



**Monthly Report on
Violations of Human Rights and Freedoms in Palestine
August 2016**

In August 2016, domestic violations continued at a varying pace. This Monthly Summary Report highlights major human rights violations as monitored and documented by the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR). Based on documentation of encroachments on human rights and public freedoms during the month of August 2016, the ICHR monitored the following violations:

Domestic human rights violations

Violation	July 2016	August 2016	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Incidents of unnatural death	21	21	12	9
Complaints against torture and ill-treatment	36	48	25	23
Violation of the right to the due process of law	36	39	24	15
Governor-ordered detentions	10	2	2	—
Attacks on public institutions, public and private properties, and persons	3	4	4	—
Unenforced or delayed enforcement of court decisions	1	14	14	—
Death sentence	—	1	—	1

- As in July 2016, the ICHR monitored **21** incidents of unnatural death during the month of August 2016.
- Compared **36** complaints filed in July 2016, the ICHR received **48** complaints on torture and ill-treatment in August 2016.

- Whilst **36** complaints were filed in July 2016, the ICHR received **39** complaints on violations of the right to the due process of law and detention without guarantees of fair trial.
- The ICHR received **two** complaints on governor-ordered detentions in the West Bank. By contrast, **10** complaints were lodged in July 2016.
- Compared to **six** in July 2016, the ICHR received **14** complaints against unenforced or delayed enforcement of court decisions in August 2016.
- As in July 2016, **four** attacks on public institutions in the West Bank were documented by the ICHR in August 2016.
- The ICHR documented **one** death sentence rendered in Gaza.

A detailed description of violations:

I. Violations of the right to life and physical safety

During the month of August 2016, the ICHR documented **21** death incidents, including **12** in the West Bank and **nine** in the Gaza Strip. Of these, **five** citizens died in mysterious circumstances, including one in the West Bank and four in Gaza. **Six** citizens died in family feuds and manslaughters. These included two deaths in the West Bank and four deaths in Gaza. **Four** citizens, including three in the West Bank and one in Gaza, died as a result of failure to implement public safety measures. **Six** citizens died as a result of the abuse of firearms in the West Bank. Below is a detailed account of death incidents:

1. Deaths in mysterious circumstances

- On 7 August 2016, Sh. H., 29-year-old female resident of the Al Qubeiba town, Jerusalem governorate, died by hanging. According to information provided to the ICHR, Sh. H's dead body was found hanging at her father's house. The Police arrived at the scene and opened an investigation into the incident. To identify the causes of death, a decision was made to perform an autopsy on the dead body. The investigation showed that criminality was involved in the death. The offender was arrested for further investigation.
- On 9 August 2016, the dead body of K. H., a 16-year-old girl from the Beit Lahiya city, Northern Gaza, was located inside a pigeon loft in the backyard of her family house. A rope was wrapped around her neck. The Police arrived at the scene and started an investigation into the incident.

- On 9 August 2016, the dead body of Sh. H., a 23-year-old resident of the Al Shuja'iyah neighbourhood, Gaza city, was located in his room on the second floor of his family house. A rope was wrapped around his neck. The Police arrived at the scene and launched an investigation into the incident.
- On 28 August 2016, the dead body of J. M., a 41-year-old resident of the Deir al Balah city, Gaza Strip, was located in a room in the backyard of his house. A rope was wrapped around his neck. The Police arrived at the scene and started an investigation into the incident.
- On 29 August 2016, the dead body of Y. D., a 20-year-old resident of the Al Qarara town, Khan Yunis governorate, was located in his room in the family house. A rope was wrapped around his neck. The Police arrived at the scene and launched an investigation into the incident.

