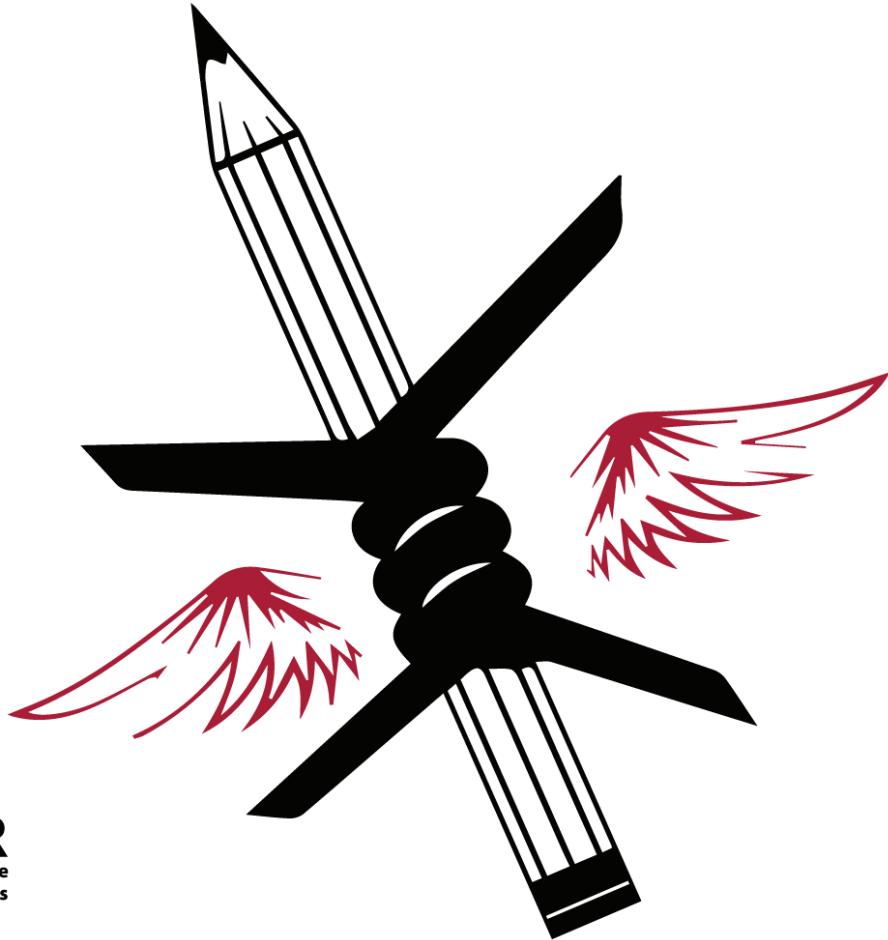


Silencing the Press: Israeli Occupation Forces Attacks on Journalists



PCHR
Palestinian Centre
For Human Rights

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Introduction

Israeli occupation forces (IOF) continued the systematic attacks against local and international media personnel¹ working in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) despite the protection that journalists, as civilians, enjoy under international law. IOF grave violations against journalists include threats to their personal safety and attack on their equipment with live and rubber bullets, physical and emotional assault, restrictions on the freedom of movement, bombardment of their office and other violations demonstrating a well-planned scheme to isolate the oPt from the rest of the world and to provide cover-up for crimes against civilians, and impose a narrative opposite to the reality on the ground.²

This is the 22nd edition of the “Silencing the Press” series issued by the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR). It covers the period from 01 May 2019 - 30 April 2020 and documents a significant escalation of Israeli attacks and violations against media personnel in the oPt. It includes detailed accounts of all Israeli attacks on media personnel and media institutions as documented by PCHR staff. This documentation is based on victims and eyewitnesses’ testimonies of PCHR’s field investigations.

1. Media personnel includes journalists, reporters, cameramen and workers at press offices. All these categories will be referred to as «journalists» in this report.

2. The isolation policy adopted by IOF is not limited to attacks and violations against media personnel, as IOF, for example, impose severe restrictions on the entry of internationals to the oPt, especially the Gaza Strip. This is also an attempt to isolate the oPt from the world to cover up the Israeli crimes against Palestinian civilians.

During the reporting period, PCHR documented an increase in attacks against journalists (98), that include:

- » Violation of the right to life and bodily integrity;
- » Violence against journalists, including physical and verbal assault, and degrading and humiliating treatment;
- » Detention and arrests;
- » Restrictions on the freedom of movement, including banning journalists' access to certain areas and from covering events; and banning journalists from travel outside the oPt;
- » Media institutions and offices raided, destroyed and shut;
- » Bombardment and destruction of media offices; and
- » Print ban on newspapers.

It should be noted that IOF violations in this regard are often complex and multi-layered making it hard to isolate incidents for an accurate count, as an incident may include multiple violations, exp. Detaining a crew of journalists, with multiple journalists, physically assaulting them or threatening them with arrest; banning journalists from covering incidents or access to a certain area.

This report focuses on the Israeli attacks against journalists covering the weekly "Great March of Return and Breaking the Siege" (GMR) protests along the eastern and northern borders of the Gaza Strip, since 30 March 2018. Ever since the first day of GMR, journalists were not spared Israeli attacks despite wearing appropriate and clearly defined attire, even more, IOF snipers deliberately targeted journalists' upper bodies, proving beyond doubt that soldiers had orders, or in the least an authorization, to cause human damage

and deter journalists from covering IOF crimes.

The bombardment and complete destruction of two media and culture institutions by IOF warplanes were the most prominent during the reporting period, particularly in the military escalation on Gaza in May 2019.

In addition to targeting journalists at GMR, PCHR documented that the most significant attacks were committed while journalists were covering incidents and peaceful protests organized by Palestinian civilians and international solidarity and human rights activists against the confiscation of Palestinian lands in the West Bank for the benefit of annexation wall and settlement expansion. Other attacks against journalists occurred shooting incidents, roads closures, Israeli bombardment, house demolitions, attacks on events and protests on national occasions and other attacks carried out by IOF on a daily basis.

Those attacks included violations of the right to personal security; assault and harassment; firing tear gas canisters at them; shooting and wounding journalists; preventing them from taking photos and covering incidents; raiding, searching, closing and banning media offices; raiding journalists' houses; and banning the print of newspapers.

During the reporting period, the policy of arresting and detaining journalists continued, especially in the West Bank where many are still under arrest; some already tried and sentenced, some placed under administrative detention, and others have neither been tried nor indicted. Those journalists were detained on charges of incitement against IOF on social media. In this context, many Palestinians, including children, especially in occupied Jerusalem, are on trial for "inciting against IOF on social media" as well.

PCHR has documented (98) attacks³ by IOF against media and were as follows:

- » 40 injured with different bullets, including 2 who lost sight in one of their eyes;
- » 14 assaults and evidence of cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment;
- » 26 arrested and detained;
- » 13 incidents where journalists were banned coverage;
- » 1 media office was raided and closed;
- » 2 media and cultural office bombarded and demolished;
- » 2 newspapers banned in the West Bank.

PCHR has categorized the crimes and violations committed by IOF against journalists depending on the type of attack, as each incident could comprise multiple violations, PCHR categorization is based on the most significant one in a given incident.

3. There are dozens of cases documented by PCHR related to prosecuting Palestinians on grounds of expressing their opinion on social media.

Legal Protection for Journalists under international humanitarian law

The international humanitarian law (IHL) considers journalists an integral part of civilians and affirms that their presence in conflict areas should not be a justification for targeting them.

The Fourth Geneva Conventions do not have specific stipulations on journalists; yet, the Third Geneva Convention (1949) relative to the treatment of prisoners of war granted war correspondents the status and privileges of prisoners of war, in case they were captured. Hence, IHL has not given special privilege or protection to journalists covering armed conflicts but stressed that they are civilians and must be treated on this basis.

