. Such measures drew Palestinian civilians into the ongoing political conflict. Measures taken by the Ministry of Interior in Ramallah prevented many people in the Gaza Strip, including patients whose medical treatment is not available in the Gaza Strip, from travelling abroad. The Ministry refused to renew passports and did not allow the Ministry of Interior in Gaza to issue new passports. On the other hand, the government in Gaza continued to prevent many Palestinians, including those affiliated to the Fatah movement, from travelling to the West Bank or abroad under security pretexts.

PCHR followed a number of cases of individuals who were prevented from travelling. PCHR views such restrictions as a violation of the right to freedom of movement and calls for an immediate end to the use of such measures.







PART 2:
PCHR ACTIVITIES
IN 2012



Introduction >

Part 2 of the report details PCHR's activities in 2012, which were carried out in accordance with its Annual Plan. Some of the key issues that arose during the year are highlighted as follows:

PCHR's efforts during and after the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip

The Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip, codenamed 'Operation Pillar of Defence', which took place from 14-21 November 2012, involved the widespread commission by Israeli forces of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law against Palestinian civilians and their property. PCHR intensified its efforts both during and after the offensive to report on Israeli violations, to pursue the prosecution of the perpetrators, and to seek redress and remedy for the victims. To this end, PCHR carried out the following activities:

- **Monitoring, documentation, and reporting**

During the offensive, PCHR monitored and documented violations of human rights and humanitarian law perpetrated by Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians. It was essential for PCHR to prepare a comprehensive fact-based narrative to refute Israel's claims that Palestinian civilians and their property were not targeted. Throughout the offensive, PCHR issued daily reports, in both Arabic and English, documenting Israeli attacks on Palestinian civilians and their property. Continuing to work at great personal risk, PCHR was a key source of credible information on the reality of the situation in the Gaza Strip for all stakeholders, including diplomatic missions, the media, and international organisations.

- **Coordination with other organisations**

PCHR coordinated with local and international civil society and human rights organisations to report on violations committed by Israeli forces and present the facts regarding the offensive on the Gaza Strip. In cooperation with these organisations, PCHR issued joint statements demanding the international community to intervene to bring an end to the offensive and compel Israel to respect international humanitarian law.

- **Media advocacy**

PCHR intensified its communication with international organisations and media around the world through countless media interviews for newspaper, television, radio, and online news sources, to raise awareness of Israeli violations against the Palestinian people, and to call on the international community to act in order to stop the offensive.

- **Legal follow-up**

During and after the offensive, PCHR's Legal Unit built legal files in order to submit criminal complaints and civil claims, seeking justice, redress, and remedy for the victims of the offensive. PCHR has extensive experience in dealing with compensation claims and the prosecution of suspected Israeli perpetrators at all levels. PCHR uses Israeli justice mechanisms to meet the requirement of exhausting domestic litigation means before resorting to international mechanisms. In this context, PCHR has continued its efforts to prosecute suspected Israeli perpetrators of violations under the principle of universal jurisdiction. PCHR is urging the Palestinian leadership to sign and ratify the Rome Statute to accept the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court and allow victims the possibility of seeking justice and redress through the international courts.

- **Inviting international legal experts to assist in investigations**

PCHR invited a number of international legal experts to assist in the investigations it initiated into possible violations committed by Israeli forces during the offensive on the Gaza Strip. They offered their expertise in investigating attacks, and provided advice on the development of legal files which meet international standards. The legal experts worked together with PCHR lawyers to prepare the files for use before the International Criminal Court and other courts that apply the principle of universal jurisdiction. The group included high profile judges, lawyers and investigators from Norway, UK and Ireland. This measure was aimed at enhancing the theoretical knowledge and practical experience of PCHR.

Intensified efforts to defend and advocate for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails

The issue of Palestinian prisoners inside Israeli jails is one of PCHR's main areas of focus. PCHR provides legal services to prisoners and carries out advocacy and lobbying activities for their cause. In 2012, the Palestinian prisoners' mass hunger strikes played a major role in raising awareness of the policy of administrative detention practiced by Israeli forces against Palestinians as well as the poor detention conditions inside Israeli jails.

In 2012, PCHR sought to intensify its efforts to support prisoners. It organised and participated in numerous activities focussed on raising awareness of the suffering of prisoners and unifying international efforts to pressurise Israel to respect international legal instruments related to the treatment of the prisoners and to release administrative detainees. PCHR focused on a number of issues, most importantly: supporting the legitimate demands of prisoners; raising awareness of the Israeli policy of administrative detention; calling for prisoners to be granted their visitation rights; the solitary confinement policy; and poor detention conditions of prisoners inside Israeli jails. The following are PCHR's key activities in this context:

Issuing press releases and appeals for intervention

PCHR issued a number of press releases and appeals for intervention. These publications outlined the suffering of Palestinian prisoners inside Israeli jails and demanded the intervention of the inter-

national community to save the lives of the prisoners on hunger strike, who have undergone hunger strike for months to obtain the basic rights which are guaranteed by international law. In its pursuit to unify efforts exerted in this field, PCHR took the initiative in publishing a number of joint press releases with civil society organisations and other human rights organisations working in the Gaza Strip. In its press releases, PCHR emphasised the importance of the international community's role in ending the policy of administrative detention practiced against Palestinian, which has become an Israeli policy aiming at limiting the freedom of Palestinians without presenting charges against the accused or following the appropriate procedures for judicial proceedings.

- **International advocacy activities**

PCHR participated in many advocacy activities in support of Palestinian prisoners. PCHR participated in a meeting in Paris which was organised by the Coalition of French NGOs for Palestine, discussing the planned campaign against the policy of administrative detention. A joint press release was issued following the meeting, which was published by French newspapers, condemning the practices of the Israeli occupation in its treatment of Palestinian prisoners and demanding the international community to pressurise Israel to put an end to the use of the policy of administrative de-

tention. PCHR also participated in the 10th annual conference of International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC), held on 11 May 2012 in Stockholm, Sweden. During the ILAC conference, PCHR focused on the issue of Palestinian prisoners, poor detention conditions, and the health risks arising from the ongoing hunger strikes. In May 2012, PCHR participated in activities organised by ACSUR and Autonomous University of Barcelona, during which it outlined the violations committed against Palestinian prisoners inside Israeli jails. Also, PCHR held a meeting with the international board of the International Federation of Human Right (FIDH) in Paris on 10 May 2012. The meeting discussed FIDH's role in supporting and advocating for Palestinian prisoners. PCHR also participated in the "International Conference for Solidarity with Palestinian and Arab Prisoners in Israeli Occupation Jails", which was sponsored by the League of Arab States and hosted by the Republic of Iraq in Baghdad on 11 and 12 December 2012.



Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, in a meeting with Ms. Suhaie Belhassen, President of FIDH; Ms. Khadija Cherif, Secretary-General of FIDH; and Mr. Antoine Bernard, Executive Director of FIDH

- **Organisation of activities in support of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails**

PCHR took the initiative to organise a number of events, regionally and internationally, to unify efforts for the cause of Palestinian prisoners, and in response to the developments produced by the mass hunger strike of the Palestinian prisoners, most importantly of these initiatives:

- » **Conference in Solidarity with Palestinian Prisoners in Cairo:**

On 14 May 2012, PCHR organised a conference in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners. This conference was organised in cooperation with the Arab Organisation for Human Rights (AOHR) and the Egyptian Journalists' Syndicate (EJS) in the EJS offices in Cairo. This conference was part of support and mobilisation activities organised in support of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. Members of Palestinian prisoners' families and ex-prisoners participated in the conference. These participants gave live statements about the suffering of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and about the suffering of prisoners' families. In addition, a number of public and official figures, representatives of international and Arab human rights organisations, representatives of political parties, parliament members, experts, media professionals and writers from Egypt and other Arab countries participated in the conference. The conference was aimed at introducing the

cause of Palestinian and Arab prisoners detained in Israeli jails and highlighting the suffering endured by them and by their families.



◀ The Palestinian delegation participation in a conference in Cairo to support Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, 14 May 2012

» **Conference in Cooperation with the Human Rights Institute of Valencia University:**

In cooperation with the Human Rights Institute of Valencia University and the Palestinian community in Valencia, Spain, PCHR organised a conference titled “The Cause of Palestinian Political Prisoners: Legal and Human Dimensions.” In this conference, PCHR addressed the living conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and attacks by Israeli forces against them, highlighting the legal and political dimensions of such violations.

Hosting meetings of regional and international organisations

In the context of its advocacy efforts for the rights of the Palestinian people, PCHR invited both the Arab Organisation for Human Rights and the International Association for Democratic Lawyers (IADL) to hold their executive committee meetings in the Gaza Strip. Both organisations accepted PCHR’s invitation, in expression of their support of the Palestinian people and rejection of the Israeli violations against them, particularly the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip. PCHR set a busy schedule for its visitors that included a number of activities which introduced to them the reality of the human rights’ situation in the Gaza Strip, including meetings with representatives of the Gaza government, members of the PLC and representatives of civil society and international organisations working in the Gaza Strip. Here are some of the activities conducted by both delegations:

I: International Association for Democratic Lawyers (IADL)

On Monday, 24 September 2012, PCHR received a delegation from the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL).⁴⁰ This delegation was comprised of 21 lawyers from IADL’s Executive Committee, which held its annual meetings this year in the Gaza Strip, as an expression of solidarity with the Palestinian people and in protest against the human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli forces, including the closure and collective punishment measures imposed on the Gaza Strip.

PCHR arranged an intense visit programme for this international delegation; it included meetings with the Prime Minister of the Gaza Government, the Minister of Justice

40. The IADL, which was founded in 1946, is a non-governmental organisation with consultative status at the UN Economic, Social and Cultural Council and UNESCO. IADL members include lawyers throughout the world and a number of national and regional associations and unions. Its goals include, inter alia: ensuring cooperation amongst lawyers throughout the world in the field of democratic practice; encouraging respect for, and maintenance of, international peace and security; promoting the independence of peoples and protesting any restrictions on such independence; defending human rights and democratic liberties; struggling for the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary and the legal profession; defending peoples’ rights of development and equality.



▲ A delegation of the International Association of Democratic Lawyer during a visit to Gaza

and a number of government officials, Palestinian civil society and human rights organisations and representatives of international organisations working in the Gaza Strip. The delegation's visit included as well a field tour to various areas in the Gaza Strip, so that the delegation could learn more about the living conditions of the Palestinian population under the violations of their rights being perpetrated by Israeli forces. In addition, the delegation visited the faculties of law in Palestinian universities and delivered lectures there.

The delegation focused in their meetings and various visits on a number of issues, the most important of which was the Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people and the issue of the Palestinian prisoners. The delegation reviewed as well the democratic and human rights situation in the Gaza Strip under the PNA. The delegation focused on the issue of the Palestinian national division, which they signalled out as the most challenging obstacle facing the Palestinian democratic reform. They also warned of its negative impact on the Palestinian cause in general, especially in regard to ending the Israeli occupation of the oPt.

- **Conducting a seminar on accountability for Israeli violations of international law in the oPt**

PCHR organised, in cooperation with IADL, a seminar titled "Accountability for Violations of International Law in the OPt." The seminar was convened with the participation of IADL's Executive Committee and in the presence of a number of academics, lawyers and representatives of human rights, non-governmental and media organisations on 27 September 2012. The seminar, which continued for more than eight hours, focused on the Israeli war crimes committed against the Palestinian people and discussed the means of prosecuting war criminals and bringing them to justice. It also discussed the status of Palestinian prisoners in international law, and the international means of support for their cause and advocacy for releasing them, as well as protecting them from the violations they are subjected to inside Israeli jails.

The seminar ▼



41. AOHR is a leading regional human rights organisation in the Arab World. It was established in 1983 as an international, non-governmental and non-profit organisation. AOHR has 22 sub-offices and member organisations in the Arab countries, including three sub-offices in European countries that serve the Arab communities abroad. PCHR is a member in AOHR, and lawyer Raji Sourani, PCHR's Director, was elected as the President of AOHR's Board of Trustees on 15 April 2011.

II: Arab Organisation for Human Rights (AOHR)

AOHR's delegation started their visit to the Gaza Strip on 19 April 2012 after the Board of Trustees had decided to hold its meetings and those of the Executive Committee in the Gaza Strip.⁴¹ This step was taken to express AOHR's solidarity with the Palestinian people and the population of the Gaza Strip, who has been living under an illegal closure for years.

PCHR organised a series of activities for members of the delegation, which offered them an opportunity to observe the current situation in the Gaza Strip

and challenges facing the Palestinian civilians in view of their ongoing suffering due the Israeli violations and war crimes, in addition to the ramifications of the internal split.

The activities included a number of official meetings that included meetings with the Palestinian Prime Minister in Gaza, the Minister of Justice in Gaza and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Gaza. The delegation members also met with representatives of civil society and human rights organisations to review the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip under the occupation and the national political split. They also met with representatives of international organisations working in the Gaza Strip.

These meetings addressed the aggravation of the internal situation in the oPt due to the internal split. Members of the delegation called for working seriously towards achieving the Palestinian reconciliation as it is the key to put an end to all forms of the fragmentation and violations of liberties, demanding all parties to join efforts to put an end to the political split.

- **Resumption of PCHR’s work before courts in Gaza**

In 2012, PCHR resumed its work before courts in the Gaza Strip. The decision to resume work before courts was taken following internal discussions in the Legal Unit and the leading bodies of PCHR, and consultations with other civil society organisations.

PCHR had suspended working before courts in the Gaza Strip since 2007, when the efforts it made jointly with other human rights organisations and the Palestine Bar Association to spare the judiciary the impacts of political split failed. In December 2007, human rights organisations and the Palestine Bar Association issued a statement calling on the government in Gaza to reverse its illegal decision to seize the civil judiciary in the Gaza Strip, and holding it responsible for undermining the judiciary for the sake of establishing alternative illegal judicial bodies.

The judiciary is one of major mechanisms available for human rights organisations. They were forced to take the decision to abstain from resorting to courts following a series of unconstitutional steps taken by the government in Gaza and its seizure of the judiciary in the Gaza Strip. PCHR had done its best to compensate this mechanism by resorting to alternative mechanisms of communication with political and security bodies, which proved ineffective.



▲ A delegation of the Arab Organization for Human Rights during a visit to PCHR

In light of the failure of efforts to unite the judiciary in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and realising that the continuous boycott might cause irreversible damage to people, PCHR decided to resume its work before courts in the Gaza Strip through direct representation by its lawyers.

In this context, on 30 April 2012, PCHR challenged the constitutionality of the decision taken by the Council of Ministers in Gaza No. 229 of 2011 before the Supreme Court in Gaza, in its capacity as a constitutional court. The decision amended the Council of Ministers’ Decision No. 9/2003 Concerning the Executive Regulation of the Charitable Associations and Community Organisations Law 1/2002. For more details about this petition, see PCHR’s press release issued on 30 April 2012.

- **Capacity-building in PCHR**

PCHR makes continuous efforts to develop its performance through capacity building of its staff to improve their professional efficiency. In 2012, PCHR continued such efforts in various directions that can be summed up as follows:

Independent International Evaluation Committee

In 2004, PCHR had an external evaluation implemented by a group of independent international consultants. In the following years, PCHR worked on the implementa-

tion of recommendations provided in the evaluation report. In the eight years since this evaluation, PCHR has expanded rapidly both in terms of the reach of its work and organisationally. PCHR wants to ensure that it maintains its edge and innovative ways of thinking, and that it has adequate resources and systems in place to support its work in an efficient and effective manner. PCHR commissioned four independent external evaluation experts to carry out the evaluation which aimed to:

1. Evaluate the impact of PCHR's programmes according to the completed strategic plan (2009-2011), and determine the lessons to be learnt for the current strategic plan (2012-2014);
2. Assess the governance structures in place in PCHR to ensure their appropriateness to the work of PCHR and assess the effectiveness and efficiency of PCHR's operational processes for the delivery of its mission and strategy; and
3. Present recommendations for future plans to support efficiency of PCHR's work to achieve its mission and strategy.

The evaluation team delivered the evaluation report to PCHR in August 2012, and PCHR is currently formulating an action plan to implement its recommendations.



The evaluation team during a meeting PCHR's staff ▲

Meetings of leading bodies in PCHR

In 2012, leading bodies in PCHR held regular meetings:

- On 18 July 2012, PCHR's General Assembly held its annual meeting in the presence of the Registrar of Companies to listen to and approve administrative and financial reports for 2010 and 2011.
- The Board of Directors held 3 meetings, in which it discussed administrative and financial issues, as well as other issues that fall under its mandate.
- The Programme Committee, which supervises PCHR's activities and which is steered by the PCHR Director or his Deputy Director for Programme Affairs, and which includes the Heads of all Units, held 24 meetings.

Participation in external courses and conferences

- On 23-24 February 2012, Bassam al-Aqra, Director of the Training Unit, participated in an international conference on challenges and opportunities for achieving transitional justice in Arab countries. The conference was organised in Cairo by the Arab Institute for Human Rights.
- In the period 7-13 May 2012, Dr Fadel al-Mzeini, a researcher in the Economic and Social Rights Unit, participated in a regional training course on economic, social and cultural rights. The course was organised in Cairo by the Arab Institute for Human Rights in cooperation with the Arab Organisation for Human Rights. It addressed enforcement of economic, social and cultural rights in Arab countries, in light of reforms in the region since the Arab Spring.
- In the period 1-10 July 2012, al-Mzeini participated in a training course for trainers of economic, social and cultural rights organised by the Arab Institute for Human Rights in Tunisia.
- In the period 3-21 September 2012, Sabreen al-Tartour, a fieldworker, and Samar al-Khdour, a translator, participated in a training course in Egypt on institutional leadership and crisis management. The training was facilitated by the Coptic Evangelical Organisation for Social Services. The training programme included crisis management skills; designing project for crisis management; gender and peace building; human rights and good governance; and advocacy skills.
- In the period 8-26 October 2012, Hany Abu Nahla, Director of the Translation Unit, participated in an advanced training course on UN Security Council Resolution 1325: Women, Peace and Security. The course was sponsored by the Swedish International

Development Cooperation Agency and was implemented by Indevelop and Kvinna till Kvinna. 25 activists from Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya participated in the course.

- In the period 5-16 November 2012, Ibrahim Sourani, a lawyer in the Legal Unit, participated in a training course for international investigators organised by the Institute for International Criminal Investigation in the Hague. The training focused on developing the technical skills of international investigators, including methods of investigation into international crimes.
- In the period 4-12 December 2012, Iyad al-Alami, Head of the Legal Unit, and Rami Abu Sha'ban, PCHR's accountant, participated in a training course on monitoring, evaluation, fundraising, and good governance in Cairo. The course focused on the planning and management of projects (the logical framework); proposal writing; and monitoring and evaluation in human rights organisations.



^ The evaluation team during a meeting with Ms. Rawia al-Shawa, Member of the Palestinian Legislative Council in Gaza City



v A meeting of PCHR's Program Committee, 6 November 2012



v A meeting of PCHR's Board of Directors



> Activities of PCHR Units

> Fieldwork Unit

In 2012, the Fieldwork Unit continued to monitor and document the human rights situation throughout the oPt, including East Jerusalem, as set out in its annual plan. The Unit is the major artery that provides PCHR with information and data on human rights violations. The 11 fieldworkers of the Unit in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip monitor and document human rights violations, escort visiting international delegation, and interview victims and encourage them to refer to PCHR to seek legal assistance and remedy. The Unit further produces weekly reports and several press releases on Israeli human rights violations in the oPt. Additionally, the Unit monitors and documents human rights violations at the internal Palestinian level.

In the Gaza Strip, Israeli forces have continued to impose a total closure for more than six years, violating the basic rights of the Palestinian civilian population. In mid-November 2012, the Israeli force launched a large-scale, 8-day offensive on the Gaza Strip, killing dozens of Palestinians and destroying hundreds of houses and civilian facilities. In response, the Unit was in a state of emergency until the end of the year to document all crimes and human rights violations perpetrated in the course of that offensive. It was even forced to use volunteers to assist in the documentation of human rights violations.

In the West Bank, Israeli forces and settlers escalated attacks against Palestinian civilians and their property, and continued efforts to create a Jewish majority in East Jerusalem. They also continued to construct the annexation wall inside the West Bank territory. They further maintained hundreds of checkpoints which restricted the movement of Palestinian civilians throughout the West Bank.

At the internal Palestinian level, the political split continued to impact all aspect of life in the Palestinian Authority controlled areas. In this regard, the Unit continued to monitor and document human rights violations at the Palestinian level in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

> **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 Israeli forces
- B. Palestinian violations of human rights

A. Documentation of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by Israeli forces

The Unit carried out the following activities:

1. Documentation of wilful and extra-judicial killings, injuries, bombardments, incursions, house raids and arrests perpetrated by Israeli forces

According to the Unit's documentation, in 2012, Israeli forces killed 265 Palestinians, including 141 civilians (including 44 children and 14 women). They also wounded 1,208 Palestinians, including 318 children and 97 women. During the Israeli offensive in November, Israeli forces killed 171 Palestinians, including 102 civilians (including 35 children and 14 women). They also wounded 648 Palestinians, including 625 civilians (including 214 children and 93 women).⁴²

42. According to PCHR's investigations, more than 1,250 Palestinians were injured during 'Operation Pillar of Defence'; out of those, 648 sustained moderate to severe injuries.

Additionally, Israeli forces arrested 1,197 Palestinians, including 59 fishermen and 49 Palestinians who were arrested while attempting to enter Israel. This number includes 170 children and 12 women. The Unit further documented at least 2,300 incursions into Palestinian communities, and 1,435 aerial, ground and naval shelling, including 1,350 air strikes during the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November.

2. Documentation of restrictions imposed by the Israeli on the freedom of movement

The Unit monitored and documented restrictions imposed by Israeli forces on the freedom of movement, including the tightened closure imposed on the Gaza Strip and its impacts on the Palestinian civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. In this context, fieldworkers wrote hundreds of reports on the movement of goods and persons, including patients, at border crossings of the Gaza Strip. The Unit also documented establishing hundreds of checkpoints in the West Bank, which restricted the movement of Palestinian civilians and the denied access of Palestinian farmers to their lands. In this context, the Unit documented 143 cases of arresting Palestinians at military checkpoints in the West Bank and at Beit Hanoun ('Erez') crossing in the Gaza Strip, including 24 children and five women. It also documented three deaths in the Gaza Strip as a result of denial of access to medical treatment. The Unit wrote hundreds of reports on the impact of the closure on the infrastructure, education, health and other vital sectors, including fishing, in the Gaza Strip.



▲ Yasser Abdul Ghafour, a field worker, while documenting human rights violations in Khan Yunis

▼ Sabreen al-Tartour, a field worker, takes testimonies about human rights violations



3. Documentation of civilian property confiscation and destruction

Over the year, Israeli forces bombarded civilian facilities, agricultural land, and Palestinian resistance training sites in the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, Israeli forces waged a systematic campaign of house demolitions and land levelling and confiscation for the purposes of settlement expansion and construction of the annexation wall.

In 2012, in the Gaza Strip, Israeli forces completely destroyed 128 houses, where 219 families comprised of 1,244 individuals, including 716 children, used to live. 126 of these buildings, containing 191 residential units, were destroyed during the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November. Additionally, Israeli forces partially destroyed 243 houses, including 160 during the Israeli offensive in November. They also damaged 570 houses. In 2012, Israeli forces destroyed 662 civilian facilities. Israeli forces also razed at least 319.300 dunums of agricultural land, including 234.300 dunums during the Israeli offensive in November.

4. 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 2012, the Unit documented at least 100 attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and property. The Unit also documented 170 attacks by Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians and international and Israeli human rights defenders during the dispersion of peaceful demonstrations organised in protest to the construction of the annexation wall in the West Bank. These attacks resulted in 180 injuries and 362 detentions. The Unit also documented 50 cases of denial of farmers' access to their lands.

5. Documentation of violations of the right to freedom of expression attacks against journalists and media institutions

In 2012, the Unit documented 30 attacks by Israeli forces against journalists and media institutions, including closure of a number of institutions, and 150 attacks against local and

international human rights defenders to prevent them from carrying out activities against the construction of the annexation wall.

6. Database of killings, injuries, house demolitions and land levelling, bombardments and detentions

In 2012, the Unit entered at least 4,992 files into the database.

To be able to document such human rights violations, fieldworkers carry out the following activities:

1. Field visits and first-hand information

Fieldworkers conduct visits to the sites of violations of human rights, despite the dangers often existing in these areas. On average, a fieldworker will make 2-3 field visits to document one incident.

Means of verification

In 2012, fieldworkers in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank conducted more than 6,000 field visits.

2. Interviews with victims and/or their families and eyewitnesses

Fieldworkers usually carry out interviews with several people in relation to each violation in order to verify the accuracy of information. Eyewitnesses are very important to draw a clear and real picture of events, especially when fieldworkers are not able to reach the site immediately following a violation due to dangers they may face. Fieldworkers have to work hard to interview as many people as possible to ensure the accuracy of information, and each interview usually takes a long time.

Means of verification

- In 2012, fieldworkers carried out at least 5,000 interviews with victims and eyewitnesses.
- Fieldworkers gathered at least 2,500 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. Fieldworkers are required to complete a form for each violation they report. Many incidents require a number of different individual reports.

Means of verification

In 2012, fieldworkers filled in 4,325 forms in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

4. Collating photographic/video evidence

Fieldworkers are required to take photographs or video footage of the site of a violation wherever possible. Photographic or video evidence can provide a valuable record of an incident for both legal and historical records.

Means of verification

The Unit took 2,255 photographs of human rights violations.

5. Collating other documentation related to human rights violations

Documents, including medical reports, ownership documents, personal photographs, and maps, are also necessary evidence for legal and historical records of incidents.

Means of verification

- 780 documents were collected and referred to various PCHR Units according to their areas of specialisation.
- Some of these documents were used by various PCHR Units.

6. Writing reports on human rights violations

Fieldworkers wrote detailed reports on human rights violations, in which eyewitness testimonies and the fieldworkers' notes are included, to give a comprehensive account of violations.

Means of verification

In 2012, fieldworkers wrote at least 4,000 field reports on human rights violations.

7. Filing information on Israeli violations of human rights

In 2012, the Unit prepared a number of files of various human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli forces in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which are categorised according to governorate.

8. Scanning of documents to be entered into the database

Hundreds of documents were scanned and entered into PCHR's database.

Indicators

- All documented human rights violations were entered into the PCHR database.
- Human rights violations were reported in 51 weekly reports.
- A number of cases were referred to the PCHR Legal Unit.
- Documents related to restrictions on the freedom of movement were referred to the PCHR Economic and Social Rights Unit.
- Materials available at the Unit were used in writing the PCHR Annual Report on the human rights situation in the oPt.
- Photographs taken by fieldworkers were published on PCHR's website and in publications.
- Materials available at the Unit were used in press releases and reports issued by PCHR, especially the Economic and Social Rights Unit.
- The Unit Director received at least 120 phone calls from other organisations inquiring about human rights violations.
- Materials available at the Unit, including figures and statistics, were used in media interviews by PCHR staff, and they were also used by international inquiry missions that visited the Gaza Strip.

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 12 file categories of human rights violations.
- Dozens of photographs taken by fieldworkers were published on the PCHR website.
- An electronic archive of these photos was prepared.

- Photographs and other documents were used by other international, regional and local organisations.
- The Unit received dozens of phone calls inquiring about certain human rights violations.
- The Unit wrote 51 weekly reports and 57 press releases.
- Weekly reports and press releases prepared by the Unit were published on the PCHR website.
- All human rights violations were entered into the PCHR database.
- Unit staff conducted 7 media interviews.

B. Documentation of Palestinian violations of human rights

The Unit carried out the following activities:

1. Documentation of the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons

• Documentation of killings and injuries

The Unit documented 82 killings; including 52 persons killed by firearms and explosions; 18 killed in tunnels at the Egyptian border; three women killed allegedly to protect “family honour;” four persons killed in internal tunnels; two persons killed in other incidents. The Unit also documented 115 injuries, including 22 children and eight women, related to the state of lawlessness and the misuse of weapons.

• Documentation of attacks on public and private property

The Unit documented dozens of such attacks.

2. Documentation of cases of medical negligence at health care facilities that result in deaths

The Unit documented 5 cases of medical negligence resulting in death.

3. Documentation of mass and individual arrests (political arrests) by security services of the Gaza government and Security Services in the West Bank

The Unit documented 167 political arrests in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

4. Documentation of cases of torture in detention centres administered by security services in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank

The Unit documented 20 cases of torture.

5. Documentation of attacks on public freedoms and the right to 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.

6. Observation of the state of economic and social rights in the Gaza Strip

The Unit documented many cases which involved violations of the rights to health and education.

To document human rights violations, fieldworkers carry out the following activities:

1. Field visits and first-hand information

Fieldworkers conducted field visits to scenes of incidents, police stations, and hospitals to obtain further information on incidents. They also interviewed eyewitnesses. Fieldworkers conducted at least 1,000 field visits in 2012.

2. Interviews with victims and/or families and eyewitnesses

Fieldworkers are required to conduct interviews with several people regarding each incident in order to verify/cross-check information. Difficulties associated with obtaining accurate and detailed statements include witnesses’ fears of reprisals. In 2012, fieldworkers carried out at least 700 interviews with victims and eyewitnesses, and gathered at least 350 testimonies from victims and eyewitnesses.

3. Collating photographic/video evidence

This activity is explained above.

4. Collating other documentation related to human rights violations

Documents, including medical reports, ownership documents, and personal photographs, are also necessary evidence for legal and historical record of incidents. Obtaining such documents is not easy, but efforts made by fieldworkers to obtain such documents are often successful.

5. Writing reports on human rights violations

Fieldworkers write detailed reports on human rights violations, in which eyewitnesses' testimonies and the fieldworkers' notes are included, to give a comprehensive account of violations. In 2012, fieldworkers wrote at least 500 reports on human rights violations.

6. Creating files on Palestinian violations of human rights

The Unit makes files of human rights violations that are classified in accordance with the type of violation.

Indicators

- Information related to killings and injuries 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 for input into press releases and field updates.
- Cases documented by the Unit with regard to killings for "family honour" were transferred to the Women's Unit and the Democratic Development Unit.
- Most human rights violations were highlighted in press releases issued by PCHR.
- All publications were put on the PCHR website.
- Information gathered by the Unit was used in the PCHR Annual Report.
- Information gathered by the Unit was used in specialised reports written by other Units.
- Photographs taken by fieldworkers were used on PCHR's website and publications.
- Many cases related to assaults on public liberties, attacks on private property, political arrests, torture in detention facilities and closure of civil societies organisations or charities were referred to the Democratic Development Unit and the Legal Unit.
- PCHR was credited as a reliable source of information and statistics for international, regional, and local organisations. The Unit received many phone calls and emails requesting information.

Means of verification

- The Unit has a well-classified database on such violations, which is used by the PCHR Units and the media.
- The Unit has at least 500 field reports on such violations in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including

East Jerusalem.

- The Unit has an archive of field photographs.
- Information and photographs gathered by the Unit were used by other local, regional, and international organisations.
- The Unit received at least 22 phone calls from interested people inquiring about particular violations.
- Information gathered by the Unit and figures from the database were used in a number of reports:
 1. Five Years and More; International Donors Continue to Fund the Israeli-Imposed Closure on the Gaza Strip;
 2. Report on the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression in the oPt;
 3. Report on the Right to Adequate Housing: The Case of Houses Destroyed during the Offensive on the Gaza Strip in 2009; and
 4. Report on Violations of the Rights of the Child in the Gaza Strip.
- PCHR issued 165 press releases on human rights violations in the oPt.
- PCHR issued 12 updates on the state of the border crossings in the Gaza Strip.

Reporting on Israeli violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the oPt

Verifiable indicators

1. Weekly report on Israeli violations of human rights in the oPt
 2. Press releases on Israeli violations of human rights in the oPt
 3. Strengthening relations with the community
 4. Escorting visiting international delegations on field visits
-
1. **Weekly report on Israeli violations of human rights in the oPt**

The Unit prepares weekly reports on Israeli violations of human rights in the oPt. The weekly reports are based on information collated each week by the fieldworkers 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 in both Arabic and English.

Indicators

- Preparation of weekly reports on Israeli violations of human rights in the oPt.

- Dissemination of the report.

Means of verification

- The Unit prepared 51 weekly reports in 2012.
- Summaries of the reports are often published in local newspapers and some websites.
- There is increasing demand for copies of these reports.
- The Unit Director received dozens of inquiries from a number of organisations and media institutions.
- Some information included in the reports was used by PCHR staff in their interventions at conferences and meetings abroad.

2. Press releases on Israeli violations of human rights in the oPt

Unit staff members prepare press releases on specific incidents as they occur. Press releases are issued on events that are of particular significance. Sometimes, two or more press releases are issued in one day.

Indicators

- Preparation of press releases.

Means of verification

- The Unit prepared 57 press releases on Israeli violations and another 27 on the internal situation in 2012.
- Press releases are published on the PCHR website and distributed by email.
- Press releases are often covered by local and international media.

3. Strengthening relations with the community

» Meetings and contacts with victims of human rights violations

Fieldworkers 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.

» Media activities

Unit staff members were interviewed by local and international media on violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli forces and on the deterioration of the internal situation in the oPt. In 2012, Unit staff gave 3 media interviews.

Indicators

- Visits to PCHR's offices by people wishing 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 fieldworkers.
- Cooperation of public institutions and security services with fieldworkers.
- Cases investigated by PCHR and legal aid provided accordingly.
- Participation in community activities.
- Interventions by Unit staff at conferences and workshops.
- Requests for information by scholars and university students for their research.

Means of verification

- Hundreds of victims refer to the PCHR Legal Unit through fieldworkers.
- Dozens of people referred to PCHR to submit complaints with regard to human rights violations.
- Hundreds of people participated in activities organised by PCHR, including conferences, workshops and training courses.
- Hundreds of copies of weekly reports were circulated by fieldworkers in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.
- The Unit provided data and statistics to scholars and university students on human rights violations to assist them in their researches.
- The Unit Director and staff gave 3 media interviews.
- Fieldworkers participated in 3 training courses organised by PCHR.
- Fieldworkers participated in 2 training courses abroad.

4. Escorting international delegations on field visits

In 2012, the Unit staff members escorted visiting international delegations and individuals on visits to locations throughout the Gaza Strip and provided briefings on recent incidents. They also organised meetings for international figures and PCHR international staff with victims.

Indicators

Unit staff members briefed the international delegations they escorted on the human rights situation in the oPt.

Means of verification

In 2012, Unit staff members escorted visiting international delegations and individuals in at least 70 field visits throughout the Gaza Strip.

Other activities

Participation in the research project on the traditional justice system and its applicability to the juvenile justice in *the Gaza Strip*.

Four fieldworkers participated in this project which began at the end of February 2012 and ended at the beginning of June 2012. They attended 10 meetings for the working team in the project. A number of tasks were assigned to those fieldworkers, including the carrying out of interviews with reconciliation figures, a judge of traditional justice, a member of the Union of Palestine Clerics, a leading local figure, and managers of vocational rehabilitation centres.