2. Deaths in family feuds, disputes and manslaughter

- On 12 August 2016, N. A., a 31-year-old resident of the Hebron city, died of serious injuries sustained. In a family feud that had taken place in the city on 9 August 2016, N. A. was stabbed in several parts of his body. Then, the Police arrived at the scene and opened an investigation into the incident.
- On 13 August 2016, S. A., a 20-year-old resident of the Al Nassr neighbourhood in the Rafah city, died of injuries sustained during a family feud. S. A. was hit several times with a sharp instrument. According to information provided to the ICHR, the dead body was transported to the Abu Yousef al Najjar Hospital in the Rafah city. The Police arrived at the scene and launched an investigation into the incident.
- On 22 August 2016, H. Gh., a 29-year-old resident of the Al Shati' refugee camp, Gaza city, died of a bullet wound in the head. During a quarrel at the family house, H. Gh.'s brother opened fire and killed his sister. The Police arrived at the scene, opened an investigation into the incident, and arrested the suspect.
- On 27 August 2016, during a family feud, M. N., a 25-year-old resident of the Jabalya refugee camp, died of a bullet wound in the chest. According to information provided to the ICHR, the dead body was transported to the Indonesian Hospital in Northern Gaza. The Police arrived at the scene and opened an investigation into the incident.

- On 28 August 2016, R. S., a 52-year-old resident of the Hebron city, died of several bullet wounds in various parts of his body. R. S. was injured during a family feud in the Um al Daliya neighbourhood south of Hebron city. The Police arrived at the scene and started an investigation into the incident.
- On 31 August 2016, A. A., a 21-year-old resident of the Khan Yunis city, died of shrapnel wounds from a hand grenade thrown during a family feud in the Al Sheikh Nasser area. According to information provided to the ICHR, the dead body was transported to the Nasser Hospital in the Khan Yunis city. The Police arrived at the scene, opened an investigation into the incident, and arrested a number of suspects.

3. Deaths resulting from failure to implement public safety measures

- On 19 August 2016, H. A., a 35-year-old resident of the Al Samoa' town, Hebron governorate, died of injuries sustained earlier while he was working at the Electricity Section of the Al Rihiya Village Council in the Hebron governorate. An electricity generator exploded, leaving H. A. with third-degree burns. The Police opened an investigation into the incident.
- On 20 August 2016, Y. A., a 1.5-year-old boy from the Hebron city, died of critical wounds sustained after he had fallen from the roof of his family house. The Police arrived at the scene and launched an investigation into the incident.
- On 22 August 2016, A. A., a 1.5-year-old boy from the Hebron city, died of critical wounds sustained after he had fallen from the roof of his family house. The Police arrived at the scene and opened an investigation into the incident.
- On 26 August 2016, R. A., a 4-year-old girl from the Tal al Sultan neighbourhood in the Rafah city, died of critical wounds. On 24 August 2016, R. A. fell from the balcony on the third floor of her family house. The Police arrived at the scene and launched an investigation into the incident.

4. Casualties resulting from the abuse of arms

- On 9 August 2016, A. N., a 30-year-old resident of the Nablus city died of a bullet wound in the stomach. According to information provided to the ICHR, individuals opened fire on A. N. at the entrance to the Balata refugee camp. A bullet penetrated A. N.'s stomach and exploded in the heart. It should be noted that

A. N. was a Military Intelligence officer. The Police arrived at the scene and launched an investigation into the incident. Having been detained, the culprits are now on trial.

- On 18 August 2016, military officers Sh. Sh., a 34-year-old resident of the Nablus governorate, and M. T., a 25-year-old resident of the Hebron governorate, died of bullet wounds in various parts of their bodies. Both officers were killed in an armed clash between Palestinian security forces and a group of armed individuals in the old city of Nablus. According to information provided to the ICHR, at 4:00 pm on Thursday, 18 August 2016, an armed clash took place between a number of individuals and security personnel. The armed group opened fire directly on security personnel, killing the two officers mentioned above and leaving four others with various wounds.
- On 19 August 2016, Khaled al Aghbar and Fares Halawah, 23- and 24-year-old residents of the Nablus city, died of bullet wounds in various parts of their bodies. Both citizens were killed in an armed clash in the old city of Nablus. According to information provided to the ICHR, the armed confrontation was triggered by the killing of two security officers on the previous day. According to the final medical report, several bullets, which had been shot at point-blank range, were located in the dead bodies. As the competent agency, the Military Prosecution launched an investigation into the incident.
- On 21 August 2016, Ahmed Izz Halawah, a 50-year-old resident of the Nablus city, died of critical wounds sustained after he had been beaten, kicked, and assaulted with sharp objects. Security agencies arrested and transported Halawah from a house in the Nablus al Jadida area to the Al Juneid prison. There, members of the 101 Brigade of the National Security Forces severely beat Halawah with their hands and feet, resulting in his immediate death. The Military Intelligence continues to investigate the incident. Halawah was a Police officer.

