



الهيئة الفلسطينية المستقلة لحقوق المواطن

The Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights

Date: 2 March 2008

February 2008 Report on Human Rights Violations

Ongoing Violations of Human Rights and Freedoms throughout PNA-Controlled Territory Drop in Violations of the Right to Life

Based on monitoring and documentation carried out by the **Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights (PICCR)**, many violations against human rights and freedoms were reported throughout the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) controlled territory over the month of February 2008. However, violations against the right to life sharply dropped.

1. Violation of the right to life and physical safety:

Compared to February 2007, violations of the right to life and physical safety decreased markedly in the PNA-controlled territory. Compared to 56 citizens killed in February 2007 and 12 in January 2008, **PICCR** reported that 10 citizens lost their lives in incidents of security chaos and local instability, as well as due to absent conditions of public safety.

Of these fatalities, 6 citizens were killed in the Gaza Strip and 4 in the West Bank. 3 citizens were killed in acts of revenge, including 2 in the Gaza Strip and 1 in the West Bank: 28-year-old Jasser Hussein Jarghoun in Khan Yunis, 21-year-old Mohammed 'Amer Badawi in the Gaza city, and 39-year-old Abdul Rahman Ahmed Badawi in the town of Huwwara in Nablus. On 13 February 2008, several persons stabbed and killed Saleh Abu Wadi, a 21-year-old citizen, in the city of Qalqiliya in light of a personal dispute. As a result of arms abuse, 4 citizens, including 3 in the Gaza Strip, were killed. On 2 February, Ahmed Iyad Ahmed Bilal, a 15-year-old child from the Gaza city, died after he was shot in the chest. Ahmed was in company of his father along the An Nafaq Street, northeast of Gaza city. On 4 February, an armed confrontation took place between Palestinian individuals and Egyptian security forces on the Egyptian border, while attempting to prevent Palestinians from crossing the border. As a result of indiscriminate fire opened during the confrontation, 38-year-old Hamed Abdullah al Qadhi, who was present on his house roof, sustained a bullet in the chest and died. On 12 February, Ja'far Taleb Mohammed Abu 'Awadh, 23-year-old from the city of Dura in the governorate of Hebron, was killed while he was on duty guarding the *Al Mizan* Hospital in the city of

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Hebron. His colleague mistakenly opened fire, shooting Abu 'Awadh in the chest. On 29 February, Malak Younis al Kafarneh, a 3-year-old female child, was killed in Beit Hanun, after a locally-made rocket, which was fired by Palestinian individuals towards the Green Line, landed and exploded in her house yard.

On 22 February, Majd Abdul 'Aziz al Barghouthi, a 44-year-old citizen from the town of Kobar in Ramallah, died at the Palestinian General Intelligence offices in the city of Ramallah.

Due to lacking conditions of public safety, 'Imad Mubarak Shukheidem, a 2-year-old child, drowned in a waste water pool in the area of the Al Qarya al Badawiya in the vicinity of the town of Beit Lahiya in Northern Gaza.

Furthermore, **PICCR** reported that 28 citizens were injured in 9 incidents of infighting and security instability. The majority of these injuries were reported to have taken place in the Gaza Strip. In armed confrontations that took place on the Egyptian border, 30 Egyptian soldiers also sustained injuries.

2. Violations against Freedom of Opinion and Expression:

On 12 February, the Magistrate Court of the deposed government issued a decision as to prevent publication and circulation of the *Al Ayyam* daily newspaper in the Gaza Strip, ostensibly because the newspaper published a caricature insulting the Palestinian Legislative Council. Moreover, the Court sentenced Akram Haniyyeh, editor-in-chief, Baha' al Bukhari, the caricaturist, and director of the *Al Ayyam* newspaper office in Gaza to prison with stay of execution.

3. Attacks on public and private Institutions and property:

During the month of February, **PICCR** reported that 5 attacks were committed against public and private institutions and property.

Having handcuffed 2 guards and transported them to an unknown area, a number of unidentified armed individuals raided the offices of the Christian Youth Society in the Gaza city and used explosives to destroy its library hall. On 17 February, and based on a decision made by the deposed government in the Gaza Strip, Police forces seized control of the offices of the Bureau of Financial and Administrative Oversight. Police officers expelled employees from their offices and prevented them from carrying out their duties. On 7 February, unidentified individuals destroyed (using explosives) a billiard hall in the city of Rafah. Reasons behind the attack are still unknown. Also, on 10 February, unidentified individuals raided the Huwwara Public Health Centre in the southern Nablus governorate and damaged its contents. Likewise, reasons behind the attack are unknown. Moreover, an electricity generator was stolen from this selfsame Centre at the end of January 2008. On 24 February, armed Palestinian groups fired locally-made rockets towards the Green Line. However, 5 rockets landed on and caused severe damage to 5 civilian houses in the town of Beit Lahiya.

4. Attacks on Academic Freedom:

At night on 21 February, a number of masked armed individuals raided the *Al Manarah al Ma'madaniya* Private Kindergarten and School and inquired the guards about the principals of the school and kindergarten as well as whether these belong to the Christian community. The masked individuals also beat a guard and demanded that all guards abandon their jobs at the school because it is Christian.

5. Attacks on personal security and arrests:

Over the past month, **PICCR** reported that 100 arrests have been carried out by Palestinian security agencies in the West Bank, targeting Hamas members and activists. In the Gaza Strip, Police forces affiliated with the Hamas deposed government also arrested dozens of activists from the Fatah movement as well as former members of the Palestinian security forces. Moreover, scores of citizens are still being held in detention centres on political backgrounds in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

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