

HUMAN RIGHTS IN BRIEF

THE ARAB ORGANIZATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

(FOUNDED IN 1983)

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A special

8th General Assembly Meeting

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Under the slogan “ Amid a climate of more freedom”, the Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR) held its 8th general assembly meeting in the period from 14 to 16 April 2011 at the headquarters of the General Secretariat in Cairo.

The General Assembly Meeting was held at a turning point in the Arab region where the whole region is at the verge of a new stage of radical changes and transformations, thanks to the smashing success of the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, and the eruption of the demands of freedom, justice, and dignity in more than half the Arab countries.

These reform revolutions and uprisings came as a practical translation of the goals that AOHR worked on realizing as of its foundation in 1983. When its founders struggled to hold their historic conference to discuss “the crisis of democracy in the Arab world” and failed to find a place in the vast Arab region, they held the conference in Limassol City, Cyprus, and concluded by emphasis on the need to establish an organization to protect and promote human rights in the Arab region.

The periodic general assembly meeting held every three years emphasizes the democratic rule approach within the AOHR. The meeting discusses the AOHR performance, future plans of action in the intervals between the different sessions, election of the Board of Trustees, and determination of the mission and goals for the new session.

Eighth General Assembly

Board of Trustees

The Board of Directors held at the end of its mandate the closing meeting for the last session (2008-2011) at the HQ on Thursday, April 14th. The Board thoroughly discussed the two reports (literary and financial) and the related suggestions as regards work in the forthcoming stage. It further discussed the arrangements for holding the 8th general assembly meeting, the preparation measures, and organizational aspects.

The Board expressed its deep concern because of the systemic suppression of the Arab regimes against the AOHR leaders and members, imposing security, administrative, and procedural constraints on the travel of some to participate in the proceedings of the General Assembly Meeting.

General Assembly Meeting

The Meeting was held on Friday, April 15th. Dr. Amin Mekki Madani, Chairman Of Board of Trustees, inaugurated the Meeting and extended thanks to the members for attending the Meeting amid the preoccupations of the member organizations with the accelerating developments in their countries.

Mr. Mohsen Awad, Secretary General of AOHR, expressed his deep appreciation for the member organizations for attending the General Assembly Meeting at this critical stage; and for the members who travelled all the way to participate in the meeting at their expense given the financial crisis the AOHR undergoes.

The Assembly elected Dr. Kazem Nabib, Assembly member and representative of Human Rights Organization in the Arab countries (Germany), to chair the meeting; and Dr. Tarek Hader Abdel Shafie, member and representative of Palestinian Centre for Human Rights(Palestine), as rapporteur.

Literary Report

Mr. Mohsen Awad, AOHR Secretary General, presented the literary report to the Board of Trustees on the tenure period (2008-2011). The report fell in three parts: Part I: Fulfillment of duties; Part II: Organizational development of AOHR; Part III: Recommendations of the Board of Trustees as regards the suggested tasks in the forthcoming period.

Part I reflected the AOHR's efforts in defense of human rights, including the efforts to interact with the areas of conflict and crises.

Efforts included support of rights of Palestinian people, and further emphasis on these rights being constant, legitimate, and inalienable. The Organization challenged the ongoing endeavors to confine the cause to humanitarian aspects; contributed to disclosure of the

crimes of the Occupation; requested lifting the siege of Gaza Strip; unveiled the crimes of intensive settlement, Judaization of the occupied Arab Jerusalem, building the racist Separation Wall, and usurping the Arab territories occupied in 1967. The Organization further emphasized the stifling siege imposed on most of the occupied West Bank areas, and occupied Arab Jerusalem; and collaborated with the United Nations mechanisms to enhance the UN's role in the protection of the rights of Palestinian people. The Organization highlighted its efforts in support of prosecution of the Israeli criminals of war; continuous call for removal and termination of siege; and the required support of the steadfastness of Jerusalem.

