



## The Palestinian Center for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession

### MUSAWA's activities in January and February 2016:

#### Core Program 2016 – 2019

MUSAWA has signed a new agreement with the State of the Netherlands, represented by the Netherlands Representative Office to the Palestinian Authority. According to this agreement the State of the Netherlands is prepared to make a contribution to MUSAWA's Strategic Plan 2016-2019. Depending on actual progress made during the first year (2016) and possible other donor commitments in the first year, the Netherlands' contribution will be continued for subsequent years.



In 2016, MUSAWA will continue to contribute to the upholding of the rule of law in the State of Palestine. Moreover, in 2016 MUSAWA will deepen its monitoring role by establishing internally a specialized monitoring unit to monitor, document and follow up right violations on daily basis. Going beyond previous interventions MUSAWA will work towards having lawyers present on a daily basis at the courts in Ramallah and Gaza. Additionally it will continue to closely work together with the Lawyers for the Rule of Law, a group of (trainee) lawyers, committed to uphold the rule of law in Palestine. Hence, MUSAWA will continue to publish its well known monitoring magazines: Eye on Justice and Justice and Law.

Additionally MUSAWA will continue to contribute to the reinforcement of the culture of the rule of law. However in the course of 2016 MUSAWA will focus on developing new training courses of high standards, tailor-made to the needs of duty bearers operating in Palestine. According to the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA), which MUSAWA will adopt on all levels in 2016, MUSAWA will conduct a base line study and several needs assessments to assess in which fields the capacity of duty bearers should be build and to assess the progress made after successful implementation of the new training courses. With its HRB approach MUSAWA will focus more on legal literacy of targeted marginalized groups in West Bank and Gaza.

The main challenge for MUSAWA in the first year lies in restructuring its organisation, which will eventually set the basis for MUSAWA to become the main watchdog for civil

society organisations, justice institutions, donors and public in upholding the rule of law in Palestine. New key positions are welcomed in MUSAWA's new organizational structure to improve efficiency regarding program- and project implementation. In this spirit, MUSAWA will work on developing clear guidelines and operational standards that will help MUSAWA in working towards unified operational procedures. MUSAWA will contract external experts to adopt a more result based programming, to adopt the HRBA at all levels and to mainstream gender at all levels. These three interventions are of paramount importance for MUSAWA in its efforts to align its approach and working methods with a growing number of civil society organisations and donors operating in Palestine (and outside Palestine), and eventually should contribute to the sustainability of MUSAWA's program.

### Legal memos

#### **11 February, 2016: Memo to Chief Justice of the High Judicial Council**

The memo included several subjects: the vacant “Director” position at the Judicial Institute, and the unlawful decision issued by the Palestinian Magistrate Court regarding the release of detainees.

#### **22 February, 2016: Memo to President Mahmoud Abbas**

Concerning the request to withdraw the President’s decision related to calculating a pension against the law.

### **Palestinian Human Rights Defenders Project**

The activities listed below come as part of a project to empower Palestinian Human Rights Defenders, carried out by MUSAWA both in the West Bank and Gaza, with the Support of the European Union.



### **Awareness workshop in Deir Jarir entitled: Rights of Working Women**

An awareness workshop was held in Deir Jarir on 14 January 2016, under the title: Rights of Working Women. The aim of the workshop was to spread the human rights culture in the marginalized regions and communities; to introduce the community to the existence and importance of the Palestinian Human Rights Defenders Network (PHRDs Network); and the dissemination of its goals and mission in order to expand and include new individuals and institutions for its membership. The workshop, given by Hamed Makho and Mahmoud Abdel-Rahim, both members of the Network, targeted more than 35 workers among which 32 were females and 3 were males.



The workshop addressed various topics including: definition of labor law and legal texts that guarantee the right to work in the community, definition of the worker, the different kinds of labor contract, wages, employer, groups that are excluded from the application of labor law, the rights of working women, including vacations of all kinds, occupational safety and health at work , cases of termination of the employment contract, unfair dismissal and the consequent rights, work injury and compensation, a demonstration of the minimum wage system, the definition of some of the institutions concerned with women's rights, and how to claim labor rights by the judiciary, the lectures used the Palestinian Labor Law No. 7 of 2000, and the decision of the Council of Ministers about the minimum wage for the year 2012.