5. Death sentences

On 17 August 2016, the Gaza Court of First Instance sentenced to death by hanging M. Kh., a 25-year-old resident of the Gaza city. M. Kh. was convicted of murder. The court decision was referenced by the Palestinian Penal Law in force in the Gaza Strip.

6. Torture in detention – Cruel and degrading treatment

During the reporting period, the ICHR received **48** complaints on torture and ill-treatment, including **25** in the West Bank and **24** in the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, **16** complaints were filed against the Police, **six** against the Preventive Security, and **three** against the General Intelligence. In Gaza, **21** complaints were lodged against the Police and **two** against the Internal Security agency.

II. Violation of the right to the due process of law, including arbitrary detention, arrest on political grounds, governor-ordered detention, and trial by military courts.

Arbitrary and political detention: During the reporting period, in the West Bank, the ICHR received **39 complaints** against invalid detention procedures, including arbitrary and political detention. In the Gaza Strip, **15 complaints** were filed on similar violations.

In August 2016, **two** citizens were detained by orders from governors in the West Bank. Detained by an order from the Nablus Governor, M. A. has been detained by the Preventive Security agency in the Jericho city since 22 July 2016. M. A. has not been brought before relevant judicial bodies. Since 30 July 2016, A. A. has been detained by the Preventive Security agency in the Jericho city by an order from the Qalqiliya Governor. A. A. has not been taken before relevant judicial bodies.

III. Attacks on public institutions, public and private properties, and persons

- At 3:30 am on 2 August 2016, unidentified individuals threw a Molotov cocktail at a car belonging to Ali al Sammoudi, a journalist at the *Al Quds* newspaper and press photographer for Reuters. The car was parked in front of Al Sammoudi's house. The individuals fled. The front of the car caught fire, causing damage to other parts of the car. According to information provided to the ICHR, a Civil Defence team arrived at the scene. The Criminal Investigations Department opened an investigation into the incident. The investigation is still underway.
- On 23 August 2016, unidentified individuals opened fire on a house belonging to lawyer W. H. in the Nablus city. According to his statement to the ICHR, on 23 August 2016, W. H. posted a video on his Facebook page, addressing President Abu Mazen. In a legal language that was void of defamation, W. H. advised that the President withdraw security forces from Nablus in order to stop the bloodshed. Such a situation would lead to grave consequences. W. H. posted the video after he heard intensive fire opened at the time Izz Halawah was being assaulted. W. H.'s house is located at a distance of 300 metres from the Al Juneid Prison.

After an increasing number of viewers watched the video, W. H. posted that he would participate in an interview on the Al-Quds Satellite Channel to talk about the situation in Nablus. Five minutes before the interview was aired, W. H. said Preventive Security officers arrived at the Al-Quds TV station and demanded that he go out and see them. The officers reported that an arrest warrant would be executed if W. H. appeared in the show. They claimed that W. H. would incite residents of Nablus to not respect the President. The Director of Preventive Security also delivered an arrest warrant to the Palestinian Bar Association. W. H. said he would not take part in the interview. Therefore, he was not arrested and returned home.

At around 10:45 pm, W. H. and his family went to his father's house. At 11:05 pm, W. H. received a telephone call from his neighbour, who said that fire had been opened at W. H.'s house. A black Skoda arrived and stopped in front of the house. Two unmasked young individuals went out of the car and opened fire on the house. W. H. reported the attack to the Preventive Security and Police, who arrived, took photographs of the house, and documented the incident. According to the W. H.'s statement, security agencies did not take any action. It is worth noting that the house is in close proximity to the Al Juneid prison and fire can be easily heard from there. Security forces did not intervene after fire had been opened.