Concerning Iraq, the Organization pursued its efforts to unveil the crimes of US occupation, and the crimes perpetrated at the hands of governmental and non-governmental Iraqi parties for ethnic, sectarian, and factional reasons. It further criticized the sectarian partitioning; and revealed political exclusion crimes. The Organization worked on promoting its field sources; collaborated with the Iraqi Network for Human Rights Culture and Development to intensify the call for conducting international investigations in the horrendous crimes in Iraq; the call for observance of the rules adopted by the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Iraq and paying more attention to the issues of asylum, displacement, and related humanitarian issues. The AOHR supported the initial efforts to prosecute the perpetrators on war crimes and crimes against humanity; and use the international criminal jurisdiction.

Concerning Sudan, the Organization monitored the serious developments in the State; the aggravated armed conflicts and political tension amid the entitlements of the South Peace Agreement and the ongoing conflict in Darfur province, western Sudan. The Organization further revealed the violations related to suppression of the political protestors; and emphasized the risks of the escalating conflict with the South, and the conflicts within the South. It supported the path of settlement in Doha as regards Darfur; pursued with concern the presidential, parliamentary and state elections; stressed the sustainability of political legitimacy crisis; and disclosed the risks of dividing the country in case of non-fulfillment of the Peace Agreement.

Concerning Somalia, the Organization monitored the serious developments there, which accumulated with the mushrooming piracy phenomenon amid the developments related to the national conflict and the international campaign against terrorism. The Organization showed interest in the grave humanitarian impact of all these conditions on the refugees and displaced and humanitarian relief efforts. AOHR appealed to the United Nations and African Union to play a more objective role there; and called for defiance of the mounting corruption in the international humanitarian relief programs. The Organization called for the adoption of a comprehensive initiative for political settlement in

Somalia that includes reconstruction of the State being the right approach to contain the crisis there after more than 20 years of civil war.

Concerning efforts exerted to support the legitimate demands of the Arab peoples during the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions and the Arab reform uprisings in most countries in the Region, the Secretary General referred to the AOHR's support from the first moment of the legitimate demands of the revolution in Tunisia; and the continuous follow-up of developments in cooperation with Tunisian League for the Defense of Human Rights. The Organization similarly reacted with the revolution in Egypt and was primarily interested in supporting the rebels' efforts to define their requests. The AOHR's actions were louder than words: it intervened to secure the release of the detainees; pursued its efforts to protect HR advocates and media men; sought to protect the back of rebels, stimulating the international community to undertake its responsibility. All this reflects the mechanism the Organization adopted in support of the Arab popular uprisings in the other countries in addition to the ongoing support of the revolutionary demands in the transitional period.

As for individual rights and grievances, the Organization monitored individual rights through the grievances the AOHR receives or learns about; it discussed the said grievances with the competent agencies and governments to publish according to the mechanisms stipulated in the Organization's bylaw.

The Organization intervened during this period in about (700) grievances and appeals to 18 Arab countries, and some foreign countries as well as the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNRWA. The issues included the AOHR's interventions as regards violations that relate to the right to life, the right to personal freedom and safety, the right to fair trial, in addition to the rights of prisoners and other detainees, forced disappearance, right to free movement, and right to acquire nationality. The issues also included violations related to general freedoms, paramount among which are freedom of opinion, peaceful assembly, and right to association. Some of these grievances addressed individual cases; others addressed groups of people, representing ongoing flagrant violations.

The Organization paid great attention to the issues of human rights activists in Jordan, Bahrain, Tunisia, Syria, Morocco, Egypt, and Iraq, including Feda'a El-Horani, Mohammed El-Marwani, Matrouk El-Faleh, Abdel Karim El-Khiwani, Hassan El-Rashdy, Loay El-Moaid, Yasser El-Wazeer, and Haitham El-Maleh.

The Organization was equally interested in the violations that journalists and media men were subject to relevant to the fulfillment of their professional duties. It supported several newspapers and Satellite TVs in most Arab countries as regards the pressures they face. The list includes Magdy Hussein, Badie Dak El-Bab, Ibrahim Sabeh El-Lalel, Montazer El-Zedai, Mohammed El-Gassem, El-Fahem Bokedos, Wael El-Abrashy, and Hamdy Khandil.