Article 79 of Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions stipulates that:

1. Journalists engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered as civilians within the meaning of Article 50, paragraph 1.
2. They shall be protected as such under the Conventions and this Protocol, provided that they take no action adversely affecting their status as civilians, and without prejudice to the right of war correspondents accredited to the armed forces to the status provided for in Article 4 A 4) of the Third Convention.
3. They may obtain an identity card similar to the model in Annex II of this Protocol. This card, which shall be issued by the government of the State of which the journalist is a national or in whose territory he resides or in which the news medium

employing him is located, shall attest to his status as a journalist.

Article (50) of Protocol I, stipulates that: *“A civilian is any person who does not belong to one of the categories of persons referred to in Article 4 A 1), 2), 3) and 6) of the Third Convention and in Article 43 of this Protocol. In case of doubt whether a person is a civilian, that person shall be considered to be a civilian.”* Thus, the presence within the civilian population of individuals who do not come within the definition of civilians does not deprive the population of its civilian character. In all cases, an attack which may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objects, or a combination thereof, which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated⁴.

In the light of the above, journalists do not have special protection and the convention has merely emphasized their civilian character. As the number of victims among journalists has increased, the United Nations has worked through the Security Council to reaffirm the civilian character of journalists and that they should not be targeted in any way. Security Council resolution 2222 of May 2015:

“Journalists, media professionals and associated personnel engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered as civilians and shall be respected and protected as such, provided that they take no action adversely affecting their status as civilians. This is without prejudice to the right of war correspondents accredited to the armed forces to the status of prisoners of war provided for in article 4.A.4 of the Third Geneva Convention.”

4. Additional Protocol I to the 1977 Geneva Conventions, Article 51 and to paragraph 5(b).

The resolution also condemns the impunity in the case of targeting journalists in armed conflicts and stipulates that: “Strongly condemns the prevailing impunity for violations and abuses committed against journalists, media professionals and associated personnel in situations of armed conflict, which in turn may contribute to the recurrence of these acts”.

Under IHL, civilians must enjoy a variety of different rights, the most important being that they should not be targeted in any way as long as they are in their civil status, according to Article 51 of Additional Protocol 1 to the Geneva Conventions:

1. The civilian population and individual civilians shall enjoy general protection against dangers arising from military operations. To give effect to this protection, the following rules, which are additional to other applicable rules of international law, shall be observed in all circumstances.
2. The civilian population as such, as well as individual civilians, shall not be the object of attack. Acts or threats of violence the primary purpose of which is to spread terror among the civilian population are prohibited.
3. Civilians shall enjoy the protection afforded by this Section, unless and for such time as they take a direct part in hostilities.

IHL classifies war correspondents as “Persons who accompany the armed forces without actually being members thereof”⁵. If this category falls into the power of the enemy, it shall be treated as a prisoner of war until final releasing and repatriation. Therefore, civilian journalists enjoy more protection than war correspondents and they should not be targeted in any way.

5. Geneva Convention (III) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War 1948, Article (4, a,4).

Protection for press institutions and equipment

Press institutions are civilian objects and therefore should not be targeted by any party to the conflict. Press institutions remain civilian objects, as long as they do not effectively contribute to hostilities. Therefore, the parties to the conflict have an obligation to distinguish between civilian objects and military objects. Article 48 of Additional Protocol I stipulates that: *“In order to ensure respect for and protection of the civilian population and civilian objects, the Parties to the conflict shall at all times distinguish between the civilian population and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives and accordingly shall direct their operations only against military objectives.”* In addition, Article 52 of Additional Protocol I stipulate, *“Civilian objects shall not be the object of attack or of reprisals. Civilian objects are all objects which are not military objectives as defined in paragraph 2”*. In light of the above, press institutions are civilian objects, even if they broadcast news or statements hostile to one of the parties to the conflict. Moreover, paragraph (3) of Article 52 stipulates that: *“In case of doubt whether an object which is normally dedicated to civilian purposes, such as a place of worship, a house or other dwelling or a school, is being used to make an effective contribution to military action, it shall be presumed not to be so used.”*

Press institutions may lose its immunity under IHL if it hosted combat action, Paragraph (2) of Article 52 stipulates, *“Attacks shall be limited strictly to military objectives. In so far as objects are concerned, military objectives are limited to those objects which by their nature, location, purpose or use make an effective contribution to military action and whose total or partial destruction, capture or neutralization, in the circumstances ruling at the time, offers a definite military advantage.”*

Press equipment, such as live broadcasting vehicles, broadcast towers, cameras and other equipment, are considered civilian objects that may not be targeted unless they are effectively used in hostilities and attacking them would have a definite military advantage. Thus, any targeting of press equipment or broadcast towers is considered a violation of international humanitarian law, amounting to a war crime.

**IOF violations
against journal-
ists working in
local and inter-
national media**

I. Violations of the right to life and bodily integrity

In this report, PCHR documented the continued Israeli violations of the right to life and physical security of journalists, including shootings which led to wounding journalists while in the field. PCHR has documented 40 cases of shooting that resulted in wounding 40 journalists in the oPt; 5 of them were shot with live bullets, 30 were shot with rubber bullets and 5 were directly hit with tear gas canisters.

Investigations showed that IOF directly and deliberately targeted journalists, as the IOF's unjustified shooting was often intended to inflict maximum harm to journalists in disregard for discrimination and proportionality principles of using force. Thirteen journalists were targeted in the head and upper bodies, while 27 others were targeted in their upper and lower limbs. In addition, 2 journalists lost their vision after IOF directly opened fire at them; the first was hit with a tear gas canister in his eye in the Gaza Strip, while the second was wounded in the West Bank. During the reporting period, another journalist, who was wounded in his eye in December 2018, lost his vision due to the aggravation of his health condition.

- **Journalists wounded during the Great March of Return and Breaking Siege (GMR) protests in the Gaza Strip**

According to PCHR's documentation, 25 journalists, including 2 females, were directly wounded while covering the GMR's weekly protests organized in the 5 encampments in eastern Gaza Strip since 30 March 2018. Additionally, (4) journalists were shot and injured with live bullets, (18) with rubber bullets and (3) with direct tear gas canisters.

Moreover, PCHR's follow-up of targeting cases and injuries confirms that IOF targeted journalists to inflict maximum harm to them, and this can be clarified from the places of injuries; (7) were targeted in the head and upper parts of the body and (18) in the upper and lower limbs.

The most prominent cases were as follows:

- » On 10 May 2019, two journalists were hit with a tear gas canister in the left leg while covering the GMR protests in eastern Rafah, south of the Gaza Strip. The wounded journalists were identified as Abdul Rahman Mohammed Deeb al-Khatib (42), a freelance journalist; and Ramzi Hatem Jameel al-Shakhrit (34), who works at "Rowad Al-Haqiqa" Network. According to PCHR's available information, al-Khatib and al-Shakhrit were wearing the PRESS-marked vests and carrying cameras to cover the protests. At approximately 15:00 IOF heavily opened fire at the protestors approached the border fence, wounding many of them and killing one. In addition, IOF fired direct tear gas canisters at the protestors and wounded them. Among those wounded were al-Khatib and al-Shakhrit who were taking photos 300 meters away from the fence.

- » On 24 May 2019, 'Atah Bassam Hadayied (24), a photojournalist at Palestine News Agency, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his right hand while covering GMR protests in eastern Khan Yunis. It should be noted that Hadayied and his colleagues, who were wearing the PRESS-marked vests and photographing the protestors, were present over 100 meters away from Jakar Street which is 100 meters away from the border fence. During which, IOF opened fire at them, wounding Hadayied with a rubber bullet in his right hand. He was then taken to a medical point, 100 meters away from the fence, for treatment.