- On 29 August 2016, M. A., a 50-year-old resident of the Balata al Balad area, Nablus governorate, was severely beaten while he was at work. As an employee at the Nablus Municipality, M. A. was reading water meters at houses. At 10:00 am, M. A. knocked at the door of a house in the Askar al Jadid refugee camp and asked to be allowed in and read the water meter. From the second floor, the house owner's brother told M. A. to get in. M. A. had already introduced himself as an employee at the municipality. While he was reading the meter, the house owner yelled at M. A.: "How come you enter the house without permission". The house owner severely beat M. A., leaving him with bone fractures in the shoulder and hand.
- On 30 August 2016, a parent assaulted a teacher at the Al Ayyoubiyah School in the Hebron city, leaving the teacher with a light wound in the hand. According to information provided to the ICHR, the teacher was accused of beating the offender's son. According to the Director of the Central Hebron Directorate of Education, the Ministry of Education would take necessary action and file a complaint against the offender.

IV. Encroachments on the freedoms of opinion and expression, the press, and peaceful assembly

- On 10 August 2016, the Investigations Department of the Tourist Police in Gaza banned a meeting of the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW). The meeting was taking place at a hall of the Abdul Salam Abu Hasirah Restaurant on the Gaza beach. Including an audience of almost 100 participants, the meeting was chaired by the GUPW Secretary Amal Hamad. It was held in the context of preparations for the local elections. According to information provided to the ICHR, the restaurant managers received a telephone call from the Investigations Department of the Tourist Police, stating that they should evacuate the hall within half an hour. It was claimed that the restaurant managers had not reported the meeting to the Investigations Department of the Tourist Police or to the Ministry of Interior. Also, the GUPW did not obtain a licence to organise the meeting. Participants were dispersed before the meeting had been completed.
- On 18 July 2016, the General Intelligence agency detained A. Sh., a 26-year-old resident of the Hebron city. According to his statement in the complaint he filed to the ICHR, A. Sh. said he was detained on grounds of expressing his opinion on Facebook.
- At 08:00 am on 22 August 2016, Guard Police personnel attacked a number of activists during a sit-in protest, which was organised in solidarity with political prisoner Bilal Kayed outside the UN HQ in the Ramallah city. According to information provided to the ICHR, a quarrel between the Guard Police and protestors developed into an altercation and physical violence. While they were being detained, two protestors were punched, kicked, and subjected to *Shabeh* at the Guard Police station. Both protestors were released several hours later.

V. Unwarranted confiscation of private properties

- On 23 June 2016, Police officers arrived at a house belonging to M. T., a 27-year-old resident of the Sa'ir town, Hebron governorate. Police personnel seized M. T.'s Galaxy cellular telephone for examination. They said the cellular telephone would be returned several days later. Until the time of reporting, however, the telephone was not restored. M. T. reported to the Sa'ir Police station and General Investigations Department. The latter seized the telephone for examination.
- On 25 July 2016, Preventive Security officers searched a house belonging to M. A., a 45-year-old resident of the Dura city, Hebron governorate, and confiscated JD 2,500, seven cheques in the amount of JD 40,000, a PC, a flash memory card,

and two briefcases containing personal documents. Preventive Security officers also seized a diary belonging to M. A.'s wife. Confiscated items were only restored at the end of August 2016.

VI. Delayed and stalled enforcement of court decisions

During the reporting period, the ICHR received **14** complaints on unenforced court decisions. While seven were executed, the other seven court decisions have not been enforced until the time of reporting. These were as follows:

- On 25 July 2016, the Preventive Security agency in Ramallah detained M. S. On 9 August, the Ramallah Court of Conciliation rendered a decision to release M. S. on bail. However, the Preventive Security agency has not enforced the court decision until the time of reporting.
- On 21 July 2016, the Preventive Security agency in Jericho detained Sh. A. On 3 August, the Jericho Court of Conciliation rendered a decision to release Sh. A. on bail. However, the Preventive Security agency has not enforced the court decision until the time of reporting.
- On 21 April 2016, the General Intelligence agency in the Hebron city detained M. A., 23 years old. On 6 June, the Dura Court of Conciliation rendered a decision to release M. A. on bail in the amount of JD 100. Despite the fact that bail was paid on time, the General Intelligence agency has not enforced the court decision until the time of reporting.
- On 18 July 2016, the General Intelligence agency in Hebron detained A. Sh., 26 years old. On 25 July, the Hebron Court of Conciliation decided to release A. Sh. on bail. However, A. Sh. could not contact his family to pay the bail. On 31 July, A. Sh. was brought before the Hebron Court of Conciliation, which decided for the second time to release him. However, the General Intelligence did not enforce the court decision and continued to detain A. Sh. On 1 August, A. Sh. was taken before the Public Prosecution, which decided to extend his detention for 48 hours. On 3 August, A. Sh. was brought before the Hebron Court of Conciliation, which acquitted him of all charges and ruled for his release. Still, the General Intelligence stalled and did not enforce the court decision. Finally, A. Sh. was released on 29 August.