Concerning the efforts of fact-finding and field control,

the report underlines the Organization's endeavors to send an expansive fact-finding mission to Gaza Strip on the advent of 2009. However, the Government of Egypt obstructed this mission. The report further addressed the role undertaken by the Organization in field investigation in the rock landslide in Dewaka where the Organization exercised pressures that led to the adoption of tangible mechanisms to resolve the urgent humanitarian and legal issues consequent to this disaster.

The report also addressed the role of the AOHR's activists and the General Secretariat in the Egyptian revolution, especially in Tahrir Square during the revolution. The Organization examined the crimes perpetrated in the wake of the revolution and developed a joint report with the National Council for Human Rights. The report rendered the ousted president and the former incumbent party accountable for these crimes. These conclusions were proven a few days before the general assembly meeting.

The report also addressed monitoring the prosecution of 12 HR activists in Syria in the autumn of 2008; and monitoring the prosecution of the culprits in the Egyptian ferry case and followed up its repercussions in 2009 and 2010.

The report presented the efforts exerted in cooperation with the international mechanisms and institutions; reviewed the efforts exerted through the Organization's consultative capacity in the UN Economic and Social Council and the executive relation with UNESCO; and discussed interest in participation in the proceedings of some sessions of Human Rights Council and the sessions of Comprehensive Periodic Review mechanism.

The report also addressed cooperation with some UN special rapporteurs; participation in the OHCHR events through regional and international conferences and seminars; and collaboration with the OHCHR and United Nations Information Centre to regionally celebrate the International Human Rights Day at the end of 2010.

The report presented cooperation with the UNDP projects; and efforts exerted to activate legal empowerment of the poor which represents a good pathway in the work of the UNDP through dependence of economic and social rights. It further examined the AOHR's cooperation with UNESCO to implement the recommendations of Durban Conference at the regional level along the past three years; and participation in the events of UN agencies, including the United Nations Office on Drugs Control and Crime UNODC).

AOHR also collaborated with the International Institute for Higher Studies In Criminology (Saracusa), Institute For International Human Rights Law, De Paul University (Chicago), and Protection Program at Jones Hopkins University (New York).

Concerning the Arab region, the report stressed the AOHR's sponsoring of events organized in cooperation with the League of Arab States (LAS) and its different

departments; attendance of several regular meetings of the diverse mechanisms of LAS; participation in preparing for Civil Society Forum for Arab Social and Economic Summit in 2011. The Organization was also keen to hold a seminar with Geneva Human Rights Institute about development of Arab human rights system with the presence of interested participants from LAS.

The report also presented the horizons of future action on the part of the Organization, including pursuing promotion of social and economic rights, support of Arab revolutions and legitimate popular demands, concern with general freedoms, independence of the judiciary, and effectiveness of parliaments as pillars to support and protect human rights, with more concern with security reform issues and anti-corruption efforts.

The report also emphasized cooperation with the United Nations mechanisms; concern with countries that still face quantitative and qualitative shortage in the entrenchment and prevalence of human rights movement; and consideration of more fact-finding missions in hot spots where crises escalate.

The report provided an annex of AOHR's activities, including 133 participation at the Arab and international levels; 17 training courses (AOHR organized 9 of these events); 11 in-depth working papers and studies on different issues.

Reports of Member Organizations

The reports of member organizations were presented in the general meeting. They covered the conditions in 13 Arab countries and 3 European countries; and discussed the implications of revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt; the developments in 9 Arab countries in the light of current popular revolutions and uprisings; expectations as regards their sustainability; and the urgent and tangible needs.

The reports submitted were from UAE Association for Human Rights, Arab Organization for Human Rights in Jordan, Arab Organization for Human Rights in Syria, Lebanese Human Rights Association, Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, Sudanese Observatory for Human Rights, Yemeni Organization for Defense of Human Rights and Democratic Freedoms, Tunisian League for Defense of Human Rights, Arab Organization for Human Rights in Austria, Arab Organization for Human Rights in UK, and Human Rights Organization in the Arab Countries (Germany).