In relation to case studies for the report, it was required to fill in a form indicating the family's consent and a form indicating the child's consent. The fieldworkers were then required to interview one of the child's parents, the child himself, whether a victim or a perpetrator, and the traditional judge who considered the case. Each fieldworker was requested to follow up three cases, excluding Gaza City, where the fieldworker was requested to follow up six cases. Fieldworkers were then required to analyze each case.

Obstacles

1. The high number of questions to be asked during each interview meant that interviews lasted for more than 3 hours.
2. The interviews were conducted in late hours as the interviewees were busy in daily affairs.
3. It was difficult to deal with the children's family because of the peculiarities of the cases.
4. Some questions designed for leading figures and traditional judges were difficult and the fieldworkers had to explain them comprehensively.

Indicators

- Fieldworkers carried out dozens of field visits.



> Legal Unit

The Unit worked on all activities included in its Annual Plan for 2012 and made efforts to carry out all of these activities. The Unit provides legal assistance to victims of human rights violations.

> *Israeli agenda*

In the period 14-21 November 2012, Israeli forces launched a large-scale military offensive on the Gaza Strip. Due to these developments, the Unit made intensive efforts to provide legal assistance to victims of Israeli violations of human rights, including establishing legal files to prosecute suspected Israeli war criminals before international courts. In spite of the heavy load of work, the Unit attempted to carry out all activities set out in its annual plan regarding to providing legal assistance to victims of human rights violations perpetrated by the Israeli force.

> **Output (1)**

Legal aid for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails

1. Providing medical care to prisoners
2. Ensuring release or better detention conditions for detainees
3. Determining the legal status and location of detention of detainees
4. Participating in meetings and colloquia
5. Issuing press releases

1. Providing medical care to prisoners

The Unit coordinated and cooperated with a number of Israeli health care organisations, 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 2012, the Unit followed up the health conditions of 16 Palestinian prisoners, including 11 from 2011.

2. Ensuring release of or better detention conditions for detainees

Activity

The Unit was able to provide legal aid to 10 Palestinian detainees to ensure their release from Israeli jails.

3. Determination of the legal status and location of detention of detainees

a. Representing Palestinian prisoners before Israeli courts

- The Unit provided legal aid for 43 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, specifying places of their detention, visiting them and representing them before court.
- The lawyer authorised by the Unit conducted 11 visits to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails to check their health conditions and legal status. Israeli occupation authorities prevented the lawyer from visiting detainees on several occasions.

b. Submitting complaints and petitions

- The Unit submitted 5 complaints to concerned Israeli authorities, including the Israeli Prison Service and the Public Prosecutor, demanding release of detainees for the deterioration of their health conditions or transferring them to other places with adequate health services.
- The Unit followed up 11 complaints from 2011.

c. Legal consultation to families of detainees

In 2012, the Unit provided 196 legal consultations to families of detainees.

4. Participation in meetings and colloquia

- On 28 February 2012, the Unit Director met with the Head of the ICRC Mission in Gaza to discuss the conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and the family visitation programme for them.
- On 7 March 2012, Unit staff participated in a workshop organised by the Palestinian Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs on administrative detention.
- On 11 April 2012, the Unit lawyers participated in a seminar organised by the Palestinian Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs on the medical and legal implications of DNA test conducted by the Israeli Prison Service on Palestinian detainees.
- On 8 November 2012, the Unit lawyers participated in a seminar on the legal aspects of the massacre committed by Israeli forces in Khan Yunis in 1956.

5. Issuing press releases

- The Unit issued a press release on 17 April 2012 on the Palestinian Prisoners Day.

Indicators

- The Unit followed up health conditions of 16 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails to ensure better health conditions for them.
- The Unit provided legal assistance to 43 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- 10 prisoners, whose cases were pursued by the Unit, were released.
- The lawyer authorised by the Unit conducted 11 visits to Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- The Unit submitted 16 complaints to concerned

Israeli authorities.

- The Unit provided 196 legal consultations to families of Palestinian prisoners.
- The Unit participated in 10 meetings.
- The Unit issued one press release.
- The Unit received a response from the Israeli Ministry of Justice concerning a sick Palestinian prisoner in Israeli jails.

Means of verification

- Observation of the number of detainees suffering from health problems.
- Observation of the number of released detainees.
- Observation of the number of occasions on which the lawyer authorised by the Unit was prevented from visiting detainees.
- Observation of positive feedback to services provided by the Unit.
- Observation of increases cases of detention of Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip.
- Observation positive feedback at the international level.

► **Output (2)**

Legal aid for victims of Israeli violations of international human rights and humanitarian law

1. Compensation for victims
2. Prosecution of war criminals

1. Compensation for victims

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

a. Legal documentation

The Unit has continued to document Israeli violations of human rights, especially during the latest Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip (14-21 November 2012). The Unit intensified its efforts to prepare legal files through the following steps in order to ensure access of victims to justice and remedy:

- Examining the scenes of attacks.
- Collating affidavits from eyewitnesses.
- Taking photos and preparing sketches and aerial images of the scenes of attacks.
- Obtaining necessary documents related to attacks.
- Collecting any documents or statements issued by Israeli authorities with regard to attacks.
- Collecting exhibits from the scenes of attacks.
- Obtaining technical reports from EOD concerning the weapons used in attacks.
- Obtaining powers of attorney from victims to legally represent them.

In 2012, the Unit documented 255 files on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights as shown in the following table.



Lawyer Mohammed al-Alami taking a victim's affidavit ►

- Fieldworkers conducted dozens of interviews.
- Notes were taken.
- All cases were delivered to the researcher who was in charge of the project.

Means of verification

The publication of an analytical study of traditional justice and its applicability to juvenile justice in the Gaza Strip.

Table 1: Legal files prepared by the Unit on Israeli violations of human rights in 2012

Violation	Number of files
Killing	68
Injuries	115
Destruction or robbery of property	72
Total	254

b. Submitting legal complaints on behalf of victims to concerned bodies

In 2012, the Unit pursued 11 complaints from Palestinian civilians who were subject to Israeli violations of human rights. These complaints were submitted to the Israeli Military Prosecutor’s Office of the MAG demanding reparation for the victims. They included cases of killing, injury, torture, and destruction or robbery of property.

Table 2: Complaints regarding incidents of killing, injuries and destruction and robbery of property and outcomes of legal actions in 2012

Subject of complaint	Number of complaints
Killing	2
Injuries	4
Destruction or robbery of property	5
Total	11

The Unit also sent a number of reminding letter to the Israeli Military Prosecutor’s Office of the MAG and the compensation officer of the Israeli Defense Ministry regarding previous complaints.

In the addition, the Unit sent written notices to the Israeli Defense Ministry in accordance with amendments made on 24 July 2002 to the Tort Law – Liability of the State of 1952, which requires sending a written notice within 60 days from the date of an incident to ensure that the right to judicial claims within two years from an incident is not lost. During the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip (14-21 November 2012), Israeli forces committed hundreds of crimes against Palestinian civilians, which increased the load of work on the Unit lawyers, which had to work intensively to ensure sending written notices.

In 2012, the Unit sent 255 written notices to the compensation officer of the Israeli Defense Ministry, including 221 related to the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November 2012.

Table 3: Written notices sent to the Israeli Defense Ministry in 2012

Violation	Number of files
Killing	68
Injuries	114
Destruction or robbery of property	72
Total	254

c. Complaints concerning attacks against Palestinian fishermen

In 2012, the Unit pursued 21 complaints concerning attacks against Palestinian fishermen, including some from previous years. These complaints were sent to the legal advisor of the Israeli Defense Ministry, the compensation officer, the claims and compensation department and the legal advisor of the Israeli Navy.

Table 4: Complaints concerning attacks against Palestinian fishermen

Subject of complaint	Number	Current status		
		Positive	Negative	Under pursuit
Confiscation of fishing boats	12	9		3
Destruction of fishing boats	8		5	3
Wounding fishermen	1			1
Total	21	9	5	7

d. Claims before the Israeli judiciary

- In 2012, the Unit filed one compensation claim before the Israeli judiciary concerning an attack against a Palestinian fisherman, Hazem al-Qur'an. It also followed up several cases in the Israeli courts filed against the State of Israel on behalf of victims of Israeli violations of human rights, including killings, injuries, house demolitions and destruction of fishing boats. The Unit demanded compensation for the victims.
- The Unit filed a number of appeals before Israeli courts concerning the financial guarantees requested for filing a number of claims.
- The Unit submitted dozens of applications to Israeli courts for extension of the time limit for paying the financial guarantees.
- Financial guarantees were paid for 12 claims

before Israeli courts.

- The Unit followed up the petition filed on 24 October 2011 at the Administrative Court of Jerusalem against preventing Palestinians from the Gaza Strip who file claims against Israeli forces from entering Israel to appear before Israeli courts.
- The Unit followed up two petitions filed on 22 December 2011 at the Israeli Supreme Court concerning the confiscating of two fishing boats.

It should be noticed that Israeli courts issued a number of decisions that makes it impossible for Palestinian victims to judicial remedy. These decisions compel each claimant in a civil case to pay a court insurance fee (guaranty) of 20,000 NIS before the court will allow the case to proceed. If the money is not paid within 120

days, the claim will be dismissed.

According to the Israeli law, civil claims must be filed within two years from the date of the event; otherwise, victims would lose their right to effective remedy. Fulfilling this condition is extremely difficult, especially in light of the Israeli restrictive measures imposed on the Gaza Strip. Two years of restrictions mean that victims would not be able to file their claims on due time. Before the 1st of August 2002, such period had been 7 years, but the Israeli Knesset amended the law decreasing it to two years, apparently to deprive Palestinians of their right to file judicial claims.

Israeli courts often require plaintiffs to pay insurance fees before initiating the judicial procedures. Such fees are left for estimations of courts. Concerning claims related to damages incurred to property, the fees are proportions of the values of property. In claims related to killings and injuries, there is no specific range for fees.

Under the Israeli law, for a testimony or an affidavit to be legal, an eyewitness or a victim must physically appear before a court. Since 2007, in spite of decisions by courts summoning victims or eyewitnesses, Israeli forces have prevented them from travelling outside the Gaza Strip.

e. Meetings and seminars

- On 29 November 2012, the Unit lawyers participated in a meeting between human rights organisations and the Minister of Justice in Gaza to coordinate and discuss establishing legal files of Israeli violations of human rights.
- On 22 May 2012, the Unit Director met with the Consul of Political Affairs of the Dutch Consulate General. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the oPt.
- On 9 July 2012, the Unit Director met with a delegation from the European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), led by their Head of Office for

West Bank and Gaza, Mr . Mamar Merzouk. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the oPt, especially in the Gaza Strip.

f. Issuing press releases

- On 12 January 2012, the Unit issued a press release titled "Israeli Courts Insist on Decisions Depriving Palestinian Victims of Access to Justice and Judicial Remedy and Making It Impossible."
- The Unit issued two press releases concerned the Israeli Central Court dismissal of the cases of the al-Daya and Abu Silimiya families.
- The Unit issued a press release concerned easing the sentence against an Israeli soldier accused of killing a woman and her daughter in the Gaza Strip during 'Operation Cast Lead'.

Indicators

- The Unit documented 255 legal files.
- The Unit submitted 11 complaints concerning cases of killing and destruction and robbery of property.
- The Unit sent 255 written notices to the Compensation Officer of the Israeli Defense Ministry.
- The Unit submitted 21 complaints regarding attacks against Palestinian fishermen.
- The Unit filed two petitions at the Israeli Supreme Court with regard to the confiscation of fishing boats.
- 45 claims were dismissed because of non-payment of financial guarantees.
- 4 claims were rejected by Israeli courts.
- The Unit pursued 111 compensation claims before Israeli courts on behalf of victims.
- Israeli courts issued a number of arbitrary decisions against victims by compelling each claimant to pay a financial guaranty that amounts to 20,000 NIS.
- The Unit received a negative response to a petition filed at the Israeli Supreme Court concerning the financial guaranty requested for filing 8 claims.
- The Unit issued 4 press releases.

> **Success story**

In the second outcome of its kind, PCHR succeeds in ensuring reparation for the family of two victims

PCHR was able to secure reparation for the family of Kassab and Ibrahim Shurrab, who were killed by the Israeli force during 'Operation Cast Lead' (27 December 2008 – 18 January 2009). PCHR was able to conclude a settlement of 430,000 NIS (approximately USD 107,500) with representatives of the Israeli Military Prosecutor's Office of the MAG, which will be paid to the victims' family within the upcoming weeks in return for the closing of their claim.

On 16 January 2009, Israeli forces opened fire for no reason and without prior warning at the car Mohammed Kassab Shurrab and his two sons – Kassab (28) and Ibrahim (18) – were travelling in, during a humanitarian truce declared by Israeli forces to allow Palestinian civilians to obtain necessary goods. As a result of the Israeli gunfire, the car collided into a wall. Shortly after, Israeli soldiers stationed in a nearby house headed towards the car. They ordered Mohammed Kassab Shurrab and his two sons to get out of the care before they began firing at them. Kassab was killed instantly and Ibrahim was wounded in his leg by a bullet. The following day, Ibrahim died as Israeli forces denied him access to medical treatment.

> **Means of verification**

- The Unit established 255 files of human rights violations, including killings, injuries and destruction or robbery of property.
- In 2012, the Unit received 126 responses from Israeli official bodies to its correspondences.

Table 5: Responses received by the Unit from Israeli authorities in 2012

Concerned Party	Positive	Negative	Under pursuit	Total
Compensation officer at Defense Ministry	Nil	4	38	42
Israeli military prosecutor	Nil	55	18	73
Israeli navy legal advisor	9	2	Nil	11
Total	9	61	56	126

- Observation of continued Israeli attacks against Palestinian fishermen.
- Arbitrary Israeli court rulings, especially concerning compensation claims as 45 claims were dismissed because the victims were not able to pay the financial guarantees.
- Observation of the threats of dismissing many claims at Israeli courts because of non-payment of financial guarantees.
- Decisions by Israeli court to nullify several compensation claims.

- **Judicial Precedents:**

- » On 27 February 2012, the Israeli Administrative Court rejecting a petition filed by PCHR against preventing Palestinians from the Gaza Strip who file claims against Israeli forces from entering Israel to appeal before Israeli courts.
 - » On 5 January 2012, the Unit received two positive responses from the Israeli Supreme Court concerning the retrieval of fishing boats that were confiscated in 2011.
- The Unit observed a negative response to a petition filed at the Israeli Supreme Court concerning the financial guaranty requested for filing 8 claims.
 - The Unit observed a decision issued by Beersheba Court adopting a negative opinion by the Israeli prosecutor concerning compensation claims filed by Palestinian victims.

2. Prosecution of war criminals

Prosecution of Israeli war criminals occupies a major part of the Unit's activities, as the Israeli judicial system has failed to ensure justice for Palestinian civilians and has worked to provide a legal cover for crimes committed by Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians. To achieve this output, the Unit carried out a number of activities as set out in its annual plan:

a. Legal documentation

The Unit has continued to document Israeli violation of human rights. In 2012, the Unit established 255 files on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights as shown in the following table.

b. Contacts with international lawyers and legal experts

The Unit has maintained contacts with international attorneys and legal experts in the context of its efforts to search for and prosecute Israeli war criminals before international tribunals.

- Upon an invitation by PCHR, in the period 14-19 December 2012, PCHR hosted a delegation of international legal experts to help in the investigations on war crimes committed by the Israeli occupation forces during its latest offensive against the Gaza Strip. The delegation was of four legal experts from Norway, Ireland and United Kingdom. The experts discussed a number of legal files related to the latest Israeli offensive against the Gaza Strip with PCHR lawyers, and listened to each of them separately on the nature of the cases they are working on; studied several documentations, including affidavits, eyewitness testimonies, medical reports and specialised reports, and gave them their feedbacks. This process enriched the lawyers' understanding of international legal standards, and their files' compatibility with them, in order to ensure its suitability for use before national courts in other countries operating under the principle of international jurisdiction, as well as in terms of presenting them to the International Criminal Court.
- PCHR has prepared files and cases on behalf of victims of Israeli violations of human rights to be sued before national courts in other countries, especially the United Kingdom and Spain.
- PCHR has maintained cooperation with the Centre for Constitutional Rights (CCR) in New York and Hickman & Rose in London, which work on the prosecution of war criminals.

- PCHR has continued to follow up lawsuits filed against Israeli war criminals in the Netherlands and Spain.

c. Meetings and consultations with experts on the issue of universal jurisdiction

- The Unit was not able to work on the organisation of complementary meetings of Malaga Conference on universal jurisdiction.
- Upon an invitation by the Faculty of Law at al-Azhar University, Mr Raji Sourani delivered a lecture to senior students on universal jurisdiction and prosecution of Israeli war criminals.

Indicators

- The Unit has documented 255 legal files.
- PCHR has prepared dozens of cases to be pursued under the principle of universal jurisdiction.
- PCHR has continued to follow two claims against Israeli war criminals before the national judiciaries of the Netherlands and Spain.
- PCHR has maintained efforts to prosecute Israeli war criminals before the national judiciaries of a number of European countries.
- 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.

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.
- Restricted movement of Israeli officials due to concerns that arrest warrants may be issued against them.
- The Unit observed success of Israeli political pressure following the arrest warrant issued against Doron Almog in 2005 and Tzipi Livni in 2009, as the universal jurisdiction legislation in the United Kingdom was amended.



◀ Mr. Raji Sourani delivering a lecture on universal jurisdiction at al-Azhar University in Gaza

> Output (3)

Legal aid for 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. Israel has continued to impose a tightened closure on the Gaza Strip and continued to close its border crossings. They imposed additional restriction on the movement of Palestinian civilians, including patients who need advanced medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip. To achieve this output, the Unit carried out a number of activities as set out in its annual plan.

1. Complaints regarding freedom of movement

In 2012, the Unit pursued 304 complaints submitted to the humanitarian cases centre at 'Erez' crossings.

Table 6: Complaints regarding freedom of movement and outcomes of legal actions in 2012

Subject of Complaint	Number of Complaints	Current Status		
		Positive	Negative	Under pursuit
Denial of travel to Israel for medical treatment	10	4	1	5
Denial of travel to the West Bank and Jordan for medical treatment	81	29	32	20
Denial of travel to accompany patients	34	17	6	11
Denial of travel of traders to Israel and the West Bank	88	37	8	43
Denial of travel of Palestinians to Israel and the West Bank to join their families	48	23	16	9
Preventing Palestinians from travelling back to the Gaza Strip	8	5	Nil	3
Preventing Palestinians from travelling to the West Bank to attend meetings	6	3	2	1
Denial of travel to the West Bank and Jerusalem for religious purposes	23	1	21	1
Preventing Palestinians from travelling to have interviews at the US Embassy	6	3	3	Nil
Total	304	122	89	93

The Unit also submitted 6 appeals to the Israeli appeal department of state prosecution concerning freedom of movement. The Unit received 3 positive responses and 3 negative ones.

2. Lawsuits and petitions

- The Unit has continued to follow up a petition filed on 15 March 2010 in cooperation with a number of human rights organisations with regard to travel of people from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank to join their families.
- The Unit has continued to follow up a petition filed in May 2010 in cooperation with a number of human rights organisations at the Israeli High Court against the expulsion of Palestinians from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip.
- The Unit has followed up a petition filed on 13 May 2008 in cooperation with a number of human rights organisations at the Israeli High Court concerning denial of entry of fuel supplies into the Gaza Strip in violation of a court ruling issued in January 2008.

3. Networking with human rights organisations

PCHR has strong relations with a number of human rights organisations to ensure the freedom of movement of Palestinian civilians. In this context, PCHR has relations with Physician for Human Rights in Israel. In the first half of 2012, the Unit sent 214 letters to the External Medical Treatment Department in Gaza and to Physicians for Human Rights in

Israel with regard restrictions imposed on access of patients from the Gaza Strip to medical treatment abroad and in Israel.

Indicators

- In 2012, the Unit pursued 304 complaints concerning freedom of movement.
- The Unit received 122 positive responses to the complaints it submitted.
- The followed up 3 petitions filed at Israeli courts in previous years.
- The Unit sent 214 letters to the External Medical Treatment Department in Gaza and to Physicians for Human Rights.
- The Unit received 201 positive responses to its letters to health organisations concerning patients.
- The Unit submitted 6 appeals to the Israeli prosecution, to which it received 3 positive responses and 3 negative ones.
- The Unit lawyers participated in one press interview and two workshops.

Means of verification

- The Unit noticed continued restrictions imposed on the movement of Palestinian civilians by Israeli forces.
- The Unit noticed cooperation between PCHR and many health and human rights organisations.

> Output (4)

Contribution to international advocacy projects

This output included a number of activities which were carried out in cooperation with PCHR's International Unit.

1. Contribution to interventions before UN bodies

The Unit carried out this activity in cooperation with the International Unit, by providing it with necessary data to prepare interventions before UN bodies.

2. Providing assistance to international fact-finding missions

In 2012, the Unit did not provide such assistance because no fact-finding missions came to the Gaza Strip.

3. Testifying before the UN Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs in the Occupied Territories

On 15 July 2012, the Unit Director testified before the UN Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs in the Occupied Territories, which came to Gaza. In his testimony, he addressed detention conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, and the absence of justice in the Israeli judicial system.

Indicators

- The Unit provided one testimony.
- The Unit contributed to PCHR's interventions before UN bodies.
- The Unit provided assistance to a number of visiting international delegations.

Means of verification

- Positive feedback by visiting international delegations.

> **Output (5)**

Providing legal aid to ensure the release bodies of Palestinians held by Israeli forces

1. Complaints demanding release of bodies

In 2012, the Unit continued to follow up 18 cases of requests for return of victims' bodies, including cases from previous years. Israeli forces have continued to hold the bodies of some Palestinians, refusing to deliver them to their families for burial in violation of humanitarian norms.

2. Filing claims

As the Israeli occupation authorities procrastinated in responding to PCHR's correspondences with regard to the release of bodies of victims, the Unit filed an appeal at the appeal department of the Israeli Military Prosecutor's Office of the MAG.

Indicators

- The Unit has followed up one appeal submitted to the appeal department of the Israeli Military Prosecutor's Office of the MAG with regard to the release bodies of 18 victims.
- The Unit sent a reminding letters in this regard,
- On 31 May 2012, Israeli authorities delivered 12 bodies to the Palestinian side, including four whose cases were followed up by PCHR.

Means of verification

- The Unit pursued cases of requests for return of victims' bodies.
- The Unit noticed political extortion by the Israeli occupation authorities in dealing with this use.

> **Output (6)**

Promotion of the right of health

1. Ensuring financial coverage and ensuring access to medical treatment

The Unit has continued to provide legal services to patients. For this purpose it maintained communication with some health organisations, especially the External Medical Treatment Department of the Palestinian Ministry of Health, to ensure appointments and financial coverage for patients. In 2012, the Unit provided assistance to 659 patients.

2. Coordination with concerned bodies to ensure travel of patients

The Unit facilitated coordination for the travel of 557 patients to hospitals outside the Gaza Strip through Beit Hanoun ('Erez') crossing and Rafah International Crossing Points.

It should be noted that each patient has to pass through a series of complicated procedures in order to be able to travel for medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip:

- A special form is first prepared at a Palestinian hospital. The form is then sent to the External Medical Treatment Department of the Ministry of Health to be presented

to the Higher Medical Committee to decide on it.

- The Higher Medical Committee sends the application to the Ministry of Health in Ramallah to provide financial coverage.
- An application for the patient's travel is then sent to the Palestinian liaison committee to coordinate his/her travel with the Israeli authorities through Beit Hanoun ('Erez') crossing.

The Unit provides another form of assistance with regard to patients whose condition cannot be diagnosed at local hospitals. It contacts relevant organisations, such as Physicians for Human Rights, in order to ensure financial coverage and an appointment at an Israeli hospital.

Additionally, the Unit played a major role during the period in which the External Medical Treatment Department was closed (17-26 July 2012). The Unit intervened with relevant parties in order to solve the problem as soon as possible.

The Unit assumed the responsibilities of the External Medical Treatment Department in order to save the lives of hundreds of patients in the Gaza Strip. It contacted relevant parties to ensure financial coverage for the treatment of patients and to coordinate their travel through Beit Hanoun ('Erez') crossing. In this context, the Unit assisted 120 patients to travel to hospitals outside the Gaza Strip.

3. Meetings

- On 26 January 2012, the Unit participated in a meeting at the UNDP headquarters on the issues of health and external treatment.

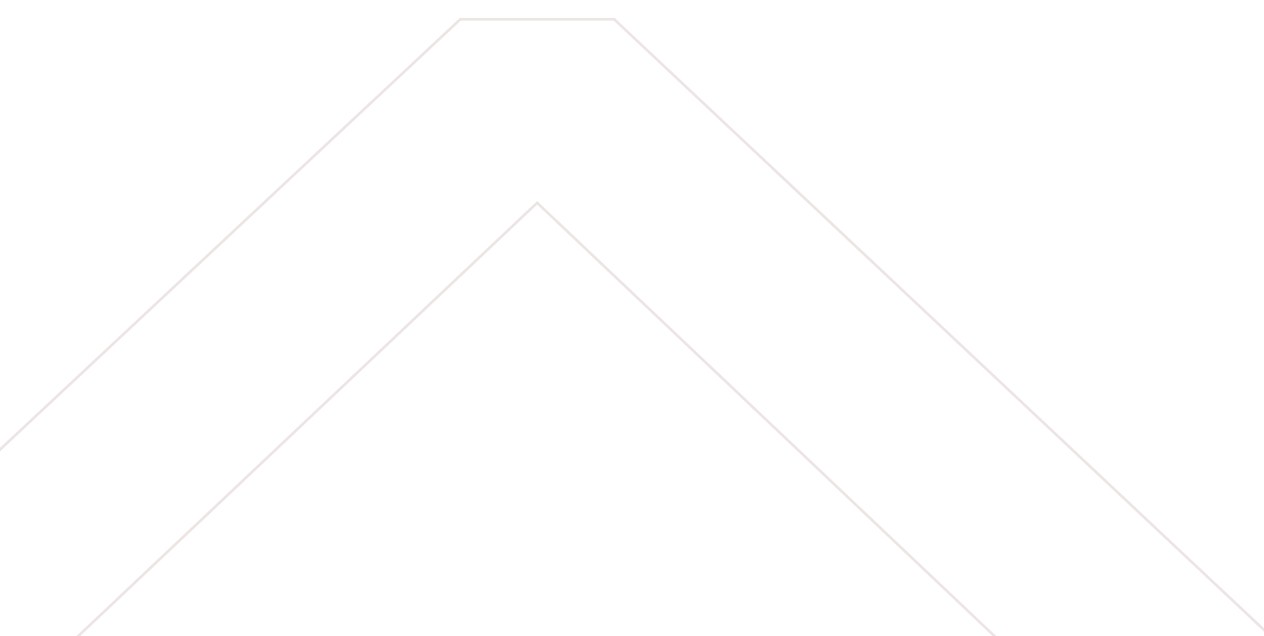
Indicators

- The Unit ensured appointments and financial coverage for 659 patients.
- The Unit facilitated coordination for the travel of 557 patients.
- The Unit assisted 120 patients during the crisis of the External Medical Treatment Department.
- The Unit participated in one meeting.



Success stories

1. On 15 March 2012, Jameel Kuhail came to PCHR in a very bad psychological condition as his 18-year-old son was in a critical condition suffering from hydrocephalus and was receiving medical treatment at Shifa Hospital in Gaza. Local doctors informed the father that it was not possible to provide adequate medical treatment to his son in Gaza. Kuhail asked PCHR for help in order to transfer his son to a hospital outside the Gaza Strip. Immediately, the Unit's lawyers pursued the case. They contacted the External Medical Treatment Department to obtain financial coverage for his treatment in Egypt and they succeeded. However, they faced unexpected problem that the patients and his companion did not have passports. Immediately, they contacted concerned authorities in Ramallah to issue passports for them, and this was achieved within a few hours. Due to the difficulties of travel through Rafah International Crossing Point, a letter was sent to the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior in Gaza to facilitate the travel of the patient and his companion. These efforts proved fruitful as the patients traveled to Egypt on 18 March 2012. He received medical treatment there and went back well to the Gaza Strip.
2. On 29 April 2012, the family of Bilal Riad Murad, 24, came to PCHR seeking help to save his life. Murad was subject to a road accident on 26 April 2012, in





which he sustained fractures to the face, the jaws and the skull. He was admitted into Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis. Due to his serious condition, doctors decided that he was in need for advanced medical treatment, which was not available in the hospital. The Unit's lawyers realised that the young man's life was at risk, as according to the Governmental Health Insurance Regulation No. 113 of 2004, the Ministry of Health is not bound to cover the treatment of people injured in road accidents. So, the Unit's lawyers had to make intensive efforts to save the young man's life. They contacted the insurance company to undertake to cover the treatment of the young man in an advanced medical centre. They also addressed a number of hospitals to receive the young man and they were able to obtain the approval of Saint Joseph Hospital in Jerusalem to receive him. They then contacted the Palestinian liaison department to coordinate the travel of the young man and his companion to Jerusalem. On 29 April 2012, the Unit's efforts were successful, and the young man was transported in a special ambulance to Saint Joseph Hospital in Jerusalem to receive medical treatment.

3. During the closure of the External Medical Treatment Department (17-26 July 2012), the Unit assisted 120 patients to travel outside the Gaza Strip to receive medical treatment.

Means of verification

- Positive feedback by clients.
- The Unit noticed cooperation by medical organisations and the Ministry of Health in Ramallah, especially during the closure of the External Medical Treatment Department.

Media interviews

- The Unit's lawyers made 8 interviews with the local, Arab and international media.

> *Palestinian Agenda*

In 2012, the oPt witnessed aspects of lawlessness in the streets and continued political fragmentation, which was characterised by political arrests and attacks on civil society organisations. All of such aspects impacted activities conducted by the Unit assisted.

> **Output (1)**

Providing legal aid for prisoners in Palestinian jails

1. Combating political arrests

The Unit has made efforts to ensure the release of political prisoners. In 2012, the Unit received 87 notifications about arrests. In the context of its legal assistance program, the Unit determined places of detention of the detainees, and held meetings with competent authorities to urge them to stop illegal arrests.

2. Ensuring the release of or better detention conditions for detainees

The Unit continued to provide legal aid to Palestinian prisoners in Palestinian jails. PCHR lawyers visited detainees in detention centres to observe their health conditions and legal status and ensure better detention conditions.

- **Representation of detainees and visits to detention centres**

1. The Unit lawyers made 13 visits to detention centres.
2. The Unit lawyers visited 50 detainees to check their health conditions.
3. 24 detainees were released following the Unit's intervention.

- **Meetings and contacts**

1. On 15 March 2012, the Unit lawyers were interviewed by an Italian television channel on the case of Vittorio Arrigoni, an Italian solidarity activist who was killed in Gaza.
2. On 15 April 2012, the Unit lawyers met with the central detention officer in Gaza concerning visits to persons detained in detention centres of the Internal Security Service.
3. On 24 April 2012, the Unit lawyers participated in a workshop in the PLC on detention conditions in prisons in the Gaza Strip.
4. On 28 April 2012, the Unit lawyers met with the military prosecutor for the coordination of visits to persons who are detained in detention centres of the Internal Security Service.
5. On 14 June 2012, the Unit lawyers held a meeting with Amnesty International on the detention conditions in Palestinian prisons.
6. On 27 June 2012, the Unit lawyers met with an ICRC delegation on the legal assistance provided to detainees held in detention centres of the Internal Security Service. The meeting discussed also cooperation between the two parties in this regard.
7. On 4 July 2012, the Unit lawyers held a meeting with the Human Rights Officer of the Swiss Embassy. The meeting discussed detention conditions in Palestinian prisons and detention centres.
8. On 12 September 2012, the Unit lawyers held a meeting with Head of the Officer of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Gaza to discuss detention conditions in Palestinian prisons and detention centres.

9. On 30 December 2012, the Unit lawyers met with the investigation officer of the Money Laundering Combat Committee to discuss the legal status of a number of detainees.

• **Press releases**

On 25 April 2012, the Unit issued a press release warning of the obstruction of detainees' visitation in detention centres of the Internal Security Service.

3. Combating torture

Complaints

- The Unit submitted 10 complaints to the Attorney General and the comptroller of security services in the Ministry of Interior concerning illegal detention and torture of persons.
- The Unit submitted two complaints to the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General concerning breaching legal orders.

4. Observation of court hearings

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.

- In 2012, the Military Court and a civil court in Gaza issued 3 death sentences.
- 3 death sentences were implemented in Gaza.
- The Unit attended 12 hearings of the Military Court in the case of Vittorio Arrigoni, an Italian activist who was killed in Gaza.
- On 5 January 2012, the Unit lawyers met with Chief Military Justice concerning the case of Vittorio Arrigoni.

Indicators

- The Unit was informed about the detention of 87 persons.
- The Unit lawyers conducted 13 visits to detention centres in the Gaza Strip.
- The Unit visited 50 detainees.
- The Unit submitted 12 complaints.
- The Unit held 10 meetings with regard to detainees.
- 24 detainees were released in response to the Unit's intervention.
- Courts in Gaza issued 3 death sentences.
- 10 death sentences were implemented.
- The Unit lawyers attended 12 court hearings.
- The Unit issued 4 press releases regarding illegal detention.

> Success stories

M. A., born in 1983, was arrested by the Internal Security Service in Gaza on 30 April 2012. On 2 May 2012, his father granted PCHR a power of attorney to determine the place where he was detained and pursue his case. The Unit lawyers intervened with concerned authority and were able to determine the place where he was detained and visit him. They then intervened with concerned authorities to allow him to attend the final exams that were held in late May, as he is a student in the Faculty of Commerce and these efforts proved fruitful as he was allowed to attend the exams over two weeks. His father thanked PCHR lawyers for their efforts.

Means of verification

- The Unit observed illegal detention and torture of persons in detention facilities.
- The Unit observed positive cooperation by the Internal Security Service by releasing 3 detainees following the Unit's intervention.
- The Unit noticed that courts in Gaza issued 3 death sentences.
- The Unit noticed the execution of death sentences without the Palestinian President's ratification.
- Media coverage of the press release issued by the Unit.

> **Output (2)**

Legal assistance to victims of the misuse of authority

1. Ensuring the application of the Civil Service Law
2. Ensuring the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly

1. Ensuring the application of the Civil Service Law

The Unit was not able to carry out this activity due to the situation in the Gaza Strip following the Israeli offensive against the Gaza Strip, during which governmental buildings were destroyed, and under the current political fragmentation between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

- **Complaints and claims before courts on behalf of victims of the misuse of authority**

In 2012, the Unit submitted a number of complaints to concerned authorities and held a number of meetings with concerned parties with regard to the misuse of authority.

Complaints submitted by the Unit to concerned bodies

Concerned Body	Number of Complaints
Ministry of National Economy	1
Comptroller of the Ministry of Interior	7
Higher Judiciary Council, Gaza	2
Ministry of Finance	6
(Attorney-General (Ramallah and Gaza	3
Finance Department, Ramallah	1
Organisation Authority, Ramallah	1
(Ministry of Interior (Ramallah and Gaza	3
Municipalities	3
General Authority for Insurance and Pensions	1
Ministry of Health	4
Ministry of Local Government	1
The Customs Department	1
Ministry of Social Affairs	1
Total	35

- **Meetings and interventions**

1. On 17 January 2012, the Unit lawyers held a meeting with the Minister of Economy in Gaza to discuss the Executive Regulation of the Non-Profit Companies Law.
2. The Unit lawyers attended a legal meeting on the legislation process under the ongoing political split held in the Law Institute of Bir Zeit University.
3. The Unit lawyers participated in 4 meetings of the fact-finding mission established to investigate the downing of two children.