- On 1 August 2016, the General Intelligence agency in Hebron detained Kh. S., 19 years old. On 4 August, the Dura Court of Conciliation rendered a decision to release Kh. S. on bail. Kh. S. was released on 4 August.
- On 18 August 2016, the General Intelligence agency in Hebron detained S. A., a 24-year-old resident of the Hebron city, on political grounds. On 25 August, S. A. was brought before the Hebron Court of Conciliation, which decided to release him on bail. Although the bail was paid on time, the General Intelligence agency only enforced the court decision at end of August 2016.
- On 25 February 2016, the High Court of Justice decided that the decision on the dismissal of M. N., a 31-year-old Presidential Guard officer, was null and void. M. N. was dismissed on 1 April without stating any reasons. Through his lawyer, M. N. addressed the Organisation and Administration Authority, Prime Minister and Office of the Attorney General, but it was in vain. The ICHR wrote to relevant authorities, but the court decision has not been enforced until the time of reporting.

In addition, 11 court decisions rendered over the past months and years have not so far been enforced.

VI. Complaints on local elections

In August 2016, the ICHR received **11** complaints concerning local elections. A number of candidates complained of the difficulties they faced in obtaining clearance certificates. In accordance with the law, the Central Elections Commission (CEC) stipulated that each candidate should receive a clearance certificate from the local body they intended to stand as candidates for. The Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) also required that candidates should be clear of any fees due for local bodies until 1 August 2016. In addition, candidates' houses should be licensed. These conditions were particularly difficult to meet by some candidates. Most houses were old and needed to be licensed by the MoLG Building and Zoning Committee. Some local bodies, such as village councils, do not issue such licences. The Minister of Local Government stipulated cash payment of licence fees. In this context, the ICHR addressed the Minister and requested that procedures for obtaining clearance certificates be consolidated and that all districts and candidates be treated on an equal footing. Complaints were resolved in collaboration between the MoLG and CEC.

Based on citizens' statements, the ICHR monitored interference by security agencies, which banned some candidates from running for local elections. In addition to threats on

telephone calls, tribes were used to put pressure on and prevent some persons from standing as candidates on certain lists. Key interventions were as follows:

- On 29 August 2016, the Preventive Security agency in Bethlehem detained M. A., 29 years old, after he had registered an electoral list titled *Al Shaheed al Ramz Abu Ammar* [The Symbol Martyr Abu Ammar]. According to his brother's statement, M. A. was detained to force him to withdraw and join Fatah's official electoral list.
- H. T., a 33-year-old resident of the Hebron city, stated that on 26 July 2016 he started to establish a list to run for elections for the Hebron Municipality. H. T. was to stand as a candidate for the Palestinian Arab Front. In several telephone calls, the Preventive Security agency threatened A. J. and S. A., two candidates on H. T.'s list, to prevent them from running for the elections. As a result, H. T. could not establish his electoral list.
- In his complaint, E. R., a candidate for the Al Kum, Beit Maqdam and Al Muwarraq village compound, stated that a Preventive Security officer called a candidate on his list and demanded that he withdraw his candidacy.
- A. A., a resident of the Hebron city and candidate on the *Abna' al Balad* [Sons of the Country] List, stated that security agencies threatened him and a number of candidates, including E. A. A. A. was demanded to withdraw his candidacy. As a result, some potential candidates did withdraw from the list.
- On 25 August 2016, an ICHR field researcher visited the CEC district office in the Hebron city on the last day designated for registering electoral lists in the local elections process. The ICHR researcher noticed that Preventive Security and General Intelligence officers were present outside the CEC district office. Others were dispatched on the main street in civilian clothes.
- F. H., a resident of the Hebron city and representative of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) in the Hebron governorate at the CEC. According to his statement, on 25 August 2016, Police, National Security and General Intelligence officers, who were in civilian clothes, arrested N. A. at the CEC district office in Hebron while he about to register the *Democratic Alliance* [Al Tahaluf al dimuqrati] List. An arrest warrant from relevant authorities was not produced. N. A. was released on 28 August 2016. According to information given to the ICHR, N. A. was wanted by the Public Prosecution on grounds of charges of issuing a dishonoured cheque.