- » On 28 June 2019, Journalist Ra'ed Yusuf Abu Mathkour (34), who works at "Rowad Al-Haqiqah" Network, was shot and injured with a live bullet in his left leg while covering the GMR protests in eastern Rafah. Abu Mathkour said that: At approximately 17:00 on Friday, 28 June 2019, he headed to Gaza-Israel border fence area in eastern al-Shawka village, east of Rafah, in order to cover the GMR protests, noting that he was not wearing the PRESS-marked vest and helmet. At approximately 17:30, thousands of protestors flocked to the return camp to participate in the GMR protests. Abu Mathkour photographed dozens of civilians who approached 150 meters to the border fence and saw when IOF fired live and rubber bullets and tear gas canisters at them. As a result, many civilians sustained live and rubber bullets wounds and suffocated due to tear gas inhalation. Abu Mathkour photographed a paramedic namely Mohamed al-'Aloul, who was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his abdomen. At approximately 18:30, Abu Mathkour sustained a live bullet wounds in his left leg while photographing the protestors and fell on the ground. The protestors carried him to the ambulance that took him to a medical point in the return camp to receive first aid before taking him to Abu Yusuf Al-Najjar Hospital in Rafah.

- » On 28 June 2019, Mohammed Omer Abdul 'Aziz Kassab (26), a freelance journalist from Deir al-Balah, was hit with a rubber bullet in the head while covering the GMR protests in eastern al-Buraij refugee camp central the Gaza Strip. Kassab was covering the protests and wearing the PRESS-marked vest, during which, he sustained a rubber bullet wounds and fell on the ground. Kassab was taken to a medical point in the return camp, where he received first aid before referring him to al-Aqsa Hospital in Dir al-Balah. It was turned out that Kassab sustained deep incised wound that was stitched.
- » On 05 June 2019, a cameraman at al-Aqsa Channel, Sami Jamal Taleb Motran (34), from al-Nusairat Camp, was hit with a rubber bullet in his chest, noting that he was wearing the PRESS-marked vest. Motran was taken to a medical point and treated on the spot.
- » On 05 July 2019, 'Atah Basel Fojo (22), a freelance journalist from Rafah, was hit with a tear gas canister in his left leg while covering the GMR protests in eastern Rafah. Fojo said that: At approximately 17:30 on Friday, 05 July 2019, he headed to border fence with Israel in eastern al-Shawka village, east of Rafah, to cover the GMR protests. Fojo clarified that he was wearing the PRESS-marked vest and not wearing helmet. He added that he took photos of IOF who fired live and rubber bullets and tear gas canisters at the protestors, resulting to the injury of a woman with a direct tear gas canister in her chest and a young man with a live bullet in his lower extremities. At approximately 18:40, Fojo was directly hit with a tear gas canister in his left leg while photographing the protests, 150 meters away from the fence. A number of young men carried him to the ambulance that took him to a medical point in the return camp, where he received first aid.

- » On 12 July 2019, Mahmoud Zakaria Abu Musallam (22), who works at Palestine al-Hadath Agency and lives in al-Maghazi refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his left leg while covering the GMR protests, 200 meters away from the fence in eastern al-Burieij camp in the central Gaza Strip. Musallam was wearing the PRESS-marked vest and a helmet. He was taken to a medical point in the return camp, where he received first aid and treatment on the spot.
- » On 12 July 2019, Touqa Suliman al-Zamli (27), who works at al-Majedat media network, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in her right leg while covering the GMR protests in eastern al-Shawka village, east of Rafah.
- » On 19 July 2019, Mo'ath Fathy al-Hams (23), a freelance journalist, sustained minor wounds after being shot with a rubber bullet in his right hand while covering the GMR protests in eastern al-Shawka village, east of Rafah. Al-Hams was targeted while standing hundreds of meters away from the border fence and wearing the PRESS-marked vest and TV-marked helmet.
- » On 19 July 2019, a cameraman at al-Aqsa Channel, Sami Jamal Taleb Motran (34), from al-Nusairat Camp, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his eye, and a photojournalist at Amad News Agency, Safenaz Baker Mahmoud al-Louh (28), from Gaza City, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in her back. Both of them were covering the GMR protests in eastern al-Burieij refugee camp and standing hundreds of meters away from the border fence when IOF opened fire at the protestors. In the meantime, Motran attempted to photograph a wounded civilian, but IOF opened fire at them, wounding him with a rubber bullet in his eye while al-Louh wounding with

a rubber bullet in her shoulder. Both of them were taken to al-Aqsa Hospital, where al-Louh received treatment and left the hospital, while Motran was referred to al-Shifa Hospital to complete his treatment. It should be noted that Motran lost his vision after his health condition deteriorated.

- » On 02 August 2019, Osama Shareef al-Kahlout (35), a freelancer journalist from Dir al-Balah, was shot and injured with a live bullet in his left leg while covering the GMR protests in eastern al-Buriej refugee camp and standing 200 meters away from the border fence. Al-Kahlout was taken a medical point to receive first aid before referring him to al-Aqsa Hospital for treatment.
- » On 02 August 2019, a reporter for Xinhua News Agency, Hatem Sa'di Omar (39), from Rafah, was shot and injured with 2 rubber bullets in his legs while covering the GMR protests, 130 meters away from the border fence in eastern Khan Yunis. It should be noted that Omar was wearing the PRESS-marked vest. Omar was taken a medical point to receive first aid before referring him to Abu Yusuf al-Najjar Hospital for treatment.
- » On 30 August 2019, 'Ali Hasan Jadallah (29), who works at Anadolu News Agency, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his head while covering the GMR protests in eastern Gaza City, despite wearing the PRESS-marked vest and TV-marked helmet and standing 200 meters away from the order fence. Jadallah was taken a medical point to receive first aid before referring him to al-Quds Hospital in Gaza City, where his injury was stitched.
- » On 06 September 2019, Ahmed Mohamed al-Hendy (27), who works at Seraj Office for media services and lives in al-Naser neighborhood in Gaza City, was shot and injured

with a rubber bullet in his hand while covering the GMR protests in eastern Gaza City, despite wearing the PRESS-marked vest and TV-marked helmet and standing 400 meters away from the order fence. Al-Hendy was taken a medical point to receive first aid before referring him to al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, where he underwent medical examinations and left the hospital later.

- » On 13 September 2019, Zakaria Rohi Bakeer (24), a freelance cameraman from al-Maghazi camp, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his left hand while covering the GMR protests, 500 meters away from the border fence in eastern al-Buriej camp. Bakeer was taken to a medical point, where he received first aid before referring him to al-Aqsa Hospital in Dir al-Balah.
- » On 20 September 2019, 'Abed al-Rahman Hani al-Kahlout (23), a cameraman at Shehab News Agency, was shot and injured with a live bullet in his feet while covering the GMR protests in eastern Gaza City, despite wearing the PRESS-marked vest and TV-marked helmet and standing 300 meters away from the order fence. Al-Kahlout was taken to a medical point before referring him to al-Quds Hospital in Gaza City, where he underwent medical examinations that turned out that he sustained shrapnel wounds in his leg. Al-Kahlout underwent surgery to remove the shrapnel.
- » On 27 September 2019, IOF opened fire at Ramadan Ibrahim al-Shareef (30), a freelance journalist from Rafah, while covering the GMR protests in eastern Rafah. The bullet settled in his PRESS-marked vest and did not penetrate it.
- » On 25 October 2019, Mahmoud Khaled Khattab (26), from Dir al-Balah, was shot and injured with a live bullet in his left shoulder while covering the GMR protests in eastern

- al-Buriej camp. Khattab was taken to a medical point, where he treated on the spot.
- » On 25 October 2019, Eyad Nadi Qudaieh (27), a freelance journalist from Khuza'ah village, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his thigh while covering the GMR protests in eastern Khan Yunis. Qudaieh was wearing the PRESS-marked vest and TV-marked helmet. He was taken to a medical point, where he treated on the spot.
 - » On 01 November 2019, 'Abed al-Raheem al-Khatib (42), a freelance journalist from Rafah, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his right arm while covering the GMR protests in eastern Rafah. Al-Khatib was wearing the PRESS-marked vest and TV-marked helmet, carrying his camera and standing 300 meters away from the border fence. Al-Khatib was taken to a medical point, where he received first aid.
 - » On 01 November 2019, Hani Hammad al-Sha'ir (30), a freelance journalist, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his back while covering the GMR protests in eastern Khan Yunis, despite wearing the PRESS-marked vest and standing 100 meters away from the border fence. Al-Sha'ir was taken to a medical point, where he received first aid.
 - » On 20 December 2019 Thair Khaled Abu Riyash (24), a cameraman at al-Shamal Online Network, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his left leg while covering the GMR protests in Abu Safia area in eastern Jabalia refugee camp, despite wearing the PRESS-marked vest and standing 150 meters away from the border fence. Abu Riyas was taken to a medical point, where he received first aid before referring him to al-'Awda Hospital in Jabalia.