- **Petitions**

On 30 April 2012, a petition was filed at the High Court in Gaza, in its capac-

ity as a constitutional court, challenging the constitutionality of the decision taken by the Council of Ministers amending the Executive Bill of the Palestinian Law of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations.

- **Indicators**
 - » 35 complaints were submitted by the Unit

in 2012.

- » The Unit received 8 positive responses and 7 negative to these complaints.
- » The Unit held 10 meetings with concerned authorities concerning the misuse of authority.
- » The Unit filed one petition.
- » The Unit issues 3 news releases in this regard.



Success stories

On 13 May 2012, Yousef Ahmed al-Muzayen referred to PCHR to intervene with concerned authorities to issue a passport for him in order to travel with his 2-year-old child who was in a serious health condition and in need for medical treatment in a Jordanian hospital. Al-Muzayen came to the Gaza Strip in 2000 with a visit permit. He stated that he lost two of his children a hepatic disease, which his third child was suffering from.

Unit lawyers immediately intervened. They sent an urgent letter to the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior in Ramallah to issue a passport of al-Muzayen for humanitarian reasons, explaining the serious health condition of the child. They continued to follow up the case until a passport was issued for al-Muzayen on 27 May 2012.

Means of verification

- The Unit noticed continued misuse of authority by executive bodies.
- The Unit noticed instability in the work of courts and concerned authorities.
- The Unit received a number of responses to its complaints.
- The Unit received a negative response from the Constitutional Court in Gaza indicating that it is not competent to consider the petition filed by PCHR.
- The Unit noticed cooperation by concerned body during meetings with the Unit lawyers.

2. Ensuring the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly

The Unit paid special attention to the right to freedom of opinion and expression because it is one of the major rights ensured under the Palestinian Basic Law and its amendments and because of the ongoing political split. In this regard, the Unit carried out the following activities:

- **The Unit submitted a complaint to the comptroller of security services in Gaza concerning attacking a female activist during a peaceful demonstration in Gaza.**
- **The Unit submitted two complaints to the Ministry of Interior concerning warning**

and dissolving NGOs in Gaza in violation of the law.

- **On 13 May 2012, the Unit lawyers held a meeting with the governmental media office in Gaza to ensure respect for the right to freedom of opinion and expression.**

Indicators

- The Unit submitted 3 complaints.
- The Unit held one meeting.

Means of verification

- Professional relations with concerned parties.
- Observation of violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression.



▲ Lawyer Mohammed Bseiso hands to Yousef al-Muzayen his passport



Output (3)

Legal aid to victims of lawlessness

1. Confronting the state of lawlessness and the proliferation of weapons

The Unit did not implement this activity.

2. Making efforts to stop encroachments on public property

In 2012, the Unit submitted 3 complaints to the Land Authority in Gaza concerning land leveling and house demolitions.

Indicators

- The Unit submitted 3 complaints.

Means of verification

- **The Unit noticed that Palestinian authorities removed some encroachments on public property in the Gaza Strip.**
- **Positive feedbacks.**



Output (4)

Legal aid for victims of medical negligence

1. Complaints

- The Unit submitted 3 complaints concerning medical negligence.
- The Unit continued to follow up 8 previous complaints concerning medical negligence.

2. Compensation claims

The compensation claim filed by PCHR in 2006 before Gaza initial proceedings court demanding compensation for the deaths of twins due to medical negligence is still delayed to the judicial situation in the Gaza Strip.

Indicators

- The Unit followed up 11 complaints.
- The Unit received 4 negative responses from the Ministry of Health.

Means of verification

- The Unit documented cases of medical negligence.
- Clients were satisfied by the legal aid provided by the Unit.



Output (5):

Capacity-building of staff

In 2012, the Unit lawyers participated in a number of training courses:

- The Unit lawyers participated in a training course organised by PCHR on the international criminal law and the International Criminal Court.
- In the period 5-16 November 2012, a Unit lawyer participated in the International

Investigator Course organised by the Institute for International Criminal Investigators in the Hague.

- In the period 14-19 December 2012, the Unit lawyers participated in investigations conducted by a delegation of international legal experts into crimes committed during the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November 2012.

Indicators

- The Unit lawyers participated in 3 training courses.
- 5 lawyers participated in these courses.

Means of verification

- Increased skills of lawyers.
- Invitations to lawyers to participate in training courses.

> **Output (6):** Raising legal awareness

1. Legal consultations

The Unit provided 4,007 legal consultations to 4,515 clients.

2. Contribution to training courses organised by PCHR

- The Unit Director delivered lectures on legal documentation in a course organised by PCHR for 28 Syrian civil society activists, which was held in Egypt in the period 18-21 February 2012.
- On 23-24 February 2012, the Unit Director participated in the international conference organised by the Arab Institute for Human Rights on the challenges and opportunities for laying the foundations for transitional justice in Arab countries.
- The Unit delivered 13 lectures on the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary in training courses organised by PCHR's Training Unit.
- The Unit delivered a lecture to 27 female farmers in the Rural Women Association in al-Mughraqa village, south of Gaza City.

Indicators

- The Unit received 4,515 clients.
- The Unit provided 4,007 legal consultations.

- The Unit lawyers delivered 15 lectures in training courses organised by PCHR at the local level and 2 at the regional level.
- The number of trainees who attended these lectures was 361.
- The Unit delivered one specialised lecture.

Means of verification

- Positive feedback by clients.
- Positive feedback by trainees.

Media interviews

The Unit made several interviews with the local, Arab and international media, including an interview with BBC Radio on 3 October 2012, which focused on the condition of detainees in Palestinian prisons.

Activities not included in the Annual Plan

1. Based on a power of attorney by his family, the Unit followed up the case of Bahjat al-Khaldi who was arrested by the Spanish authorities on 12 June 2009. He was accused of murder. On 11 June 2012, a Spanish court ordered releasing al-Khaldi.
2. Based on a power of attorney by a Palestinian from the Gaza Strip, the Unit addressed the Egyptian Ambassador to the Palestinian Authority and the Arab Organisation for Human Rights to allow him to travel to Egypt as he was barred from travelling.
3. Based on a letter sent by his wife to PCHR, the Unit addressed the Director of the UAE Human Rights Association to intervene in order to ensure the release of a Palestinian detained in the UAE.
4. International Criminal Law Moot Court Competition.

In cooperation with PCHR International Unit, the Unit implemented the first International Criminal Law Moot Court project in the Gaza Strip. The project, managed by the international Unit, involved 30 students from the three law faculties of Gaza city: Al-Azhar University, Islamic University and the University of Palestine. The groups of students received theoretical training from PCHR-trained coaches from 1 February until 15 May 2012, and then worked on their written submissions until the beginning of July, with guidance from their coaches. From March to May the students also received expert legal training from experts on international

criminal law. During the Moot Court competition of 14-15 July 2012 participating student teams from the different Gaza Faculties of Law presented their oral and written pleadings before a jury, composed of international legal experts. The competition was won by al-Azhar University. All students who successfully completed the programme were awarded with an individual certificate and a team trophy.

Indicators

- The Unit provided legal assistance to 3 persons.
- 3 universities participated in the International Criminal Law Moot Court Project.
- 30 students participated in the project.
- PCHR published a documentary on the project.

Means of verification

- Al-Khaldi's family was satisfied by the service provided by PCHR and sent a thankful letter to PCHR.
- The Unit received a positive response from the Arab Organisation for Human Rights.
- Increased knowledge of students on the law and procedures applicable before the International Criminal Court.
- Academics and jurists were highly interested in the project.
- Media coverage of the project.

The opening of the Moot Court Project in Rashad al-Shawa Center in Gaza >



Conclusion of the Moot Court competition >



» Democratic Development Unit

The Unit carried out all activities as set out in its 2012 Annual Plan. The Palestinian political division and its impact on the civil and political rights and the process of democratic reform occupied the largest portion of the Unit's work.



Output (1)

Raising awareness of the international community and the local public of violations of civil and political rights and international human rights law in the oPt

Activities

1. PCHR Annual Report 2011

1. The report occupied a large portion of the Unit's burden of work in the last two months of 2011 and the first quarter of 2012.
2. The report was published by PCHR in May 2012.
3. On 6 May 2012, PCHR held a press conference in its head office in Gaza City declaring the publication of the report, and a number of electronic copies of the report were sent to journalists.
4. PCHR issued a news release and a summary of the report which were widely disseminated.

2. Press releases and other media outputs

1. The Unit issued 78 press releases on Palestinian violations of human rights.
2. These press releases addressed violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the right to peaceful assembly, the right to freedom of association, the death penalty and other issues.

3. Media interviews

1. Unit staff gave more than 60 interviews to local Arab and international media.

4. Meetings and contacts

1. Testifying before the UN Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs in the Occupied Territories

On 15 July 2012, the Unit Director testified before the UN Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs in the Occupied Territories. In his speech, the Unit Director addressed the Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights, pointing out that the period covered by the Committee's investigations witnesses further deterioration in the human rights situation.

5. Participation in activities organised by civil society organisations

Unit staff participated in dozens of activities organised by civil society organisa-

tions in 2012. Unit staff presented working papers in two of these activities:

- On 23 June 2012, the Unit Director presented a working paper in a conference on national partnership in the Palestinian society organised by the Nation Forum in the Commodore Hotel in Gaza City.⁴³
- On 18 September 2012, Unit researcher Mohammed Abu Hashem presented a working paper in a colloquium organised by al-Widad Society for Society Rehabilitation on the youth representation in the decision-making process, which was held in the hall of the Khan Yunis Municipality. In his paper, Abu Hashem addressed methods to promote the role of youth in the political life.

Indicators

- Media coverage of the annual report: Several journalists attended the press conference held by PCHR, and the media reported on it.
- Feedback by the beneficiaries: The Unit observed positive feedback towards the annual report and PCHR's role. For instance, on 6 May 2012, the Unit Director was invited to an hour-interview on Hona al-Quds Television to discuss the annual report.
- The report was used in reports and publications issued by local and international organisations and other beneficiaries.

Means of verification

- PCHR has a documentation of news published in the media about the Unit's activities.
- Observation of feedback to the report.
- PCHR has a documentation of some reports which depended on information included in the annual report.

> Output (2)

Documentation of the state of lawlessness and attacks on the rule of law

Activities

1. Press releases

They units issued 10 press releases in 2012 focusing on the state of lawlessness and murders of women motivated by the so-called family honour.

2. Field updates

In 2012, the Unit issued 23 field updates on human rights violations related to the state of lawlessness and attacks on the rule of law, including violations of the right to life and the misuse of weapons.

3. 3) Advocacy activities

A number of interviews with the media addressing the state of lawlessness.

Indicators

- The number of press releases and field updates.
- Wide media coverage of these activities.

43. There are other participations which will be addressed under other outputs.

- The use of these publications in local and international reports.
- Positive feedbacks.
- A number of meetings with local and international organisations to follow up the cases reported by PCHR.

Means of verification

- The Unit has a documentation of media coverage.
- Observation of the use of such materials by local and international organisations.
- Observation of the number of meetings and contacts with local and international organisations.
- Feedback by the beneficiaries.

> Output (3)

Efforts to minimise violations of the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly through reporting on these violations

Activities

1. Periodic report on violations of the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly

The report was published in December 2012.

2. Silencing the Press: Israeli attacks on journalists and media institutions

A draft of the report is ready, but it has not been published yet.

3. Press releases

The Unit issued 9 press releases on violations of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, including 2 on Israeli attacks on journalists.

4. Poster on the right to freedom of opinion and expression

The poster was not prepared, and instead, the Unit prepared a number of paintings using a wall painting that had been already drawn by a number of artists. These paintings, which hold PCHR's logo, will be distributed to a number of organisations and public places.

5. Participation in advocacy activities in support of press freedoms, the right to freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly

Unit staff participated in advocacy activities in sup-

port for press freedoms, the right to freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly:

- On 20 February 2012, researcher Mahmoud Efranji delivered a lecture in a training course organised by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in conjunction with the Palestinian Institute for Communication and Development for students of the faculties of media in Palestinian universities. He presented a working paper on the right to freedom of opinion and expression under the international human rights law and domestic laws.
- On 26 March 2012, the Unit Director participated in a live television discussion on al-Quds Television about Israeli attacks on journalists and media institutions. The programme was rebroadcasted several times.
- On 6 May 2012, in the context of events related to the World Press Freedom Day, the Unit participated in a colloquium organised by the Faculty of Media in the Islamic University on press freedom in Palestine. The speakers in the colloquium were: Dr Tal'at Eissa, Chairman of the Press and Media Department in the University; Dr Ayman Abu Nqaira, Deputy Chairman of the Press and Media Department in the University; Dr Jawad al-Dalu, a professor of journalism; Mr. Ghassan Radwan, Director of Press and Publications in the Governmental Media Office in Gaza; and Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, Director of the Democratic Development Unit.
- On 16 May 2012, Unit researcher Mahmoud Efranji delivered a speech in a sit-in organised in front of PCHR's head office in solidarity with journalist Mohammed Othman who was wounded by Israeli forces on 16 May 2012.
- On 13 June 2012, the Unit Director participated as a speaker in a study day on the right to access to information, means to enforce it and its effects on the rights of people, organised by the legal clinic of the Faculty of Law in Palestine University. He presented a working paper on the concept and status of the right to have access to information in the human rights system. The event took place in Light House Gallery in Gaza City.
- On 5 November 2012, researcher Mohammed Abu Hashem participated in a colloquium on the right to freedom of opinion and expression in Palestinian universities organised by university professors in al-Diwan Restaurant in Gaza City. Abu Hashem presented a working paper on the restrictions imposed on the right to

freedom of expression in regard to the rights of others under the international and domestic laws.

Indicators

- Decreased attacks against journalists and media institutions: Regrettably, the political fragmentation and conflict between the two governments in Gaza and Ramallah contributed to increased attacks on the freedom of expression and peaceful assembly in the Palestinian Territories.
- Feedback to the press releases issued by the Unit.
- The use of these materials in local and international reports.
- 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 opinion and expression.
- PCHR has a documentation of media coverage of the activities.

> Output (4)

Efforts to protect the right to peaceful assembly, including annulling the Executive Bill of the Public Meetings Law of 1998 which restricts this right

Activities

1. Report on the right to peaceful assembly under the PNA

A draft report has been prepared, but it has not been published yet.

2. Periodic report on Israeli violations of the right to peaceful assembly

It was published in December 2012.

3. Press releases on the right to peaceful assembly

The Unit issued 8 press releases on violations of the right to peaceful assembly.

4. Advocacy activities

- The Unit Director participated in a colloquium on the right to peaceful assembly organised by the National Association for Democracy and Law in Rafah on 5 February 2012.
- A number of the workshops mentioned below were devoted to the right to peaceful assembly.

Indicators

- Decreased violations of the right to peaceful assembly: PCHR observed continued violations of the right to peaceful assembly due to the continued political split in the Palestinian Authority, but in the last quarter of 2012 several peaceful demonstrations and public meetings were organised under the positive atmosphere between Fatah and Hamas movements.
- Feedback to the press releases issued by the Unit.
- The use of these materials in local and international reports.
- 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 opinion and expression.
- PCHR has a documentation of media coverage of the activities.

> Output (5)

Efforts to protect the right to freedom of association through reporting on violations of This right and advocacy activities

Activities

1. Report on the right to freedom of association

It is being prepared.

2. Press releases

The Unit issued 2 press releases on violations of the right to freedom of association.

3. Advocacy and lobbying in support of freedom of association

- On 16 January 2012, the Unit organised a seminar the Right to freedom of association in the hall of Roots Restaurant in Gaza City. This seminar aimed at shedding light on Palestinian violations of the right to form associations, particularly under the significant increase in these violations since the internal division in mid June 2007. The Unit Director reviewed the report on the “Right to Form Associations under PA, November 2009 – October 2010.” Mr Mohsen Abu Ramadan, Chairman of the Board of Directors of NGO Network – Gaza, talked about mechanisms to promote the right to freedom of association. Mr Ala’ al-Saqqqa, the lawyer of Sharek Youth Forum, talked about the experience of defending the Forum against the two decisions to close and dissolve the Forum taken by the Attorney-General and the Interior Minister respectively.
- The Unit participated in several meetings organised by the Palestinian NGO Network, including a meeting on 21 April 2012 to discuss amendments to the Executive Bill of the Charitable Associations and Community Organisations Law. The meeting was concluded by a series of steps, including issuing a joint statement written by the Unit condemning the amendments and calling for cancelling them.
- Two meetings were held with the Public Affairs Director in the Gaza Ministry of Interior on 18 March and 28 May 2012, in which some issues related to restriction impose on the work of NGOs were discussed.
- On 26 December 2012, the Unit Director facilitated a session on the civil society organisations and the challenges facing them in the context of a conference on the state of the Palestinian civil society in 2012, which was organised by the NGO Network in Gaza.



Indicators

- Decreased violations of the right to freedom of association: Such violations continue under the ongoing political division.
- Media coverage: The local media reported on the Unit’s activities.

Means of verification

- PCHR has a documentation of media coverage of the activities.

> Output (6)

Contribution to the protection of the right not to be subject to illegal detention, torture, and other forms of cruel and degrading treatment

Activities

1. Report on detention and torture under the PNA

The report was published in December 2012.

2. Press releases

On 18 October 2012, the Unit issued a press release entitled "PCHR Demands Investigation into the Death of a Civilian inside Khan Yunis Police Station."

3. Advocacy activities

On 26 June 2012, Unit staff participated in a workshop on the right of torture victims to support and rehabilitation organised by the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme in Grand Palace Hotel in Gaza. The Unit Director facilitated the first session of the workshop.

Indicators

- Decreased cases of illegal detention and torture.
- The use of PCHR's publications in international report.

Means of verification

- Observation of decreased cases of illegal detention and torture.
- Observation of the use of PCHR's publications in local and international reports.
- Documentation of media publications based on PCHR's publications.

> Output (7)

Abolishment or suspension of the death penalty

Activities

1. Press releases

The Unit issued 11 press releases condemning death sentences.

2. Workshops and meetings with youth groups and civil society activists to raise debate on the death penalty and the need to abolish it

7 meetings were held to discuss the death penalty and the need to abolish it. They are detailed in the awareness raising activities below.

3. Contacts with lawmakers

The issue of the death penalty was raised in a number of meetings with lawmakers and decision makers. In this context, PCHR and the Board of Trustees of the Arab Organisation for Human Rights with Prime Minister Ismail Haniya, Minister of Justice Faraj al-Ghoul, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohamed Awadh, Deputy Speaker of the PLC Dr Ahmed Bahar and a number of members of the PLC.

4. Special letters and appeals concerning death sentences

- The abovementioned press releases included calls for refraining from the applications of the death penalty and demands for the Palestinian Authority to abolish the death penalty.
- PCHR is a major source of information for the media, international organisations and diplomatic missions that are interested in stopping the application of the death penalty.

5. Availability of data on all persons sentenced to death

The Unit, in cooperation with the Legal Unit and the Fieldwork Unit, has detailed data of persons who have been sentenced to death.

Indicators

- Abstention from issuing and implementing death sentences: Regrettably, 6 death sentences were executed in the Gaza Strip, while no one was executed in the West Bank.
- For the sixth consecutive year, the Palestinian President has not ratified any death sentences.
- Abstention from issuing new death sentences: 5 death sentences were issued in Gaza, while no sentence was issued in the West Bank.
- Amendments to laws: No amendments have been made to laws that allow 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.

- The use of PCHR’s information by international organisations: On 28 May 2012, Amnesty International issued an urgent appeal for stopping the execution of 4 convicted persons in Gaza. Amnesty International depended in the appeal on PCHR’s information, and highlighted this in the appeal.

Means of verification

- Monitoring the judiciary and its rulings.
- Observation of the use of PCHR’s information by international organisations.
- 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.

➤ Output (8)

Monitoring the performance of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) and urging it to assume its full responsibilities

The PLC has been paralyzed because of the state of political division in the Palestinian Authority. The ‘Change and Reform’ Bloc of Hams has continued to hold session in the name of PLC, during which they discuss and pass draft laws and publish them in the official gazette issued by the government in Gaza, without the Palestinian President’s ratification.

PCHR has expressed rejection for holding such sessions, and has called on the Palestinian President to stop issuing decisions that have the power of laws under the pretext of the absence of the PLC.

Activities

1. Monitoring the work of the ‘Change and Reform’ bloc in Gaza and legislation promulgated in the PLC’s name

- The Unit monitors and documents legislations passed by the ‘Change and Reform’ Bloc.

2. Monitoring decrees that have the power of law issued by the Palestinian President allegedly because the PLC is absent

- The Unit monitors and documents decrees that have the power of laws issued by the Palestinian President.

3. Report titled ‘Legislation and Parliamentary Monitoring under the Palestinian Political Split’

- The report was published in December 2012.
- A news release was issued on the publication of the report, which was widely disseminated.

4. Press releases

- The Unit issued 5 press releases about the PLC.

5. Advocacy activities to warn of the consequences of keeping the PLC paralyzed

- On 13 February, the Unit organised a seminar titled “The PLC between the Hammer of Israeli Occupation and the Anvil of Internal Fragmentation” in the Roots Restaurant in Gaza City. PLC Members Rawia al-Shawa, Yahia Mousa, Faisal Abu Shahla and Jameel al-Majdalawi, and Dr Mohammed Abu Sa’da, Dean of the Faculty of Law in Palestine University, presented interventions in the seminar.



▲ Mr. Hamdi Shaqqura facilitates the seminar

- The Unit issued a press release detailing the proceedings of the seminar.
- PCHR organised two meetings for the Board of Trustees of the Arab Organisation for Human Rights on 22 April with PLC Members; one was with PLC Members from the ‘Change and Reform’ Bloc and was held in the PLC’s premises, and the other one was with PLC Members from Fatah movement and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and was held in al-Mathaf Hotel.

- On 27 December 2012, researcher Mohammed Abu Hashem presented a working paper on the legislative process and the parliamentary monitoring in the Palestinian Authority in a training day organised by the Community Media Centre in Gaza City on the mechanism of legislation in the Palestinian Authority.

Indicators

- More awareness of the work mechanisms of the PLC and criticism to its performance.
- Participation of PLC Members from both Fatah and Hamas movements in meetings and activities organised by PCHR.

Means of verification

- Media coverage of activities.

> Output (9)

Contribution to support efforts to hold general and local elections in the PNA

PCHR has repeatedly emphasised its position that elections can never be held without national reconciliation and agreement.

Activities

In light of understandings between Hamas and Fatah movements in Cairo on 20 May 2012, in the context of steps to achieve the Palestinian reconciliation, the Central Elections Commission (CEC) initiated preparations to update the electoral register in the period 3-14 July 2012. Immediately, PCHR, through the Unit, initiated preparations to monitor the registration of voters. These preparations included the following:

- On 2 June 2012, PCHR submitted an application to be accredited by the CEC as a local observation body.⁴⁴
- On 10 June 2012, PCHR received a letter from the CEC indicating that PCHR was accredited as a local observation body.
- Starting from 25 June 2012, PCHR submitted applications for accrediting its 44 observers, including 14 staff members of PCHR and 30 young activists who received training in PCHR in the field of human rights and democracy (women constituted 50% of the number of observers).
- On 1-2 July 2012, PCHR organised intensive training meetings for its observers focusing on the process of updating the electoral register, the code of conduct of observers and human rights standards in monitoring the process of updating the electoral register. PCHR also distributed the observers to registration centres throughout the Gaza Strip.
- However, on 2 July 2012, Sami Abu Zuhri, Spokesman of Hamas, stated that Hamas decided "to temporarily suspend the registration process in the Gaza Strip". PCHR disapproved of the decision and viewed it as unjustified and unaccepted intervention by Hamas into the CEC's work.⁴⁵

Press releases

PCHR issued two press releases; the first one condemned Hamas' decision to prevent the CEC from updating the electoral register, while the second one criticised the elections organised in the West Bank.

44. See: "As Part of Preparations to Monitor the PNA Elections, PCHR Submits an Application to the Central Elections Commissions to Be Accredited as a Local Observation Body," Press Release, Ref: 62/2012, PCHR, 3 June 2012.

45. See: "PCHR Disapproves Hamas' Decision to Halt Voter Registry Update by the CEC," Press Release, Ref: 74/2012, PCHR, 2 July 2012.

Indicators

- Abstention from organising election without the national reconciliation and agreement.
- Civil society organisations' acceptance to participate in the observation campaign organised by PCHR to monitor the electoral registration in the Gaza Strip before it was stopped by Hamas.

Means of verification

- Reports issued by PCHR.
- Observation of organisations joining the elections observation campaign.
- Feedback from observers and the organisations participating in the monitoring of elections.

> Output (10)

Raising awareness of 600 young men and women of values of democracy and fundamental freedoms through workshops and lectures organised in cooperation with civil society organisations.

Activities

1. Organising 30 workshops and roundtable discussions with civil society organisations

- The Unit organised 57 workshops and roundtable discussions in cooperation with 23 civil society and youth organisations.
- 1,180 persons, including 775 young women (66%), participated in these activities.
- The workshops addressed various topics as follows:

Political participation	27
The right to freedom of expression	12
Abolishment of the death penalty	9
Transitional justice	5
Democracy in Palestine	3
The right to peaceful assembly	1

✓ Mahmoud al-Efrangi, a researcher in the Democratic Development Unit, during a workshop



✓ Mohammed Abu Hashem, a researcher in the Democratic Development Unit, during a workshop



Workshops and meetings

	Topic	Place	Area	Number of participants			Date
				Males	Females	Total	
1.	Political participation	Al-Sahel Association for Development	Jabalya, North Gaza	9	18	27	26 February
2.	The right to freedom of opinion and expression	Fursan al-Ghad Youth Association	Beit Lahia, North Gaza	11	13	24	26 February
3.	Political participation	Female Graduates Association	Gaza City	0	21	21	27 February
4.	Political participation	Independent Commission for Development	Beit Lahia, North Gaza	16	17	33	28 February
5.	Political participation	Female Graduates Association	Gaza City	0	18	18	29 February
6.	The right to freedom of opinion and expression	Al-Adham Charitable Society	Beit Hanoun, North Gaza	8	10	18	5 March
7.	The right to freedom of opinion and expression	Female Graduates Association	Gaza City	0	19	19	5 March
8.	Political participation	Sonnaa al-Mustakbal Youth Club	Gaza City	13	7	20	6 March
9.	The death penalty	Female Graduates Association	Gaza City	0	16	16	7 March
10.	Political participation	Soura Association	Gaza City	11	3	14	8 March
11.	Political participation	Wefaq Society for Woman and Child Care	Rafah	10	17	27	11 March
12.	The right to peaceful assembly	Al-Adham Association	Beit Hanoun, North Gaza	8	18	28	12 March
13.	Political participation	Gaa al-Qurain Development Association	Khan Yunis	0	29	29	13 March
14.	Political participation	Al-Maghazi Cultural Centre	Al-Maghazi, Central Gaza	18	0	18	14 March
15.	Political participation	Al-Qarara Youth Forum	Khan Yunis	11	10	21	15 March
16.	Political participation	Fursan al-Ghad Youth Association	Beit Hanoun, North Gaza	5	12	17	18 March
17.	The death penalty	Female Graduates Association	Gaza City	0	18	18	19 March
18.	Political participation	Femal Media Professionals Forum	Rafah	2	11	16	21 March
19.	Political participation	Binaa Association	Gaza City	9	11	20	22 March

20.	The right to freedom of opinion and expression	Binaa Association	Gaza City	9	4	13	26 March
21.	The rights to freedom of opinion and expression	Female Graduates Association	Gaza City	0	25	25	28 March
22.	Political participation	Al-Fajr Youth Association	Khan Yunis	18	6	24	2 April
23.	The right to freedom of opinion and expression	Al-Qarara Youth Forum	Khan Yunis	18	6	24	5 April
24.	Women's political participation	Union of Agricultural Work Committees	Khan Yunis	0	31	31	9 April
25.	The death penalty	Fursan al-Ghad Youth Association	Beit Hanoun, North Gaza	18	4	22	11 April
26.	Women's political participation	Female Graduates Association	Gaza City	0	29	29	17 April
27.	The death penalty	Binaa Association	Gaza City	4	11	15	28 April
28.	The right to freedom of opinion and expression	Wefaq Society for Woman and Child Care	Rafah	2	22	24	23 April
29.	Women's political participation	The South Association for Women's Health	Rafah	0	19	19	25 April
30.	The right to freedom of opinion and expression	Al-Fajr Youth Association	Khan Yunis	15	2	17	30 April
31.	Political participation	Female Graduates Association	Gaza City	0	29	29	2 May
32.	The death penalty	Al-Qarara Youth Forum	Khan Yunis	11	5	16	3 May
33.	Political participation	Female Graduates Association	Gaza City	0	27	27	6 May
34.	The death penalty	Wefaq Society for Woman and Child Care	Rafah	6	9	15	7 May
35.	The right to freedom of opinion and expression	Female Graduates Association	Gaza City	0	24	24	9 May
36.	The role of the media in enhancing political participation	Al-Aqsa University	Gaza City	0	31	31	13 May
37.	Legitimate restrictions on the freedom of press work	Al-Aqsa University	Gaza City	0	19	19	14 May
38.	The role of the media in enhancing democracy in Palestine	Al-Aqsa University	Gaza City	0	29	29	16 May
39.	The death penalty	Al-Aqsa University	Gaza City	0	25	25	21 May
40.	Political participation under international and domestic laws	Adala Association	Khan Yunis	11	0	11	30 May

41.	Transitional justice	Al-Aqsa University	Gaza City	0	11	11	31 May
42.	Democracy and transitional justice	Binaa Association	Gaza City	9	5	14	14 June
43.	Democracy and transitional justice	Al-Qarara Youth Forum	Khan Yunis	16	11	27	26 June
44.	Political participation	Oxygen Youth Group	Gaza City	15	15	30	27 June
45.	The right to freedom of opinion and expression	Oxygen Youth Forum	Gaza City	13	13	26	28 June
46.	Democracy in Palestine	Oxygen Youth Group	Gaza City	13	14	27	1 July
47.	The death penalty	Oxygen Youth Group	Gaza City	15	10	25	4 July
48.	Political participation and the role of media in its promotion	Media Professionals Forum	Gaza City	12	6	18	9 July
49.	Transitional justice	Oxygen Youth Group	Gaza City	12	9	21	10 July
50.	Democracy in Palestine	Media Professionals Forum	Gaza City	11	6	17	11 July
51.	Legitimate restrictions on press work freedom	Media Professionals Forum	Gaza City	10	5	15	16 July
52.	The death penalty	Media Professionals Forum	Gaza City	7	6	13	18 July
53.	Transitional justice	Media Professionals Forum	Gaza City	7	6	13	18 July
54.	Political participation	Ford Association	Gaza City	5	6	11	3 October
55.	Political participation	Al-Qarara Youth Forum	Khan Yunis	13	8	21	21 October
56.	Political participation	East Gaza Society for Family Development	Gaza City	2	17	19	22 October
57.	Political participation	Youth Commission for Culture and Development	Jabalya, North Gaza	7	18	25	23 October
Total				405	775	1,180	

2. Preparing 5 awareness leaflets on the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the right to peaceful assembly, the right to freedom of association and the right to political participation

These leaflets were prepared and printed, and they were distributed to participants in these activities.

3. News releases on these activities

The Unit issued 8 news releases.

Indicators

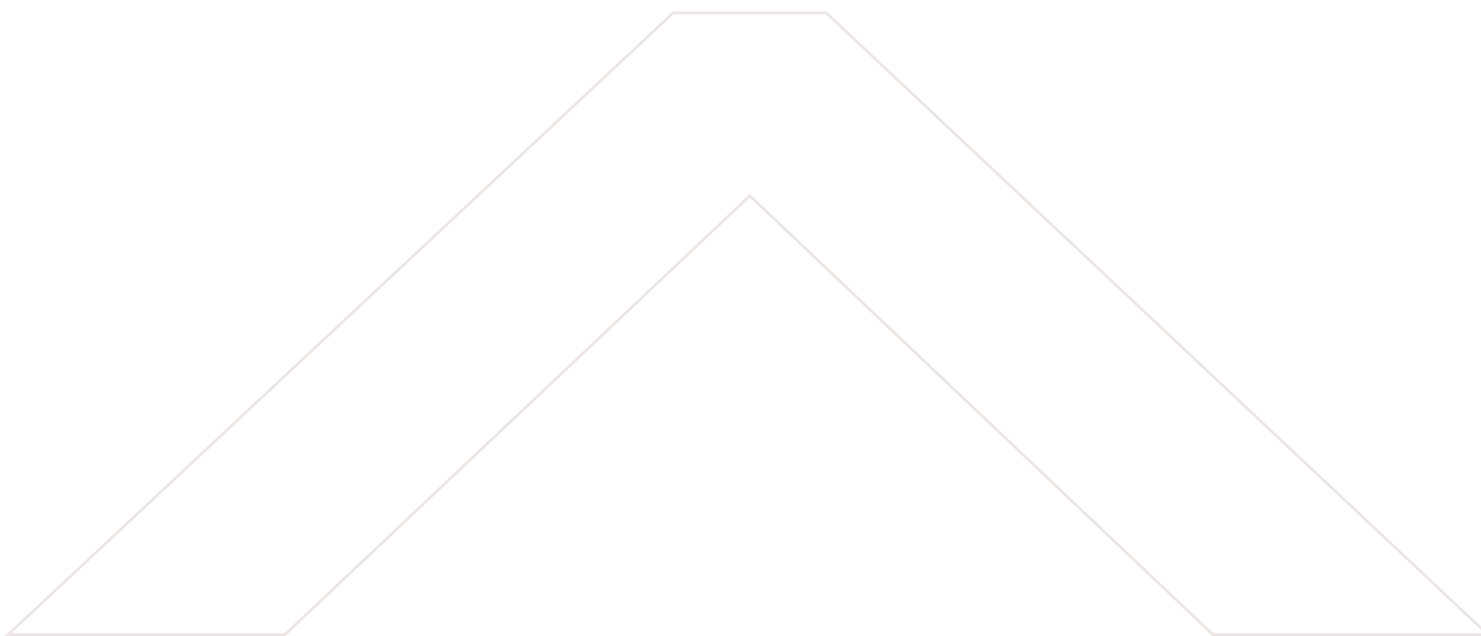
- Participation: The number of meetings organised in the first half of 2012 is higher than the planned number of whole year by 15 meetings, and the number of participants in these activities is higher

than the number of targeted persons as set out in the Unit's plan for 2012 by 365 participants. Women constituted about 70% of the total number of participants.

- Positive feedbacks.
- Cooperation of other organisations with the unit: These activities were organised in cooperation with 19 organisations.
- Preparing the leaflets and using them in the Unit's activities.
- The number of news releases.