- The *Kafa'at* [Competences] List, which was about to run for local elections in the Beit Ummar town, was not able to register because several members had received telephone calls from a number of bodies, including security agencies. According to a member on the list, four out of eight members withdrew from the list. As a result, the list could not register for the elections.
- Y. Q. stated that, on 9 August 2016, he was summoned and interrogated by the General Intelligence agency in Hebron. He was questioned about the local elections in Dura. Y. Q. was released on 10 August 2016.
- A. A. stated that, at the end of July 2016, he was summoned by the Preventive Security agency, which reported that he was prevented from exercising any activities in association with Hamas, particularly in the electoral process. In mid August 2016, A. A. was summoned and questioned by the General Intelligence agency about supporting and establishing electoral lists.
- On 3 August 2016, H. Kh., a 36-year-old resident of the Al Zaytun neighbourhood in Gaza and representative of the Fatah Social Committee, was summoned by the Internal Security agency in Gaza. For three hours, H. Kh. was interrogated about his factional activity and the problems associated with Fatah elections in the Al Zaytun neighbourhood. H. Kh. was released at a later time.
- On 3 August 2016, S. Q., a 46-year-old resident of the Al Shuja'iyah neighbourhood in Gaza, member of Fatah and journalist, was summoned by the Internal Security agency in Gaza (Al Amal Hotel). For three hours, S. Q. was interrogated about his factional activity and recent writings. To maintain a positive atmosphere of the elections, S. Q. was demanded to avoid defaming Hamas and was released at a later time.
- On 3 August 2016, Z. H., a 34-year-old resident of the Al Zaytun neighbourhood in Gaza and a Fatah leading activist, was summoned by the Internal Security agency in Gaza. For two and a half hours, Z. H. was interrogated his factional activity and about his car. He was further demanded to not create havoc during the election period. Z. H. was released at a later time.
- On 9 August 2016, A. A., a 30-year-old resident of the Sheikh Redwan neighbourhood in the Gaza city and a member of Fatah, was summoned by telephone to report to the Internal Security agency in Gaza. For an hour and a half, A. A. was interrogated about his factional work, funding of the Fatah electoral campaign, and names of Fatah candidates for municipal elections. A. A. was released at a later time.

- At around 11:30 am on 29 August 2016, Dr. R. B., a 44-year-old resident of the Bani Suheila town, Khan Yunis governorate, and Fatah representative at the CEC for the Eastern Area, received a telephone call from someone called Mohammed Zaki al Dardisi, a leading activist of the Al Qassam Brigades. Al Dardisi demanded that Dr. B. calm down and threatened him of breaking his feet. At around 1:20 pm on the same day, while Dr. B. was leaving the CEC district office in Khan Yunis, a grey car without registration number plates blocked Dr. B.'s car. Four masked individual in black clothes went out, took Dr. B. out of his car, and forced him into theirs. Meanwhile, they beat Dr. B. with the butts of their pistols and hand. While they were driving to an unknown area, the masked individuals continued to beat and threaten Dr. B. When the car stopped, individuals forced Dr. B. out and beat him on the soles of his feet. After they received a telephone call from a person called Abu Mohammed, the masked individuals left Dr. B. in the area and left. Dr. B. was transported in a civilian car to the European Hospital in Khan Yunis. Following diagnosis, it appeared that Dr. B. sustained contusions in various parties of his body as well as a minor bone fracture in the left leg. Dr. B. filed a complaint to the CEC.
- On 29 August 2016, A. Q., a 31-year-old engineer, resident of the Khuza'a town in the eastern Khan Yunis governorate and candidate on Fatah's *Al Taharrur wal al Bina'* [Liberation and Building] List for the Khuza'a town, received a call on his cellular telephone from an unknown number. The caller demanded that A. Q. withdraw from the elections. Otherwise, he would be treated like Dr. R. B., who had been assaulted earlier.
- On 29 August 2016, Dr. W. A., a 41-year-old resident of the Khuza'a town, Khan Yunis governorate, and candidate on Fatah's *Al Taharrur wal al Bina'* [Liberation and Building] List for the Khuza'a town, received a call on his cellular telephone from an unknown number. The caller, who said his name was Wisam, demanded that W. A. withdraw from the elections. Otherwise, he would be treated like Dr. R. B., who had been assaulted earlier.
- On 29 August 2016, A. Sh., a 59-year-old female lawyer, resident of the Bani Suheila town, and candidate on Fatah's *Al Taharrur wal al Bina'* [Liberation and Building] List for the Bani Suheila town, received a call on her cellular telephone from an unknown number. The caller accused A. Sh. of convincing candidates on independent lists to withdraw and joint Fatah's list and threatened to shoot her. At the same time, H. Sh., A. Sh.'s husband, received a similar telephone call. The caller said "Your wife is ill-mannered. We will teach her how to behave".