- **Journalists Wounded in the West Bank**

PCHR has documented 15 cases in which journalists, including a female, were directly injured while covering incidents in the West Bank; 1 was shot with a live bullet, 12 with rubber bullet and 2 were directly hit with tear gas canisters throughout their bodies. Among those wounded: (6) in their upper body and (9) in their upper and lower limbs.

The most prominent cases were as follows:

- » On 03 May 2019, a reporter at Ihlal News Agency, Sari Shareef Jaradat (35), from Sa'ir village in Hebron, was shot and injured with a live bullet in his left leg while covering a peaceful demonstration in Beit Sirah village, west of Ramallah. Jaradat said to PCHR's fieldworker that: *"On 03 May, I was in Ramallah to cover a demonstration that organized in Beit Sirah village, west of Ramallah, calling for recovering Palestinians' dead bodies. I waited until the worshipers got out of the mosque after performing Friday prayer. They gathered and headed towards the annexation wall in a peaceful demonstration. When they arrived at the annexation wall, IOF were deployed in the area and military vehicles parked behind the barbed wire. The worshipers stood 100 meters away from the soldiers, who heavily fired sound bombs, tear gas canisters and rubber bullets at them. Many journalists and I stood the western side where the soldiers stationed, but they fired tear gas canisters at us, so we were forced to stand in another side. In the meantime, Palestinian young men threw stones at the soldiers who were hiding behind the olive trees, 150 meters away from us. Forty minutes later, I felt pain in my right leg, so I hold my colleague Hisham Abu Shaqrah, who shouted: "ambulance... ambulance". I was taken via a private car to Ramallah governmental hospital and I bled all the way. I was admitted to the emergency department, where I received first aid and then the shrapnel were removed from my leg."*

- » On 28 June 2019, Nedal Shafeek Taher Eshtiah (49), a photojournalist at Xinhua News Agency, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his hand while covering a peaceful demonstration organized in Kufuor Qaddoum village, northeast of Qalqilya. Eshtiah was standing 200 meters away from the clashes erupted between the protestors and IOF and wearing the PRESS-marked vest. Eshtiah was taken to a clinic in the village, where he received first aid.
- » On 19 July 2019, 'Abdullah Ishtawi (27), a photojournalist at B'Tselem, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his back; and Ja'far Eshtiah (51), a photojournalist at Agence France-Presse (AFP), was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his foot, while covering a peaceful demonstration organized at the eastern entrance to Kufuor Qaddoum village, northeast of Qalqilya.
- » On 20 July 2019, Ayat 'Arqawi (29), a photographer at APE Agency, was hit with a tear gas canister when IOF raided a sit-in tent established by civilians protesting at the Israeli authorities' decision to demolish 16 residential building in Wadi al-Humus neighborhood in Sour Baher village, south of occupied East Jerusalem, east of Bethlehem. IOF fired sound bombs and tear gas canisters at the protestors, wounding 'Arqawi. She was then taken to a clinic to receive treatment.
- » On 20 September 2019, Ahmed Shower (27), a photojournalist at Palestine TV, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his hand while covering a peaceful demonstration organized in the center of Kufuor Qaddoum village, northeast of Qalqilya, protesting at the closure of the eastern entrance to the village for 15 years. IOF stationed behind sand berms fired rubber bullets, sound bombs and tear gas canisters at the protestors.

As a result, 3 civilians, including Shower, were wounded. Shower was taken to Darwish Nazzal Hospital in Qalqilya, where he underwent medical examinations that showed he sustained a fracture in his hand.

- » On 06 October 2019, a reporter at al-Quds News Website, Mo'tasem Saqf al-Hait (31), from Nablus, was shot and injured with a rubber bullet in his abdomen while covering clashes erupted between Palestinian young men and IOF in Nablus. The clashes erupted when IOF stationed in the eastern area of the city to secure the entry of (17) buses carrying (1100) settlers to the abovementioned area in order to perform prayers in "Joseph's Tomb". Mo'tasem was standing few meters away and wearing the PRESS-marked vest when he sustained a rubber bullet wounds in his waist and fell on the ground. The Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS)'s staff provided him with first aid.
- » On 15 November 2019, On 15 November 2019, Journalist Mo'ath Ibrahim 'Atiyah al-'Amarnah (30), from al-Duheishah refugee camp, south of Bethlehem, sustained serious wounds after being shot with a rubber bullet in his left eye. He was taken to Surif village where he was transferred via a PRCS ambulance to al-Ahli Hospital in Hebron. Al-'Amarnah was then taken to Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation Hospital where he underwent medical examinations and later was referred to Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. Al-'Amarnah underwent a surgery to remove the metal shrapnel that settled in his eye cavity, but doctors could not remove it fearing it would cause a hemorrhage near the brain. Al-'Amaranah completely lost sight in his left eye due to his injury.
- » On 26 November 2019, journalist Abdul Majeed Mohammed Abdul Majeed 'Edwan

(30), from Far'oun village, south of Tulkarm, was shot with a rubber bullet in the left foot, while covering a peaceful activity organized by dozens of Palestinian civilians and a number of students from Palestine Technical University (Khadouri), west of Tulkarm, against U.S.A administration's decision to legitimize settlements. Israeli soldiers fired live and rubber bullets and sound bombs at the protestors when the latter attempted to approach the annexation wall established adjacent to the university buildings.

- » On 31 January 2020, Mohammed 'Ayyad 'Awad (55), a volunteering photographer at B'Tselem, was wounded with a rubber bullet to the left foot while covering the clashes between IOF and Palestinian civilians at the entrance to Beit Ummer village, north of Hebron. An Israeli infantry unit deployed in Asidah area adjacent to the village entrance when Palestinian young men threw stones at Israeli soldiers, set tires on fire, and closed the road with steel barriers. Israeli soldiers chased the young men and fired sound bombs and tear gas canisters indiscriminately. As a result, a number of protestors suffocated due to tear gas inhalation.
- » On 02 February 2020, Abdul Mohsen Tayseer Abdul Mohsen Shalaldah (28), a journalist at Media Agency, was shot with a rubber bullet in the left side of his head. He fell on the ground and had seizure and fainted. After that, Shalaldah was transferred to al-Ahli hospital in Hebron. After medical examinations, Shalaldah suffered a fracture in the skull. Shalaldah was covering confrontations between IOF and Palestinians at Hebron's northern entrance, to protest the U.S. President Trump's Middle East Plan.

Journalist Shalaldah said to PCHR's fieldworker:

"I was about 30 meters away from Israeli soldiers and about 100 meters away from stone-throwers as I was wearing the "PRESS" flak jacket". IOF heavily fired tear gas canisters at the area. As a result, I suffocated due to tear gas inhalation, so I wore the muzzle. After that I heard a sound of gunfire. I felt something hit my head and then fell on the ground. I fainted and had seizure. When walk up, I was at al-Ahli hospital. Until now, I suffer from my injury."

- » On 02 February 2020, Journalist Mashhour Hasan al-Wahwah (37), was shot with a tear gas canister in his chest, causing his suffocation when he was covering confrontations between IOF and Palestinian civilians in Bab al-Zawiyah area in the center of Hebron. dozens of Palestinian outraged young men gathered in Bab al-Zawiyah area in the center of Hebron. They burned tires and threw stones and empty bottles adjacent to the military Checkpoint (56) established at the entrance to al-Shuhada'a Street, which is closed by IOF. In the meantime, Israeli soldiers deployed in the area and topped roofs of nearby houses and fired sound bombs and tear gas canisters at stone-throwers and at commercial shops. As a result, a number of civilians and protestors suffocated due to tear gas inhalation. Israeli soldiers continued chasing protestors and indiscriminately fired rubber bullets and tear gas canisters at them.
- » On 11 February 2020, Mohammed Hamdan (29), a photojournalist at Awdah Satellite Channel, was shot with a rubber bullet in his left hand while covering confrontations between IOF and Palestinians at al-Birah's northern entrance. Journalist Hamdan was taken to Palestine Medical Complex in Ramallah where received proper medical treatment.