Means of verification

- The Unit has lists of participants and partner organisations.
- Successful organisation of the meetings.
- Feedback.
- Media coverage.



> **Women's Unit**

In 2012, the Unit carried out the activities set out in its annual plan, excluding those related to efforts to amend laws, especially the Family Law, due to the ongoing political split. The Unit was also forced to make changes to some activities due to the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip in November 2012.

> **Output (1)**
Legal aid for women

1. Representation of 600 women and children before Shari'a courts
2. Providing legal consultations to 500 women
3. Providing legal consultations to female prisoners

1. Representation of women before Shari'a courts

The Unit continued to represent women before *Shari'a* courts. In 2012, the Unit pursued 1,213 cases in *Shari'a* courts, including 52 from 2011.

Table 1: *Shari'a* court cases pursued by the Unit in 2012

Case type	Number
Alimony	634
Rights to household property	298
Custody rights	40
Access rights to children	33
Hosting	24
Payment for childbirth	37
Delayed dowry	39
Separation	55
Obedience	3
Divorce confirmation	7
Custody payment	39
Others	4
Total	1,213

Table 2: Results of cases followed by the Unit before *Shari'a* courts in 2012

Rulings	Under consideration	Reconciled	Cancelled	Total
713	70	363	67	1,213

Table 3: Distribution of cases among PCHR offices

Gaza Office	Jabalya Office	Khan Yunis Office	Total
554	314	293	1,213

1.2. Coordination with Shari'a courts

In 2012, cooperation and coordination enhanced with the *Shari'a* Courts in the Gaza Strip, which refer women who need legal assistance to the Unit. The Unit in its turn provides free legal assistance to women. Cooperation between the Unit and *Shari'a* courts is not limited to cooperation with judges, rather it extends to all staff of the courts, thus facilitating the work of lawyers.

1.3. Coordination with women's organisations

The Unit pursued a number of cases referred to it by women's organisations, especially Women's Health Centre in Jabalya, the Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Conflict Resolution and the Independent Commission for Human Rights.

In this context, the Unit received a letter from the Union of Health Work Committees concerning cooperation and coordination in the field of legal assistance and the referral of cases that need legal representation to PCHR.

Additionally, on 29 July 2012, the Unit Director met with Mr Ibrahim Abu Shammala and Mr Dawod al-Masri, from the Legal Aid Project, and discussed with them possible cooperation and coordination between the Unit of the project.

1.4. Meetings with civil society and women's organisations

On 26 April 2012, the Unit organised a meeting for community-based and women's organisations in the northern Gaza Strip. The objective of the meeting was to discuss cooperation and coordination between PCHR and organisations that support women's rights and provide legal assistance to women. The meeting was concluded by a number of recommendations, including continuing women's awareness activities especially in marginalised areas. Targeting males in legal awareness activities; and ensuring access of school children to organisations that provide legal services to women. The number of participants in this meeting was 45.

1.5. Cooperation with the Shelter House

In 2012, Unit staff visited the shelter house of the Ministry of Social Affairs, which was established in 2011. They met with the director, the social worker and the psychiatrist and discussed with them the nature of their works and the cases admitted into the house. Coop-

eration between PCHR and the house was also discussed. Another visit was also facilitated for Unit staff, who met with some women in the house. Additionally, the Unit delivered 3 legal awareness lectures to the staff of the house.

4. Providing legal consultations to 500 women

In 2011, the Unit provided 430 legal consultations to women in person or by telephone: 163 consultations in Gaza office; 113 in Jabalya office; and 154 in Khan Yunis office. This decrease in the number of consultations provided by the Unit is attributed to the increasing number of organisations that provide legal services to women in the Gaza Strip, including the Legal Aid Project which has 12 member organisations.

5. Providing legal consultations to female prisoners

In 2012, lawyer Hanan Matar visited the detention facility of women. She met with the manager of the facility. She also met with 24 detainees, including 2 sentenced women, and provided them with legal consultations.

Indicators

- The Unit received 1,213 cases.
- Courts issued 713 judgments in favour of women.
- The Unit provided 430 legal consultations to women.
- *Shari'a* courts referred 553 cases to the Unit.
- Community and women's organisations referred 34 cases to the Unit.
- 689 women⁴⁶ benefited from legal assistance provided by the Unit.
- A Unit lawyer visited 24 female detainees.

Means of verification

- The Unit observed the number of cases received in 2012.
- The Unit observed the number of court judgments in favour of women.
- The Unit observed the number of cases transferred by the *Shari'a* courts.
- The Unit observed the number of cases transferred by women's organisations.

46. It is noted that this number differs from the total number of cases pursued by the Unit because one case may receive more than one consultation, or more than one claim is filed in its regard.



Success stories

The Case of Z.A.

Z.A. referred to the Women's Unit to request assistance with a problem that had been ongoing for more than 35 years. She married when she was 13 years old and had 4 children. Her husband abandoned her and married another woman. The new wife lived on the first floor of the house, while Z.A. lived on the ground floor. Her husband completely neglected her and her children and refused to provide them with maintenance. When she requested him to do so, he insulted and beat her, threatening to divorce her and file for custody of the children. She stopped asking him for money out of concern that she would be deprived of her children. She depended on herself to provide subsistence for her children. The house lacked the minimum requirements for adequate living conditions. When the children grew up, they got married, and she lived with her son, but her conditions were not any better. She referred to the Unit hoping to find a solution for her longstanding problem. A Unit lawyer filed for divorce on her behalf. When the statement of the claim was served to the husband, he threatened her, but she persisted in following through with the case. The court issued a ruling in her favour, which was confirmed by the Court of Appeal. Following her divorce, Z.A. obtained an UNRWA ration card, a salary from the Ministry of Social Affairs and an insurance card, which would improve her health and economic conditions.

The Case of A.Sh.

A.Sh. got married when she was 14. She experienced problems with her husband in the first week of her marriage due to her mother-in-law's interference into their life. She had two children and her husband then divorced her. She was 17 at the time. She lived with her father and stepmother, who could not endure the presence of the two children. She was forced to return the two children to their father who had since married to another woman. Four years later, her husband decided to take her back under a new marriage contract and she agreed, as a means of escaping her stepmother's mistreatment. She gave birth to two more children, but the problems with her husband persisted. In the end, her husband's second wife arranged for A. Sh. to be divorced by their husband. A. Sh. referred to the Unit seeking legal assistance to obtain alimony for two of her children. A Unit lawyer filed a claim on her behalf and the court issued a ruling granting monthly alimony of JD 50 for the two children. The Unit also filed a claim to allow her to visit and host her other two children, who remained in the custody of her ex-husband. The court issued a ruling allowing her to host her children every second week.



Output (2)

Legal awareness for women: Raising awareness of 2,000 women of their rights as ensured by domestic laws and international human rights instruments

1. Organising legal awareness lectures
2. Preparing a poster on International Women’s Day
3. Issuing a press release on International Women’s Day
4. Cooperation with the media
5. Contribution to training courses organised by PCHR Training Unit

1. Organising 100 legal awareness lectures, including 20 on the rights of the child

In 2012, the Unit organised 102 legal awareness lectures. Of these lectures: 25 focused on family law; 32 addressed violence against women; 19 focused on the rights of the child; 6 addressed the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; 2 focused on murders related to “family honour;” 2 addressed women’s political participation; 2 addressed women’s health rights; 6 addressed the impacts of the Israeli offensive on women; 2 focused on women’s rights under the Labour Law and the Penal Code.

✓ The unit’s staff in a meeting in Jabalya, 26 April 2012



Lectures

No.	Date	Place	Area	Topic	Number of participants	
					Males	Females
1.	9 Jan.	Women's Work Department	Beit Lahia	Violence against women		34
2.	10 Jan.	Safa Charitable Society	Khan Yunis	Violence against women		29
3.	12 Jan.	Women's Activity Centre	Gaza	Violence against women		65
4.	15 Jan.	Women's Activity Centre	Deir al-Balah	Family Law		12
5.	16 Jan.	National Association of Democracy and Law	Rafah	Convention on the Rights of the Child	12	10
6.	18 Jan.	Union of Health Work Committees	Jabalya	Family Law	25	
7.	19 Jan.	Union of Health Work Committees	Jabalya	Family Law	25	
8.	22 Jan.	Afaq Charitable Society	Nussairat	Violence against women		18
9.	25 Jan.	Union of Health Work Committees	Jabalya	Family Law	20	
10.	26 Jan.	Union of Health Work Committees	Rafah	Family Law	40	
11.	13 Feb.	Khan Yunis Secondary School for Girls "B"	Khan Yunis	Violence against women		34
12.	15 Feb.	Bunian Cultural Society	Khan Yunis	CEDAW		29
13.	16 Feb.	Women's Work Department	Beit Lahia	Violence against women		25
14.	16 Feb.	Khan Yunis Elementary School for Boys "A"	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		12
15.	21 Feb.	National Association of Democracy and Law	Rafah	Women under the Penal Code	8	10
16.	22 Feb.	Union of Struggle Youth	Gaza	Family law	12	6
17.	23 Feb.	Solidarity Society	Gaza	Family Law		14
18.	27 Feb.	Abu Hmaid Elementary School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		25
19.	28 Feb.	Shelter Home of the Ministry of Social Affairs	Gaza	Family Law		18
20.	5 Mar.	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	Khan Yunis	CEDAW		36
21.	6 Mar.	Abassan Elementary School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		22
22.	7 Mar.	Khuzaa Elementary School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		25
23.	11 Mar.	Bunian Cultural Society	Khan Yunis	CEDAW		30
24.	12 Mar.	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		30
25.	13 Mar.	Liberal Youth Union	Gaza	CEDAW	21	9
26.	15 Mar.	Al-Amal New School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		18
27.	18 Mar.	Shelter Home of the Ministry of Social Affairs	Gaza	Family Law		15
28.	20 Mar.	Wifaq Charitable Society	Rafah	Violence against women		25

29.	21 Mar.	Afaq Charitable Society	Nussairat	Family Law		18
30.	22 Mar.	Khuzaa Elementary School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		12
31.	25 Mar.	Khan Yunis Elementary "School for Girls "A"	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		15
32.	25 Mar.	Khan Yunis Elementary "School for Girls "C"	Khan Yunis	Khan Yunis Elementary School for Girls		30
33.	26 Mar.	Women's Work Department	Beit Lahia	Violence against women		45
34.	3 Apr.	Middle East Council of Churches	Gaza	Family Law		25
35.	4 Apr.	Middle East Council of Churches	Gaza	Family Law		25
36.	5 Apr.	Middle East Council of Churches	Gaza	Violence against women		25
37.	15 Apr.	Al-Amal New Preparatory School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		25
38.	17 Apr.	Women's Activity Centre	Al-Boreij	Murders related to "family honour"		30
39.	19 Apr.	Women's Activity Centre	Al-Maghazi	Family Law		20
40.	22 Apr.	Wifaq Charitable Society	Rafah	Murders related to "family honour"		30
41.	23 Apr.	Al-Satar al-Gharbi Neighborhood Committee	Al-Qarara	Family Law		40
42.	25 Apr.	The Parliament of the New School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		15
43.	26 Apr.	The Parliament of Khan Yunis Elementary School "A"	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		30
44.	13 May	Knowledge Light Society	Nussairat	Violence against women		25
45.	16 May	Afaq Charitable Society	Rafah	Violence against women		39
46.	17 May	Zaker Association	Gaza	Family Law		20
47.	20 May	Shelter Home of the Ministry of Social Affairs	Gaza	Family Law		20
48.	27 May	Gaa al-Qurain Development Society	Khan Yunis	Murders related to "family honour"		30
49.	29 May	Ghassan Kanafani Society	Beit Hanoun	Murders related to "family honour"		30
50.	30 May	Women's Activity Centre	Deir al-Balah	Family Law		15
51.	10 Jun.	Women's Activity Centre	Deir al-Balah	Family Law		15
52.	12 Jun.	Bissan Charitable Society	Khan Yunis	Violence against women		20
53.	13 Jun.	Women's Activity Centre	Gaza	Family Law		20
54.	14 Jun.	Palestinian Academy for Rehabilitation and Training	Khan Yunis	Family Law		25
55.	18 Jun.	Buds of Hope Society	Nussairat	Violence against women		30
56.	19 Jun.	The Palestinian Society for the Protection of Land and Man	Khan Yunis	Violence against women		30
57.	20 Jun.	Knowledge Light Society	Nussairat	Violence against women		45
58.	24 Jun.	Women's Work Department	Beit Lahia	CEDAW		30

59.	27 Jun.	The Arts and Crafts Village	Gaza	Family law		20
60.	8 Jul.	Women's Activity Centre	Rafah	Violence against women		25
61.	9 Jul.	Friendship Centre	Al-Boreij	Violence against women	22	
62.	15 Jul.	Al-Satar al-Gharbi Neighborhood Committee	Khan Yunis	Violence against women		15
63.	16 Jul.	Liberal Youth Union	Gaza	Women's political participation	10	15
64.	17 Jul.	National Association of Democracy and Law	Rafah	Women under the Labor Law	12	8
65.	19 Jul.	National Association for the Protection of Land and Man	Khan Yunis	Violence against women		30
66.	22 Jul.	Palestine Liberation Front	Khan Yunis	Violence against women	15	
67.	4 Sep.	Tawasol Charitable Society	Rafah	Violence against women	20	
68.	6 Sep.	Women's Activity Centre	Deir al-Balah	Violence against women		18
69.	9 Sep.	Bunian Cultural Association	Khan Yunis	Violence against women		17
70.	11 Sep.	Al-Hayat Society for Family Development	Khan Yunis	Violence against women		37
71.	13 Sep.	Afaq Charitable Society	Nussairat	Violence against women		22
72.	16 Sep.	Right and Justice Society	Khan Yunis	Violence against women		19
73.	17 Sep.	Deir al-Balah Service Centre	Deir al-Balah	Violence against women		23
74.	18 Sep.	Middle East Council of Churches	Gaza	Family Law		30
75.	19 Sep.	Middle East Council of Churches	Gaza	Family Law		30
76.	20 Sep.	Ghassan Kanafani Association	Beit Hanoun	Violence against women		20
77.	23 Sep.	Female Media Professionals of the South	Rafah	Violence against women		12
78.	25 Sep.	Al-Amal Elementary School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		60
79.	3 Oct.	Women's Struggle Bloc	Deir al-Balah	Violence against women		20
80.	4 Oct.	Abu Tua'ima Elementary School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child	40	15
81.	8 Oct.	Al-Safa Charitable Society	Khan Yunis	Violence against women	17	12
82.	10 Oct.	Union of Health Work Committees	Jabalya	Violence against women	10	8
83.	11 Oct.	Afaq Charitable Society	Nussairat	CEDAW		25
84.	14 Oct.	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		28
85.	21 Oct.	National Association of Democracy and Law	Rafah	Women's Political Participation	25	
86.	24 Oct.	Al-Amal New Elementary School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		25
87.	.Nov 6	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child	20	24
88.	7 Nov.	Al-Amal New Elementary School	Khan Yunis	CEDAW		30
89.	8 Nov.	Zakher Charitable Society	Gaza	Family Law		15

90.	11 Nov.	"Akka Secondary School" B	Khan Yunis	CEDAW		30
91.	13 Nov.	Sanad Charitable Society	Jabalya	CEDAW		45
92.	26 Nov.	Khan Yunis Elementary "School" B	Khan Yunis	Convention on the Rights of the Child		33
93.	2 Dec.	Nibras Educational Centre	Khan Yunis	Impacts of the Israeli offensive on women	38	4
94.	9 Dec.	Khan Yunis Elementary School	Khan Yunis	Family Law		35
95.	9 Dec.	Afaq Charitable Society	Nussairat	Impacts of the Israeli offensive on women		25
96.	10 Dec.	Women's Activity Centre	Deir al-Balah	Impacts of the Israeli offensive on women		20
97.	11 Dec.	Women's Work Department	Beit Lahia	Impacts of the Israeli offensive on women		35
98.	12 Dec.	Zakher Charitable Society	Gaza	Impacts of the Israeli offensive on women		20
99.	13 Dec.	Right and Justice Association	Khan Yunis	Impacts of the Israeli offensive on women		27
100.	16 Dec.	Mubarak Hospital	Khan Yunis	Women's health rights	15	10
101.	16 Dec.	The Emirati Hospital	Rafah	Women's health rights	15	10
102.	18 Dec.	Women's Activity Centre	Gaza	Impacts of the Israeli offensive on women		45
Total					422	2,272

- Cooperation with the Union of Health Work Committees
- Upon invitation by the Union of Health Work Committees, lawyer Sameer Hassaniya delivered 4 legal awareness lectures on marriage, divorce and inheritance, which were attended by 80 men.
- Cooperation with the Middle East Council of Churches
- Upon invitation by the Council, lawyers Hanan Matar and Sameer Hassaniya delivered 5 legal awareness lectures on the Family Law in a training course organised by the Council for 40 women.
- Additionally, the Unit cooperated for the first time with some organisations, including Qaa' al-Qurain Association, Light of Knowledge Association, al-Safa Charitable Society, the Shelter House of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Afaq Society, Rafah Afaq, Solidarity Charitable Society Union of Liberal Struggle Youth. It also cooperated with a number of schools.

2. Press release on International Women's Day

The Unit issued a press release on the occasion of International Women's Day on 8 March titled "On the Eighth of March: We Are All Hana Shalabi." The eighth of March coincided with the hunger strike declared by Hana Shalabi, a female Palestinian detainee in Israeli jails. The press release called on the international community to intervene to stop Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights. It called also for ending the Palestinian split.

3. Poster for International Women's Day

The Unit prepared a poster on the International Women's Day. Unit staff and the Director of PCHR also participated in a sit-in organised in front of the premises of the ICRC in Gaza in solidarity with Hana Shalabi. Copies of the poster were distributed during the sit-in.

- Cooperation with the French Cultural Centre
- On the 8th of March 2012, the French Cultural Centre hosted the Unit Director to comment on a documentary shown on this occasion on the rights of working women in the world. The Unit Director presented

an intervention on the rights and conditions of working Palestinian women.

4. Cooperation with the media

In 2012, Unit staff members were interviewed by journalists and were hosted in TV and radio programs.



Lawyer Hanan Matar during a training session

5. Contribution to training courses organised by PCHR Training Unit

In 2012, the Unit contributed to training courses organised by PCHR Training Unit in the field of democracy and human rights. The Unit delivered 10 lectures on the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, gender issues and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Indicators

- In 2012, the Unit organised 102 legal awareness lectures, including: 25 on the Family Law; 32 on violence against women; 19 on the rights of the child; 6 on the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; 2 on murders related to "family honour;" 2 on women's political participation; 2 on women's health rights; 6 on the impacts of the Israeli offensive on women; 2 on women's rights under the Labour Law and the Penal Code.
- 2,272 women attended these lectures.
- 422 men attended these lectures.
- 40 women referred to the Unit seeking legal aid after having attended these lectures.
- The Unit provided 90 on-spot legal consultations to women during these lectures.
- These lectures were organised in cooperation with 32 organisations and 12 schools throughout the Gaza Strip.
- The Unit cooperated with 18 organisations and schools for the first time.
- 500 copies of the poster on the International Women's Day were printed.

Means of verification

- The Unit received positive feedback to the press release issued on the International Women's Day.
- The Unit received positive feedback to the poster issued on the International Women's Day.
- The Unit was able to reach marginalised areas in the Gaza Strip, which lack community-based and women's organisations.

➤ **Output (3)**

Contribution to the elimination of violence against women, including murders related to “family honour”

1. Activities for ‘16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence’ (25 November – 10 December)

The Unit’s 2012 plan included efforts to stop violence against women through implementing a number of activities, especially in relation to the 16 Days of Activism against Gender violence, in the period 25 November – 10 December. However, it faced extreme difficulties in implementing some of these activities due to the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip in the period 14-21 November 2012, which made implementing activities after this period very difficult.

Instead, the Unit set an action plan similar to the one that followed the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in 2008-2009. The plan included re-establishing contacts with organisations with which the Unit had been coordinating; holding open meeting with women; and organising a number of lectures in response to women’s needs.

During the period, the Unit organised 9 open meetings for women, which were focused on Israeli violence against women and the suffering of women during the Israeli offensive.

Additionally, the Unit issued a press release on 25 November 2012 titled “On the Occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women: An Open Call to the International Community to Offer Protection to Palestinian Civilian, Mainly Women.”

The Unit was not able to issue a poster on this occasion due the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip.

Cooperation with local and international women’s organisations for ‘16 Days of Activism’

Amal (Hope) Coalition against Violence against Women

PCHR is a member of the consultative committee of *Amal (Hope) Coalition against Violence against Women* – a coalition of human rights and women’s organisations for the elimination of violence against women. The coalition is comprised of: PCHR; Women’s Affairs Centre; Palestinian Centre for Conflict Resolution; Centre for Women’s Legal Research & Consulting; Culture and Free Thought Centre; Al Ataa’ Charitable Society;

Aisha Association for Women and Children Protection; Wafaq Society for Women and Child Care; Creative Women Forum; Palestine Red Crescent Society; Union of Health Work Committees; and Women’s Affairs Technical Committee.

The Unit participated in the central event organised by the Coalition, in cooperation with UN Women, UNRWA, UNDP and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, on the 16 Days of Activism against Gender violence.

On 31 December 2012, the Unit organised a seminar, in cooperation with the Coalition, on murders motivated by “family honour,” in which 35 students from the Faculty of Law in al-Azhar University and a number of staff members of women’s organisations, participated. The discussion was facilitated by lawyer Hanan Matar, who addressed murders of women in the Palestinian society for the so-called family honour, and relevant laws. She also addressed the decree issued by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas annulling lenient sentences against the perpetrators of crimes related to “family honour.”

In the period 24-26 September 2012, the Swedish Kvinna till Kvinna, a partner organisation, organised a roundtable discussion in Jordan to share experiences in regard to violence against women. Twelve partner organisations of Kvinna till Kvinna in Iraq, Jordan and Palestinian participated in the discussion. PCHR was represented by the Unit Director and lawyer Hanan Matar. Matar presented a working paper on the Family Law applicable in the Gaza Strip.

➤ **Output (4)**

Lobbying for the incorporation of international standards relating to the rights of women and children into Palestinian law

The Unit was not able to continue the activities it started in 2006 with regard to the draft Family Law due to the suspension of the legislature because of the ongoing political split.

➤ **Output (5)**

Capacity-building

1. On 27-28 February 2012, training lawyers Abeer Sha’sha’a, Nour al-Qishawi and Amal Shirreer participated in a training course on equity and the right to housing organised by the Norwegian Refugee Council in Gaza City.
2. In the period 15-18 October 2012, Unit researched

Majeda Shihada participated in a training course organised by Women's Technical Affairs Committee in Gaza City on gender-based violence.

3. In the period 10-12 December 2012, lawyer Abeer Sha'sha'a participated in a training course organised by Women's Technical Affairs Committee in Gaza City on reproductive health.

Indicators

- 3 trainee lawyers in the Unit participated in a specialised course.
- 2 staff members of the Unit participated in 2 specialised training courses.

Means of verification

- Increased awareness of lawyers on the issue of gender-based violence.

> Output (6)

Qualifying young lawyers to litigate before Shari'a courts

1. Training young lawyers to litigate before Shari'a courts

In the first quarter of 2012, three young lawyers received practical training in the Unit on litigation before Shari'a courts, in the context of a joint project with the Norwegian Refugee Council which started in 2011. The training focused on how to receive cases, how to prepare a case, how to write a claim pleading and how to register a claim in Shari'a courts. The training helped these lawyers pass the test for practicing the Shari'a legal profession.

Indicators

- Two of the trainee lawyers obtained licenses to practice the Shari'a legal profession.
- The trainee lawyers attended 200 hearings in the Shari'a courts.
- The trainee lawyers received 200 cases in the Unit.

Means of verification

- Following the training, two lawyers obtained licenses to practice the Shari'a legal profession.

Activities not included in the Annual Plan

Participation in the Research Project on the Traditional Justice System and Its Applicability to the Juvenile Jus-

tice in the Gaza Strip

In January 2012, PCHR began working on a research project, in cooperation with Terre des Hommes, to evaluate the traditional justice system and its applicability to juveniles in the Gaza Strip. The research sought to study the traditional justice system and its connection with the official justice system, and to evaluate its effectiveness to achieve justice for Palestinian children in the Gaza Strip. It further sought to establish guidelines to ensure the rights of children who break the law or who may be dealt as such in procedural stages of the traditional justice, through studying the current situation and the best applicable practices in the field of juvenile justice.

During the project, information was collected about the traditional justice, actors were interviewed, working groups were established with the police, the judiciary and concerned ministries and cases of 15 children that were considered by the traditional justice were studied.

The Unit participated in writing the research paper as it is interested in this issue and has significant experience in this field. The research was completed in August 2012, and the research paper is expected to be published in the beginning of 2013.

Participation in workshops and conferences organised by civil society and women's organisations

- On 19 July 2012, lawyer Sameer Hassaniya submitted a working paper entitled "The Role of Civil Society Organisation in Developing Alimony Cases" in a workshop organised by the Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Conflict Resolution.
- On 1 November 2012, lawyer Hanan Matar participated in a workshop organised by the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling to discuss a research paper prepared by the Centre on divorce.
- On 16 December 2012, researcher Majeda Shihada participated in a meeting organised by Wissal Coalition on women's health rights. She delivered a lecture on reproductive health.
- On 23 December 2012, lawyer Sameer Hassaniya submitted a working paper on Israeli violations of Palestinian children's rights in the annual conference organised by the Ministry of Culture.

➤ Economic and Social Rights Unit

In 2012, the Economic and Social Rights Unit undertook implementing all activities set out in its annual plan. The activities focused on two major issues: 1) Ongoing monitoring of the total closure imposed on the oPt, especially Gaza Strip; and the continuous military operations which Israeli forces carry out throughout Gaza Strip, especially in areas near the border; and 2) Monitoring the repercussions of the political split on the economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian population. The Unit contributed in many ways to following up the impact of Israeli policies on the Palestinian civilian population, and the deterioration of its social, economic and cultural rights. The Unit focused also on pursuing all field developments related to the social, economic and cultural rights of Palestinian civilians and their continuous suffering due to the absence of tangible opportunities to rebuild the Gaza Strip following the Israeli offensive on Gaza Strip in 2008-2009.

The Unit also monitored, studied and documented the social, economic and cultural rights in the oPt in general, and specifically in Gaza Strip. In addition, the Unit continued its work on the Palestinian agenda in the field of promoting and protecting the social, economic and cultural rights of the Palestinian people.

Furthermore, the Unit issued a number of periodic and special reports and contributed to implement other PCHR's activities, especially in the training Unit. Outstandingly, the Unit also promoted partnerships and networking with NGOs and international organisations and cooperated with them in carrying out activities. The Unit also partook in activities of civil society organisations in Gaza Strip. Finally, the Unit was distinguished at promoting its activities at the media level. The following is a detailed description of the Unit's activities in 2012.

➤ Output (1)

Contribution to raising awareness of economic, social and cultural rights in the oPt, especially the Gaza Strip

Activities:

1. Establishing a database on the situation of social, economic and cultural rights in the Gaza Strip
2. Meetings with development experts, officials from local and international governmental and non-governmental organisations. Academics, donors and UN bodies.
3. Issuing a report on the closure policy and its impact on the economic, social and cultural rights in the oPt.
4. Issuing 11 field updates on the state of border crossings in the Gaza Strip
5. Issuing a report on the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip from the perspective of economic and social rights.
6. Organising a workshop on the economic and social rights in the oPt, especially the Gaza Strip.
7. Issuing factsheets on violations of Palestinian children's rights in the Gaza Strip.
8. Issuing press releases and other media activities.

The Unit focused on monitoring the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip and the repercussions of the closure imposed by Israel on the social, economic and cultural rights of Palestinian civilian populations. These activities included the following:

1. Establishing a database on the situation of social, economic, and cultural rights in the Gaza Strip

In 2012, the Unit continued to create a database on economic, social and cultural rights in the oPt, especially in the Gaza Strip. This database has been the main source of information for the Unit of violations of the rights of education, adequate housing, 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, officials from local and international governmental and non-governmental organisations, academics, donors, and UN bodies

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 closure imposed by Israel on the oPt on the Palestinian economic, social and cultural rights.

- Meetings with international delegations representing NGOs, relief organisations, solidarity movements and diplomatic missions.
- Meetings with representatives of UN agencies, including UNRWA, WHO, OCHA, UNDP and OHCHR.

- Meetings with ministers in the government of Gaza, members of the Palestinian Legislative Council and representatives of local NGOs.

3. Report on the closure policy and its impact on the economic, social and cultural rights in the oPt

The Unit prepared a report on the ongoing closure imposed on the Gaza Strip for the sixth consecutive year, and its impacts on the economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian civilian population. The report covers the period 1 January – 31 December 2012. The report observes the state of the border crossings, health conditions, education conditions, the sea blockade and the situation in border areas. It is expected to be published in the beginning of 2013.



▲ Dr. Fadel al-Mzeini, a researcher in the unit, during a workshop on the electricity crisis

4. Field updates on the state of border crossings in 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 2012, the Unit issued 11 of these updates.

5. Report on the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip from the perspective of economic and social rights.

The Unit issued a report titled "The Right to Adequate Housing in the Gaza Strip: The Case of People Whose Houses Were Destroyed during the Israeli Offensive (27 December 2008 – 18 January 2009)."

The report addresses the suffering of Palestinian civilians whose houses were destroyed during the Israeli offensive because of delayed reconstruction of their houses.

6. Workshop on economic and social rights in the oPt, especially the Gaza Strip

- On 26 February 2012, the Unit organised a workshop on the shortage of medicines and medical supplies in the Gaza Strip. The workshop was held in the Commodore Hotel in Gaza City. Many representatives of the governmental, non-governmental and internal health organisations participated in the workshop which discussed the shortage of medicines and its impact on patients, especially in light of the Israeli closure and the Palestinian political split. It was concluded by a number of recommendations to end this crisis.
- On 15 March 2012, the Unit organised a workshop titled "Power Crisis in the Gaza Strip... Is It Financial or Political?" This workshop was organised in the context of the PCHR's follow-up to the power crisis in the Gaza Strip and the right to receive basic services. The workshop was held in the Commodore Hotel in Gaza City. It was attended by a number of representatives of governmental institutions, non-government organisations, community-based organisations, the disabled associations, workers in the electricity sector, in addition to the media and interested people. It was concluded by a number of recommendations to end the power crisis.



▲ Mr. Khalil Shaeen, director of the unit, during a workshop of the crisis of medicines

7. Issuing factsheets on violations of Palestinian children's rights in the Gaza Strip

The Unit continued to issue monthly factsheets on violation of children's rights in time of armed conflicts in the Gaza Strip, depending on the monitor-

ing and reporting mechanism established by the UN Security Council Resolution 1612 of 2005. In 2012, the Unit published 12 of these factsheets.

8. Issuing press releases and other media activities

• Press releases

In 2012, the Unit issued 22 press releases on violations of economic, social and cultural rights calling upon the international community to intervene to stop the collective penalties and protect the Palestinian economic, social and cultural rights to avoid deterioration of the humanitarian conditions.

• Media Activities

In 2012, Unit staff members were interviewed by the local, Arab and international media on more than 100 occasions. The interviewed focused on human rights violations perpetrated against the Palestinian civilian population in the oPt, especially in the Gaza Strip.

> Output (2)

Promotion of the right to education

The Unit carried out a number of activities to promote the right to education. In this context, it held a series of meetings with representatives of educational institutions in the Gaza Strip, reported on the impact of the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip on the educational sector and organised a number of lectures and workshops on the right to education.

Activities

1. Monitoring the impact of the closure on education in the Gaza Strip
2. Meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Education and Members of the Palestinian Legislative Council.
3. A workshop on the right to education in the Gaza Strip
4. Advocacy activities to address the problem of reconstruction and development of educational institutions in the Gaza Strip
5. A report on the situation of education in the Gaza Strip from the perspective of economic and social rights

1. Monitoring the impact of the closure on education in the Gaza Strip

In 2012, the Unit monitored the impact of the total closure imposed by Israeli forces on the Gaza Strip on the educational sector, including denial of access of students to education outside the Gaza Strip, the entry of educational technical supplies into the Gaza Strip and the obstacles to reconstruction of educational institutions in the Gaza Strip.

2. Meetings

Staff members of the Unit held a number of meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Education, UNRWA Education Department the private education sector in the Gaza Strip to discuss mechanisms to develop education. The meetings discussed also ways to overcome the impact of the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip on the education sector.

3. Workshop on the conditions of elementary education in the Gaza Strip

On 23 October 2012, the Unit organised a workshop titled 'The Reality of Elementary Education in the Gaza Strip', which took place in Al-Quds International Hotel in Gaza City. The workshop was attended by a number of specialised persons representing the Education Department in UNRWA, the private education sector and a number of education institutions in the Gaza Strip. Azzam Sha'ath, a researcher for the Economic and Social Rights Unit, delivered a presentation titled "The Right to Education in International Instruments and Palestinian Legislation." Dr Mahmoud Hemdyat, director of the Education Department in UNRWA, delivered a presentation titled "The Reality of Education in UNRWA." Mohammed Hamed al-Jedi, former Director General of Public Education in the Gaza Strip, discussed the stages which the elementary education sector has gone through in the Gaza Strip since the Israeli occupation began. In his presentation titled 'Between Education and National Security,' Mohammed Shahin, an education expert, noted that developed countries have a strong interest in promoting education and that education occupies a special place in a state's budget.

4. Report on the situation of education in the elementary stages and special education in the Gaza Strip from the perspective of economic and social rights

The Unit started working on a report on the situation in the elementary stages and special education in the Gaza Strip from the perspective of economic

and social rights. The report focuses on the parties that provide education services in the elementary stages in the Gaza Strip. It further provides detailed statistics and data about the elementary education. The report is expected to be published in the beginning of 2013, as in the end of 2012, the Unit was involved in other activities that addressed the impact of the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November 2012.

> **Output (3)**

Promoting of the right to health

Activities

1. Monitoring health services in the Gaza Strip
2. Meetings with bodies that provide health services
3. Advocacy activities to promote the right of health
4. A radio workshop on health services in the Gaza Strip
5. A workshop on external medical treatment
6. Awareness activities on the right of health
7. Press releases and other media activities

1. Monitoring health services in the Gaza Strip

The Unit monitored health services in the Gaza Strip through updating the data available in the Unit, including following up the procedures of granting medical transfers to patients to hospitals in Israel, the West Bank and Egypt. The Unit monitored restrictions imposed by Israeli forces on access of patients to medical treatment outside the Gaza Strip, which some sometime resulted in a number of deaths. The Unit further monitored health conditions in the Gaza Strip in light of shortages in medicines and medical consumables. Additionally, the Unit played a major role in following up the work of the External Medical Treatment Department in the Gaza Strip, in coordination with World Health Organisation, the health sector of the Palestinian NGO Network and the Ministries of Health in Ramallah and Gaza.