### **Palestinian Human Rights Defenders Network welcomes new member**

As a result of the training of trainers training course, which was carried out by MUSAWA in cooperation with the Palestinian Human Rights Defenders Network in Ramallah and the workshops that followed, Hiwar - The Foundation for Community Development has joined the Network.

### **Result Oriented Monitoring Review**

In order to monitor the progress of the PHRDs project, David Crespo, who was contracted by the European Union, visited Palestine in the period between 11 -19 January 2016, and met members of the network of individuals, institutions, governmental and nongovernmental partners in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip in separate meetings, in which he discussed some of the activities and outputs related to the project, and ways to develop it in order to ensure the sustainability of the network after the end of the project. MUSAWA scored 'Good/Very Good" overall for relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.

### **Training of trainers**

In order to rehabilitate new groups and increase the members within the Palestinian Human Rights Defenders Network (PHRD), MUSAWA organized two training courses.

#### **11-13 February, 2016: Khan Yunis**

The training course which was implemented in Khan Yunis targeted 37 male and female participants from different areas of the Gaza Strip, 20 of whom were males while 17 were females. The course was distributed over three



days, 6 hours a day. The lecturers were members of the PHRD Network: Lawyers *Anas Al Barqouni*, *Ghassan Al Khaldi*, *Mohammad Allouh*, *Abdel Fattah Jaradeh* and *Isra' Shehadeh*, and Media Figure *Ansam Al Qatta'*.

### **14-16 February, 2016: Jenin**

The training course which was implemented in Jenin targeted 37 activists from Tulkarm, Qalqilya, Jenin, and Tubas; 26 of whom were females while 11 were males. It was conducted in Jenin over three days, 6 hours a day. The lecture was given by members of the PHRD Network: Lawyers *Wissam Soudah* and *Sultan Zakarneh*, and Media Figures *Ala' Kanaan*, *Reham Abu Hableh* and *Amneh Al Bustanji*, under the supervision of *Mr. Thuqan Qishawi*, who is an expert in the field.

### **Awareness Workshops in Marginalized Regions**

In order to spread the Human Rights culture in marginalized areas and communities, introduce the community to the existence and importance of the PHRDs Network, and disseminate its goals and mission in order to expand and include new individuals and institutions as members, MUSAWA arranged 6 workshops in the West Bank and Gaza.

### **6 February, 2016: Deir Al Sudan Workshop**

In cooperation with Deir Al Sudan's women charitable organization and the PHRDs Network, MUSAWA organized a workshop under the title of "Women's Rights in Marriage Contracts". The workshop targeted 29 women from the village, including university students. The lecturers were Lawyers *Yusra Hassouneh* and *Iman Daraghme*, both members of the PHRDs Network.



### **20 February, 2016: Froush Beit Dajan Workshop**

In cooperation with the PHRDs Network and Froush Beit Dajan's Village Council, MUSAWA organized a workshop, titled "Rights and Trade Union Freedoms in Palestinian Laws", in the village of Froush Beit Dajan in the Jordan Valley. The workshop targeted 12 male and female participants of laborers and farmers, 10 of whom were males while 2 were females. It was implemented in the presence of the Head of the Village Council, *Mr. Azzam Haj Mohammad*. The lecturers included Lawyer *Rasha Zaghab* and Trade Unionist *Fouad Al Sheikh*, both members of the PHRDs Network.

### **23 February, 2016: Duma Workshop - Nablus**

A workshop under the title of "Domestic Violence and Human Rights" was arranged by MUSAWA, in cooperation with the PHRDs Network and Duma's Village Council. The workshop targeted 20 women

residing in the village of Duma. The workshop was given by two members of the PHRDs Network: *Tal'at Ziyadeh* and *Lamees Abu Assidah*.