Election of Board of Trustees

A committee of members of the General Assembly Meeting (who are not candidates) was assigned to oversee the elections to select 20 members for the new board of trustees for the forthcoming session out of 23 candidates. The Election Committee was chaired by Sameeh Senquret, Lawyer, Arab Organization for Human Rights in Jordan, Hosneya Awad, Arab Organization for

Human Rights in Austria, Mohammed Salem El-Khabi, UAE Association for Human Rights, and Ghalrb El-Anee, Human Rights Organization in the Arab Countries (Germany).

The elected board of trustees held its first procedural meeting and elected its chairman, vice chairman, secretary general, treasurer, and three members for the executive committee ([See the composition](#)).

Amin Mekki Madeni		Sudan
Hafez Abo Sedda	Member, Executive Committee	Egypt
Hamed Fadlallah	Treasurer	Germany
Hassan Moussa	Member, Executive Committee	Austria
Ragy El-Sorani	Chairman	Palestine
Rassem El-Atassy		Syria
Seham El-Feryeh		Kuwait
Sayed Osman El-Sheikh		Mauritania
Abdel Ghaffar Hussein		UAE
Abdullah El-Derazi		Bahrain
Alaa Shalaby	Secretary General	Egypt
Amaar Querbi		Syria
Omar El-Farouk Hassan		Sudan
Fadl Ali Abdallah		Yemen
Mohsen Awad		Egypt
Mohammed Fayek		Egypt
Maha El-Bergus	Vice Chairman	Kuwait
Nabil Yacoub		Germany
Naema Gomma	Member, Executive Committee	Lebanon
Hany El-Dahla		Jordon

Closing Statement

The Closing Statement entailed the vision of the general assembly on the developments in the Arab arena, after "listening to" the field reports of the member organizations on the developments during the transitional period following the ouster of the two tyrannical regimes in Egypt and Tunisia, the challenges, and the difficulties the revolutions in Libya, Yemen, and Syria encounter in addition to the requests for reform in Bahrain, Oman, Jordon, Algeria, and Morocco; the popular action to terminate the division in Palestine and

call for a third intifada against the occupation in the anniversary of the Nakba; and the escalating protests in Iraq demanding real reforms, prevention of renewal for the occupation troops, and fighting corruption.

The Assembly noted with relief the developments in Tunisia and Egypt for severance of any relation with the former regimes; accountability of the culprits for the crimes perpetrated against the citizens; and the endeavors to restore the corruption-generated funds.

However, the Assembly expressed its concern because of the slow procedures adopted to restore the smuggled funds in a manner that may lead to loss of these funds. It demanded acceleration of the fulfillment of the legislative tasks required for the real political reform according to an approach that observes the paths of transition to democracy, and is not intimidated by the wide multi-party system considered a feature of transitional periods.

The Assembly strongly condemned all forms of suppression and crimes against peaceful protestors in Yemen, and declared its solidarity with their legitimate demands of reform as the regime has lost its legitimacy.

It expressed concern as regards the developments in Libya, and deep apprehensions due to the shaky international attitudes as regards the interpretation of the Security Council Resolution 1973.

The Assembly appealed to the Syrian government to seriously respond to the legitimate demands of freedom, and accountability of the culprits for the murder crimes against the peaceful protestors.

It urged governments in all Arab countries to positively interact with the popular demand of transition to constitutional entitlements, abolishment of emergency laws and similar exceptional laws, and development of the national legislations to keep abreast with the request of dignity, freedom, and equality.

The Assembly paused in particular before the fierce aggressions against the Palestinian people, and the deteriorating path of the legitimate, fixed, and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. It expressed deep concern about the ongoing national division in Palestine, and appealed to the political forces to collaborate to terminate this division. It welcomed the daring stand of Goldstone Committee in defiance of the shameful stance of Goldstone that wastes the rights of the aggression victims and encourages its replication.

The Assembly was pleased with the Iraqi demands that exceeded the ethnic, sectarian, and factional divisions and emphasized the call for non-renewal for the American troops, and for serious reforms.

It voiced its apprehensions as regards the deterioration of the conditions in Sudan synchronous with the implementation of the results of the referendum; the continuous conflict in Darfur region, western Sudan; the disregard of the ruling party of the legitimate popular demands for free elections after the southern MPs got out of the Parliament and request of the incumbent party to form a coalition government under its governance.