- On 29 August 2016, J. N., a 46-year-old resident of the Khuza'a town in the Khan Yunis governorate and member on the Elections Supervision Committee of the Fatah's *Al Taharrur wal al Bina'* [Liberation and Building] List in the Khuza'a town, received a call on his cellular telephone from an unknown number. The caller threatened to break J. N.'s hands and feet.
- On 30 August 2016, Y. A., a 35-year-old resident of the Wadi al Salqa town east of Deir al Balah city and Coordinator of the Media Campaign of the Fatah's *Al Taharrur wal al Bina'* [Liberation and Building] List in the Wadi al Salqa town, received a call on his cellular telephone from an unknown number. The caller demanded that Y. A. calm down and threatened to open fire on his legs and to cut off his tongue.
- On 30 August 2016, E. A., a 44-year-old resident of the Bani Suheila area in the Khan Yunis governorate and Fatah's Secretary in the Eastern Area, received a telephone call from someone called Mohammed Zaki al Dardisi, a member of the Al Qassam Brigades. Al Dardisi threatened E. A. on grounds of the local elections. E. A. filed a complaint to the Police.

VIII. ICHR monitoring of human rights violations resulting from public policies and legislative process

A. The Council of Ministers

On 9 August 2016, the Council of Ministers approved, in a first reading, the Law on the Supreme Criminal Court. The Council of Ministers also approved and sent the Law on Agriculture to the President for promulgation in due form. The Law provides for aggravating penalties and taking actions to combat the entry of smuggled and spoilt animal and plant products into the Palestinian market. In addition, the Council of Ministers decided to refer the Draft Law by Decree on Union Organisation, Draft Law by Decree Amending the Law by Decree on the Lending Fund for Students at Higher Education Institutions in Palestine, Draft Bylaw on the Duration of Secondment, Unpaid Study Leaves, Duration of Official Delegation, and Ordinary and Extraordinary Leaves, Draft Regulation on the Chairpersons and Heads of Local Bodies, and Draft Amendment of the Administrative Regulation Concerning the Employees of the Palestinian Pension Authority to ministers for consideration and comments. Relevant legal procedures would be taken in an upcoming session.

In its session of 23 August 2016, the Council of Ministers decided to refer to the amendment of the Law by Decree on Consumer Protection to ministers for consideration and comments. Relevant legal procedures would be taken in an upcoming session.

In its session of 30 August 2016, the Council of Ministers decided to amend and refer the General Electricity Law No. 13 of 2009 to the President for promulgation in due form. The amendment is tailored to develop the energy sector. The Council of Ministers also approved the Law on Pharmaceutical Studies with a view to improving the health sector in Palestine, providing safe and effective medicines, and regulating and controlling quality of homemade drugs. The Law also provides for promoting the Ministry of Health's oversight role, licensing centres for pharmaceutical studies, and increasing public revenues. Additionally, the Council of Ministers decided to refer the Draft Administrative and Financial Regulation of the Palestinian Agricultural Development, Risk Reduction and Insurance Fund (PADRRIF) to ministers for consideration and comments. Relevant legal procedures would be taken in an upcoming session.

B. Decisions of the Reform and Change Bloc in the Gaza-based PLC

The Gaza-based PLC Reform and Change Bloc discussed the first Draft Law on Penal Conciliation of 2016. The Reform and Change Bloc also passed the Law on the Government Administrative Committee of 2016.

Ends