- » On 11 March 2020, Baker Mohammed Abdul Haq (30), journalist at Palestine Satellite Channel, was shot with rubber bullet in his left leg while covering confrontations between IOF and Palestinians in al-Armah Mount, south of Beta village in Nablus. Israeli soldiers heavily opened fire and fired tear gas canisters at the civilians, killing a Palestinian child and wounding 14 others; 2 of them were deemed in critical condition.

- » On 13 March 2020, Ja'far Eshtiyah (51), a journalist at Agence France-Presse, was shot with a rubber bullet in his right leg, while covering weekly protest in Kafer Qaddoum village, northeast of Qalqilya. According to PCHR's follow-up, Eshtiyah, who was wearing the "PRESS" flak jacket and was about tens of meters away while photographing the incidents as, when a soldier deliberately shot him. Eshtiyah received first aid by PRCs ambulance that were in the area.

II. Violence, assault, degrading and inhumane treatment against journalists

PCHR documented many cases in which 14 journalists, including a woman, were subjected to beating and other forms of violence and inhumane and degrading treatment by Israeli forces. Those attacks were as follows:

- » On 16 July 2019, Israeli police officers arrested 2 journalists who were covering confrontations between Palestinian civilians and IOF that brought equipment to demolish a water pool belonging to Zayed al-Ja'bari in al-Gharous Valley area, east of Hebron, alleging that the pool was built in area (C). Israeli border guard police officers attacked Abdul Hafith Diab al-Hashlamoun (55), journalist at the European Agency. An officer aggressively pushed al-Hashlamoun into the ground. As a result, al-Hashlamoun fell on the ground and sustained minor wounds in his hands and legs. Other officers also attacked Mashhour Hasan Mahmoud al-Wahwah (34), a journalist at Wafa News agency, ruptured his shirt, and aggressively pushed him on the ground, causing him minor wounds in his hands.
- » On 02 August 2019, Israeli soldiers attacked Iyad Namer Hamad (61), a photographer at Associated Press, by beating him while he was covering a protest organized by Palestinian civilians in Wadi Hums neighborhood in Sour Baher village, south of occupied East Jerusalem. IOF suppressed the peaceful protest, attacked the participants and fired tear gas canisters at them. As a result, many civilians suffocated due to tear gas inhalation, including journalist Hamad as an Israeli soldiers kicked him by his leg. Hamad fell on the ground, as a result of that, and sustained minor wounds and was referred to Beit Jala Hospital. Journalist Hamad said that Israeli soldiers detained him for a while

to prevent him from covering the Friday prayer activities in Wadi al-Hums and then attacked him.

- » On 17 October 2019, Israeli soldiers attacked Motasem Saqef al-Hait (28), a photographer at Quds News Network, while he was covering confrontations between IOF and Palestinian civilians in Tarmesi'yah village, east of Ramallah, to protest against Israeli settlers' incursions of the village. Israeli soldiers indiscriminately fired sound bombs and tear gas canisters at the civilians, chased then into the fields and prevented journalists from being present in the area. Israeli soldiers also attacked by pushing and verbally insulting journalist Saqef al-Hait.
- » On 25 October 2019, Israeli soldiers attacked Mashhour Hasan al-Wahwah (36), a photographer at Wafa News Agency, while covering IOF incursion into al-Hawouz area, south of Hebron, as IOF broke the commercial shops' doors and summoned their owners to come and hand them the surveillance cameras. When journalist al-Wahwah attempted to record the incidents, an Israeli soldier attacked him and beat him with his rifle's butt and forced him to leave the area.
- » On 26 October 2019, Israeli soldiers physically assaulted 6 journalists while the latter were covering a peaceful protest organized by dozens of civilians in Salah al-Din St, in occupied East Jerusalem, in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners on hunger-strike for being put under administrative detention: Heba al-Labdy; Samer al-Arbeed; Tariq Qa'dan. Israeli police surrounded the area and assaulted participants with clubs and fired sound bombs at them. Eyewitnesses said the IOF chased 2 young men, beat them, dragged them on the ground, and took them to Salah Edin police center for

investigation. IOF also arrested, Fayez Abu Rmilah (27), a photojournalist at Anadolu Agency; Nawal Hijazi, a reporter at Alkofiya Satellite Channel; Ghassan Mohammed Abu Eid (36), a photographer at Alkofiya Satellite Channel; and Mahmoud Eliyan (40), photographer at al-Quds Newspaper. IOF forced all journalists to evacuate the area with force.

- » On 11 November 2019, IOF stationed at Za'tarah checkpoint, south of Nablus attacked, Majdi Mohammed Suleiman Ishtayah (37), a photojournalist at Associated Press Agency from Salem village, east of Nablus, when he was crossing the above checkpoint in Hebron. Ishtayah said to PCHR's fieldworker that:

"At approximately 19:00 on Monday, 11 November 2019, I was returning from Hebron and returning home in Salem village, east of Nablus. When I arrived at Za'tarah checkpoint established south of the city, a female border guards soldiers stopped me and checked my ID card, in which identify me as a photojournalist at the Associated Agency. A soldier approached me and told me to write down my phone number on his cell phone, but I rejected that. The soldier then ordered me to park my vehicle adjacent to the checkpoint, detained me inside it, and took the key. Five hours later, the 2 soldiers returned to me and ordered me to step off the vehicle and put my right hand to my back. I was taken to a point where Israeli settlers are stationed away from the checkpoint's cameras. I was frightened and thought that the soldiers will shoot me dead due to fake allegations as they always do. I was thoroughly searched and beaten by the soldiers. After 10 minutes, the soldier headed to my vehicle and searched it. When he found my camera, the "PRESS" flak jacket and helmet, he made some calls until he realized that I am a photojournalist and released me after that."

- » On 25 January 2020, Israeli soldiers detained Tha'er Abdul Nasser Ahmed Sharif (28), a journalist at Palestine Satellite Channel from al-Aroub refugee camp, north of Hebron, heavily beaten him, and pepper sprayed him and his family near his house, which is 10 meters away from the Bypass road (60) at the entrance to al-Aroub refugee camp, north of Hebron. Sharif was released after 5 hours of detention during which he was tortured and subjected to degrading treatment by Israeli soldiers. Journalist Sharif said to PCHR that:

"Israeli soldiers maltreated me during the detention hours as one of them told me to bend down and he attacked me by slapping me on the back of my neck while 2 other soldiers hold my hands to my back in an attempt to make me fall on the ground. An officer pushed me to the ground and put his foot on my neck and squeezed on my neck 3 times, so I screamed. My father and sisters arrived and attempted to interfere, but the soldiers pepper-sprayed them. The officer ordered me to turn back and stand up with my face to the wall where he handcuffed me and hit me on my neck, so I fell on the ground. I was taken after that to the military watchtower where I was tortured throughout my body. I suffered severe pain and felt dizzy. Few hours later, I was released. I felt dizzy, so I asked a young man, whom I know, to take me home."

- » On 02 February 2020, Israeli soldiers attacked journalist Mohammed Melhem, who works at Marah Radio Station, from Halhoul in Hebron, while covering a peaceful protest. Melhem said to PCHR:

"On Sunday morning, 02 February 2020, I learnt that student march took part in Hebron's University and another one took part from Halhoul called for by national factions, so that both protests meet in Halhoul's Bridge where a military watchtower is established. At ap-

proximately 11:30 on the morning, I headed to the station office in Hebron to bring "PRESS" flak jacket and cover the protests. I arrived at a military site, which is about 400 meters away from the military watchtower where a group of Israeli border guards police officers deployed in the area. The road was closed, and the officers prevented vehicles from passing through it while participants in Hebron's University march arrived at the western area of the military watchtower. Two young men threw stones at Israeli soldiers and the latter heavily fired tear gas canisters and attacked the participants. In the meantime, police officers attacked me by heavily beating me on my head and face. I bled from my face and my tooth fractured. The soldiers dragged me towards a military vehicle and stepped me into it. I stayed for 10 minutes in the military vehicle during which I was beaten all over my body by Israeli soldiers and then hand cuffed and blindfolded. I was taken to "Kiryat Arba" Settlement's police center."