2. Meetings with bodies that provide health services

- On 9 January 2012, Dr Fadel al-Mzainy, a researcher in the Unit, participated in a meeting that was held in the office of WHO in Gaza to discuss the serious health conditions caused by the shortages in medicines and medical consumables in the Gaza Strip, and their impact on the lives of patients, and to propose solutions for this crisis.

Representatives of a number of local and international organisations attended the meeting.

- On 6 March 2012, Dr Fadel al-Mzainy, a researcher in the Unit, carried out a field visit during which he visited a number of health facilities in Gaza City to monitor the impact of the power outages on the activities of these facilities. He also held a number of meetings with officials of the Ministry of Health, including Dr Ashraf al-Qidra, Spokesman of the Ministry, and Eng. Bassam al-Hamadin, Director of Engineering and Maintenance in the Ministry. He visited the intensive care Unit in Shifa Hospital and met with Dr Kamal Abada, deputy director of the Unit.
- On 17 April 2012, Dr Fadel al-Mzainy, visited Shifa Hospital in Gaza City to monitor the impact of the shortage of medicines in the Gaza Strip. He met with Dr Nael Skaik, head of the chemotherapy pharmacy. The meeting discussed the impact of the shortage of chemotherapy medicines.
- On 18 April 2012, Dr Fadel al-Mzainy met with Dr Zakaria Qamar, head of the central warehouses of the Ministry of Health in Gaza, Dr Mahmoud Dhaher, Head of WHO Office in Gaza, and Dr Hazem Ammar, manager of NOVARTS Company in Gaza. These meeting discussed the impact of the shortage of medicines.
- The Unit Director followed up developments related to the shortage of medicines required for the treatment of cancer. He addressed the Ministry of Health in Ramallah. He also facilitated a meeting for Ursula Mando, a member of PCHR International Unit, with the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health in Ramallah, and a representative of NOVARTS Company to ensure the provision of such medicines.
- On 28 June 2012, the Unit staff met with representatives of a number of Palestinian medical companies to discuss the repercussions of the financial crisis in the Ministry of Health and freezing the supplies of some medicines to health facilities in the Gaza Strip.
- On 7 August 2012, the Unit Director met with Mr Tergi Walter Dahl, from WHO, and Mr Safwat Diab. The meeting discussed a training programme organised by WHO and WHO's role in the oPt.

3. Advocacy activities to promote the right of health

The Unit implemented a number of advocacy activities aimed to promote health services in the Gaza Strip. These activities included following up the work of the External Medical Treatment Depart-

ment of the Ministry of Health in the Gaza Strip, and the shortage of medicines and medical needs in public health facilities. The Unit communicated with the Ministries of Health in Gaza and Ramallah, the health sector of the Palestinian NGO Network and WHO to settle crises related to the work of the External Medical Treatment Department, and to ensure regular supply of medicines and medical needs to health facilities in the Gaza Strip. Additionally, media activities carried by the Unit contributed to highlight the deteriorating health services in the Gaza Strip, through urging concerned governmental bodies to take effective steps to solve the problem of the shortage of medicines.

4. Radio workshop on health services in the Gaza Strip

- On 21 March 2012, People Radio hosted the Unit Director in radio workshop on the electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip and its impact on health facilities.
- On 26 March 2012, al-Kitab Television hosted the Unit Director in an interview on the electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip and its impact on health facilities.

5. Workshop on external medical treatment

On 17 October 2012, the Unit organised a workshop on the external medical treatment of patients from the Gaza Strip. The workshop was held in al-Quds International Hotel in Gaza City. A number of specialists and representatives of the Ministry of Health, WHO, Palestinian NGO Network and civil society organisations participated in the workshop.



▲ The unit's staff during the workshop

6. Awareness activities on the right of health

The Unit implemented a number of awareness activities on the right of health. These activities included workshops, meetings and lectures targeting health workers and administrative staff of hospitals, students of medicines and workers in rehabilitation centres of disabled persons.

On 4 March 2012, the Unit Director delivered a lecture to directors of hospitals, doctors and health workers in the public health sector on the role of human rights organisations in promoting and protecting the right of health. The lecture was held in the office of WHO in Gaza, and the number of participants was 28.

7. Press releases and other media activities

The Unit issued a number of press releases and made a number media interviews on health conditions in the Gaza Strip.

Other activities

On 16 April 2012, Unit staff participated in a workshop on the old age and health organised by WHO, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health. Representatives of a number of health organisations participated in the workshop.

► Output (4)

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

Activities

1. Monitoring the situation of the rights of disabled persons
2. Activating efforts of the National Committee to Support the Rights of Disabled Persons
3. Advocacy and lobbying activities
4. Meetings with international organisations to support rehabilitation facilities of the disabled
5. A workshop to train disabled persons on advocacy activities to demand their rights
6. A media workshop on the rights of disabled persons
7. Press releases and media activities

1. Monitoring the situation of the rights of the disabled

In 2012, the Unit pursued building its database on

the situation of the rights of the disabled with regard to work, education, health and social security. Other activities included preparation of statistical figures on the number of persons injured or killed and the destruction of their rehabilitation facilities. This data was compiled through holding interviews and meetings with victims or their families, and employees from institutions which were destroyed or damaged.

2. Activating efforts of the National Committee to Support the Rights of Disabled Persons

The Unit participated in the majority of activities held by the National Committee to Support the Rights of Disabled Persons in 2012. Unit staff suggested a number of activities and events aimed to support the rights of disabled persons in the Gaza Strip, including workshops and meetings. The Unit contributed to designing and implementing a training course of trainers on advocacy activities to support the rights of disabled persons, in coordination with Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children. Six organisations for the rehabilitation of disabled persons participated in the course.

3. Advocacy and lobbying activities

- On 7 May 2012, the Unit, in cooperation of PCHR Training Unit, organised a training course on advocacy activities to support the rights of disabled persons. The training targeted 21 staff members of 6 rehabilitation organisations.
- On 6 December 2012, the Unit Director participated in a preparatory meeting for a conference on the future of disabled persons in Palestine, which was organised by Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children in cooperation with other rehabilitation centres.
- On 12 December 2012, the Unit Director presented a working paper on domestic laws concerning the rights of disabled persons. He addressed the economic and social conditions of disabled persons in the Gaza Strip.

4. Meetings with international organisations to support rehabilitation facilities of the disabled

On 17 May 2012, Azzam Shaath, a researcher in the Unit, held a series of meetings in preparation for a workshop on the rights of disabled persons.

5. A workshop to train disabled persons on advocacy activities to demand their rights

- On 2 April 2012, Azzam Shaath, a researcher in the Unit, participated in a work shop organised

by the Unit, in cooperation with the National Centre for Community Rehabilitation, on the needs of disabled persons. Shaath presented an intervention on the role of PCHR and other human rights organisations in advocacy activities to support the rights of disabled persons in the Gaza Strip.

- On 6 May 2012, the Unit, in cooperation with the National Centre or Community Rehabilitation, organised a workshop on the identification of the needs of disabled women.
- On 22 May 2012, the Unit, in cooperation with the National Centre or Community Rehabilitation, organised a workshop on the rights of disabled persons. 80 disabled persons participated in the workshop.
- On 26 June 2012, the Unit organised a workshop, in cooperation with Atfaluna Society for Deaf Persons. 35 disabled persons participated in the workshop.

6. A media workshop on the rights of disabled persons

- On 1 February 2012, the Unit Director participated in a radio workshop on the living conditions of disabled persons in the Palestinian society organised by Alwan Radio in Gaza.
- On 24 May 2012, Azzam Shaath, a researcher in the Unit, participated in a radio workshop on the living conditions of disabled persons in the Palestinian society organised by al-Quds Radio in Gaza.

7. Press releases and media activities

On 3 December 2012, the Unit issued a press released on the deterioration of conditions of disabled persons in the Gaza Strip on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.



▲ The unit's staff during the workshop on the rights of disabled persons, 22 May 2012

> **Output (5)**

Promotion of the right to adequate housing

Activities

1. Observation of housing projects for victims of the right to adequate housing
2. Meetings with the Ministry of Housing, the Palestinian Housing Council, housing associations, contractors and beneficiaries
3. A report on housing in the Gaza Strip
4. A workshop on housing in the Gaza Strip
5. Press releases and media activities

1. Observation of housing projects for victims of the right to adequate housing

The Unit followed up housing projects for victims of the right to adequate housing. In this regard, the Unit documented the number of house that were destroyed in the Gaza Strip during the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip (“Operation Pillar of Defense”), and the areas of land that were razed by Israeli forces during their military operations in the Gaza Strip. It also followed up efforts to reconstruct houses that had been destroyed by Israeli forces during ‘Operation Cast Lead’ (2008-2009).

2. Meetings with the Ministry of Housing, the Palestinian Housing Council, housing associations, contractors and beneficiaries

Staff members of the Unit held meetings with representatives of the Palestinian Ministry of Housing, the Palestinian Housing Council, UNRWA and contractors to discuss housing conditions in the Gaza Strip in order to overcome the impacts of the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip.

3. Report on housing in the Gaza Strip

- On 24 December 2012, the Unit issued a report titled “the Right to Adequate Housing in the Gaza Strip: The Case of People Whose Houses Were Destroyed during the Israeli Offensive (2008-2009).” The report addressed the right to adequate housing following 4 years of the Israeli offensive.
- In the period 7 February – 27 March 2012, the Unit monitored and documented house demolitions in ‘Izbat al-Hamamiya area in Gaza City. The staff met with owners of the houses and prepared a draft report on these houses demolitions.

4. Workshop on housing in the Gaza Strip

The Unit was supposed to organise a workshop on the right to adequate housing in the Gaza Strip, but it postponed the workshop to the beginning of 2013 as it was involved in other prioritised activities.

5. Press releases and media activities

- On 3 February 2012, the Unit Director was interviewed by al-Kitab Television on house demolition notices delivered to people in ‘Izbat al-Hamamiya area in Gaza.
- On 7 February 2012, Unit staff participated in a meeting held by the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing with civil society organisations on housing conditions in the Gaza Strip.
- On 2 May 2012, the Unit held a meeting with Rich Wills from the Resource Centre for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights (BADIL) on forcible displacement during ‘Operation Cast Lead’ (2008-2009).
- On 13 June 2012, the Unit Director met with Wassim al-Sarraj, from the British humanitarian policies group, on forcible displacement during ‘Operation Cast Lead’ (2008-2009).
- On 28 June 2012, the Unit Director met with Wassim al-Sarraj and Simone, from the British humanitarian policies group, on forcible displacement in the Gaza Strip.

> **Output (6)**

Promotion of economic and social Rights of the population of the ‘buffer zone’

Activities

1. Monitoring violations of the economic and social rights of the population of the ‘buffer zone’, including fishermen
2. Meetings with the population to determine their needs
3. Meetings with international and local organisations, including donors
4. Advocacy and lobbying for the rights of the population
5. Fact-sheets on attacks against fishermen in the Gaza Strip

The Unit monitored the economic and living conditions of the population of the Israeli-imposed ‘buffer zone’ in the Gaza Strip, including farmers and fishermen, and the impact of the Israeli closure on their subsistence.

1. Monitoring violations of the economic and social rights of the population of the 'buffer zone', including fishermen

In 2012, the Unit monitored violations of the economic and social rights of the population of the Israeli-imposed 'buffer zone' in the Gaza Strip, including farmers and fishermen. The Unit has been a major source for data on the "buffer zone", including on daily attacks on farmers and fishermen.

2. Meetings with the population to determine their needs

Unit staff held periodic meetings with residents of the "buffer zone", including representatives of the civil societies in the area and the Fishermen Syndicate. These meetings addressed efforts to support the population and its basic needs, and document violations against farmers and fishermen.

3. Meetings with international and local organisations, including donors

The Unit Director held several meetings with international organisations to highlight the suffering of Palestinian civilians living in the 'buffer zone' and violations of their rights. He also escorted several visiting international delegations and representatives of international organisations operating in the Gaza Strip in field tour to border areas and Gaza fishing harbour to meet with farmers and fishermen.

4. Advocacy and lobbying for the rights of the population

The Unit carried out a number of activities to highlight the suffering of the population of border areas and fishermen:

- Meetings with societies operating in border areas, including fishing associations, to discuss the economic and social conditions in these areas.
- Escorting international delegations in field tours in these areas to witness the suffering of the population.
- Providing information and statistics to international relief organisations to provide assistance to victims of Israeli attacks.
- Media interviews on violations against the population of border areas and fishermen.
- Coordination and cooperation with international solidarity activists to organise activities to support for the population of border areas and fishermen.

5. Factsheets on attacks against fishermen in the Gaza Strip

- The Unit issued 8 factsheets on Israeli attacks against Palestinian fishermen, including shooting and detention of fishermen and damaging and confiscation of fishing boats.

> Output (7)

Promotion of economic, social, and cultural rights of the youth

Activities

6. Monitoring the economic, social and cultural rights of the youth
7. Periodic meetings with young men and women to determine their needs and priorities
8. Advocacy activities to expose and solve the problems of young men and women
9. Organising a workshop on the economic, social and cultural rights of the youth in the Gaza Strip
10. A brief report on challenges facing university graduates in the Gaza Strip

1. Monitoring the economic, social and cultural rights of the youth

The Unit monitored the economic, social and cultural rights of the youth. It established a database on the youth in the Gaza Strip, including the number of university graduates, university students and youth job creating projects.

2. Periodic meetings with young men and women to determine their needs and priorities

Unit staff held periodic meetings with youth organisations in the Gaza Strip. The meetings focused on promoting the youth awareness of human rights and development and the youth participation in PCHR's activities.

3. Advocacy activities to expose and solve the problems of young men and women

Unit staff carried out some advocacy activities to expose the youth problems in the Gaza Strip, especially in light of the deteriorating economic conditions. They also participated in a number of workshops on the rights of the youth organised by a number of youth organisations. The Unit Director was also interviewed by the media with regard to the international youth year in Palestine.

4. Organising a workshop on the economic, social and cultural rights of the youth in the Gaza Strip

The Unit organised a workshop on the rights of the youth under international and domestic laws, in cooperation with the Youth Future Protection Association in Gaza City. The workshop, in which 33 young men and women participated, was facilitated by the Unit Director who presented the rights of the youth under international human rights instruments.

5. Brief report on challenges facing university graduates in the Gaza Strip

The Unit was supposed to prepare a brief report on challenges facing university graduates in the Gaza Strip, but it postponed this activity because it prioritised other activities.

Output (8)

Raising awareness of 200 young women and men of economic, social, and cultural rights

Activities

1. Organising workshops, lectures, and meetings

The Unit organised a number of workshops, lectures and meetings, in cooperation with civil society organisations in the Gaza Strip. These activities addressed several topics, including economic, social and cultural rights of the youth under international human rights instruments; the right to adequate housing; the right of education; the right of health; and the rights of disabled persons. These activities targeted young women and men working in civil society organisations in the Gaza Strip.

- On 6 February 2012, the Unit organised a work-

shop, in cooperation with the national campaign to decrease university education fees, on the right to higher education. The workshop was held in Adwaa Centre for Supporting Education and Training and was attended by 75 university students.

- On 4 March 2012, the Unit Director delivered a lecture on the right of health according to international human rights standards for students of medicine of al-Azhar University, Palestine University and the Islamic University. The lecture was organised by WHO and was attended by 38 students.
- On 24 September 2012, Azzam Shaath, a researcher in the Unit, contributed to a training course organised by the National Society for Rehabilitation in Khan Yunis, in which 22 disabled persons participated. He delivered a lecture on Law No. 4 of 1999 on the Rights of Disabled Persons.
- On 26 September 2012, Azzam Shaath, a researcher in the Unit, contributed to a training course organised by the National Society for Rehabilitation in Rafah, in which 22 disabled persons participated. He delivered a lecture on Law No. 4 of 1999 on the Rights of Disabled Persons.
- On 21 October 2012, the Unit Director presented a working paper on the quality of university education in the Gaza Strip in a workshop organised Palthink for Strategic Studies. The workshop was held in Grand Palace Hotel and was attended by 35 university students.
- On 27 December 2012, the Unit Director delivered a lecture on judicial remedy for violations of the right to adequate housing, which was held in the office of Wadi al-Salqa Development Society in the central Gaza Strip. The lecture was attended by 28 women.

2. Contribution to training courses organised by the Training Unit

No.	Date	Topic of Training Session	Target Group	Place
1.	16 January	The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Members of CBOs in Khan Yunis	PCHR's office in Khan Yunis
2.	23 January	The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Members and volunteers of Creative Women Forum	Creative Women Forum's in Gaza City
3.	6 February	The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Students of the Faculty of Law in al-Azhar University	PCHR's office in Gaza City
4.	7 February	The right of development	Students of the Faculty of Law in al-Azhar University	PCHR's office in Gaza City
5.	7 May	Advocacy for the rights of disabled persons	Workers of 6 rehabilitation centres	Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children

6.	9 July	The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Members and volunteers of CBOs in Khan Yunis	The Palestinian Academy for Training in Khan Yunis
7.	24 September	The international mechanism to report on serious violations of children's rights in armed conflicts	PCHR's fieldworkers	PCHR's office in Gaza City
8.	24 September	Practical applications on violations of children's rights	PCHR's fieldworkers	PCHR's office in Gaza City
9.	5 November	The international mechanism to report on serious violations of children's rights in armed conflicts	Members of political factions and governmental institutions	PCHR's office in Gaza City
10.	5 November	Practical applications on violations of children's rights	Members of political factions and governmental institutions	PCHR's office in Gaza City
11.	6 December	The international mechanism to report on serious violations of children's rights in armed conflicts	Members of political factions and governmental institutions	PCHR's office in Khan Yunis
12.	6 December	Practical applications on violations of children's rights	Members of political factions and governmental institutions	PCHR's office in Khan Yunis
13.	24 December	The right to adequate housing under international humanitarian law	Members of agricultural committees in North Gaza	Pioneer Women Club in North Gaza
14.	24 December	International standards of the right to adequate housing	Members of agricultural committees in North Gaza	Pioneer Women Club in North Gaza

3. Contribution to the PCHR Annual Report

The Unit contributed to the PCHR Annual Report by preparing a number of reports that focused on the following issues:

- Continued Closure and Violation of the Right to Freedom of Movement.
- Impact of the Political Division on the Economic and Social Conditions in the Gaza Strip.
- Destruction of Civilian Property and Objects.

Other activities

- **Project on monitoring and reporting serious violations of children's rights, funded by UNICEF (September – December 2012)**

This project began on 11 September 2012 and continued until the end of 2012. It aimed at capacity building of PCHR staff on the use of the monitoring and reporting mechanism established by the UN Security Council Resolution 1612 issued in 2005, to collect and provide timely, objective, accurate and reliable information of the recruitment and use of child soldiers in violation of applicable international law and on other violations and abuses committed against children affected by armed conflict. The project was implemented by the Unit, the Training Unit and the Fieldwork Unit. All activities included in the project were implemented, including training PCHR's fieldworkers and members of political factions and

governmental organisations. PCHR further issued fact-sheets on violations of children's rights in the Gaza Strip. During the period of project, information was exchanged between PCHR and UNICEF on violations of children's rights. PCHR will publish a report in the beginning of 2013 on violations of children's rights in the Gaza Strip in 2012, which will include some human stories.

- **Project on improving access to justice for the population in the border areas of the Gaza Strip, including fishermen, funded by NRC (August 2012 – March 2013)**

The project began on 1 August 2012 and will continue until 31 March 2013. It aims at improving access of the population of border areas to justice. The project is being implemented by the Unit, the Fieldwork Unit, the Training Unit, the Legal Unit and the International Unit. It seeks to train and develop skills of agricultural and fishing committees in the fields of the right to adequate housing and access to justice. It also provides legal awareness services to farmers and fishermen with regard to legal assistance to victims of violations of the right to adequate housing. In the context of this project, the Unit issued a number of fact-sheets on Israeli attacks on Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip. At the end of the project, a comprehensive report will be issued detailing all activities.

➤ Training Unit

In 2012, the Training Unit carried out activities detailed in its annual plan, and developed its activities quantitatively and qualitatively interacting with the Arab Spring by organising regional training courses for Arab human rights defenders in cooperation with international and regional organisation. One output that was postponed to the next year for subjective reasons.

The Unit organised 2 regional training courses in the field of monitoring and documentation and building legal files for war crimes and crimes against humanity to human rights defenders from Syria and Yemen, which were significantly important in light of developments in the Arab World and crimes committed against civilians. These courses aimed at creating a generation of human rights defenders capable of monitoring and documenting human rights violations to ensure accountability of the perpetrators.

At the Palestinian level, human rights education has continued to be faced by a state of frustration among Palestinians due to the impunity granted to alleged Israeli war criminals, the failure of the international community to fulfil its moral and legal obligations to hold Israel accountable for crimes committed against the Palestinian civilians population and dual standards adopted by European governments. Such challenges increased following the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November 2012.

Additionally, the ongoing political division in the Palestinian territory has led to extensive human rights violations and obstruction of democratic reform, causing more frustration to the Palestinian populations.

All these factors have obstructed the education of human rights and democracy and have added more burdens on human rights defenders to revive and disseminate the human rights culture in the Palestinian society.

➤ Output (1)

Organising 18 training courses for 400 young men and women who are members of civil society organisations in the field of human rights and democracy

In 2012, the Unit organised 23 training courses for various community segments. The number of participants in these courses 570 persons representing more than 60 community-based organisations throughout the Gaza Strip. The Unit organised also 2 regional courses for 65 Syrian and Yemeni civil society activists. These two courses drew the attention of a number of international organisations to organise similar courses. They asked for PCHR's assistance to organise such courses. The Unit organised training courses in cooperation with a number of international organisation, including UNICEF, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Creart, the International Federation of Human Rights and Trocaire; regional organisations, including the Arab Organisation for Human Rights, and local organisations, including Palestine Bar Association, the *Shari'a* Judiciary Council, the Community Media Centre, Creative Women Forum, the National Association of Democracy and Law and Union of Agricultural Work Committees. The Unit was able to implement these activities depending on the strategy it has put to maintain the network of constant contacts with organisations with which it cooperates annually. It also cooperated with newly estab-



▲ A training course for Yemeni civil society activists, Cairo, 15 February 2012



▲ A training course for Syrian civil society activists, Cairo

lished organisations and was able to have access to new segments of the Palestinian society. The Unit will always cooperate with new organisations in order to open prospects for wider dissemination of the human rights culture in the Palestinian society.



Mr. Bassam al-Aqra, director of the unit, during a lecture for UNRWA school children

Training courses organised by the Unit in 2012

No.	Number of courses and target groups	Number of participants	Number of training hours	Women's participation
1	1 course for women's rights activists	31	20	87%
2	8 courses for members of community-based organisations	204	160	53%
3	5 courses for young lawyers	103	87	41%
4	1 course for university students	29	20	45%
5	3 courses for defenders of children's rights	63	40	57%
6	1 course for media graduates	34	15	41%
7	1 course for defenders of the rights of disabled persons	23	20	56%
8	2 regional courses for Arab human rights defenders from Syria and Yemen	65	58	32%
9	3 training courses for fieldworkers, researchers, lawyers and members of agricultural committees	83	30	55%

In total, the Unit provided training to 635 persons, including 304 women (48%), in 444 training hours. Attendance was estimated at 89%.

A specialised team of trainers from PCHR and external trainers provided the training.

Training courses organised by the Unit in 2012

No.	Target group	Number of trainees	Place	Training hours	Period	Women's participation
1	Members of community-based organisations in Khan Yunis	37	PCHR office in Khan Yunis	20	15-19 Jan.	73%
2	Young lawyers	27	PCHR office in Gaza City	17	22-29 Jan.	48%
3	Members of community-based organisations in Gaza City	31	Creative Women Forum, Gaza City	20	22-26 Jan.	87%
4	Students from the Faculty of Law in al-Azhar University	29	PCHR office in Gaza City	20	5-9 Feb.	45%
5	Yemeni civil society activists	35	Cairo	29	12-15 Feb.	37%
6	Syrian civil society activists	30	Cairo	29	18-21 Feb.	27%
7	Members of community-based organisations in Deir al-Balah	23	Hikr al-Jame' Youth Centre in Deir al-Balah	20	8-12 Apr.	74%
8	Lawyers providing free service to victims of human rights violations	18	PCHR office in Gaza City	20	29 Apr.-3 May	56%
9	Lawyers providing free service to victims of human rights violations	19	PCHR office in Gaza City	20	06-10 May	10%
10	Members of community-based organisations in Khan Yunis	29	PCHR office in Khan Yunis	20	13-17 May	48%
11	Media graduates	34	Laterna Restaurant in Gaza City	15	16-19 May	41%
12	Members of rehabilitation centres for disabled persons	23	Atfaluna Society in Gaza City	20	14 May – 11 Jun.	56%
13	Members of community-based organisations interested in children's rights	20	The Bedouin Village, North Gaza	14	12-20 Jun.	55%
14	Members of community-based organisations in Rafah	25	National Association of Democracy and Law	20	24-28 Jun.	32%
15	Members of CBOs in Khan Yunis	23	PCHR office in Khan Yunis	20	1-5 Jul.	56%
16	Members of CBOs in Khan Yunis	25	The Palestinian Academy for Education and Training	20	8-12 Jul.	64%
17	Members of CBOs in Rafah	17	Tawasol Association in Rafah	20	15-19 Jul.	29%
18	Female farmers in Khan Yunis	32	Union of Agricultural Work Committees	10	17-18 Jul.	100%
19	Members of CBOs in the northern Gaza Strip	25	Palestine Appeal Charitable Society	20	23-27 Sep.	0%
20	Young lawyers	23	PCHR office in Gaza City	15	31 Sep. – 4 Oct.	30%
21	Young lawyers	16	PCHR office in Gaza City	15	7-11 Oct.	37%
22	Members of CBOs in Gaza City who are active in defending children's rights	16	PCHR office in Gaza City	10	4-5 Nov.	56%
23	Members of CBOs in Khan Yunis who are active in defending children's rights	27	PCHR office in Khan Yunis	10	5-6 Dec.	59%
24	PCHR's fieldworkers, researchers and lawyers	21	PCHR office in Gaza City	10	23-24 Dec.	33%
25	Members of agricultural committees in Beit Lahia	30	Pioneer Women Club	10	24-26 Dec.	23%

It is worth noting that the Unit developed the following tools to measure the effects of training.

No.	Tool	Indicators
1	Observation	<p>The Unit Director, who attended all lectures, noticed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A state of confusion towards human rights was noticed over the year, especially among fishermen, which relatively decreased by the end of the year. • Participants were increasingly involved in discussions. • Trainees demonstrated increased respect for discussion and other opinions. • Attendance was satisfactory. • Increased interest in participating in training 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	<p>The participants identified the following expectations at the beginning of the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing about the role of human rights organisations, especially PCHR. • Making new contacts. • Obtaining certificates of participation. • Acquiring new information on human rights and the rights of women and children. It should be noted that details were different from one category to another. For example, media professionals focused on their status under the international human rights law; university students focused on the role and rights of the youth; young lawyers focused on the <i>Shari'a</i> Law expression their wish to obtain licenses to work before <i>Shari'a</i> courts; and participants in the regional courses focused on understanding the mechanisms of the international human rights system and monitoring and documentation of human rights violations. <p>The participants evaluated the courses as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They knew more about the role of human rights organisations, especially PCHR in the prosecution of war criminals and defending human rights. • They acquired new information on human rights and international humanitarian law. • They made new contacts. • They acquired new theoretical and practical knowledge. <p>The participants suggested the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding more similar training courses. • Holding more specialised training courses on the rights of women and children. • Organising external courses to train trainer in cooperation with regional and international human rights education organisations. <p>The questionnaires explained the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 was good. • Attendance was high. • Commitment to the rules of discussion and respect for others' opinions were good. • Training places were adequate, excluding one. • The trainees benefited of PCHR's publications, especially the training guide.

No.	Tool	Indicators
3	Tracing effects of training at the personal and professional levels	<p>Although it is difficult to trace effects of training on trainers at the personal and professional levels, the Unit Director was able to notice the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two human rights organisations were established in Yemen. • Two Facebook pages were established to document human rights violations in Yemen and Syria. • 10 trainees were involved in projects on children's rights and carried out 38 activities. • 8 trainees volunteered in PCHR Fieldwork Unit to assist in documenting human rights violation during the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip in November 2012. • 49 lawyers of those who participated in training courses obtained license to practice the legal profession before Shari'a courts. • 6 participants expressed their wish to work as volunteers. • At least 50 participants visited PCHR's offices over the year. • Many trainees participated in PCHR's activities following the training. • 35 teachers who received training in PCHR in previous years facilitated visits of school children to PCHR's offices; the number of visiting students in 2012 was 846 children. • Directors of a number of other organisations stated to the Unit Director that their employees who received training acquired more knowledge and experience and their relations with their colleagues and organisations improved. • A number of trainees organised 4 training courses in Khan Yunis and Deir al-Balah. • An exhibition titled "Despite What Happened" was organised on 12 December 2012 in al-Asriya Cultural Centre. • A human rights film festival was organised on 21 October 2012.
4	Informing about human rights violations and referring victims to PCHR	In 2012, the Unit Director received information from trainees on human rights violations at least 40 times; 10 trainees came to PCHR to inform about human rights violations; and 10 trainees accompanied victims to PCHR.
5	Participation in PCHR's activities	<p>Many trainees participated in PCHR's activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of trainees participated in workshops organised by PCHR. • A number of trainees assisted in organising 4 training courses in their organisations. • A number of trainees informed PCHR about human rights violations and some of them accompanied victims to PCHR. • A number of trainees invited PCHR's staff members to deliver lectures or participated in meetings.
6	Trainees' initiatives	<p>Trainees made a number of initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainees coordinated 35 visits for school children to PCHR's offices. • A number of trainees invited a number of PCHR staff members to participate in workshops organised by their organisations. • 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. • A number of trainees worked as volunteers in human rights programs. • Organising 14 lectures for parents and UNRWA teachers.
7	Requests for organising training courses	In 2012, the Unit received 25 requests from a number of civil society organisations to organise training courses for their members on human rights and democracy, and to be invited to participate in activities organised by PCHR.



Issuing news releases related to the Unit's activities

In 2012, the Unit issued 15 press releases covering its activities. Local newspapers reported on these activities.

> Output (2)

Organising a training course for human rights trainers

This activity was not implemented due to the lack of funding.

> Output (3)

Raising 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 organised by PCHR, as the Unit is not able to meet all invitations by civil society groups to organise training courses for their members. In 2012, the Unit delivered 16 training sessions and lectures on the rights of the child, the rights of disabled persons and basic human rights concepts. The number of attendants was 395, including teachers and members of women's organisations. In this regard, the Unit cooperated with the Women's Affairs Technical Committee and UNRWA schools.

Awareness-raising activities

Activity	Implementation	Means of verification	Indicators
Raising awareness of 250 individuals of rights ensured by international human rights law	The Unit organised 16 lectures throughout the Gaza Strip on human rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaining more knowledge about human rights issues. Attendance. The increase in the number of requests to organise or to be invited to attend lectures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participants expressed that they gained more knowledge about human rights issues. 374 individuals attended the lectures. The Unit received 18 requests.

Details of lectures

No.	Partner organisation	Target groups	Subject	Place	Number of participants	Date
1.	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	Parents	The rights of the child	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	30	12 Mar.
2.	Popular Struggle Front	Members of the front	Women's rights	Popular Struggle Front	17	15 Mar.
3.	Popular Struggle Front	Members of the front	The rights of the child	Popular Struggle Front	18	22 Mar.
4.	Jabalya Preparatory School "B" for Girls	Parents	The rights of disabled persons	Jabalya Preparatory School "B" for Girls	21	26 Mar.
5.	Gaza Elementary School "C"	Parents	Violence against children	Gaza Elementary School "C"	29	19 Apr.
6.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Basic human rights concepts	General Union of Palestinian Women in Gaza	18	25 Sep.

No.	Partner organisation	Target groups	Subject	Place	Number of participants	Date
7.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Universal Declaration of Human Rights	General Union of Palestinian Women in Gaza	18	25 Sep.
8.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Civil and political rights	General Union of Palestinian Women in Gaza	18	26 Sep.
9.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Economic, social and cultural rights	General Union of Palestinian Women in Gaza	18	26 Sep.
10.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Basic human rights concepts	Wefaq Society for Woman and Child Care	23	3 Oct.
11.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Universal Declaration of Human Rights	Wefaq Society for Woman and Child Care	23	3 Oct.
12.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Civil and political rights	Wefaq Society for Woman and Child Care	23	4 Oct.
13.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Economic, social and cultural rights	Wefaq Society for Woman and Child Care	23	4 Oct.
14.	Union of Agricultural Work Committees – Rafah	Farmers	Legal mechanisms to ensure remedy for farmers	Union of Agricultural Work Committees – Rafah	21	6 Nov.
15.	Activists in Palestinian prisoners' affairs	Activists in Palestinian prisoners' affairs	The legal status of Palestinian prisoners following the recognition of Palestine	PCHR's office in Gaza City	15	6 Dec.
16.	Al-Aqsa University	Students of Al-Aqsa Community College	The role of human rights organisations during the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip	The campus of al-Aqsa University in Khan Yunis	80	26 Dec.

Mr. Bassm al-Aqra, director of the unit, during a training course on monitoring and reporting, 6 November 2012



> **Output (4)**

Maintaining contacts with trainees and establishing an alumni network

The Unit continued its efforts to establish an alumni network that brings together individuals who receive training at PCHR. In 2012, the Unit filed contact details of 550 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.

Persons who received training at PCHR contributed to a number of activities organised by PCHR and other organisations:

1. The Unit added at e-mail addresses of at least 450 trainees to PCHR's mailing list.
2. The Unit received many visitors who received training.
3. A number of PCHR's staff members were invited to participate in workshops and meeting organised by organisations whose members had training at PCHR.
4. Establishing a human rights organisation in Yemen (Justice for Human Rights) – <http://www.facebook.com/groups/afhr>.
5. Establishing a human rights organisation in Yemen (Opinions for Civil Development) – <http://www.facebook.com/FARAADH>.
6. Establishing a network of fieldworkers to monitor and document human rights violations and establishing a website in Yemen (Hadramout Monitor for Human Rights) – <http://www.facebookd.com/hofhy>.
7. Establishing a network of fieldworkers to monitor human rights violations and establishing a website in Syria (Time Papers) – <http://www.facebook.com/groups/342790805759087>.
8. A number of workshops were organised while the training team was in Libya, so a number of members of the team participated in these workshops.
9. A number of participants in the courses that were organised in Libya participated in a number of human rights conferences after the training inside and outside Libya.
10. A number of participants assisted in the organisation of 4 training courses.
11. A number of participants informed PCHR about human rights violations.
12. Friends of PCHR organised 33 visits for 846 school children to PCHR's offices.

