



Statement of Solidarity with Civil Society in Palestine

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The Israeli occupation is the major challenge and obstacle that the Palestinian society has, and that obstructs its development. The basic right of security, peaceful existence and selfdetermination for the Palestinian people, as well as its right to exist in an independent Palestinian State continues to be violated, resulting in deteriorating human rights conditions in the country, including poverty, unemployment, health care, education.

The raid by Israeli occupation army on December 11th 2012, to the offices of three civil society organizations based in Ramallah, namely the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO), Women's Union and Addameer; an advocate for Palestinians in Israeli jails, confiscating five computers from the latter group, is a mere demonstration of systematic Israeli policy towards adoption of drastic aggressive measures to stop any attempt towards the quest of freedom by Palestinian people. The incident adds to Israeli record of continuous violation of international humanitarian and human rights law and the continuous challenge Palestinian people are facing for the enjoyment of freedom of association and freedom of opinion and of expression under Israeli occupation.

The incident, that came right after December 10th International Human Rights Day, which particularly this year marked the importance of inclusion through reference to the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, to peaceful assembly and association require immediate action and condemnation by international community towards Israeli occupation forces. The incident follows as well the bid of Palestinian people towards recognition and the new UN status



as "non-member observer state," and points the Israeli policy approach to hinder the voices of Palestinian people to be heard by blocking human rights defenders and civil society activists' work through physical and psychological pressure implemented on them.

In this regard, as the Arab NGO Network for Development, in solidarity with our member organizations in Palestine, we call upon the international community, particularly the international organizations and international civil society, who extensively enjoy their freedom of expression and opinion to raise the restrictions that their counterparts in Palestine are facing under Israeli occupation. We call them to use their freedom to promote the Palestinians' through direct lobby on their governments to pressure Israel towards giving an immediate halt to attack human rights defenders.

It's time to put an end to the occupation which is violating the international laws by all means, we therefore call upon the international community and instances to pressure on Israel to abide the related UN resolutions, the recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to live in peace and prosperity.

Moreover, we call all the members of the Human Rights Council to elaborate the violations that human rights defenders' are facing under Israeli occupation during the upcoming Universal Periodic Review on January 29th 2013, for which yet Israel showed no signs of cooperation.