Melhem Added that he was accused of throwing stones at Israeli soldiers. He attempted to convince the officers that he is a journalists and phone called his brother to bring his press ID card to prove that. However, Melhem was transferred to Etzion Center where he stayed in a room and the officers stripped him naked. In the next day, Melhem felt sick, but he only received a pain medicine (paracetamol) though he felt severe pain. On 05 February 2020, Melhem attended a hearing in Ofer Military Court where he was accused of throwing stones and his detention was extended to 72 hours. On 13 February 2020, the court issued a decision to release Melhem on bail of about NIS 5000. However, the court set another hearing on 08 March 2020.

- » On 21 February 2020, IOF attacked Mohammed Enayah (28), a photojournalist at Palestine Satellite Channel, while covering confrontations between IOF and Palestinian civilians, to protest against IOF's ongoing closure of the eastern entrance to Kafer Qad-doum village, north east of Qalqilya. According to PCHR's follow-up, clashes occurred between Palestinian protestors and IOF, who fired rubber bullets and sound bombs at them. Enayah, who was wearing the "PRESS" flak jacket, was covering these incidents while wearing "PRESS" flak jacket when an Israeli bulldozer attacked the protestors and leveled a big rock, so the rocks and hit 2 civilians, including Enayah. As a result, Enayah fell on the ground and his camera was broken and he sustained injury in his leg. Enaya was referred to Darwish Nazal Hospital in the city where he underwent medical examinations and received medical treatment.

III. Detention and Arrests against Journalists

During the reporting period, around (26) journalists, including 6 women, were detained or arrested by the Israeli forces. PCHR documented many cases of detaining or arresting journalists whether on duty or from their own houses following raiding and searching them on grounds of being a journalist. Four journalists are still under arrest; some of them have been sentenced, others were referred to administrative detention and their detention was renewed more than once. Other detained journalists were not sentenced or convicted on any charge. The arrests and detention were as follows:

- » On 03 May 2019, IOF arrested 2 journalists while covering incidents in Yatta, south of Hebron between Palestinian civilians and IOF. dozens of Palestinian civilians, Israeli activists and human rights defenders organized a volunteer day to fix the soil road that connects between the west and southeast of Yatta, south of Hebron. The Israeli forces arrived at the area and handed the participants a decision to evacuate the area, claiming that it is a military closed zone. The participants refused to leave the area and continued their work, so the soldiers attacked them and pushed them into the ground. The soldiers arrested 15 foreign activists and 3 civilians from the city. The soldiers also arrested Abdul Hafith al-Hashlamoun (45), a photojournalist at Associated Press (AP) Agency and freelance journalist Ahmed al-Bath, from Nablus. The arrestees were taken to the Israeli police center in “Kiryat Arba” settlement, east of Hebron. The police released them after informing them of the decision to deport them of the area for 15 days.
- » On 21 May 2019, Israeli soldiers arrested journalist Sami Radi al’Asi (48), a reporter at a number of local networks in Nablus after they raided and searched his house in

Nablus. IOF referred al-'Asi for administrative detention for 3 months and renewed his detention once more before releasing him on 18 November 2019. Al-'Asi served 6 months in the Israeli prison.

- » On 24 June 2019, Israeli soldiers arrested journalist Amer Tawfiq Abu Hleil (25) after they raided and searched his house in Durra, southwest of Hebron. Abu Hleil's mother said to PCHR:
- » "I woke up to the sound of heavy knocking on our door. When I opened the door, a number of Israeli soldiers rushed into our living room and detained me and my son Ammar (18), who suffers from cardiac problems, and took our ID cards and cell-phones while searching the house. An officer asked me about my son Amer (25), so I told him that Amer lives in the first floor with his wife. A group of Israeli soldiers headed to Amer's apartment. When Amer opened the door, the soldiers immediately handcuffed him while a number of them searched the apartment. After that, the soldiers left the house, taking my son Amer with them to an unknown destination."
- » IOF arrested Abu Hleil under Administrative detention for 3 months and renewed his detention for another 3 months.
- » On 06 August 2019, IOF arrested Mohammed Ali Atiq (27), a reporter at Watan News Agency, after they raided and searched his house in Birqin village, west of Jenin. Journalist Atiq was interrogated by IOF on grounds of his press work in al-Jalamah prison. Atiq was referred to Salem Court in Nablus, which decided to release him 8 days after his detention.

- » On 30 August 2019, IOF arrested photojournalist Hasan Dabous (30), after they raided and searched his house in Ni'lin village, west of Ramallah. A recorded video published on social media shown the moment IOF arrested journalist Dabous from his house. Dabous was arrested for several days before he was released.
- » On 08 October 2019, Israeli police stationed at Bab Hetta in occupied East Jerusalem's Old City, handed summonses to Maisa'a Mahmoud Abu Ghazalah (34), a reporter at Ma'an News Agency in Jerusalem, and Sundos Abdul Rahman Abu Baker Owais (23), a reporter at Al Jazeera Mubasher TV Channel, for investigation in al-Qashla Police Center in occupied East Jerusalem's Old City. The 2 journalists were interrogated on grounds of disruption of public order by photographing Israeli settlers storming al-Aq-sa Mosque. the detainees were released later.
- » On 31 October 2019, Ali Abdul Rahim Jaradat (64), a writer and journalist, was arrested from his house in al-Baloua' neighborhood, al-Beira. IOF raided and searched his house and checked the ID cards of his family, and took Jaradat to Ofer Prison, west of Ramallah. IOF announced the administrative detention for 6-months after a week of his detention which ended in 30 April 2020, and the verdict was confirmed on 12 November. It should be noted that Jaradat spent up to 14 years in separate periods in the Israeli prisons, the latest was in 2016.

Jaradat's agent, a lawyer of al-Dameer Association for Human Rights, who appealed the court's judgment, said that the military court's judge claimed that there are evidences that the detainee is an activist in a "prohibited organization", and his activity poses a threat to the security of the area, and this evidence is sufficient to justify the military judge's decision to confirm the administrative detention over the specified period, so the appeal was therefore dismissed.

- » On 02 November 2019, IOF arrested the activist journalist Ahmed al-Safadi (45), while covering the Palestinian protest in support to the infected prisoners on hunger strike in the Israeli prisons. al-Safadi was taken to “Salah al-Dein St.” police station for interrogation on grounds of his journalistic work. Several hours later, he was released after forcing him to sign a decision of banning his entry to Salah al-Dein St. in Jerusalem for 15 days or appearing before military court.

- » On 06 December 2019, IOF arrested the Palestine Satellite Channel’s crew and one of the guests while broadcasting the weekly program “Good Morning Jerusalem” in the occupied East Jerusalem. Wadi Helwa information center – Silwan, said that the Israeli Intelligence Services arrested the channel crews from 2 locations in al-Zaytoun Mount and Bab al-’Amoud area, east and center of the city. The center added that IOF arrested Dana Abu Shamsiyah, the show presenter; photographer Amir ‘Abed Rabbuh; and former prisoner Mohammed al-’Abasi, the show guest, from al-Zaytoun Mount after IOF raided the place and confiscated the camera equipment. In Bab al-’Amoud area, journalist Christine Renawi and photographer ‘Ali Yaseen were arrested after they ended the show and the camera equipment were confiscated. It should be noted that “Gilad Ardan”, Minister of Public Security, issued a decision on 20 November 2019, to close Palestine Satellite Channel’s office in the city for 6 months for “PA-organized activities in the State of Israel without a permit under the law”.