Visits by schoolchildren to PCHR offices in 2012

No.	School	Office	Number of children	Date
1.	"Al Shujaiya Elementary School "B"	Gaza City	35	31 January
2.	Tabria Secondary School for Girls	Khan Yunis	10	22 February
3.	"Khan Yunis Elementary School "A"	Khan Yunis	18	23 February
4.	Khan Yunis Preparatory School "C" for Girls	Khan Yunis	4	28 February
5.	Khan Yunis Elementary School "C" for Boys	Khan Yunis	15	5 March
6.	Khan Yunis Elementary School "B" for Girls	Khan Yunis	23	7 March
7.	Maan Preparatory School for Boys	Khan Yunis	6	8 March
8.	"Al-Shujaiya Elementary School "C"	Gaza City	12	12 March
9.	Al-Zaytoun Preparatory School "A" for Girls	Gaza City	40	15 March
10.	Al Zaytoun Preparatory School "B" for Boys	Gaza City	34	21 March
11.	Abu Tuaima Preparatory School for Girls	Khan Yunis	4	22 March
12.	"Khan Yunus Elementary School "B"	Khan Yunis	20	25 March
13.	Al-Remal Preparatory School "B" for Boys	Gaza City	19	25 March
14.	Khan Yunis Preparatory School "B" for Girls	Khan Yunis	15	29 March
15.	Khawla Elementary School "A" for Girls	Gaza City	27	29 March
16.	Ayman Abdul Aziz Preparatory School for Boys	Khan Yunis	35	3 April
17.	Asma Elementary School	Gaza City	36	4 April
18.	Al-Boreij Preparatory School "B" for Boys	Gaza City	36	4 April
19.	"Al Shjaiya School "A"	Gaza City	20	10 April
20.	Khan Yunis Preparatory School	Khan Yunis	20	10 April
21.	Rafah Preparatory School "B" for Boys	Gaza City	35	11 April
22.	"Al-Fakhoura Preparatory School "B"	Gaza City	99	18 April
23.	Beit Hanoun Preparatory School for Boys	Jabalya	12	19 April
24.	Jabalya Preparatory School "D" for Boys	Jabalya	25	19 April
25.	Rafah Preparatory School "E" for Boys	Gaza City	25	25 April
26.	Rafah Preparatory School "F" for Boys	Gaza City	16	25 April
27.	Rafah Preparatory School "A" for Girls	Gaza City	53	25 April
28.	Jabalya Preparatory School "B" for Boys	Gaza City	32	29 April
29.	Maan Preparatory School	Khan Yunis	12	30 April
30.	Khan Yunis Elementary School "C" for Girls	Khan Yunis	21	6 May
31.	Abu Tuaima Preparatory School	Khan Yunis	12	7 May
32.	Beit Hanoun Preparatory School "A" for Girls	Jabalya	17	8 November
33.	Jeddah Elementary School	Gaza City	28	13 November
34.	Union of UNRWA School Parliaments in Khan Yunis	Khan Yunis	20	9 December
35.	Khan Yunis Elementary School "B" for Girls	Khan Yunis	15	24 December

> **Output (5)**

Maintaining relations with civil society organisations through training activities

The Unit contributes to promote PCHR's relations with civil society organisations by participating in training activities organised by these organisations. The Unit receives many invitations from governmental and non-governmental organisations to organise training courses for their members, delivering lectures or designing training programmes due to the Unit's high professionalism.

The Unit responded positively to invitations from community-based organisations to deliver lectures or facilitate training sessions in the field of human rights. In 2012, the Unit implemented 28 of such activities, which were attended by 608 persons.

Activities conducted by the Unit to enhance relations with other civil society organisations

No.	Activity	Implementation	Means of verification	Indicators
1	Participation in training activities organised by other civil society organisations, especially those focusing on women and the disabled	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Unit organised 4 training courses, the Unit Director delivered 24 lectures and colleagues delivered other lectures in training activities organised by other civil society organisations. The Unit organised a training course for workers who deal with disabled persons and accepted invitations from the Women's Technical Affairs Committee 	An increase in the number of invitations sent by other civil society organisations to PCHR to participate in training activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Unit received 35 requests from other civil society organisations to organise training courses for their members or deliver lectures in training courses they organised. The Unit responded positively to 4 requests to organise training courses, and 28 to deliver lectures. Representatives of 7 civil society organisations visited PCHR for the purpose of coordination and networking with PCHR.
2	Hosting activities or small civil society organisations, especially those focusing on women and the disabled	Not implemented	Requests sent to the Unit to host such activities	The Unit did not receive any request in this regard
3	Assisting small civil society organisations, especially those focusing on the rights of women and the disabled, in designing training courses	Not implemented	An increase in the number of organisations requesting the Unit's assistance in designing training courses	The Unit did not receive any requests in this regard
4	Inviting trainers from other organisations to contribute to training activities organised by the unit	A number of external trainers contributed to training activities organised by PCHR.	The number of trainers who contributed to the Unit's training activities	The Unit invited 7 external trainers to contribute to training activities

Lectures delivered by the Unit at training courses organised by other organisations

No.	Organisation	Target group	Subject	Place	Participants	Date	Time
1.	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	Parents	The rights of the child	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	12	16 Feb.	90 min.
2.	Abu Hmaid Elementary School	Parents and teachers	The rights of the child	Abu Hmaid Elementary School	25	27 Feb.	90 min.
3.	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	Parents and teachers	Violence against women	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	22	5 Mar.	2 hrs.
4.	Abassan Elementary School	Parents	The importance of human rights education	Abassan Elementary School	22	6 Mar.	90 min.
5.	Khuzaa Elementary School	Parents	The importance of human rights education	Khuzaa Elementary School	25	7 Mar.	90 min.
6.	Khan Yunis Elementary School "B" for Girls	Parents	The rights of the child	Khan Yunis Elementary School "B" for Girls	50	8 Mar.	2 hrs.
7.	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	Parents	The rights of the child	Mustafa Hafez Elementary School	30	12 Mar.	90 min.
8.	Popular Struggle Front	Members of the front	Women's rights	Popular Struggle Front	17	15 Mar.	2 hrs.
9.	Al-Amal New School	Parents	The importance of human rights education	Al-Amal New School	18	15 Mar.	90 min.
10.	The preparatory committee for the week for resistance of the wall and apartheid	Members of local council in Jenin Governorate	Human rights monitoring and documentation	Mahmoud Darwish Cultural Centre	15	15 Mar.	4 hrs.
11.	Khuzaa Elementary School	Parents	The rights of the child	Khuzaa Elementary School	12	22 Mar.	2 hrs.
12.	Popular Struggle Front	Members of the front	The rights of the child	Popular Struggle Front	18	22 Mar.	2 hrs.
13.	Khan Yunis Elementary School "A" for Girls	Parents	The importance of human rights education	Khan Yunis Elementary School "A" for Girls	30	25 Mar.	90 min.
14.	Khan Yunis Elementary School "C"	Parents	The importance of human rights education	Khan Yunis Elementary School "C"	30	25 Mar.	60 min.

No.	Organisation	Target group	Subject	Place	Participants	Date	Time
15.	Jabalya Preparatory School "B" for Girls	Parents	The rights of disabled persons	Jabalya Preparatory School "B" for Girls	21	26 Mar.	60 min.
16.	Al-Amal Preparatory School	Parents	The rights of the child	Al-Amal Preparatory School	21	15 Apr.	90 min.
17.	Gaza Elementary School "C"	Parents	Violence against children	Gaza Elementary School "C"	29	15 Apr.	90 min.
18.	Police Sciences Faculty in Ummah University	Female students	The right to custody and alimony	The faculty	21	5 Jun.	2 hrs.
19.	Police Sciences Faculty in Ummah University	Female students	The right to inheritance	The faculty	27	7 Jun.	150 min.
20.	Palestinian Refugee Commission	Lawyers and media professionals	Human rights monitoring and documentation	Al-Mathaf Hotel	18	30 Aug.	4 hrs.
21.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Development of the international humanitarian law	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	18	30 Sep.	2 hrs.
22.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Basic human rights concepts	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	18	30 Sep.	2 hrs.
23.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Enforcement mechanisms of international humanitarian law	General Union of Palestinian Women in Gaza	18	1 Oct.	2 hrs
24.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	The rights of women and children in time of armed conflicts	General Union of Palestinian Women in Gaza	18	1 Oct.	2 hrs
25.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Development of the international humanitarian law	Wefaq Society for Woman and Child Care	23	8 Oct.	2 hrs
26.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Basic principles of the international humanitarian law	Wefaq Society for Woman and Child Care	23	8 Oct.	2 hrs
27.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	Enforcement mechanisms of international humanitarian law	Wefaq Society for Woman and Child Care	23	9 Oct.	2 hrs
28.	Women's Technical Affairs Committee	Women's rights activists	The rights of women and children in time of armed conflicts	Wefaq Society for Woman and Child Care	23	9 Oct.	2 hrs

> **Output (6)**

Q&A Guide to Human Rights

It was not published in 2012 due to the situation in the Gaza Strip, and because of focusing on other activities. It will be published in the next year.

Activities not included in the Annual Plan

The Unit Director participated in an international conference of challenges and opportunities for the transitional justice system in the Arab countries, which was organised by the Arab Institute for Human Rights on 23-24 February 2012.



> International Unit

The Unit's work is predominantly focused on strengthening PCHR's external capabilities, namely: developing and strengthening relations with other organisations, and increasing PCHR's profile and output on the international stage.

1. International legal work

The International Unit works closely with PCHR's Legal Unit to develop and enhance PCHR's activities with respect to the pursuit of justice through international mechanisms. In particular, in light of the inadequacies of the Israeli legal system, and the Palestinian Authority's lack of jurisdiction over Israeli citizens, PCHR has continued to pursue universal jurisdiction. This international focus is founded on two underlying motivations. First, PCHR seeks to ensure victims' legitimate rights to an effective judicial remedy, and to the equal protection of the law. Such rights are codified in Article 2 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and constitute the cornerstone of international justice. Second, PCHR firmly believes that the rule of law offers the most appropriate mechanism for securing and protecting individual's rights. However, if the rule of law is to be relevant, it must be enforced. By pursuing international justice, including through universal jurisdiction, PCHR seeks to hold accountable those who commit international crimes. This serves to combat the pervasive culture of impunity, and to promote and strengthen respect for the rule of law.

In 2012, the International Unit cooperated closely with PCHR's Legal Unit, in particular with respect to: evaluating and developing the possibilities of taking universal jurisdiction cases to other jurisdictions. The Unit contributes to PCHR's work in developing and strengthening an international legal network for coordinating and preparing cases under universal jurisdiction.



▲ The unit's staff in a meeting

Verifiable indicators

The Unit notes the number of publications, the number of press releases and the number of joint statements initiated and endorsed by PCHR.

> Output

The Unit noted the progress of current legal cases, development of new legal opportunities, an increase in international coordination and cooperation, and an increase in awareness of the utility and necessity of universal jurisdiction.

2. Publications and reports

The International Unit produces a number of publications and press releases. Publications are intended to enhance PCHR's core functionality, by providing accessible reports documenting the situation in the oPt, and analyzing events from the perspective of international law. During the reporting period, PCHR worked on developing further cases under the principle of international jurisdiction for possible future filing in foreign courts.

Verifiable indicators

The Unit notes the number of publications, the number of press releases, and the number of joint statements initiated and endorsed by PCHR:

A. Publications / reports

- » Booklet: Gaza 3 Years on; 'Operation Cast Lead' Victims tell their stories. (January 2012)
- » Factsheet: Status of Criminal and Civil Complaints Submitted to Israeli Authorities on behalf of Victims of Operation Cast Lead (18 January 2012)
- » Documentary: Palestinians Behind Bars; Prisoners Without Human Rights. (17 April 2012)

B. Submissions to the United Nations:

In 2012, the Unit made the following written and oral submission to the United Nations Human Rights Council, Universal Periodic Review, Special Rapporteurs, Working Groups and relevant treaty bodies:

- Submission to the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), prepared on occasion of the review of Israel on occasion of its 80th session, Geneva, Switzerland (18 February 2012)
- Submission to the UN Special Rapporteur for the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation, and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence on the Status of Reparation Complaints submitted to the Israeli Authorities by PCHR on behalf of Palestinian Victims of Operation 'Operation Cast Lead' (27 April 2012)
- Submission on Gaza prisoners to the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people (April 2012)
- Submission of a Memorandum to the UN

Special Rapporteur for the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence. "The right to a remedy: Pursuit of reparations in response to violations of international law" (27 April 2012)

- Written statement to the 20th session of the HRC – "The right to a remedy: Pursuit of reparations in response to violations of international law" (24 June 2012)
- Submission to the 62-63rd Session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, "Report of Israel under the Convention on the Rights of the Child" (15 July 2012)
- Submission to the 15th Session of the United Nations Universal Periodic Review, Human Rights Council 21 January - 1 February 2013 (16 July 2012)
- Submission of a Memorandum to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. "Israel's Arbitrary Detention of Fishermen in the Gaza Sea", supplemented with factsheet and briefing note (27 August 2012)
- Submission of an Individual Complaint to the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Israel's extrajudicial killing of civilians in or near the unilaterally imposed 'buffer zone', supplemented with a factsheet and legal briefing note (10 September 2012)
- Submission of a Memorandum to the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, "The Internal Displacement of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip", supplemented with a factsheet and legal briefing note (24 September 2012)
- Submission of a written statement to the 21st Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council, "The right to a remedy: Pursuit of reparations in response to violations of international law" (24 August 2012)
- Submission of an oral statement to the 21st session of the HRC, "Update on the Progress made in the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict," co-sponsored and presented to the Council by the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) (24 September 2012)
- Submission of an Individual Complaint to the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, supplemented with a factsheet and legal briefing note (15 October 2012)
- Submission of an Individual Complaint to the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion

or belief, supplemented with a legal briefing note (12 November 2012)

- Submission of an Individual Complaint to the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, supplemented with a factsheet and legal briefing note (24 December 2012)

C. Opinion pieces

- Opinion piece, Raji Sourani – “History is repeated as the international community turns its back on Gaza” (17 November 2012)

D. Letters, statements, and (non-legal) petitions for signing

- Disseminating a joint letter to the United Nations Secretary-General Mr Ban Ki-Moon (2 February 2012)
- Disseminating an Urgent Call for Action, jointly with Al Dameer Association for Human Right, and Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights (20 February 2012)
- Disseminating a call for the urgent establishment of an independent international investigative body to address the escalating violence in the Gaza Strip (20 November 2012)
- Joint Statement, principal authors: Call for Special Session of the Human Rights Council: Violations of International Law in the Gaza Strip Must End (15 November 2012)
- Submission of joint open letter to the Human Rights Council members calling for a Special Session of the Council (16 November 2012)
- Disseminating a petition: End impunity in Palestine; calling for investigation and prosecution by the International Criminal Court (10 December 2012)

E. Letters, calls, statements etc.

The Unit sent the following letters or statements in 2012:

- Letter to FIDH, ICJ, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanethem Pillay, and dozens of diplomatic representatives in Israel and the oPt, regarding the case of Palestinian prisoners on open-ended hunger strikes (6 May 2012)
- PCHR welcomes Turkey’s indictment of Israeli officers for Mavi Marmara killings (2 June 2012)
- PCHR welcomes South Africa move to label West Bank settlement goods (2 June 2012)
- Letter to FIFA President Mr Sepp Blatter regarding the case of Palestinian national footballer Mahmoud Al-Sarsek (12 June 2012)
- PCHR Welcomes FIFA President Sepp Blatter’s Statements Regarding the Case of Palestinian National Footballer Mahmoud Al-Sarsek (13 June 2012)
- PCHR condemns EU decision to strengthen ties with Israel (2 August 2012)
- PCHR Condemns Israeli Authorities Denial of Gaza Muslims’ Freedom of Worship (16 August 2012)
- PCHR welcomes South Africa decision to place oPt labels on settlement goods (26 August 2012)
- Written statement and oral speech to the Assembly of States Parties to the International Criminal Court (15 November 2012)
- PCHR Calls for Independent International Investigation to address escalating violations in the Gaza Strip (20 November 2012)
- PCHR Calls on ICC Prosecutor to Initiate Investigation into Situation in Gaza Strip (21 November 2012)

F. Narrative series

The Unit prepared and disseminated a number of narratives during 2012:

Civilians Under Attack

- » ‘We are really hoping for a ceasefire. We want to live like normal people, without fear.’
- » (21 November 2012)
- » 50 years of hard work and labour shattered within hours (28 November)



▲ A press conference on 2 February 2012 boycotting meetings with Ban Ki Mon for his refusal to meet to representatives of the families of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails

Occupied Lives

- » Mental Health (9 February 2012)
- » Sniper Fire in the 'Buffer Zone' (16 February 2012)
- » Targeted Livelihoods (7 March 2012)
- » Switching off hospitals (14 March 2012)
- » My Son Ayoub (21 March 2012)
- » No benzene, no livelihood (4 April 2012)
- » Marking Land Day, marking lives (25 April 2012)
- » Fear at the Border (2 May 2012)
- » Hoping for a New Home (9 May 2012)
- » Not knowing what your son looks like (16 May 2012)
- » Denying medical care (23 May 2012)
- » Paralyzed in the Gaza Strip (30 May 2012) – including video
- » A Dream Beyond the Border (6 June 2012) – including video
- » I shall not be moved from my land (13 June 2012) – including video
- » Closure of Gaza's Agricultural Industry (14 June 2012) – including video
- » Farming without a Market (20 June 2012) – including video
- » I will build my house again (27 June 2012) – including video
- » She might never walk again (4 July 2012) – including video
- » They killed my only child (11 July 2012) – including video
- » Free at last, free at last. Finally, free at last (18 July 2012) – including video
- » Fishing in Troubled Waters (25 July 2012) – including video
- » He just wanted a better life (1 August 2012) – including video
- » I have no future (8 August 2012) – including video
- » 13 days of trauma (15 August 2012) – including video
- » I hope to see my son before it's too late (29 August 2012) – including video
- » No place to call home (5 September 2012)
- » No justice for my son's death (12 September 2012)
- » Nothing left to hope for (19 September 2012) – including video
- » Education under attack (26 September 2012)
- » They terrorize us in our homes (3 October 2012)
- » No child should have to go through this (10 October 2012)
- » Violation of the right to freedom of worship (17 October 2012)
- » There was no reason for my son's death (24 October 2012)
- » People died while waiting for a new home (7 November 2012)
- » I have not seen my son for more than five years (14 November)
- » We are really hoping for a ceasefire. We want to live like normal people (21 November)
- » 50 years of hard work and labour shattered within hours (28 November)
- » Journalists attacked during the Israeli Operation Pillar of Defense (5 December)
- » I just want to live a peaceful life and be able to fish freely (12 December)
- » They can attack our bodies but not our strength (19 December)

Aftermath

- » The Nasla Family (1 January 2012)
- » Eyad al-Astal (2 January 2012)
- » Motee' and Isma'il as-Selawy (3 January 2012)
- » The Abdel Dayem Family (4 January 2012)
- » Amal al-Samouni (5 January 2012)
- » Al-Dayah Family (6 January 2012)
- » The Mattar Family (7 January 2012)
- » The al-Rahel Family (8 January 2012)
- » The Abu Oda Family (9 January 2012)

- » Wafa al-Radea (10 January 2012)
- » The Hamouda Family (11 January 2012)
- » The Ayad Family (12 January 2012)
- » Hibba al-Najjar (13 January 2012)
- » Muhammed Mousa (14 January 2012)
- » The al-Nadeem Family (15 January 2012)
- » The Shurrab Family (16 January 2012)
- » The Al Ashqar Family (17 January 2012)
- » The Abu Rujailah Family (18 January 2012)

Behind Locked Doors

- » Fishermen detained (17 April 2012)
- » Collectively punishing families through prisoners isolation (17 April 2012)

G. Press/News releases

In 2012, the Unit issued 16 press releases.

3. International advocacy

PCHR's international advocacy work is intended to increase international understanding of the human rights situation in the oPt. This work is focused on two audiences. First, it intends to address governments directly, ensuring that they are informed of the reality in the OPT, and urging them to take action. Second, it addresses civil society. This form of advocacy is intended to mobilise popular support behind the Palestinian cause, and to generate domestic pressure on politicians and governments.

With respect to International Advocacy, a substantial part of the International Unit's work in 2012 focused on bringing structural human rights abuses by Israeli occupation forces carried out against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip to the attention of UN Human Rights Council, Special Rapporteurs, Working Groups, treaty bodies, and other relevant UN bodies.

To this end, PCHR participated in the review of Israel within the 80th session of the UN Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the 21st Session of the UN Human Rights Council.

Verifiable indicators

The Unit notes the documentation that was produced and distributed. The Unit also notes that it organised advocacy meetings, conferences and hosted delegations. It also engaged in interviews with different media from around the world.

► Output

The Unit participated in the following activities during 2012:

H. Participation in missions, UN sessions, conferences, international meetings etc.

- » 14 February 2012, meeting with OHCHR desk officers of the staff of the SRs on torture, oPt, independence of justice and lawyers, UN-OHCHR, Palais Wilson Geneva, Switzerland;
- » 14-16 February 2012, the review of Israel within the 80th session of the UN Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), Geneva, Switzerland;
- » 15 February 2012, as member of a Panel of NGOs experts meeting with members of the UN Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), UN-OHCHR, Palais Wilson, Geneva, Switzerland;
- » 15 February 2012, round-table NGOs with diplomats of Hungary, Russia, Ireland, Egypt, Tunisia, UN HQ, Geneva, Switzerland;
- » 3-5 April 2012, The UN International Meeting on the Question of Palestine and "The Question of Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons and detention facilities: legal and political implications", Geneva, Switzerland;
- » 5 April 2012, consultations b/w a delegation of the UN Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and representative from CSOs active on the question of Palestine; UN HQ, Geneva, Switzerland;
- » 10 May 2012, consultations b/w a delegation of "Amb Palestina al Cor" – With Palestine in the Heart - a platform of Catalan NGOs supporting the Palestinian cause, and a delegation of Catalan deputies, Parliament of Catalonia, Barcelona, Spain;
- » 10 May 2012, "Non-Violence as Resistance Strategy in Palestine", presentation titled "Derecho a la Justicia y Responsabilidad Juridica Internacional. El caso de Gaza", Home Room of the Faculty of History and Geography of the University of Barcelona, Spain;
- » 10-11 May 2012, Commemoration of the 64th anniversary of the Naqba, Barcelona, Spain;
- » September 2012, meeting with the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court;
- » 9-13 September 2012, participation in Christian Aid Regional Partners Meeting, London;
- » 24-25 September 2012, (Rethinking International Law and Justice), co-hosted by the Istanbul Kültür University and the Australia-based Queensland University of Technology and Griffith University, presentation titled "Justice and Protection

of Civilians in Armed Conflicts through the Enforcement of International Legal Obligations. The Case of the Gaza Strip), Main Hall of the Istanbul Kültür University, Turkey;

- » 26 September 2012, consultations with the Turkish legal team of the civilian victims of the “Mavi Marmara”, Istanbul, Turkey;
- » 5 November 2012, meeting with the Turkish legal team of the “Mavi Marmara”, Istanbul, Turkey;
- » 5-8 November 2012, observed the criminal trial on the “Mavi Marmara” case, Istanbul, Turkey;
- » 22 November 2012, video conference event ‘Gaza is Live’ with 5 British and Canadian universities.
- » 22 November 2012, participated in panel discussion at Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights AGM, with Desmond Travers and Daniel Machover;
- » 30 November 2012, (La Cuestión de los Prisioneros Políticos Palestinos: Implicaciones Políticas, Legales y Humanitarias), co-hosted by PCHR, Human Rights Institute of the University of Valencia, Palestinian Community of Valencia, Main Hall of the University of Valencia, Spain;
- » 11-12 December 2012, International Conference of Solidarity with the Palestinian & Arab Prisoners & Detainees in Israeli Occupation Jails, sponsored by the League of Arab States and hosted by the Republic of Iraq, Baghdad.

I. Media interviews

The Unit carried out interviews with the international media from several countries, including the Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Russia, France, South Africa, India, Pakistan, Italy, Egypt, UK, Cuba, Bosnia, Kenya and USA. They gave 6 television interviews, 19 radio interviews, 21 newspaper interviews and 43 interviews with news websites. These interviews addressed the human rights situation in the oPt, especially in the Gaza Strip, and PCHR’s international work.

4. Support for other Units in PCHR

The International Unit is the primary non-Arabic language support Unit in PCHR. This means that the Unit edits all of PCHR’s publications, many of which are published first in Arabic. The weekly report and the vast majority of press releases are included in this. The International Unit also supports the Director of PCHR in international activities. This support includes speech preparation, coordination, etc.

Verifiable indicators

The Unit notes the number of press releases and re-

ports edited, as well as other documentation.

> Outputs

- The Unit edited all of the press releases which were released by PCHR that had been translated from Arabic, and edited all of the weekly reports. The Unit was also responsible for editing the Annual Report, produced in conjunction with the Democratic Development Unit and other PCHR publications.
- The Unit responded to numerous enquiries about the work of the Centre and other related requests for information from the media and the public. The Unit also made enquiries for other units, carries out English language research for other units, and was responsible for all non-Arabic language communication, coordination and advice on behalf of Units who required it.
- After attending a training course at the Institute for International Criminal Investigations (IICI) in The Hague, this training was passed onto the Fieldwork Unit and Legal Unit through 4 lectures.

5. Participation in and contribution to UN Working Groups and Agencies

PCHR regularly participates in, and contributes to, the work of numerous UN-based working groups and agencies, such as: Protection Cluster Working Group (PCWG), a forum of NGOs and IGOs operating in the Gaza Strip that aim to share information and, where possible, formulate a coordinated response or assistance (monthly meeting); Legal Task Force (LTF), which was established on 3 October 2011 and aims at bringing together, on a regular basis, key legal service providers to share legal information and co-ordinate assistance and research, as well as seeking to build response capacity through training of relevant partners at the local level (monthly meeting); Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), a subgroup of the PCWG aimed at providing a similar approach for violations of children’s rights in the Gaza Strip (monthly meeting); and Access Restricted Area (ARA). PCHR is party to the Core Group of the ARA to facilitate a coordinated response to incidents related to the ARA, with a particular focus on accountability (monthly meeting).

6. International Criminal Law Moot Court Competition

In 2012 PCHR organised the first International Criminal Law Moot Court project in the Gaza Strip.

The project, managed by the international Unit, involved 30 students from the three law faculties of Gaza city: Al-Azhar University, Islamic University and the University of Palestine. The project was aimed at encouraging University law students of the Gaza Strip to increase their knowledge of international humanitarian law international criminal law, with particular focus on the law and procedures applicable before the International Criminal Court (ICC). By creating a Moot Court Competition within the faculties of law of Gaza, the students had the opportunity to strengthen their legal skills through the work on a fictitious case, which presents the characteristics of a real one. In addition to gaining knowledge of IHL and ICL principles and rules, the students had the opportunity to come closer to the mandate, functions and jurisprudence of the ICC and other international tribunals.

Each participating University ensured that the team of students working on the Moot Court Competition was provided with a dedicated room, a 'legal clinic', and the necessary tools (computers, internet resources, etc.) in order to carry out the work of preparation for the case. Computers, printers, pro-

jectors and legal text books were provided by PCHR as part of the project.

The groups of students received theoretical training from PCHR-trained coaches from 1 February until 15 May 2012, and then worked on their written submissions until the beginning of July, with guidance from their coaches. From March to May the students also received expert legal training from experts on international criminal law. During the Moot Court competition of 14-15 July 2012 participating student teams from the different Gaza Faculties of Law presented their oral and written pleadings before a jury, composed of international legal experts. The case was a hypothetical international criminal case dispute between the parties.

All students who successfully completed the programme were awarded with an individual certificate and a team trophy. The hours dedicated to the Moot Court preparation are accounted as credits by the Universities. Through the Moot Court project the teaching of international criminal law was introduced in the local academic institutions' curricula for the first time.



▲ Daragh Murray, international legal officer, delivers a lecture in the context of the Moot Court Project

➤ Advocacy and lobbying activities

PCHR continues to develop a strong network of contacts based on joint cooperation in order to be able to achieve its goal of protecting human rights and promoting compliance with international humanitarian law. PCHR's efforts to carry out advocacy and lobbying activities at the local level are aimed at protecting human rights in the oPt and promoting democratic awareness in Palestinian society. At the international level, PCHR makes use of such efforts to defend Palestinian human rights and influence international public opinion to stand against human rights violations and crimes perpetrated by Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians.

In 2012, PCHR carried out intensive advocacy and lobbying activities at the international level with regard to the prosecution of suspected Israeli war criminals and the implementation of the Goldstone Report. PCHR developed its relationships with partner international organisations and international delegations that visited the Gaza Strip, encouraging them to lobby their respective organisations and governments to push for justice for Palestinian victims and an end to Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians.

➤ Participation in international and regional conferences and meetings

In 2012, PCHR received invitations to participate in numerous international and regional conferences and meetings related to the protection and promotion of human rights in the oPt, in spite of the ongoing severe restrictions on the freedom of movement imposed on the Gaza Strip. Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and other staff members of PCHR were able to participate in a number of events as follows:

Workshop on the independence of the judiciary – Tunisia

On 20 and 21 January 2012, Mr Raji Sourani, in his capacity as Vice President of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), participated in a workshop organised by FIDH in Tunisia. In the opening speech, Sourani stressed that the independence of judiciary is the essential for Tunisia and its people to ensure the institutionalisation of the revolution, and the protection of liberty and rights, and ensure that society does not move backwards.

Conference on building a new Yemen – Cairo

On 23 January 2012, Mr Raji Sourani, lawyer and PCHR Director, participated in a conference in Cairo titled 'Towards Contemporary Vision to Build a New Yemen'. The conference was organised jointly by the Arab Organisation for Human Rights and the Human Rights Information and Training Centre in Yemen. In his speech, Sourani highlighted the importance of accountability, as the most prominent element of any revolution, ensuring remedy for victims and learning of lessons.



▲ Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, in a conference titled "Towards Contemporary Vision to Build a New Yemen"



▲ Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, with Lakhdar Ibrahim, UN Special Envoy to Syria, and Ezziddin al-Asbahi in Yemen

Conference on the role of the constitution in transition to democracy – Egypt

Mr Raji Sourani, lawyer and PCHR Director, participated in a conference titled 'The Role of the Constitution in Transition to Democracy in Egypt'. The conference, which was held in Cairo on 6 and 7 February 2012, was organised by the International Commission of Jurists in cooperation with the Arab Centre for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession and Hisham Mubarak Law Centre. In his opening speech at the conference, Sourani emphasised that a constitution is the essence of the philosophy of any regime, and it is the document that organises the system of any state. Sourani further stressed the importance of establishing a strong, clear constitution for Egypt to protect the achievements of the revolution and lay foundations for a prosperous future.



▲ Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, in the conference

Mr. Raji Sourani's activities in Spain

During his visit to Spain from 15 to 18 May 2012 in response to an invitation by Casa Árabe, Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, participated in a number of activities organised on the anniversary of the Palestinian *Nakba*



▲ Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, delivers a lecture on the anniversary of the Palestinian *Nakba*

(the uprooting of the Palestinian people from their lands in 1948), which were organised in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners detained in Israeli jails.

- » Lecture in Cordoba
- » On 15 May 2012, Sourani delivered a lecture in Cordoba – Andalusia, with the President of Casa Árabe and the Palestinian Ambassador to Spain in attendance. The lecture addressed the living conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- » Lecture in Madrid
- » On 16 May 2012, Sourani participated in a lecture in Madrid with the attendance of a number of representatives of solidarity committees supporting the Palestinian people and other interested figures. The lecture addressed the human rights situation in the oPt and living conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- » Seminar by ACSUR
- » In response to an invitation by ACSUR, one of PCHR partners, on 17 May, Sourani participated in a seminar which was attended by representatives of solidarity committees and civil society and interested persons. The seminar addressed the living conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.
- » Lecture in University Autonomia in Madrid
- » On 18 May, in response to an invitation by the Section of Middle Eastern Political Studies Department at University Autonomia in Madrid, Sourani delivered a lecture at University Autonomia. The lecture addressed the human rights situation in the oPt, living conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, and the legal status of prisoners from the Gaza Strip who are detained in Israeli jails.

Meeting of the French NGOs Platform for Palestine – France

On 21 May 2012, Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy PCHR Director for Programme Affairs, participated in a meeting of the French NGOs Platform for Palestine in Paris. The meeting discussed the advocacy and support campaign planned by the Platform against administrative detention. It also addressed conditions in Israeli prisons, focusing on the hunger strike started by the Palestinian prisoners at the time.

ILAC's 10th Annual Meeting – Sweden

11 May 2012, Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR participated in the tenth annual conference of the International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC), which was held in Stockholm. The conference addressed the cause of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and their hunger strike.

Panel debate on legal reform and the Arab Spring – Sweden

On 12 May 2012, Mr Raji Souranu participated in a panel debate on the topic of ‘Legal Reform and the Arab Spring – is there a role for the international community?’ Sourani spoke about the implications of Arab revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt.

Panel debate on violence against women – Jordan

In the period 24-26 September 2012, Mona al-Shawa, Director of PCHR Women’s Unit, and Hanan Matar, a lawyer in the Unit, participated in a panel debate on violence against women, which was held in Amman in Jordan. The panel debate was organised by the Swedish Kvinna till Kvinna, with the participation of 12 partner organisations from Jordan, Iraq and Palestine. The discussion addressed three major topics: family law; documentation of violence against women; and referral of victims to other organisations.



▲ Lawyer Hanan Matar, from the Women’s Rights Unit, in the conference

International law conference – Turkey

PCHR participated in an international conference titled ‘Rethinking International Law and Justice’, held on 24-25 September in Istanbul, and co-hosted by the Istanbul Kültür University and the Australia-based Griffith University and Queensland University of Technology. Mr. Davide Tundo, a member of PCHR’s International Unit, participated in the conference, delivering a presentation titled ‘Justice and the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts through the Enforcement of International Legal Obligations: The case of the Gaza Strip.

▼ David Tundo, from the International Unit, in the conference



First session of the “Mavi Marmara” trial – Turkey

On 6 November 2012, PCHR attended the first session of the criminal trial regarding the Israeli assault on the humanitarian boat ‘Mavi Marmara’ – which killed nine Turkish nationals and injured many others. The hearing was held at the Istanbul Çağlayan Courthouse. Mr Davide Tundo, a member of PCHR’s International Unit, attended the trial as an observer.

Activities in Chile

In the period 06-11 November 2012, Raji Sourani, accompanied by Gonzalo Boye, a Spanish attorney, and Chantal Miloni, from the International Unit, visited Chile in the context of efforts to prosecute suspected Israeli war criminals before national judiciaries of other countries. Sourani held a number of meetings and delivered a lecture. He also met with the daughter for former President Salvador Allende, who is an MP.



▲ Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, with the daughter for former President Salvador Allende, who is an MP

Mr. Jaber Wishah’s activities in Spain

Upon the invitation of a number of Spanish universities, Spanish civil society organisations, and the Palestinian community of Valencia, Jaber Wishah, Deputy PCHR Director for Branch Affairs, participated in a number of public activities in Spain from 29 November – 3 December 2012.

- » Conference on the future of the two-state solution
- » On 29 November 2012, Wishah participated in a conference titled ‘Israel-Palestine, the Future of

▼ Mr. Jaber Wishah delivers a lecture in the conference



the Two-state Solution', held at Casa Arabe in Madrid, under the auspices of the Palestinian diplomatic mission in Spain. In his intervention, Wishah pointed out that "the international community should no longer be complicit with the Israeli occupation and its flagrant violations of Palestinians' human rights."