It was noted that all the hurdles facing the Arab regimes stemmed from the systemic flagrant violations of human rights. The Assembly drew the attention that restoration of stability in the region should be through commitment to political, economic, and social reforms consistent with the values, principles, and standards of human rights and citizenship.

Related to the proceedings of the general assembly meeting, the Assembly condemned the prevention of some of its members from attending, whether via security decisions in Syria, or administrative measures in Bahrain; the abstention of the Egyptian authorities to issue entry visas to members from Iraq; and restriction of members coming from the occupied Palestinian territories from entering.

Issues and interactions

Egypt Issues and Interactions

The Organization presented practical solutions to resolve the pressing issues in the transitional period. The AOHR submitted on 16 February an extensive memorandum to the Supreme Military Council in Egypt where it presented practical solutions to resolve the urgent issues in this transitional period after the success of the glorious January revolution in Egypt.

The memorandum included proposals for the expeditious treatment of the issue of the missing people, the disappeared and detained in the context of the events the revolution witnessed with emphasis on the need to call to account the perpetrators of crimes during the revolution, and treat the deteriorating conditions in

prisons which aggravated with the events the prisons witnessed in the context of the revolution. The Organization further called for expansion of the pardon and conditional release procedures in order to encourage the fugitives to turn themselves in.

The memorandum also addressed the need to rejuvenate the police through structural and objective reforms that include liquidation of the negative administrative heritage of a three-decade implementation of an emergency state; determination of a definite framework to repeal the emergency law provided that this is to be preceded by administrative liquidation of the conditions of detainees as soon as possible.

The memorandum stressed that the so-called “sectoral demands” are mostly an expression of original rights that have to be met after long decades of social and economic injustices.

The Organization called for abstention from use of force against labor protests; paying attention to the demands related to a minimum wage level that secures a decent livelihood, a reasonable level consistent with wages that does not constitute additional burdens on the State's general budget.

The Organization highlighted the dangerous situation in Sinai Peninsula that necessitates a comprehensive political and economic treatment; stressed its stand calling for adoption of procedures to call the former ruling party to account; restoration of the people's funds that the party unjustifiably received; and termination of the party's domination on political life.

The Organization proposed the formation of a mechanism through the Prosecutor General to investigate the widely spread corruption crimes; recruiting members from the judiciary in this mechanism with the jurisdiction needed to trace the smuggled funds, and confiscation of documents that may be subject to vandalism.

Through the relentless follow-up of these developments, the Organization welcomes the response of the Supreme Military Council and the Cabinet to some of its suggestions; calls for expeditious response to the remaining suggestions deemed an urgent need, if implemented, the current efforts exerted during this transitional period shall prove a success.

Urgent suggestions to treat the conditions of the fleeing Egyptians in Tunisia

During the participation of Mohsen Awad, former Secretary General, and Alaa Shalaby, current Secretary General, in an event in Tunisia in early March, the AOHR submitted an urgent memo to the Supreme Military Council in Egypt to promptly handle the conditions of more than 20 thousand Egyptians who fled from Libya and were congested in Ras Gueddir and Gerba in Tunisian territories.

The Organization mentioned the importance of international parties undertaking their responsibilities in support of Egypt and Tunisia to address the repercussions of the situation in Libya.

The Organization welcomed the Egyptian efforts and international aid that helped evacuate all Egyptians at the Tunisian borders in less than five successive days.

Suggestions to address the issue of siege on Gaza Strip

The Organization submitted mid March two notes to the Supreme Military Council and the Cabinet in Egypt underlining the need to pursue efforts to resolve the problems related to the Rafah crossway on the borders with Gaza Strip, and to promote the current efforts to guarantee the freedom of movement of the Palestinian citizens in Gaza.

The Organization presented practical suggestions to hold an extensive meeting with some active Palestinian civil society associations in Gaza to listen to their suggestions as regards strengthening of the Egyptian role to terminate the siege on Gaza and realize the national reconciliation.