- » On 09 December 2019, IOF arrested the journalist Sameh Jabr al-Titi (24), a reporter for the Hebron University-affiliated broadcaster Radio Alam, from his house in al-’Aroub refugee camp, north of Hebron. IOF raided and searched his house before arresting him, then he was subjected to interrogation as the Israeli military prosecution accused him of posting false, misleading and inflammatory news on his Facebook page, and

photographing the military watchtower established at the entrance to al-'Aroub refugee camp and publishing it in a report. Al-Titi detention has been extended several times. On 01 March 2020, he was tried, and no verdict was issued. The trial session was postponed until 19 April 2020, when the verdict was issued. On 19 April 2020, the Israeli 'Ofer Military Court, west of Ramallah, sentenced al-Titi to six months and 1 day in prison, and fined him NIS 5,000, in addition to 18-month stay of execution for 5 years, if he appears before the military court again on the same charge.

- » On 11 December 2019, IOF raided and searched Bushra Jamal al-Taweel's (26) house in Um al-Sharayet neighborhood in al-Beira, the journalist and photographer at "Anin al-Qaid Net". IOF detained her father, the senior Hamas leader Jamal al-Taweel, who was released recently, in his house. Bushra was arrested several times on ground of her journalistic work; the latest was in November 2017. Bushra was subjected to the administrative arrest for 8 months, after 3 days, Israeli Intelligence Services extended the administrative arrest for more 4 months.
- » On 15 January 2020, IOF moved into al-'Abydeya village, east of Bethlehem, they raided and searched Suhaib Aziz al-Assa's (33) house, a journalist in al-Jazeera channel, and handed him a summons to refer to the Israeli Intelligence Services in "Gush Etzion" settlement, south of the city.
- » On 21 January 2020, IOF arrested the photojournalist Yazan Ja'far Fawzi Abdullah Abu Salah (26), a photographer at al-Hadaf Magazine and Beesan Association who live in 'Arraba, southeast of Nablus. Abu Salah was arrested while passing through a temporary military checkpoint on route 505 highway, southeast of Nablus using taxi from

Ramallah to Nablus, and then he was taken to al-Jalama prison, north of the West Bank. Israeli Authorities extended the detention of Abu Salah for over 6 times, and prevented his lawyer from meeting him, and he is still under arrest without trial until now.

- » On 24 January 2020, IOF arrested Abdul Karim Darwish (25), after raiding and searching his house in Beit Hanina neighborhood, north of Jerusalem. IOF took Darwish to “Salah al-Dein St.” police station in the occupied East Jerusalem, after hours; IOF released him after giving him a decision of banning his entry to the Aqsa Mosque for 10 days.
- » After 24 January 2020, IOF arrested the journalist Amjad Mohammed ‘Arafa (40), after raiding and searching his house in Ra’s al-‘Amoud, east of the occupied East Jerusalem’s Old City. IOF took Abu ‘Arafa to “Salah al-Dein St.” police station in the occupied East Jerusalem, after hours; IOF released him after giving him a decision of banning his entry to the Aqsa Mosque for 15 days.
- » On 09 February 2020, IOF raided and searched the journalist Ala’ Jaber Titi’s (37) house, in al-‘Aroub refugee camp, north of Hebron. Al-Titit said to the PCHR’s fieldworker that: at approximately 01:30, IOF stormed their house and pointed the gun to his face causing fear to his family and children. He added, they took him and his brothers out of the building and started searching his apartment and all the apartments in the building that belonging to his brothers accurately before releasing him.
- » On 21 February 2020, IOF arrested the journalist Emad Jabrin, while covering the clashes between the IOF and the Palestinian civilians when IOF established a temporary military checkpoint in the western entrance of Taqoua’, south of Bethlehem, and start-

ed checking the Palestinian's vehicles and their ID cards. Dozens of Palestinian young men gathered and threw stones at IOF, who replied by shooting live bullets and hit a number of them. IOF detained Jabrin in the military watchtower near the entrance of the village and released him after two hours.

- » On 26 February 2020, IOF arrested the journalist Mujahed Bani Mifleh (31), an editor of al-Quds.com, while driving with his wife and children passing through a military checkpoint established on Ramallah road in Nablus. He was then taken to "Ariel settlement" police station where they investigated with him on ground of his journalistic work and his posts on Facebook. His detention has been extended. On 01 March 2020, supposed to be his trial session but it was postponed until 05 March 2020, when the verdict was issued in Salem Military Court, north of Ramallah, to release him.
- » On 16 April 2020, Israeli Intelligence Services summoned Palestine TV reporter in Jerusalem, Christine Khaled Rinawi (31), via a phone call to refer to al-Maskoubeya Police Station in West Jerusalem, at approximately 22:00 of the same day.

Al-Rinawi said that the Israeli Intelligence Services investigated with her for 3 consecutive hours about her work at Palestine TV and the media messages that she spread via TV and her Facebook page. She added that the Security Officers accused her that she did not commit to the Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan decision to ban the TV staff from doing any work for 6 months, which was expired two days ago. Al-Rinawi said that she was threatened by the Israeli Authority to renew the decision of banning the Palestine TV staff in Jerusalem again. Six months ago, IOF has shut down Palestine TV office in Jerusalem, east of the occupied East Jerusalem's Old City, arrested and barred its employees from doing any work for the TV in Jerusalem.

IV. Restrictions on the freedom of movement

Restrictions on freedom of movement form a systematic policy in the context of the violations and collective punishments that the Israeli occupation forces continue to impose on Palestinian civilians in the oPt. Journalists face serious difficulties to access and cover incidents to practice their work, including; banning their travel outside the oPt; restriction on moving between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; preventing them from moving between the West Bank's villages and countries due to the Israeli military checkpoints; and restricting their access to cover incidents. However, Palestinian journalists suffer from this type of violation every day, and even the international journalists, because it is unlimited and cannot be confined in certain cases. Despite this, PCHR monitored some cases:

1. Journalists banned access to certain areas

- » On 12 May 2019, IOF arrested 6 journalists and banned them from practicing their work and covering the Israeli violations against the Palestinian civilians in the valleys. IOF arrested them while covering the incidents when the IOF evacuated the residents of Humsa al-Fawqa village in the northern valleys. The arrestees are: Khaled Bdair (30), a reporter at al-Ghad TV; Shadi Yaser Jarar'a (29), a freelancer journalist; Mahmoud Fawzi Abdul Ghani (35), a freelancer journalist; Hazem Emad Naser (29), a photographer at al-Najah Satellite Channel; Shaza Abdul Rahman Hammad (30), a freelancer journalist; Ranin Rateb Sawafta (30), a reporter at Ajyal Radio Network; and Hisham Abu Shakra (31), al-Anadol Agency. IOF released them in evening hours after confiscating their Journalistic ID Cards, claiming that this is a closed military zone.

- » On 31 May 2019, IOF banned the journalist Monthir Mohammed al-Khatib (35), a photographer at al-Ghad TV, from documenting the crowded civilians on Qalandia checkpoint, north of Ramallah. IOF forced al-Khatib to leave and threatened him to break down his camera.
- » On 31 January 2020, IOF banned Palestine Satellite Channel's crew from covering the clashes in al-'Aroub refugee camp, north of Hebron, during the protest when Trump announced, "the deal of the century." The crew included: the photographer Tha'er 'Arjan (38); the photographer Fadi Taleb Khilaf (33); and the reporter Azmi Waleed Banat (24).
- » On 25 February 2020, IOF banned Palestine Satellite Channel's crew from shooting of "Malaf al-Yawm" program, in Deir Nizam village, west of Ramallah, and arrested them for 2 hours.

2. Journalists banned travel outside the oPt

During the reporting period, IOF banned two journalists, including a member of the General Secretariat of the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate, from travelling outside of the oPt. Weather to practice their journalistic work or to participate in international conferences.

- » On 09 June 2019, IOF banned Omar Nazzal, a member of the General Secretariat of the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate, from travelling through Allenby checkpoint (King Hussein Bridge) heading to Tunisia to represent the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate in the International Federation of Journalists It should be noted that the Israeli Authorities kept on preventing Nazzal from travelling since 2014.