- » Conference on the question of Palestinian political prisoners
- » On 30 November 2012, Wishah and Davide Tundo, a member of PCHR International Unit, participated in an international conference titled 'The Question of the Palestinian Political Prisoners: Political, Legal and Humanitarian Implications', which was held at the Faculty of Law of the University of Valencia. The conference was jointly organised by the Human Rights Institute of the University of Valencia, the Palestinian Community of Valencia, and PCHR.
- » Meeting with the Youth Forum of the Spanish National Party
- » On 30 November 2012, in a meeting organised by the Palestinian Community of Valencia, Wishah addressed the youth forum of the Spanish National Party on the human rights situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the role that youth can play in supporting the Palestinian struggle for justice.
- » Meeting with Secretary General of the Socialist Party in Valencia
- » On 1 December 2012 Wishah met with Joaquim Ferrer, Secretary General of the Socialist party in the Valencia region. The meeting discussed the impact of the closure on every aspect of life in Gaza, and the impact of the annexation wall and the 462 checkpoints in the West Bank on the daily life of Palestinians.

International conference for solidarity with Palestinian and Arab prisoners – Iraq

On 11-12 December, 2012, PCHR participated in the 'International Conference for Solidarity with Palestinian and Arab Prisoners in Israeli Occupation Jails', sponsored by the League of Arab States and hosted by the Republic of Iraq in Baghdad. Davide Tundo participated in the conference and delivered a presentation focusing on a few specific issues illustrative of the main pattern of Israeli violations *vis à vis* Palestinian prisoners.



▲ David Tundo, from the international unit, in the conference

> Visiting international delegations

PCHR regularly receives international delegations and public figures as part of its efforts to provide the international community with a comprehensive overview of and background to violations of human rights perpetrated by Israeli forces in the oPt. In 2012, PCHR received several visiting delegations and figures that were able to enter the Gaza Strip despite the complicated procedures that must be followed in order to access the Gaza Strip. PCHR also received a number of visitors and delegations in its office in Ramallah. During these visits, PCHR briefed the delegations and visitors on the human rights situation in the oPt.

Deputy Representative of Ireland to the Palestinian Authority

On 16 January 2012, PCHR received Ms Fionnuala Callanan, Deputy Representative of Ireland to the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah. In the meeting, they reviewed the human rights situation in oPt and the Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians, in particular the ongoing Israeli closure.



Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, meets with the Irish Foreign Minister in al-Mathaf Hotel in Gaza, 27 January 2012 >

Delegation from the Norwegian Representative Office

On 17 January 2012, PCHR received a delegation from the Norwegian Representative Office. The delegation was comprised of: Erik Berggrav, Second Secretary in the Representative Office; Petter Bauk; Tale Kvalvaag and Ellen Svendsen. Members of the delegation met with Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, PCHR's Deputy Director for Programme Affairs.

Swedish Consul of Development Cooperation

On 18 January 2012, PCHR received Ms Maria Bjerbevi, Consul of Development Cooperation in the Swedish Consulate-General in Jerusalem, in PCHR's main office in Gaza City. The visitor met with Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR. In the meeting, Sourani surveyed the human rights situation in the oPt, especially in the Gaza Strip, and the deterioration of human rights because of the tightened closure and Israeli practices.



Mr. Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy PCHR Director of Program Affairs, meets with the Swedish Consul of Development Cooperation, 18 January 2012 >

Director of UNSCO in Gaza

On 31 January 2012, PCHR received Mr Alexander Maslov, Director of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process in Gaza. The visitor met with Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed him on the human rights situation in the oPt, highlighting Israeli human rights violations against Palestinian civilians.

Political Affairs Officer in the EU Representative Office

On 16 February 2012, PCHR received Mr Joris Van Winckel, Political Affairs Officer, EU Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority. The visitor met with Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy Director of PCHR for Programme Affairs. The meeting discussed developments in the human rights situation in the oPt, particularly the deteriorating human rights situation in the Gaza Strip as a result on the ongoing Israeli-imposed closure, which has impacted all aspects of life.



Mr. Hamdi Shaqqura meets with the Political Affairs Officer in the EU Representative Office, 16 February 2012

Delegation of Representative Office of South Africa

On 16 February 2012, PCHR received a delegation from the Representative Office of South Africa to the Palestinian Authority comprised of: Mr Phadime Choshane, First Secretary; and Mr Musa Mthemby, Second Secretary. The visitors met with Mr Jaber Wishah, PCHR Director for Branch Affairs, who briefed them on the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip, particularly the impact of the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip, which violates Palestinian economic and social rights.

Swedish Academic Delegation

On 16 February 2012, PCHR received an academic delegation from the Swedish Lund University comprised of

Dr Karin Aggestam, and Dr Lisa Strömbom. The visitors met with Mr Sameeh Mohsen, Coordinator of PCHR Activities in the West Bank, in PCHR's office in Ramallah. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the oPt and the impact of the Palestinian political division on human rights.



Mr. Sameeh Mohsen, Coordinator of PCHR's Activities in the West Bank, receives an academic delegation from the Swedish Lund University

Head of Mission of the Representative Office of South Africa

On 23 February 2012, PCHR received Mr Mlungisi W. Makalima, Head of Mission of the Representative Office of South Africa to the Palestinian Authority. The visitor met with Mr Jaber Wishah, Deputy PCHR Director for Branch Affairs, and Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy PCHR Director for Programme Affairs. The meeting discussed enhancing the relations between South Africa and Palestine, and the role played by South Africa in Palestinian reconciliation.

Head of Mission of the Representative Office of Netherlands

On 28 February 2012, Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy PCHR Director for Programme Affairs, met with Ms Birgitta Tazelaar, Head of Mission of the Representative Office of the Kingdom of Netherlands to the Palestinian Authority, and Martijin Lucassen, Policy Advisor – Economic Affairs in the Representative Office. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the oPt, focusing on the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip, and Israeli settlement activities in the West Bank.

Swiss Diplomatic Delegation

On 29 February 2012, PCHR received Ms Natalie Kohli, Counselor and Deputy of Mission of the Embassy of Switzerland, and Mr Gilles Cerutti, Human and International Humanitarian Law Advisor in the Representative Office of Switzerland to the Palestinian Authority. The

visitors met with Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, PCHR Deputy Director for Programme Affairs, who briefed the visitors on the deteriorating human rights situation in the oPt due to continued Israeli violations against Palestinian civilians.

Canadian Diplomatic Delegation

On 6 March 2012, PCHR received a Canadian diplomatic delegation comprised of: Nathan Naidoo, First Secretary of the Canadian Embassy in Tel Aviv; Hussein Hirji, Political Officer, Representative Office of Canada in Ramallah; Kierstin Heiberg, Coordinator, Representative Office of Canada in Ramallah. The visitors were received in PCHR's head office in Gaza City by Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Mr Hamdi Shqqura, PCHR Deputy Director for Programme Affairs. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the oPt, particularly the ongoing Israeli closure imposed on the Gaza Strip and its impact on all aspects of life.

Head of OCHA in the oPt

On 27 March 2012, Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, met with Mr Ramesh Rajasingham, Head of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and Mr Hamada al-Bayari from OCHA – Gaza. The meeting was held in PCHR's head office in Gaza City. It addressed the human rights situation in oPt and its deterioration due to the continued violations committed by Israeli forces.

Finnish Diplomatic Delegation

On 27 March 2012, Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, PCHR Deputy Director for Programme Affairs, met with a Finnish delegation. The delegation was comprised of Dr Martti Eirola, Representative of Finland to the Palestinian Authority; Mika Routsalainen, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations; and Dr Olli Rouhoma-ki, Senior Advisor in the Department for Development Policy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. PCHR's representatives briefed the visitors on the human rights situation in the oPt in light of ongoing Israeli violations committed in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. They particularly focused on the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip and how it denies Palestinian civilians their economic and social rights.

Consul General of Sweden, Consul General of Belgium and Danish Representative to the Palestinian Authority

On 17 April 2012, Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, received Axel Wernhoff, Consul General of Sweden, Gert Clockx, Consul General of Belgium, and Lars Rehof, the Danish Representative to the Palestinian Authority, in

PCHR's head office in Gaza City. In the meeting, Sourani focused on the Israeli measures aimed at institutionalisation of the closure that has been imposed on the Gaza Strip for more than five years. He pointed to the impact of the closure on the lives of civilians on the economic, social, humanitarian, and health level.



▲ Mr. Raji Sourani meets with the Consul General of Sweden, Consul General of Belgium and Danish Representative to the Palestinian Authority

Deputy Representative of Ireland and Swedish Consul of Political Affairs

On 9 May 2012, PCHR received Fionnuala Callan, Deputy Representative of Ireland to the Palestinian Authority, and Maria Velasco, the Consul of Political Affairs at the Consulate General of Sweden. The visitors met with Jaber Wishah, PCHR's Deputy Director for Branch Affairs, and Daragh Murray, PCHR's International Legal Officer. The meeting discussed developments related to the Palestinian prisoners' hunger strike which poses risks on the lives of a number of prisoners.

Deputy Consul General of Spain

On 25 May 2012, PCHR received Javier Cortes, Deputy Consul General of Spain. The Deputy Consul met with Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy Director of PCHR for Programme Affairs, who briefed him on the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip.

ICRC Delegation

On 4 June 2012, PCHR received a delegation from the ICRC comprised of Charlotte Lindsey-Curtet, ICRC Director of Communication and Information Management; Patrick Gueissaz, Head of the ICRC's sub-delegation in Gaza; and Jameela Hammami, Deputy Head of the ICRC's sub-delegation in Gaza.



Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Mr. Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy PCHR Director for Program Affairs, meet with the ICRC delegation

Delegation from Irish Aid

On 26 June 2012, Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, met with a high profile delegation from Irish Aid. The delegation was headed by Ms Dymrna Hayes, Head of Mission, Representative Office of Ireland to the Palestinian Authority (PA), and was comprised of: Ms Fionnuala Callnan, Deputy, Representative Office of Ireland to the PA; Ms Stephanie O'Brien, Incoming Deputy, Representative Office of Ireland to the PA; Ms Fionnuala Gilsonan, Director, Civil Society Section, Irish Aid; Mr Kevin Kelly, Director, Emergency and Recovery Section, Irish Aid; and Mr David Bruck, Deputy Director, Emergency and Recovery Section, Irish Aid. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the oPt. Sourani briefed the members of the delegation on developments regarding the ongoing closure imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip. The meeting also addressed the internal situation and prospects for Palestinian national reconciliation.

Swedish Consul of Development Cooperation

On 3 July 2012, PCHR received Ms Maria Bjernevi, Consul of Development Cooperation at the Consulate General of Sweden in Jerusalem, in her last visit to the Gaza Strip, and the new Consul of Development Cooperation, Mr Frederik Westerholm. Ms Bjernevi and Mr Westerholm met with Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and with Mr Hamdi Shaqurra, Deputy PCHR Director for Programme Affairs. During the meeting, the new Consul was briefed on PCHR's work and activities and the role of the various units were introduced to

the new Consul. The meeting addressed the situation of Palestinian civilians in view of the increasing Israeli violations in the oPt.

Human Rights and IHL Adviser at the Representative Office of Switzerland

On 4 July 2012, PCHR received Mr Gilles Cerutti, Human Rights and IHL Adviser at the Representative Office of Switzerland to the Palestinian Authority, in PCHR's head office in Gaza City. The visitor met with Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy PCHR Director for Programme Affairs. The meeting discussed the human rights situation in the oPt and of the most prominent Israeli violations and policies against Palestinian civilians and their property in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Delegation from the European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection

On 9 July 2012, PCHR a delegation from the European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), led by their Head of Office for West Bank and Gaza, Mr Mamar Merzouk. The delegation was received by Deputy Director for Programme Affairs, Hamdi Shaqqura and Deputy Director for Administrative and Legal Affairs, Iyad Alami of PCHR. The meeting addressed the difficulties faced by the people of Gaza arising from the occupation and the closure, and PCHR's work in the area of protection, particularly legal assistance, representation and advocacy, nationally and internationally.

Delegation from the Norwegian Representative Office

On 9 July 2012, PCHR received a delegation from the Representative Office of Norway to the Palestinian Authority. The delegation was headed by Mr Hans Jacob Frydenlund, Head of the Representative Office. Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, PCHR's Deputy Director for Programme Affairs, met with the delegation at PCHR's head office in Gaza City. He briefed them on the human rights situation in the oPt.

Director of UNRWA Operations

On 16 July 2012, Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, met with the new Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza, Robert Turner. The meeting addressed human rights situation in the Gaza Strip, in light of Israel's continued violations which are resulting in the deterioration of human rights in Gaza.

Head of the Netherlands Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority

On 13 August 2012, PCHR received the Head of the Netherlands Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority, Ms Birgitta Tazelaar, in its head offices in



Mr. Raji Sourani meets with the Head of the Netherlands Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority

Gaza City. Tazelaar met with Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed her on the deteriorating human rights situation in the Gaza Strip.

Delegation from International Federation of Medical Students' Associations

On 13 August 2012, PCHR received a delegation from the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations. The delegation included 15 students representing several countries. They met with Mr Sameeh Mohsen, Coordinator of PCHR's Activities in the West Bank, who briefed them on the human rights situation in the oPt, and the impact of the Israeli closure imposed on the Gaza Strip.

IADL Delegation

In the period 24-29 September 2012, PCHR hosted a delegation from the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL). This delegation is comprised of 21 lawyers from IADL's Executive Committee, which decided to hold its annual meetings this year in the Gaza Strip, as an expression of solidarity with the Palestinian people. PCHR arranged the visit programme for this international delegation. The programme visit included a field tour to various areas in the Gaza Strip, so that the delegation could learn more about the living conditions of the Palestinian population whose rights are being violated by the Israeli forces.

Consul General of Sweden

On 24 September 2012, PCHR received Mr Axel Werhoeff, Consul General of Sweden, and Ms Johanna Strömquist, Consul Political Affairs. The two visitors met with Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy Director of PCHR for Programme Affairs, who briefed them on developments in the human rights situation in the oPt.

Director of OCHA in Jerusalem

On 22 October 2012, Mr Raji al-Sourani, Director of PCHR, received Ramesh Singam, Director of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Jerusalem, who was accompanied by the director of the local Gaza office. During the meeting, the issue of the Israeli closure of the Gaza Strip and its major impacts on the lives of civilians was discussed; in particular, the participants discussed the danger that the international community is contributing to the institutionalisation of the closure.

US Solidarity Delegation

In the period 5-13 November 2012, PCHR hosted a 21-member solidarity delegation, representing different sectors of the civil society organisations, from United States of America. The delegation includes the family of the international solidarity movement activist, Rachel Corrie, who was killed on 16 March 2003, when an Israeli bulldozer drove over her while she was protesting against the demolition of houses in Rafah in the south of the Gaza Strip. PCHR scheduled several activities for the delegation.



Mr. Raji Sourani meets with a US solidarity delegation

AECID Delegation

On 6 November 2012, PCHR received a delegation from Spanish Agency for International Development Coop-



Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Mr. Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy PCHR Director for Program Affairs, meet with the AECID delegation

eration (AECID) headed by Mr Alberto Virella, Director of Africa, Asia, and Western Europe for AECID. The delegation met with Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy PCHR Director for Programme Affairs. The meeting addressed the human rights situation in the oPt, especially in Gaza Strip.

International Solidarity Delegation

On 1 December 2012, PCHR received a 22-member international solidarity groups with the Palestinian people. The delegation represented a number of groups, including the International Solidarity Movement, National Lawyers Guild, Free Gaza Movement and Code Pink. The delegation met with Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who briefed them on the human rights situation in the Gaza Strip.

Consul General of Italy

On 11 December 2012, Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy PCHR Director for Programme Affairs, received Mr Giampaolo Cantini, Consul General of Italy, and his deputy, Hanna Pappalardo. The meeting, which took place in ArcMed Hotel in Gaza, discussed the human rights situation in the oPt and the implications of the latest Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip.

Delegation from the Norwegian Representative Office

On 18 December 2012, PCHR received a delegation from the Norwegian Representative Office to PNA. The delegation included: Mr Stein Torgersbråten, Head of Development Section of the Norwegian Representative Office, Mr Erik Berggrav, Second Secretary in the representative office, Ms Marte Teie Hellum, Programme Advisor, and Montaha Aqel, from the Representative Office in Gaza. They met with Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Mr Hamdi Shaqqura, PCHR's Deputy Director for Programme Affairs. The meeting with the Norwegian diplomatic delegation discussed the current human rights situation in the Gaza Strip and the consequences of the latest Israeli offensive which targeted civilians and civilian facilities.

Delegation from the South African Representative Office

On 19 December 2012, PCHR received a delegation from the South African Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority headed by Mlungisi W Makalima, Head of the Representative Office of South Africa. The delegation members met with the lawyer Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, who addressed the developments of human rights in the oPt referring to the consequences of the latest Israeli offensive on the people of the Gaza Strip.



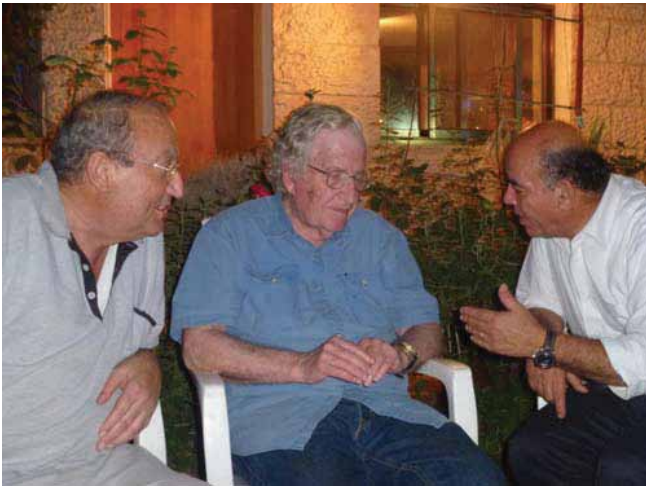
▲ Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, with the Secretary General of the Union of Arab Lawyer, 11 December 2012



▲ Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, and Mr. Hamdi Shaqqura, Deputy PCHR Director for Program Affairs, meet with a delegation from the Indian Consulate, 21 December



▲ Mr. Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, receives a delegation from the Representative Office of South Africa



^ Mr. Raji Sourani and Dr. Eyad al-Sarraj meet with Mr. Noam Chomsky in Gaza, 6 November 2012



^ Mr. Raji Sourani delivers a lecture in the graduation ceremony of Bir Zeit University in the Arch Med Hotel in Gaza, 28 March 2012



^ Mr. Raji Sourani meets with Mr. Richard Falk, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the oPt



^ Mr. Raji Sourani receives a delegation from the Swish Development Cooperation, 11 December 2012



< Mr. Raji Sourani meets with a delegation from the Austrian Consulate, 10 December

International figures and visitors who met with PCHR in Gaza in 2012

Date	Meetings
9 January	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ibrahim Abu Shammala, UNDP 2. Daoud al-Masri, UNDP
16 January	Ms. Fionnuala Callanan, Deputy Representative of Ireland to the Palestinian Authority
27 January	A delegation from the Norwegian Representative Office comprised of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Erik Berggrav, Second Secretary in the Representative Office; 2. Petter Bauk; 3. Tale Kvalvaag; and 4. Ellen Svendsen.
17 January	A meeting with representatives of the Norwegian Refugee Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monica Sanchez Bermudez, Project Manager, Gaza; and 2. Wafaa' al-Kafarna, Deputy Project Manager
18 January	A meeting with a delegation from the British Consulate
25 January	Maria Bjerbevi, Consul of Development Cooperation in the Swedish Consulate-General in Jerusalem
26 January	Abla al-'Amawi, Good Governance Officer, UNDP
27 January	A meeting with Mr Eamon Gilmore, Irish Foreign Minister, and members of the Irish Foreign Ministry and the Representative Office of Ireland to the Palestinian Authority in al-Mathaf Hotel in Gaza
31 January	Alexander Maslov, Director of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process in Gaza
7 February	Raquel Rolnik, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing
8 February	Leif Eriksson, Migration Expert at the General Consulate of Sweden in Jerusalem
8 February	Paolo Pennati, Field Coordinator, Terre des Hommes
9 February	Shivani Verma, OHCHR, oPt
16 February	Joris Van Winckel, Political Affairs Officer, EU Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority
16 February	A delegation from the Representative Office of South Africa to the Palestinian Authority comprised of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Phadime Choshane, First Secretary; and 2. Musa Mthemby, Second Secretary
23 February	A delegation from the Representative Office of South Africa to the Palestinian Authority comprised of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mlungisi W. Makalima, Head of Mission; 2. Machiel Van Niekerk, Advisor; and 3. Livingstone Vukile Mdlalo, First Secretary

Date	Meetings
28 February	A delegation from the Representative Office of the Kingdom of Netherlands to the Palestinian Authority: 1. Birgitta Tazelaar, Head of Mission; and 2. Martijin Lucassen, Policy Advisor – Economic Affairs in the Representative Office
29 February	1. Natalie Kohli, Counselor and Deputy of Mission of the Embassy of Switzerland; and 2. Gilles Cerutti, Human and International Humanitarian Law Advisor in the Representative Office of Switzerland to the Palestinian Authority
6 March	A Canadian diplomatic delegation comprised of: 1. Hussein Hirji, Political Officer, Representative Office of Canada in Ramallah; 2. Nathan Heiberg, Coordinator, Representative Office of Canada in Ramallah; and 3. Kierstin Heiberg, First Secretary, Embassy of Canada in Tel Aviv.
6 March	Martin Clutterbuck, Chair, Legal Task Force, Norwegian Refugee Council
10 March	A delegation of European parliamentarians
15 March	Matthias Behnke, Head of Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, oPt
22 March	1. Marta Lorenzo Rodriguez, Associate Country Director for Oxfam Novib; and 2. Nivedita Monga, Programme Officer, Oxfam Novib
26 March	1. Sarah Adamczyk, Project Manager, NRC; 2. Wafaa al-Kafarna, NRC
26 March	1. Matthias Behnke, Head of OHCHR, oPt; 2. Shivani Verma, OHCHR
27 March	A diplomatic Finnish delegation comprised of: 1. Dr Martti Eirola, Representative of Finland to the Palestinian Authority; 2. Mika Routsalainen, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations; and 3. Dr Olli Rouhomaki, Senior Advisor in the Department for Development Policy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland
27 March	1. Ramesh Rajasingham, Head of OCHA oPt; and 2. Hamada al-Bayari, OCHA Field Office, Gaza
28 March	Erik Berggrav, from the Representative Office of Norway to the Palestinian Authority
April 9	Sayed Abdul Ghani, Assistant Secretary General of the Union of Arab Lawyers
12 April	1. Diane Araki, Chief of Gaza Field Office, UNICEF-oPt; and 2. Mieh Nemoto, UNICEF Child Protection Specialist in Gaza
15 April	Mina Remy, Programme Coordinator for the Middle East and Haiti, Grassroots International
16 April	Matthias Behnke, Head of OHCHR, oPt

Date	Meetings
17 April	1. Axel Wernhoff, Consul General of Sweden; 2. Gert Clockx, Consul General of Belgium; and 3. Lars Rehof, the Danish Representative to the Palestinian Authority
18 April	1. David Viveash, Field Office Director of the Carter Centre; and 2. Nathan Stock, Assistant Director of Conflict Resolution Programme at Carter Centre
19 April	The Board of Trustees of the Arab Organisation for Human Rights
29 April	A delegation from OCHA
1 May	A meeting with the staff of the Representative Office of the Kingdom of Netherlands to the Palestinian Authority
2 May	Saul Takahashi, OHCHR Deputy Head of Office – oPt
9 May	1. Fionnuala Callan, Deputy Representative of Ireland to the Palestinian Authority; and 2. Maria Velasco, the Consul of Political Affairs at the Consulate General of Sweden
16 May	Marta Lorenzo Rodriguez, Associate Country Director for Oxfam Novib
17 May	A meeting with ACSUR
22 May	Sjoerd Wiemer, Policy Advisor, Representative Office of the Kingdom of Netherlands to the Palestinian Authority
24 May	Javier Cortes, Representative Office of Spain to the Palestinian Authority
30 May	Shivani Verma, Protection Coordination Officer, OHCHR
4 June	A meeting in the ICRC office in Gaza with: 1. Charlotte Lindsey Curtet, ICRC Director of Communications and Information Management in Geneva; 2. Patrick Gueissaz, Head of the ICRC Sub-Delegation in Gaza; and 3. Jamila Hammami, Deputy Head of the ICRC Sub-Delegation in Gaza.
7 June	Joris Van Winckel, Political Affairs Officer, EU Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority
14 June	A delegation from Amnesty International: 1. Carsten Jurgensen, Researcher, Middle East and North Africa Program; 2. Saleh Hijazi, Campaigner, Middle East and North Africa Program; and 3. Deborah Hyams, Researcher, Middle East and North Africa Program
26 June	A delegation from Irish Aid: 1. Dympna Hayes, Head of Mission, Representative Office of Ireland to the Palestinian Authority; 2. Fionnuala Callnan, Deputy, Representative Office of Ireland; 3. Stephanie O'Brien, Incoming Deputy, Representative Office of Ireland; 4. Fionnuala Gilsenan, Director, Civil Society Section, Irish Aid; 5. Kevin Kelly, Director, Emergency and Recovery Section, Irish Aid; and 6. David Bruck, Deputy Director, Emergency and Recovery Section, Irish Aid

Date	Meetings
27 June	A delegation from Amnesty International: 1. Saleh Hijazi, Campaigner, Middle East and North Africa Program; and 2. Deborah Hyams, Researcher, Middle East and North Africa Program
1 July	Garry Walsh, oPt/Israel Programme Officer, Trócaire
2 July	Teresa Plana, ICRC Protection Delegate
3 July	1. Maria Bjernevi, Consul of Development Cooperation at the Consulate General of Sweden in Jerusalem; and 2. Frederik Westerholm, Consul of Development Cooperation
4 July	1. Gilles Cerutti, Human Rights and IHL Adviser at the Representative Office of Switzerland to the Palestinian Authority 2. Stephen McCloskey, Director of the Centre for Global Education, Ireland
9 July	A delegation from the European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO): 1. Mamar Merzouk, Head of ECHO Office for West Bank and Gaza; 2. Saber Ashour, European Commission; and 3. Majed Jouda, European Commission
9 July	A delegation from Carter Centre: 1. Roger Bryant, International Election Observer; 2. Baya Kara, Senior Electoral Analyst; and 3. Nadia al-Haddad, International Election Observer
10 July	A diplomatic delegation comprised of: 1. Hans Jacob Frydenlund, Head of Mission, the Representative Office of Norway to the Palestinian Authority; 2. Christian Jetzlsperger, the Representative Office of Germany to the Palestinian Authority; and 3. René Wildangel, Head of the Heinrich Böll Foundation's office in Ramallah
16 July	Robert Turner, Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza
7 August	Patrick Gueissaz, Head of the ICRC Sub-Delegation in Gaza
9 August	A meeting with officials from the Representative Office of Canada to the Palestinian Authority
13 August	Birgitta Tazelaar, Head of the Netherlands Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority
4 September	1. Ana Povreznic, Area Manager – Gaza, Norwegian Refugee Council; 2. Laura Cunial, Advisor/Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance, International Legal Program, Norwegian Refugee Council; 3. Sune Krogstrup, First Secretary, Danish Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority
5 September	Pradeep Wagle, Head of OHCHR Sub-Office, Gaza

Date	Meetings
12 September	Pradeep Wagle, Head of OHCHR Sub-Office, Gaza
12 September	A meeting with representatives of Care International
23 September	A meetings with representatives of UNRWA from the offices of Washington and New York
24 September	1. Axel Wernhoff, Consul General of Sweden; and 2. Johanna Strömquit, Consul Political Affairs, Consulate General of Sweden
26 September	A delegation from the International Association of Democratic Lawyers
27 September	1. Kristin Janson, First Secretary, Embassy of Canada; and 2. Hussein Hirji, Political Officer, Representative Office of Canada in Ramallah
4 October	A delegation from the Church of Scotland: 1. James Laing, Regional Manager; and 2. Dr Andrew McLellan, a preacher
6 October	Alberto Virella, Director of Cooperation with Africa and Asia for the Spanish Agency for International Development
11 October	A delegation from Care International: 1. Fairuz Taqi-Eddin, Regional Director of Development; 2. Liz McLaughlin, Head of International Fundraising and Partnerships; and 3. Blake Selzer, Senior Policy Advocate, Policy and Advocacy Unit

> Media interviews

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 oPt. In 2012, PCHR continued to conduct interviews with local and international media and respond to requests for information on human rights in the oPt. The PCHR Director and staff were interviewed by hundreds of local and international journalists. The interviews largely focused on the report of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Gaza Conflict (Goldstone Report), the human rights situation in the oPt and the impact of the Israeli closure imposed on the Gaza Strip. The major media institutions that interviewed PCHR staff were: Reuters News Agency; Associated Press; France Press, TV France; BBC; Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel; Palestine Television; Nile News Television; Sky News Arabic, the Guardian; the Independent; Der Spiegel; New Germany; Los Angeles Times; and South Africa Radio.

> PCHR publications in 2012

PCHR publications include: press releases; field updates on the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons; field updates on the Israeli closure; narratives; periodic and special reports; leaflets; position papers; interventions to UN and other international bodies; and working papers at international and local conferences.

1. Press releases

PCHR regularly issues press releases providing detailed and timely information regarding specific incidents, violations of international human rights or humanitarian law, and other important developments. In 2012, PCHR issued 162 press releases, including 62 that highlighted human rights violations by the PNA and internal Palestinian issues, and 93 press releases that focused on human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli forces. The remaining 7 press releases were focused on general violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

PCHR press releases on Palestinian violations of human rights in 2012

No.	Date	Responsible Unit	Title
1.	8 January	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Obstruction of Passage of Fatah Delegation at Beit Hanoun ('Erez') Crossing
2.	15 January	Democratic Development Unit	Israeli Courts Insist on Decisions Depriving Palestinian Victims of Access to Justice and Judicial Remedy and Making It Impossible
3.	16 January	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Use of Force by Security Officers against a Number of Palestinians While Performing Shiite Rituals
4.	17 January	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Attack on Human Defender, Mahmoud Abu Rahma
5.	18 January	Democratic Development Unit	Second Death Sentence in 2012 Issued in Gaza
6.	2 February	Democratic Development Unit	High Military Court in Gaza Upholds Death Sentence
7.	8 February	Democratic Development Unit	The Third Sentence of Its Kind since the Beginning of the year, High Military Court in Gaza upholds Death Sentence
8.	12 February	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigation into the Drowning of Boy in Sewage Water Basin in Northern Gaza Strip
9.	14 February	Economic and Social Rights Unit	Gaza Power Plant Forced to Shut Down, PCHR Concerned by Deterioration of Humanitarian Conditions of Approximately 1.6 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip
10.	15 February	Democratic Development Unit	Military High Court in Gaza Upholds Death Sentence
11.	15 February	Economic and Social Rights Unit	Gaza Is on the Brink of Health and Environmental Catastrophe Due to Power Outages and Lack of Fuel
12.	19 February	Democratic Development Unit	Gaza Court of Cassation Upholds Death Sentence
13.	1 March	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns PSS's Attack on Correspondent of al-Aqsa Satellite Channel and Crew of Media Modern Company in Ramallah
14.	3 March	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls upon Palestinian President Not to Ratify Death Sentence Upheld by Gaza Court of Cassation
15.	21 March	A Joint press release with the NGO Network; Mezan Centre; and Addameer Centre	In View of Publishing it in al-Waqa'i Official Gazette in Gaza, Palestinian NGO Network and Human Rights Organisations Call Upon the Council of Ministers in Gaza to Reconsider the Decision to Make Amendments to the Executive Bill of Charitable Association

No.	Date	Responsible Unit	Title
16.	25 March	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Murder of Woman on the Ground of "Family honour" in Khan Yunis
17.	27 March	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Gravely Concerned over the Internal Security Service's Summons against Fatah Members in the Gaza Strip
18.	3 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR is Concerned over Summons and Arrests against Members of Hamas in the West Bank
19.	7 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Execution of 3 Palestinians in Gaza
20.	15 April	International Unit	PCHR remembers Italian activist, Vittorio Arrigoni, on the first anniversary of his death in Gaza
21.	25 April	Legal Unit	PCHR Warns Against the Continuing Obstruction of Detainees' Visitation at Detention Centres of ISS
22.	30 April	Legal Unit	PCHR challenges the Constitutionality of the Ministerial Amendment Made to the Executive Regulation of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations Law
23.	9 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Preventing al-Quds Channel Crew from Carrying out Their Work and Their Detention by Shifa Hospital Security Personnel in Gaza City
24.	10 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Break-up of the Concluding Colloquium of the Palestine Festival of Literature by Security Forces in Gaza
25.	14 May	Democratic Development Unit	Gaza Court of Cassation Confirms Death Sentence
26.	22 May	Democratic Development Unit	Gaza Court of Cassation Confirms Death Sentence: PCHR Calls on Palestinian President Not to Ratify it
27.	7 June	Legal Unit	The Constitutional Court Postpones, Considering PCHR's Petition Challenging the Constitutionality of the Ministerial Amendment Made to the Executive Bill of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations Law
28.	19 June	Legal Unit	The Constitutional Court rejects, Considering PCHR's Petition Challenging the Constitutionality of the Ministerial Amendment Made to the Executive Bill of Charitable Associations and Community Organisations Law
29.	21 June	Democratic Development Unit	A Child Killed and 5 Others Wounded due to the Accidental Landing of Home-Made Rockets on their Houses when Palestinian Resistance Groups Launched Rockets on Israeli Targets
30.	25 June	Democratic Development Unit	A Palestinian Killed and 19 Others Wounded Due to Heavy Fire in the Gaza Strip Celebrating Mursi Winning the Egyptian Presidential Elections
31.	28 June	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls Upon the Palestinian Authority to Release the Detainees on Hunger Strike in its Prisons

No.	Date	Responsible Unit	Title
32.	1 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Shooting of PLC Member Shami al-Shami
33.	2 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Disapproves Hamas' Decision to Halt Voter Registry Update by the CEC
34.	2 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Strongly Condemns the Use of Force against Peaceful Demonstrations in Ramallah
35.	11 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Reconciliation and an End to the Ongoing Fragmentation before the Organisation of Palestinian Elections
36.	17 July	Legal Unit	PCHR Condemns the Execution of 3 Palestinians in Gaza in Violation of the Law
37.	18 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Killing of Palestinian Woman in Gaza to "Maintain Family honour"
38.	19 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for the Annulment of Gaza Interior Minister's Decision to Dissolve Sharek Youth Forum in Gaza
39.	19 July	Economic and Social Rights Unit	Offices of External Medical Treatment Department in Gaza Closed for the 3rd Consecutive Day; PCHR Warns of Further Deterioration to the Health Conditions of Palestinian Patients in Gaza
40.	29 July	Democratic Development Unit	Two Palestinians Executed in Gaza; PCHR Condemns Continued Application of Death Penalty in Violation of the Law
41.	30 July	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Attack of a Judge by al-Qassam Members in Khan Yunis
42.	2 August	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR is Concerned about a Decision Issued by the Attorney General in Gaza to Prevent the Palestinian Contractors Union's Director and 8 Journalists from Travelling on the Grounds of Freedom of Expression and Union Freedom
43.	2 September	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Banning Mass Marriage Ceremony in Gaza
44.	3 September	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Deeply Concerned About the Injury of 5 Palestinians, Including a Child, Due of the Misuse of Weapons in Residential Areas
45.	13 September	Democratic Development Unit	Gaza Military Court Sentences Man to Death
46.	17 September	Democratic Development Unit	Gaza Court of Appeal Sentences Man to Death
47.	19 September	Democratic Development Unit	Palestinian Security Services Arrest Dozens of Hamas Members in the West Bank