### **28 February, 2016: Al-Sawahreh Al-Sharqiyeh Workshop**

In cooperation with the PHRDs Network and Al-Sawahreh Al-Sharqiyeh Center, MUSAWA organized a workshop under the title of “The Phenomenon of Child Labor between the Law and Reality”. The workshop was conducted in



the center's headquarters, and it targeted 12 of the town's mothers. The lecturers were Social Worker *Maha Za'atra* and Lawyer *Nisreen Qandeel*, both members of the PHRDs Network.

### **28 February, 2016: Al-Am'ari Refugee Camp Workshop**

A workshop titled “Children's Rights in International Law” was carried out by MUSAWA, in cooperation with the PHRDs Network and Al-Am'ari Elementary Boys School in Ramallah. The workshop targeted more than 25 eighth-grade and ninth-grade students. The workshop was given by three of the PHRDs Network: Lawyers *Angham Mansour*, *Nour Shafi'i*, and *Lina Al Haj*.

### **29 February, 2016: Beit Lahia Workshop**

A workshop under the title of “Rights of the Elderly in International Agreements and Palestinian Laws” was implemented by MUSAWA, in cooperation with the PHRDs Network, in the headquarters of the Freedom Forum Association in the city of Beit Lahia- The Northern Gaza Strip. The workshop targeted 33 male and female participants, 21 men and male youngsters and 12 women. The lecturers included Trainee Lawyer *Hala Hasanein* and Lawyer *Mustafa Abu Zir*, both members of the PHRDs Network.

### **23 February, 2016: MUSAWA meets with Brazilian Trade Unionist Herbert Carlos**

MUSAWA met with Brazilian Trade Unionist Mr. Herbert Carlos. Accompanied by the Deputy Chairman of the Palestinian Post Office Trade Union, Mr. Hussam Musleh, Mr. Carlos came to MUSAWA in order to know more about the scope of its work; to be introduced to the PHRDs Network and its role in defending the rights of unionists, who constitute a part of the Human Rights defenders; and to deepen cooperation between unionists and the Network.

The number of beneficiaries from the awareness workshops carried out by MUSAWA, in cooperation with the PHRDs Network, as part of a project to empower Palestinian Human Rights defenders reached 727 male and female participants, 517 of whom were females while 210 were males. During the period between the end of August 2015 and the end of February 2016, MUSAWA

succeeded in carrying out 27 workshops in Hebron, Bethlehem, Nablus, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Jordan Valley, and Gaza Strip.

### **Released statements**

18 February, 2016: We at MUSAWA, and on behalf of the Palestinian Human Rights Defenders Network as one of its members and founders, express our deep concern regarding the measures taken by the Executive Authority and its services against the teachers who are claiming their rights. MUSAWA stresses the legal invalidity of the measures taken against the teachers, especially since sit-ins and peaceful assemblies fall under the constitutional rights guaranteed by the law and international agreements. MUSAWA believes it is vital to listen to the teachers' demands, and calls on social partners to work together for the purpose of protecting their rights. MUSAWA emphasizes its full preparedness to do everything in its power to defend the rights of teachers and to represent them before judicial bodies, and leaves its doors wide-open for any initiative that would contribute in preserving the teachers' rights and provide them with the necessary legal and social protection

### **MUSAWA Launches an Initiative to Solve the Teachers-Government Crisis**

25 February, 2016: Following the teachers' mobility with great care, MUSAWA emphasizes the need for all parties, especially official ones, to adhere to the provisions of the Basic Law regarding the rights and freedoms inherent in the human person. Moreover, MUSAWA would like to point out that the measures taken by the Government and Security Services to confront the teachers' legitimate movement represent a violation of the Basic Law, international agreements, and Human Rights. Accordingly, MUSAWA rolls-on its initiative by proposing solutions for the crisis to prevent further escalation, and calls everyone who is keen on the nation's interest and unity to show interest in this initiative, to enrich it and to work as a single civil-society-team towards helping the parties involved in the crisis in arriving at a solution that fulfills the teachers' demands and maintains their unity under trade union laws.

More information can be found on the [Palestinian Human Rights Defenders Website](http://www.palhrd.org).