- » On 18 August 2019, IOF banned Majdoulin Reda Hassouna (31), a journalist at (TRT) TV, from Nablus, from travelling through Allenby checkpoint (King Hussein Bridge) heading to Turkey for work. According to her statement, she headed to Jericho Bridge to pass through King Hussein Bridge heading to Turkey, when she arrived at the Israeli checkpoint and gave her passport, they immediately arrested her, and she was taken to ISS. She tried to tell him that she is flying at 22:00, but to no avail. At approximately 21:30, three Israeli soldiers came and took her to the waiting room and then told her that she was banned from travelling after arresting her for 4 hours, and she has to refer to the ISS in her village. On the next day, Majdoulin headed to ISS office in Hawara, Nablus, but they ordered her to refer again on the next day, this was repeated for 3 consecutive days, without being able to conduct an interview.

V. Media institutions raided, destroyed and shut

PCHR documented several cases in which IOF raided, searched and closed media institutions, and confiscated its contents and equipment under the pretext of incitement against Israel.

- » On 20 November 2019, an Israeli police and Intelligence force raided and searched al-Arz Tv Productions office which also contains the Palestine Satellite Channel office in al-Sawana neighborhood, in the occupied East Jerusalem. They raided and searched the office, and confiscated some of the folders and computers, then they hung a decision on the office's door signed by the Israeli Internal Security Minister Gilad Erdan to close the office for 6 months. Christine Rinawi said that IOF raided and searched Pal-

estine Satellite Channel office, and handed her and Nizar Younis, the general director of the office, summonses to refer to the Israeli Intelligence Services. Furthermore, IOF arrested the photographer Ayman Abu al-Romouz.

VI. Media offices bombarded and destroyed

On 04 May 2019, during the Israeli military escalation on the Gaza Strip, IOF targeted a journalistic headquarter and cultural center with several missiles launched by the Israeli warplanes.

In the first incident, Israeli warplanes targeted a 6-story building in western Gaza Strip, contained al-Anadol Agency, and totally destroyed it. Eyad Yaser Eqtifan (45), the owner of the building, said that at approximately 07:30, he received a phone call asking him about the office of al-Anadol Agency, then ordered him to evacuate in 30-minutes. After 30-minutes, Israeli warplane launched 5 warning missiles at the building, then 2 missiles which totally destroyed it. It should be noted that the building was containing al-Asra Media office before they moved to another place recently. And no casualties were reported.

In separate incident, at approximately 21:05, Israeli warplanes targeted the 5-storey al-Khuzondar building in al-Rimal neighborhood, in the central Gaza Strip, that where it contains Abdullah al-Hourani Center for Studies and Documentation which belonging to PLO.

VII. Newspapers banned in the OPT

IOF continue to ban al-Resalah and Palestine newspapers, which are published in Gaza

City, from being printed in the West Bank's printing houses for 5 years. On 28 May 2014, the Israeli authorities issued a decision to ban the printing of the two newspapers in al-Ayyam printing house in the West Bank. They raided al-Ayyam newspaper office in Betunia village, west of Ramallah, in the center of the West Bank and informed the printing house of a military decision to ban publishing and distributing Palestine newspaper, which is originally

published in Gaza city.

The policy of impunity, lack of accountability, and the silence of the international community on the practices that IOF committed against journalists and media workers over the past years; and that led to more and significant violations, especially in the last two years.

We can notice the absence of justice in the Israeli legal system when it belongs to the Palestinian civilians. The Israeli legal system is still denying the crimes committed against Palestinians in the oPt in general, and also denying complaints provided by Palestinian civilians' demanding to investigate in their crimes in order to compensate them and hold the perpetrators accountable. In this context, PCHR had submitted (179) criminal complaints of on behalf of Palestinian victims of Israeli violations at the GMR protests since its outbreak in March 2018, but only an investigation was opened into 9 complaints, 7 of them were committed against journalists killed or wounded while covering the GMR. However, PCHR did not receive responses to most of them. On 10 April 2018, PCHR

provided a civil complaint to the Israeli Ministry of Defense as an agent to one of the most prominently, the killing of the journalist Yasser Murtaja on 07 April 2018. Murtaja was wounded after being hit with a live bullet to the abdomen causing a rupture to the main artery of the Intestines while he was recording the events, 200-meters into the northeast of the demonstration yard in Khuza'ah, east of Khan Yunis. Murtaja was transferred via an ambulance to Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis. Doctors found out that Murtaja suffers from a severe bleeding in the abdomen in addition to a rupture in an artery. He underwent a surgery and received medical treatment until his death was announced on the next day dawn. According to PCHR's investigations, he was apparently wearing "a Blue Helmet and Vest clearly Marked Press". On 12 April 2018, PCHR provided a criminal complaint to the Public Prosecutor and the Military Prosecution for Operations Affairs, who responded on 17 April 2018, saying that the abovementioned complaint is under investigation.

On 19 April 2018, PCHR sent a letter to MAG requesting that an error on the date of the incident in the MAG's reply be corrected; however, the Centre received a reply from MAG – Operation requesting all relevant materials and medical reports. PCHR sent a reply with the translated materials and medical reports it has to the MAG on 24 July 2018. On 04 October 2018, PCHR lawyer handed all materials and medical documents in person to the investigation committee at Erez crossing. Consequently, PCHR filed a lawsuit on 02 April 2020 in the Israeli judiciary on the killing of journalist Yasser Murtaja.

Conclusion and Recommendations

PCHR documented that IOF continued their attacks against journalists and media personnel in the oPt in the period between 01 May 2019 and 30 April 2020. The most significant human rights violations against journalists over the year was the escalation of shooting crimes against journalists and media personnel in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, especially those covering the weekly Great March of Return protests on the eastern borders of the Gaza Strip, ongoing since 30 March 2018 that resulted in 1 journalist losing sight in one eye, and another who lost sight as well after his health condition deteriorated. Another significant violation against media bodies was the bombardment by Israeli warplanes and complete destruction of 2 media and cultural offices in Gaza City. Also, shutting Palestine TV office in Jerusalem and persecuting its staff, particularly in Jerusalem and in the West Bank for alleged incitement against IOF.

PCHR also documented that IOF continued to commit crimes affecting the bodily integrity of journalists, including shootings; resulting in many injuries among journalists while on duty, costing a journalist sight in one of his eyes.

Additionally, PCHR documented that IOF continued to arrest and detain journalists both in the field while on duty; and at their homes during military raids conducted on grounds of their work.

Moreover, IOF continue to ban al-Resalah and Palestine newspapers, which are published in Gaza City, from being printed in the West Bank since 2014.

It should be noted that IOF do not conduct any serious investigation in the crimes committed against media personnel in the oPt, similarly to its handling of its other crimes committed against Palestinian civilians in the oPt.

In light of that:

PCHR confirms that targeting journalists, despite all the distinctive signs that emphasize the nature of their work, especially IOF' deliberate targeting of journalists' upper bodies undoubtedly confirms that the soldiers have orders, or at least permission, to inflict bodily harm on journalists and deter them from covering the incidents;

1. PCHR considers these practices against media personnel as part of Israel's ongoing violations of Palestinian civilians' rights and proof of Israel's disregard for international humanitarian law, especially the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention Relevant to Protection of Civilians in Times of War;
2. PCHR stresses that the majority of the Israeli attacks carried out against the journalists working in local and international news agencies were willful and intentional, especially that these journalists were in their press uniforms while on duty.
3. PCHR underscores that these systematic attacks aim at preventing media from covering and publishing the crimes committed by IOF against civilians in the oPt in attempt to silence the press.
4. Therefore, PCHR reiterates its call for the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to meet their obligations under the Convention and immediately provide international protection for the Palestinian people and their property.

5. PCHR calls upon all international media institutions to monitor Israeli violations against media personnel in the oPt, and to exert all efforts at the international level to pressurize Israel to stop their crimes against Palestinian civilians and their property in general and media personnel in particular.