No.	Date	Responsible Unit	Title
48.	3 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Forcible Dispersion of Peaceful Set-in by Security Services in Gaza
49.	3 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Injuring of Two Children by the Police During the Evacuation of Governmental Lands in the Northern Gaza Strip
50.	18 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Demands Investigation into the Death of a Civilian Inside Khan Younis Police Station
51.	18 October	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR deeply concerned about the holding of local elections in the West Bank in context of large-scale human rights violations
52.	4 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Obstruction of Work of Its Ramallah Field-worker by Presidential Guard
53.	4 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Prevention of Journalists Shoblaq and Abu-Doghaim from Travelling by the Gaza Government
54.	5 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Prevention of Persons from Travelling by ISS
55.	6 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Strongly Condemns the Palestinian Police's Dispersal of a Women's Sit-in Calling for Ending Division
56.	13 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Security Services' Intervention to Stop Events Commemorating the Death of President Arafat
57.	14 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Attacks on Peaceful Assemblies in Gaza and Hebron
58.	21 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Extra-Judicial Killings of Persons in Gaza for Alleged Collaboration with Israel
59.	25 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR welcomes Gaza Authorities' Decision to Grant Amnesties to Persons Accused of Criminal Charges in Relation to the 2006 Palestinian Internal Conflict
60.	29 November	International Unit	Land mark day: Palestinian statehood
61.	22 December	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Arson Attack on Car of Former Chief Justice of Palestine by Unknown Persons in Hebron
62.	27 December	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Investigation into the Circumstances of Man's Death in Ansar Prison in Gaza

PCHR press releases on Israeli violations of human rights in 2012

No.	Date	Responsible Unit	Title
1.	8 January	Economic and Social Rights Unit	In one Week, IOF Arrests 7 Fishermen, PCHR Condemns the Continued Israeli Violations Against Palestinian Fishermen in the Gaza Strip
2.	12 January	Legal Unit	Israeli Courts Insist on Decisions Depriving Palestinian Victims of Access to Justice and Judicial Remedy and Making It Impossible
3.	22 January	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Detention of PLC Speaker, Dr Aziz Dwaik, and PLC Member Khaled Thwaib
4.	23 January	Economic and Social Rights Unit	IOF Arrest Patient at Beit Hanoun ('Erez') Crossing in the Northern Gaza Strip; PCHR Fears he is Subjected to Torture,
5.	24 January	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Storming ICRC Head Office and Detention of PLC Member Toutah and Former Minister Abu 'Arafa
6.	31 January	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Concerned for the Life of Palestinian Detainee in Israeli Jails Who Has Been on Hunger Strike for about 45 Days
7.	12 February	Fieldwork Unit	Israeli Warplanes Escalate Airstrikes on the Gaza Strip; Old Palestinian Man Killed and His Son Wounded in Gaza City
8.	16 February	Fieldwork Unit	Former Prisoner's Wife Miscarried as IOF Stormed Her House in Salem Village near Nablus
9.	19 February	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls upon the International Community to Save the Life of the Palestinian Detainee, Khader Adnan, Who Is on Hunger Strike
10.	20 February	Joint press release	Urgent Call for Action
11.	26 February	Fieldwork Unit	IOF Use Excessive Force and Kill Demonstrator in Peaceful Demonstration in al-Ram Village, North of Occupied Jerusalem
12.	27 February	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls upon the International Community to Pressurize Israel to Release Palestinian Detainee, Hana' Shalabi, Who Has Been on Hunger Strike
13.	1 March	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns IOF's Raids on Watan TV and Al-Quds TV and Confiscation of Their Equipment
14.	6 March	Fieldwork Unit	PCHR Condemns IOF's Use of Excessive Force against Peaceful Demonstrations in the West Bank
15.	7 March	Fieldwork Unit	Two Palestinian Children Killed and Three Others Wounded in Hebron in Explosion of Suspicious Object

No.	Date	Responsible Unit	Title
16.	7 March	Joint press release	Human Rights Organisations Call upon the International Community to Save the Life of the Palestinian Detainee, Hanaa' Shalabi
17.	8 March	Woman and Child Unit	On the Eighth of March: We Are All Hana Shalabi
18.	10 March	Fieldwork Unit	New Israeli Escalation against the Gaza Strip: 12 Palestinians, Including Secretary-General of the Popular Resistance Committees, Killed and 11 Others Wounded
19.	11 March	Fieldwork Unit	IOF Kill Palestinian Child and Wounds and Arrest another One South of Hebron
20.	11 March	Fieldwork Unit	6 Palestinians, Including a Child, Killed and 24 Others Wounded, Raising Number of Victims of Ongoing Israeli Military Escalation against the Gaza Strip to 18 Deaths and 35 Injuries
21.	12 March	Fieldwork Unit	IOF Continued Offensive on Gaza for 4th Consecutive Day: 4 Palestinians, Including an Old Man and His Daughter, Killed and 33 Others Wounded Since Yesterday Afternoon, Raising Deaths to 22 and Injuries to 68
22.	15 March	International Unit	UN Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination Expresses Concern at Obstacles Faced by Palestinians Seeking Compensation for Cast-Lead Violations before Israeli Courts; Calls upon Israel to Lift Closure of the Gaza Strip
23.	21 March	Joint press release with NGO Network and Addameer	Human Rights Organisations Call on B'Tselem to Withdraw from Conference Featuring Alleged War Criminal Ehud Olmert
24.	26 March	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Incitement Campaign by Right-Wing Israeli Group against UAWC
25.	27 March	International Unit	UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Acknowledges Physical and Monetary Obstacles to Justice for Gazan; Calls upon Israel to Duly Compensate and Eliminate Discrimination in Regard to Justice
26.	31 March	Fieldwork Unit	Palestinian Civilian Killed and 63 Others Wounded, Including 18 Children, in Demonstrations Commemorating Land Day
27.	3 April	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Hana Shalabi's Deportation to Gaza by IOF
28.	4 April	International Unit	A Dark Day for International Justice: ICC Office of the Prosecutor decides not to open investigations into situation of Palestine
29.	17 April	Legal Unit	On Palestinian Prisoners Day, the Suffering of Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli Jails Continues
30.	17 April	Economic and Social Rights Unit	PCHR Condemns Banning of Dozens of European Solidarity Activists by Israel from travelling to the oPt

No.	Date	Responsible Unit	Title
31.	26 April	Democratic Development Unit	Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli Jails Initiate Hunger Strike; PCHR Calls upon the International Community to Save Lives of Bilal Diab and Tha'er Halahla Who Initiated Hunger Strike
32.	30 April	Economic and Social Rights Unit	PCHR Condemns Continued Israeli Attacks against Palestinian Fishermen in Gaza
33.	2 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls upon the International Community to Intervene to Save Lives of Bilal Diab and Tha'er Halahla Who Have Been on Hunger Strike
34.	2 May	Legal Unit	Israel's Disgraceful Decision to Close Samouni Case Makes Mockery of Victims' Rights and International Law
35.	15 May	Press Officer	64th Anniversary of the Nakba: Palestinians' Suffering Continues to Aggravate and the Human Rights Situation deteriorates
36.	15 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Welcomes the Agreement, Based on Which Palestinian Prisoners Ended their Hunger Strike, and Expresses Respect to the Prisoners' Decision
37.	30 May	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns the Renewing of Administrative Detention Orders for 8 Palestinians, Including a PLC Member
38.	2 June	International Unit	PCHR welcomes South Africa move to label West Bank settlement goods
39.	2 June	International Unit	PCHR welcomes Turkey's indictment of Israeli officers for Mavi Marmara killings
40.	10 June	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Appeals the International Community to Save the Lives of Palestinian Prisoners, Mahmoud al-Sersek and Akram al-Rakhawi, Who Have Been on Hunger Strike
41.	13 June	International Unit	PCHR Calls upon FIFA President to Save the Life of a Palestinian Football Player
42.	13 June	International Unit	PCHR Welcomes FIFA President Sepp Blatter's Statements Regarding the Case of Palestinian National Footballer Mahmoud Al-Sarsek
43.	14 June	Economic and Social Rights Unit	Israeli Navy Attacks Oliva Boat and Holds another Boat in Gaza Waters
44.	20 June	Fieldwork Unit	Extremist Israeli Settlers Set Fire to Zaid Bin Hareth Mosque in Jaba' village, Northeast of Jerusalem
45.	21 June	Fieldwork Unit	In a New Israeli Escalation in the Gaza Strip, a Child is Killed and his Father and Another Three Children are Wounded
46.	11 July	Democratic Development Unit	Israeli Authorities Release Palestinian National Footballer Mahmoud Al-Sersek

No.	Date	Responsible Unit	Title
47.	30 July	Fieldwork Unit	IOF Kills a Palestinian Worker and Wounds another Three Workers at al-Zaeem Checkpoint east of Jerusalem
48.	13 August	Legal Unit	Israeli Military Court Continues to Provide Cover for IOF's Crimes
49.	16 August	International Unit	PCHR Condemns Israeli Authorities Denial of Gaza Muslims' Freedom of Worship
50.	27 August	Economic and Social Rights Unit	PCHR Strongly Condemns the Denial of Entry to the oPt of dozens of International Solidarity Activists by Israel
51.	28 August	Democratic Development Unit	Continuing Impunity for the Death of Rachel Corrie
52.	29 August	Economic and Social Rights Unit	PCHR Condemns Continued Israeli Violations against Palestinian Fishermen in the Gaza Strip
53.	9 September	Legal Unit	In A Second Case of Its Kind for the Victims of the Offensive on the Gaza Strip, PCHR Succeeds in Ensuring Compensation for Shurab Family for the Death of Their 2 Sons
54.	11 September	Legal Unit	In Continued Denial of Access to Justice, the Israeli Central Court Dismisses a Claim Filed on Behalf of the al-Daya Family
55.	20 September	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Concerned for the Lives of Palestinian Detainees on Hunger Strike, Reiterates Rejection of Forcible Transfer of Civilians
56.	23 September	Fieldwork Unit	Continuing its Efforts to Judaize Occupied East Jerusalem, Israel's Forces Close the Ras Khamis Checkpoint and Declare the Establishment of a Bridge between Silwan and al-Buaq Wall
57.	30 September	Economic and Social Rights Unit	Fisherman Killed and Brother Wounded by Israel's Forces; PCHR Condemns Continued Israeli Attacks against Palestinian Fishermen in Gaza Sea
58.	8 October	Economic and Social Rights Unit	Four Fishermen Arrested and a Fishing Boat Confiscated, PCHR Condemns Continued Israeli Violations Against Palestinian Fishermen in the Gaza Strip
59.	9 October	Fieldwork Unit	Renewed Israeli Escalation in the Gaza Strip: 1 Palestinian man killed and another wounded, along with 8 civilians, including 4 children and 1 woman
60.	10 October	Legal Unit	Continuing Denial of Justice for Palestinian Civilian Victims: Israeli District Court Rejects Judicial Case Filed on Behalf of Abu Selmiya Family
61.	22 October	Economic and Social Rights Unit	PCHR calls for the immediate release of 'Estelle' international activists
62.	22 October	Economic and Social Rights Unit	Four fishermen arrested in the Gaza Sea, fishing boat confiscated

No.	Date	Responsible Unit	Title
63.	24 October	Economic and Social Rights Unit	Closure of Beit Hanoun Crossing Threatens the Lives of Hundreds of Patients in the Gaza Strip
64.	5 November	Fieldwork Unit	In Excessive Use of Force, IOF Kill Palestinian Civilian in Central Gaza Strip
65.	5 November	Economic and Social Rights Unit	PCHR Condemns IOF Assault on a Fishing Boat While Palestinian Fishermen and International Solidarity Activists Were on Board
66.	11 November	Fieldwork Unit	New Israeli Escalation against the Gaza Strip, 7 Palestinians, Including 3 Children, Killed and 52 Others, Including 6 Women and 12 Children, Wounded
67.	15 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Calls for Special Session of the Human Rights Council: Violations of International Law in the Gaza Strip Must End
68.	15 November	Fieldwork Unit	New Israeli Military Escalation against the Gaza Strip; Leader of Hamas' Armed Wing and His Bodyguard Extra-Judicially Executed and Death Toll in Rises to 13, Including Two Children and a Woman, While 115 Civilian, Including 26 Children and 25 Women, Woun
69.	16 November	Fieldwork Unit	IOF Continue the Offensive on the Gaza Strip: Civilian Deaths Rise to 10, Including 6 Children, and 253 Others, Including 62 Children, Wounded
70.	17 November	Fieldwork Unit	Ongoing Israeli Offensive on Gaza: Palestinian Civilian Deaths Rise to 17, Including 2 Women and 6 Children, and 381 Wounded, Including 107 Children and 64 Women
71.	18 November	Fieldwork Unit	Ongoing Israeli Offensive on Gaza: Palestinian Civilian Deaths Rise to 27, Including 10 Children and 5 Women, and 520 Wounded, Including 140 Children and 83 Women
72.	18 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Strongly Condemns Targeting of Journalists in Gaza by Israeli Warplanes
73.	19 November	Fieldwork Unit	Attempts to Rescue the al-Dalu Family Ongoing; Israeli Occupation Forces Destroy House over Its Residents
74.	19 November	Fieldwork Unit	Ongoing Israeli Offensive on Gaza: Palestinian Civilian Deaths Rise to 58, Including 18 Children and 12 Women, and 622 Wounded, Including 175 Children and 107 Women
75.	20 November	International Unit	PCHR Calls for Independent International Investigation to address escalating violations in the Gaza Strip
76.	20 November	Fieldwork Unit	Israeli Offensive on Gaza Ongoing for 7th Consecutive Day:
77.	21 November	International Unit	PCHR Calls on ICC Prosecutor to Initiate Investigation into Situation in Gaza Strip
78.	21 November	Fieldwork Unit	Israeli Offensive on Gaza Ongoing for 8th Consecutive Day and Military Operations Escalate:

No.	Date	Responsible Unit	Title
79.	21 November	Economic and Social Rights Unit	Shame on International Community... On Universal Children's Day, Dozens of Palestinian Children Victimized by Israeli Military Offensive on the Gaza Strip
80.	21 November	Democratic Development Unit	3 Journalists Killed in 2 Separate Israeli Airstrikes in Gaza City and Deir al-Balah
81.	22 November	Fieldwork Unit	Israeli Offensive on Gaza Stopped Following 8 Days of Attacks:
82.	23 November	Fieldwork Unit	After the Truce Deal: Israeli Forces Kill Palestinian Civilian and Wound 20 Others in Khan Yunis;
83.	25 November	Woman and Child Unit	On the Occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women: An Open Call to the International Community to Offer Protection to Palestinian Civilians, Mainly Women
84.	26 November	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Arrests of Political Leaders of Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the West Bank
85.	29 November	Economic and Social Rights Unit	15 Fishermen Arrested and 6 Fishing Boats Confiscated and Destroyed The Continued Attacks against Palestinian Fishermen Prove False Israeli Claims of Permitting Fishermen to Fish up to 6 Nautical Miles
86.	2 December	Economic and Social Rights Unit	In New Violation of Cease-fire Agreement, Israeli Forces Arrest 14 Fishermen and Confiscate 3 Fishing Boats: Number of Arrested Fishermen Increases to 29 and Confiscated Boats to 9
87.	4 December	Fieldwork Unit	Israeli Government Defies International Law by Approving More Settlement Projects in Occupied Jerusalem
88.	10 December	International Unit	PCHR launches campaign 'Palestine to the ICC'
89.	11 December	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Condemns Raids of Three Civil and Human Rights Organisations in Ramallah by Israeli Forces
90.	13 December	Fieldwork Unit	Israeli Forces Kill Palestinian Child in Hebron
91.	18 December	Economic and Social Rights Unit	Palestinian Fisherman Injured and Arrested along with Another by Israeli Forces in Gaza Sea
92.	20 December	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Appeals the International Community to Save the Lives of Palestinian Administrative Detainees, al-Sharawna and al-Eissawi, Who Have Been on Hunger Strike
93.	27 December	International Unit	4 Years Since Operation Cast Lead

Other PCHR press releases in 2012

No.	Date	Preparing Unit	Title
1.	16 January	International Unit	PCHR Welcomes PLO Approach to Swiss Government Requesting the Convening of a Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention
2.	26 June	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Welcomes the Results of Egyptian Elections, and Considers it to be a Milestone for Democratic Transformation in Egypt and the Arab World
3.	2 August	International Unit	PCHR condemns EU decision to strengthen ties with Israel
4.	8 August	Joint press release	A Press Release Issued by PNGO Glory to the Egyptian Martyrs and Shame on Criminals
5.	26 August	International Unit	PCHR welcomes South Africa decision to place Opt labels on settlement goods
6.	27 August	Democratic Development Unit	PCHR Welcomes the Egyptian Authorities' Decision to Re-open the Rafah International Crossing Point for Movement to and from the Gaza Strip
7.	3 December	Economic and Social Rights Unit	20 Years After Declaring the International Day of Persons with Disabilities: Deterioration of the Palestinian Disabled Persons' Conditions Continues

2. Field updates on the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons

In 2006, the Democratic Development Unit began to issue field updates highlighting the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons in the oPt. The updates are based on information gathered by the Fieldwork Unit. In 2012, PCHR issued 23 of these updates, all of which are available on the PCHR website.

Field updates on the state of lawlessness and proliferation of weapons in 2012

No.	Date	Title
1.	15 January	Palestinian Killed and Four Others Injured Due to Explosion inside House in Rafah
2.	8 February	Two Siblings Shot Dead in Nablus
3.	8 February	Young Man Killed and another One Seriously Wounded by Gunmen in Rafah
4.	12 February	Civil Liaison Office Stormed and Robbed in Northern Gaza for 7th Time
5.	19 February	Child Killed as Tunnel Collapses in al-Zahra Town South of Gaza
6.	15 March	A Child Killed and Two Persons Wounded in Three Separate Shooting Incidents in the Gaza Strip
7.	5 April	Child Killed in Jabalya While Playing with Firearm
8.	29 April	Young Man Killed While Attempting to Settle Family Dispute in Gaza
9.	15 May	House of Ms Sohaila Tarazi Fired at and the Administrative Staff of al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza Threatened by Unknown Persons
10.	3 June	Two Palestinians Killed in Khan Younis and Hebron Due to Misuse of Weapons

11.	9 July	5 Children Injured in 2 Separate Incidents by Recklessly Playing with Explosive Objects in the Gaza Strip
12.	1 August	Fatah Leader Yehya Rabah Beaten by Unknown Persons in Gaza
13.	6 August	One Palestinian Killed and Another Wounded in a Familial Dispute in al-Bureij Refugee Camp in Central Gaza
14.	15 August	Bomb Detonated in Front of a Women's Hairdressing Shop in Central Gaza Strip
15.	6 September	PSS Officer Killed by Unknown Persons in Jenin
16.	4 October	Explosion outside Restaurant in Jabalia Refugee Camp, Northern Gaza Strip
17.	18 October	Palestinian wounded by home-made rocket near his house in Rafah
18.	22 October	Palestinian killed by unknown gunmen in Khan Yunis
19.	23 October	Palestinian killed by home-made rocket in Beit Hanoun
20.	31 October	Palestinian woman wounded as homemade rocket lands on house in Rafah
21.	5 November	Man Killed in al-Nussairat Refugee Camp and Two Others Injured in Rafah by Internal Explosions
22.	9 December	Man and His Son Injured by gunfire during Personal Dispute in Gaza
23.	12 December	Man Killed and 6 Injured by Gunfire in Jabalya

3. Behind Locked Doors narratives

On 17 April 2012, which marked the Palestinian Prisoners Day, PCHR published 9 narratives which focused on the detention conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, by providing testimonies of released prisoners and highlighting the suffering of families of prisoners.

No.	Date	Title
1.	17 April	Fishermen Detained
2.	17 April	Collectively Punishing Families through Prisoners Isolation

4. Field updates on the state of the Gaza Strip border crossings

In light of the unprecedented closure imposed by Israeli forces on the Gaza Strip, the Economic and Social Rights Unit started to issue field updates documenting the state of the Gaza Strip border crossings. In 2012, PCHR issued 12 of these updates in both Arabic and English.

No.	Date	Period
1.	8 January	1 December 2011 – 31 December 2011
2.	9 February	1 January 2012 – 31 January 2012
3.	14 March	1 – 29 February 2012
4.	12 April	1 – 31 March 2012
5.	8 May	1 – 30 April 2012
6.	11 June	1 – 31 May 2012
7.	18 July	1 – 30 June 2012
8.	8 August	1 – 31 July 2012
9.	10 September	1 – 31 August 2012
10.	8 October	1 – 30 September 2012
11.	12 November	1 – 31 October 2012
12.	12 December	1 – 30 November 2012

5. Occupied Lives narratives

These narrative accounts are the personal stories of victims of human rights and humanitarian law violations. The narratives demonstrate the hardship of life in the oPt. In 2012, PCHR published 35 of these narratives in both Arabic and English.

No.	Date	Title
1.	9 February	• Mental Health
2.	16 February	• Sniper Fire in the 'Buffer Zone'
3.	7 March	• Targeted Livelihoods
4.	14 March	• Switching off hospitals
5.	21 March	• My Son Ayoub
6.	4 April	• No benzene, no livelihood
7.	25 April	• Marking Land Day, marking lives
8.	02 May	• Fear at the Border
9.	9 May	• Hoping for a New Home
10.	16 May	• Not knowing what your son looks like
11.	23 May	• Denying medical care
12.	30 May	• Paralyzed in the Gaza Strip
13.	6 June	• A Dream Beyond the Border
14.	13 June	• I shall not be moved from my land.
15.	14 June	• Closure of Gaza's Agricultural Industry
16.	20 June	• Farming without a Market
17.	27 June	• I will build my house again
18.	4 July	• She might never walk again
19.	11 July	• They killed my only child
20.	18 July	• Free at Last. Free at Last. Finally, Free at Last.
21.	25 July	• Fishing in Troubled Waters
22.	1 August	• He just wanted a better life
23.	8 August	• I have no future
24.	15 August	• 13 days of trauma
25.	29 August	• I hope to see my son before it's too late
26.	5 September	• No place to call home
27.	12 September	• No justice for my son's death
28.	19 September	• Nothing left to hope for
29.	26 September	• Education under attack
30.	3 October	• They terrorize us in our homes.
31.	10 October	• No child should have to go through this
32.	17 October	• Violation of the right to freedom of worship
33.	24 October	• There was no reason for my son's death
34.	7 November	• People died while waiting for a new home
35.	14 November	I Have not seen my son for more than five years

6. Factsheets

In 2012, PCHR published 34 factsheets highlighting specific violations of human rights, including violations of children's rights in the Gaza Strip, attacks on the Gaza Strip and their consequences, the 'buffer zone' in the Gaza Strip, the illegal closure imposed by Israeli forces on the Gaza Strip, and Israeli attacks on Palestinian fishermen in the Gaza Strip.

No.	Date	Title
1.	10 January	Violations of Children's Rights in the Gaza Strip (01– 30 December 2011)
2.	18 January	Status of Criminal and Civil Complaints Submitted to Israeli Authorities on behalf of Victims of Operation Cast Lead
3.	30 January	Attacks in the "bufferzone" and their consequences
4.	8 February	The Buffer Zone in the Gaza Strip (January 2012)
5.	28 February	Israel's illegal closure of the Gaza Strip
6.	28 February	Attacks in the "bufferzone" and their consequences
7.	14 March	Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen in Gaza Sea
8.	21 March	Violations of Children's Rights in the Gaza Strip (01-30 February 2012)
9.	30 March	Israel's illegal closure of the Gaza Strip
10.	30 March	Attacks in the 'buffer zone' and their consequences
11.	10 April	Violation of Children's Rights in the Gaza Strip (01-31 March 2012)
12.	7 May	Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen in Gaza Sea
13.	10 May	Attacks in the Gaza Strip and their consequences
14.	13 May	Violations of Children's Rights in the Gaza Strip (01-30 April 2012)
15.	7 June	Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen in the Gaza Sea
16.	10 June	Attacks in the 'buffer zone' and their consequences
17.	02 July	Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen in the Gaza Sea
18.	3 July	Israel's illegal closure of the Gaza Strip
19.	17 July	Attacks in the "bufferzone" and their consequences
20.	23 July	Violation of Children's Rights in the Gaza Strip 1 May – 30 June 2012
21.	4 August	Israel's illegal closure of the Gaza Strip
22.	8 August	Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen in Gaza Sea
23.	3 September	Israel's illegal closure of the Gaza Strip
24.	3 September	Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen in Gaza Sea
25.	5 September	Violations of Children's Rights in the Gaza Strip (1 July– 31 August 2012)
26.	1 October	Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen in the Gaza Sea
27.	1 October	Gaza Strip: Attacks and their Consequences
28.	4 October	Violations of Children's Rights in the Gaza Strip (01– 30 September 2012)
29.	14 October	Israel's illegal closure of the Gaza Strip
30.	7 November	Violation of Children's Rights in the Gaza Strip 1 – 31 October 2012
31.	12 November	Attacks in the 'buffer zone' and their consequences
32.	13 November	Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen in the Gaza Sea
33.	9 December	Israeli Attacks on Palestinian Fishermen in Gaza Sea
34.	26 December	Violation of Children's Rights in the Gaza Strip (1 – 30 November 2012)

7. Aftermath

PCHR began to publish these narratives after the Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip (27 December 2008 – 18 January 2009) to highlight on the ongoing impacts of the offensive on the Palestinian civilian population.

No.	Date	Title
1.	1 January	1 January 2009: The al-Naslah Family
2.	02 January	02 January 2009: Eyad Al-Astal
3.	3 January	3 January 2009: Muti'a and Ismail Al-Silawi
4.	4 January	4 January 2009: The Abdel Dayim family
5.	5 January	5 January 2009: Amal Al-Samouni
6.	6 January	6 January 2009: The Al-Daya family
7.	7 January	7 January 2009: Matter family
8.	8 January	8 January 2009: The Al-Rahel Family
9.	9 January	9 January 2009: Abu Odah Family
10.	10 January	10 January 2009: Wafaa' Al-Radi'a
11.	11 January	11 January 2009: Hamoudah Family
12.	12 January	12 January 2009: 'Ayyad Family
13.	13 January	13 January 2009: Hiba al-Najjar
14.	14 January	14 January 2009: Mohammed Mousa
15.	15 January	15 January 2009: The Al-Nadim Family
16.	16 January	16 January 2009: Shurrab Family
17.	17 January	17 January 2009: The al-Ashqar family
18.	18 January	18 January 2009: Abu Rjeilah family

8. Civilians under attack

No.	Date	Title
1.	21 November	We are really Hoping for a ceasefire. We want to live like normal people, without fear
2.	28 November	50 Years of Hard Work and Labor Shattered within Hours
3.	5 December	Journalists Attacked during the Israeli Operation Pillar of Defense

9. PCHR submissions to the UN

In 2012, PCHR presented 15 oral and written submissions before the UN bodies, including: Human Rights Council (HRC); Universal Periodic Review (UPR) bodies; Special Rapporteurs; Working Groups; and treaty bodies.

No.	Date	Title
1.	18 February	Memorandum to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
2.	9 April	Memorandum on the Detainees from the Gaza Strip submitted to the UN Committee on Exercise of Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

3.	27 April	Memorandum to the UN Special Rapporteur for the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence on Reparation complaints which was submitted by PCHR to the Israeli Authorities on behalf of Victims of Operation Cast Lead
4.	27 April	Memorandum to the UN Special Rapporteur for the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence; titled: «The right to a remedy: Pursuit of reparations in response to violations of international law»
5.	24 June	Written statement to the 20th session of the HRC
6.	15 July	Memorandum to the Sixty-Second and Sixty-Third Sessions of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child; «Report of Israel under the Convention on the Rights of the Child»
7.	16 July	Memorandum to the Fifteenth session for the Universal Review Periodic in the UN- Human Rights Council
8.	24 August	Written submission in the twenty-first session for the HRC; titled «The right to a remedy: Pursuit of reparations in response to violations of international law»
9.	27 August	Memorandum to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention
10.	10 September	PCHR Submits Memorandum to the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions
11.	24 September	PCHR Submits Memorandum to the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons
12.	24 September	PCHR Submits Written and Oral Statement to the 21st Session of the Human Rights Council
13.	15 October	PCHR submits an Individual Complaint to the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food
14.	12 November	PCHR submits an Individual Complaint to the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief
15.	10 December	PCHR submits an Individual Complaint to the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing

10. Reports, studies and other publications

Publication	Type	Number	Language
Annual Report 2011	Periodic report	1	Arabic and English
The Rights to Freedom of Opinion and Expression and the Right to Peaceful Assembly under the PNA (1 September 2011 – 31 August 2012)	Report	1	Arabic
The Legislative Process and Financial Control during the Palestinian Political Fragmentation (June 2007– August 2012)	Study	1	Arabic
Palestinian Violations of the Right to Form Associations under the PNA			
The Right to adequate housing in The Gaza Strip Conditions of the owners of houses which were destroyed during the Israeli Offensive on the Gaza Strip (27 December 2008 – 18 January 2009)	Report		
Gaza 3 Years on; 'Operation Cast Lead' Victims tell their stories	Report	1	English
The Reality of Housing in the Gaza Strip December 2012			
Impact of the Closure Policy on the Economic and Social Rights in the oPT (1 January – 31 December 2012)	Report		
Weekly Report on Israeli Human Rights Violations in the OPT	Regular report	50	Arabic and English

Al-Mentar	Monthly newsletter	11	Arabic
The right to freedom of peaceful assembly under the PNA			
The Status of Criminal and Civil Complaints Which were Submitted by PCHR to the Israeli Authorities on behalf of Victims of "the Operation of Cast Lead" January 2012			
Palestinians behind Bars, Prisoners without Human Rights April 2012	Documentary		
Executive Summary: Report of the Independent Civil Society Fact-Finding Mission to Libya January 2012	Executive Summary		Arabic and English
Case Review: The State's obligation to investigate suspected grave violations of international law committed in the Gaza Strip during the 2004 military Operations 'Rainbow' and 'Days of Penitence'			
PCHR Issues New Report Titled: «No Solutions Are Foreseen: The Power and Fuel Ongoing Crisis Paralyzes Life in the Gaza Strip»	Report		
The text of the letter sent by Mr Raji Sourani, Director of PCHR, to Ms Jessica Montell, Executive Director of B'Tselem.	Letter		
End impunity in Palestine: calling for investigation and prosecution by the International Criminal Court	Joint Invitation		
Letter to the Italian President on the Occasion of His Visit to Bethlehem	Letter		
Letter by Human Rights Organisations to the Secretary General of the League of Arab States	Joint letter		
Letter by Human Rights Organisations to the UN Secretary General on the General Assembly's Session	Joint letter		
Civil Society Organisations: International Community Must Intervene Now to End the Impunity Enjoyed by War Criminals in Israeli and Palestine	Appeal		

Other publications

Publication	Type
Palestinian Prisoners Day	Poster
International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women	Poster

> **PCHR website (www.pchrgaza.org)**

We realise and appreciate the importance of communication and information technology in the contemporary world. Increasingly, we depend on our website as a means of disseminating human rights information. Our website is updated daily with publications and information on our activities and events on the ground. The material on the website is available in both Arabic and English.

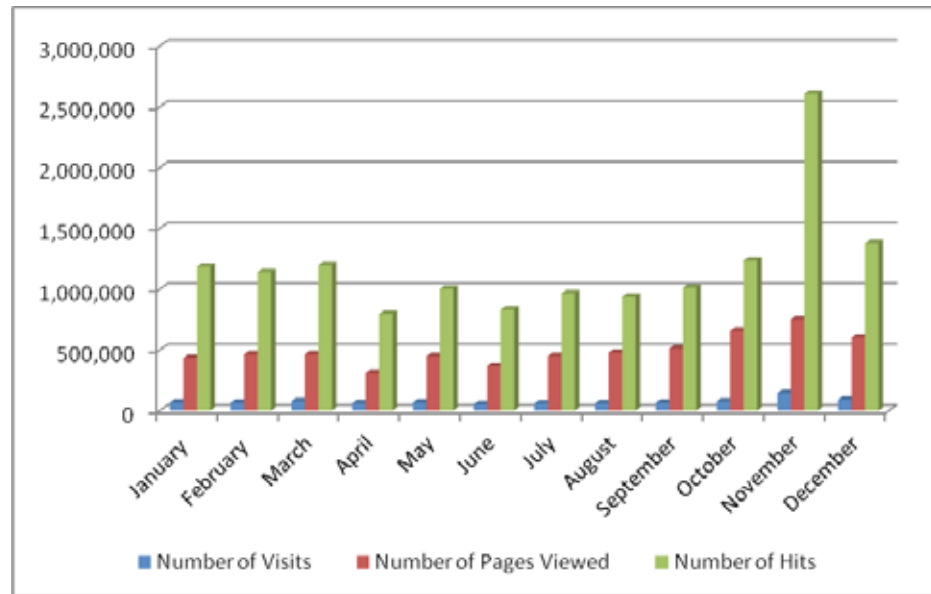
We also distribute our publications via e-mail: More than 8,000 subscribers to our mailing list receive PCHR publications via e-mail. In 2012, there were 913,323 visits to our website, with an average of 76,110 visits monthly and 2,537 visits daily.

Additionally, we use social media networks to disseminate our publications. The number of people who “liked” the PCHR page on Facebook is circa 8,300, and the number of people who follow PCHR on Twitter is circa 4,000.

Visits to the PCHR website in 2012

Month	Number of Visits	Number of Pages Viewed	Number of Hits
January	69,862	434,043	1,186,723
February	67,673	464,173	1,141,270
March	80,326	464,532	1,199,447
April	62,269	312,176	797,469
May	69,776	447,853	1,004,487
June	53,349	370,148	833,634
July	62,009	449,914	966,270
August	62,791	477,750	936,418
September	67,257	512,207	1,013,632
October	77,782	658,659	1,235,672
November	146,948	752,330	2,609,948
December	93,191	604,852	1,379,086
Total	913,323	5,948,637	14,304,056

Website statistics for 2012



> **PCHR Library**

PCHR has a specialised library with Arabic and English reference materials and periodicals, which focus on various subjects, including international law, domestic laws, human rights, democracy, the Palestinian cause, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. As of the end of 2012, the library collection consisted of 4,913 books (3,079 books in Arabic and 1,834 in English) and 1,079 periodicals (359 in Arabic and 720 in English). The library is open to the public and is mainly used by students, academics, scholars and other interested individuals.

(Footnotes)

1. PLC member Marwan Barghouti was elected in the 2006 PLC elections while in detention in an Israeli prison, as a member of Fatah parliamentary bloc.