The Organization further submitted an urgent memo to Dr. Nabil El-Araby, the Foreign Minister, at the end of March appealing for a prompt action to facilitate the return of the Palestinian citizens stranded in many countries in the world after exit from Gaza Strip across the Egyptian territories before 25 January revolution; they failed to return because of the tight security constraints on entry to Egypt. The AOHR welcomed the announcement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to instruct Egyptian embassies abroad to issue visas to the stranded Palestinians to facilitate their return to Gaza.

The Organization addressed the Cabinet anew on 22 April as regards the issue of limiting Palestinians' movement from and into Gaza, especially some cases that suffered the slowdown in issuance of entry visas ; open detention of the returnees at Cairo Airport until they are deported directly to Rafah crossway under inappropriate conditions; and addition of the phrase "under security guard" next to the entry stamp to Egypt, this may constitute a risk in case Palestinians travel to other countries. The Organization was promised that the memo and initiative shall be considered.

The Organization also welcomed the Egyptian efforts that fruitfully led to signing the Palestinian national reconciliation agreement, and the pledges of the Foreign Minister to secure free movement across Rafah crossway.

Request for practical measures to end the sectarian turmoil in Egypt

The Organization followed with great concern the sectarian clashes that burst in the village of Soul, southern Cairo, in Imbaba district in Giza, and in front of the Egyptian Radio and TV building in Maspero in Cairo , and other dangerous events that shake the stability and unity of the Egyptian community.

The Organization denounced the apparent security slackness during these serious events, and warned against its correlation with attempts to prevent the prosecution of the perpetrators of murder crimes during the revolution.

The Organization expressed its concern as regards the inadequacy of the measures adopted to stop this grave rift, especially with assurance of the army commandership that these events were part of an intrigue that aimed to fan the flames of civil war.

It has noted that the features of sectarian tensions are escalating in a horrendous manner and constitute an imminent hazard at this critical stage, especially with the clear manifestations of a conspiracy interwoven by the

ousted regime proponents.

The Organization denounced the security slackness in defiance of these serious developments that may destabilize the country, and asked the Supreme Military Council and the transitional government to firmly defy these incidents, and to exclude any treatment that is not based on the sound implementation of the law on all regardless of the religious and political trends.

The Organization warned against the consequences of such slackness in defiance of these serious events amid the sustainability and escalation of sectarian turmoil strongly made by the former regime along the past two decades with the purpose of stressing the need for the sustainability of the said regime and disregard of its sins and crimes. Unfortunately, the transitional authorities have failed to properly address up till now.

The Organization called for prompt action to terminate the state of political confusion that Egypt is currently experiencing through announcement of a political platform with a definite timeframe that meets the overall demands of the revolution, especially: (1) immediate start to develop a new constitution; (2) acceleration of accountability of the culprits for the crimes committed during the revolution and defiance of any impunity attempts ; (3) adoption of radical procedures to treat the imbalances in the police organ and not to be confined to restructuring of the whole system; (4) response to the ongoing popular calls for dissolution of the local councils that may constitute a counter-revolution; (5) imposition of definite clear limits that shall prevent the employment of religious beliefs in public affairs in a manner that aggravates the state of turmoil and undermine the sublimity and sanctity of these beliefs; (6) assurance of the rule of the State on different places of worship.

Activities and Participations

Activities and Participations AOHR launches the Arab Dialogue Forum

In the context of interaction with the extended popular wave calling for change and reform in the region, the Organization took the initiative to establish the 'Arab dialogue forum' with the purpose of holding a monthly intellectual dialogue on the human rights and related issues at this critical stage.

In view of the current issues of the transitional stage in Tunisia and Egypt, and the importance of presenting a democratization model in the region, AOHR decided that the forthcoming events of the Forum shall focus during the first six months on "a series of transitional stage dialogues".

The Organization chose the theme "integration of human rights principles in the transitional stage policies" for the first event where the issues and problems of the transitional stage in Egypt shall be discussed as well as the role of human rights in resolving these issues and securing the success of the transitional stage. The theme shall be discussed through an open dialogue with Mr. Mohammed Fayek, former Minister of Information, and Vice Chairman of National Council for Human Rights. The prominent media figure, Hussein Abdel Ghani shall moderate the dialogue.

The Organization intends to hold the first event at Dr. Souad El-Sabah meeting room at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the AOHR on Sunday 22 May 2011.

Nakba 36rd Anniversary

63rd Anniversary of the Nakba Right of return ... fixed, legitimate, and inalienable

The Organization expressed its full support of the comprehensive Arab and Palestinian popular intifada against the Israeli occupation in the 63rd anniversary of Nakba, in defiance of the racist and settlement-based policy, and in an attempt to effectuate the fixed, legitimate, and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The Organization appealed to all Arab and peace-loving nations to express solidarity with all forms and means of peaceful lobbying.

The Organization also expressed its vision that the sole way-out is sustainability of the intifada, protest, and legitimate resistance to satisfy the Palestinian rights. It further emphasized that the right of every

nation to self-determination secures the right to resistance through all possible legitimate means.

The Organization reiterated its condemnation of the crimes Israel perpetrated on 15 May at the borders with the occupied Arab territories in Gaza, Golan, and south Lebanon, where live bullets were used to kill unarmed protestors. 15 protestors were martyred and hundreds injured though they were asking for their legitimate right to return. The Organization deemed these protests a manifestation of the adherence of the Palestinians inside and in the Diaspora to their right to return and indemnity according to the GA resolution 194.

The Organization stressed that the right to return is the core of the fixed, legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The AOHR and other human rights organizations have long defied any attempts to undermine this critical right.

AOHR further emphasized that occupation is the core and crux of the conflict, and condemned the recurrent US use of the "veto" right in the Security Council to impede the incrimination of Israeli atrocities and crimes, most recently settlement. It also condemned the Quartet's policies that aim to confine the international community will to resolutions and policies in contradiction with the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The Organization asked the UN Secretariat to instantly withdraw from the Quartet group as all its stands and policies contradict with the role of the United Nations as a sponsor of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

AOHR welcomed the adoption of the General Assembly of the United Nations to a new international convention to limit forced disappearance, and called for the international community and Arab governments to ratify it to enter into force as soon as possible.

Statements

AOHR Condemns Killing of Peaceful Protestors in Yemen

The Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR) strongly condemns the killing of unarmed protestors in the Yemeni cities of Al Hudaydah, Taiz, and Sanaa in the past three days. As a result, dozens protestors were killed and hundreds were injured. The high number of victims was caused by the use of live ammunition by the security forces, the republican guards, and the central security against unarmed protestors who practice their rights to meeting and peaceful protest.

The AOHR asserts that the international community should promptly intervene as the doors opened by the

GCC initiative have only led to further killings and violations of human rights. The situation in Yemen is seriously deteriorating, particularly after the killings of protestors in the vicinity of the Council of Ministers and the attempt to break into the Al Taghyeer Square where demonstrations took place.

The AOHR reiterates its calls on the United Nations Human Rights Council (UN HRC) to swiftly convene a special session to examine the systematic and grave violations against protestors in Yemen and to take prompt and effective actions to stop these violations and ensure that they will not be committed again in the future. The AOHR recommends creating and dispatching an international investigative committee to investigate these crimes with a view to achieve justice, ensure redress for the victims, and bring perpetrators of criminal conduct to justice.

AOHR Condemns the Arrest of Its Board Member Rasem Al Attasi

The Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR) have condemned the arrest of prominent human rights activist, Eng. Rasem Al Attasi, member of the Board of Trustees of AOHR and its former chair in Syria. Mr. Al Attasi was arrested by the Syrian authorities on Wednesday 27 April 2011 in Homs, north of the capital Damascus and released in 6 May.

The AOHR calls up on the Syrian authorities to promptly release all detainees and all human rights activists, as well as all prisoners of Opinion, whose detention represents part of a series of violations against freedoms.

The Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR)

AOHR was founded in December 1983 as a regional non-governmental organization that aims at promoting and protecting Human Rights in the Arab world in accordance with international standards.

AOHR obtained the consultative status in the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) in 1989. It also obtained the Observative status in the African Commission for Human Rights and Peoples' Rights in 1989.

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