

# Palestinian Women and Security: Promoting the Rights of Palestinian Women and Girls through Legislation

## Working Paper

Ramallah and Geneva, May 2012



Geneva Centre for the  
Democratic Control of  
Armed Forces (DCAF)



Palestinian Women's  
Centre for Legal Aid and  
Counselling (WCLAC)

## **Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC)**

The Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC) was established in Jerusalem in 1991 as an independent Palestinian, non-profit, non-governmental organisation seeking to contribute to developing a democratic Palestinian society based on principles of equality and social justice between men and women. By forging a feminist vision based on equality and social justice, WCLAC has played a prominent role in addressing gender-based violence in Palestinian society in both private and public spheres.

## **The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)**

The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) promotes good governance and reform of the security sector. The Centre conducts research on good practices, encourages the development of appropriate norms at the national and international levels, makes policy recommendations and provides in-country advice and assistance programmes. DCAF's partners include governments, parliaments, civil society, international organisations and the range of security sector actors such as police, judiciary, intelligence agencies, border security services and the military.

## **Disclaimer**

The views expressed in this paper are those of participants and do not necessarily reflect those of DCAF and WCLAC.

## **Note**

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# Overview

## Problem statement

Many Palestinians believe that some of the applicable laws relating to the security of Palestinian women and girls do not provide sufficient protection to women, and need to be thoroughly reformed.<sup>1</sup> One of the problems is the lack of a unified legal framework applicable in the occupied Palestinian territory. Indeed, different laws apply to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip,

many of them inherited from the colonial period. This mixture of Jordanian, Egyptian, Palestinian, Ottoman and British laws, as well as Israeli military orders accounts for many inconsistencies in the legal framework. In addition, outdated laws fail to take into account the current needs of Palestinian women and girls, which have been acknowledged in more recent legislation.

## Response

Between May and October 2011, the Palestinian Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC) and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) jointly implemented a project under the title 'Assist the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) in enacting new legislation which enhances the security of Palestinian women and girls'.<sup>2</sup>

To that effect, WCLAC and DCAF gathered a taskforce composed of strategic-level representatives of key Palestinian institutions and civil society organisations.<sup>3</sup> Nine taskforce meetings were organised to address gaps and inconsistencies among applicable laws and to submit recommendations to the Palestinian authorities. The discussions were based on DCAF's publication, *Palestinian Women and Security – A Legal Collection*<sup>4</sup>, and on WCLAC's experience in the field of legislation related to

women. In addition to six permanent taskforce members, WCLAC and DCAF also invited non-permanent members to join the meetings based on their expertise on the topic. During an introductory meeting, permanent taskforce members jointly selected the topics to be discussed during subsequent meetings. They also reviewed the present working paper during a final meeting.

WCLAC and DCAF also conducted a briefing session on the advancement of the project for fifty decision-makers from the PNA, the PLC, the National Security Forces, the Ministries of Interior and Women's Affairs, the judiciary, academia and civil society organisations.

Based on the taskforce meetings, WCLAC and DCAF jointly submit this working paper to the concerned authorities to present the conclusions and recommendations of the taskforce to PNA and PLC decision-makers. WCLAC and DCAF will also publish three policy briefs highlighting some of the issues raised in this working paper. The views and recommendations presented in this working paper are those of the taskforce members, and do not necessarily reflect the views of DCAF and WCLAC. The role of both organisations was to facilitate the taskforce process, not to act as advisors.

## General remarks

This Working Paper is the continuation of a process started by the Palestinian authorities in order to promote laws that better take into account the security needs of Palestinian women and girls. In particular, WCLAC and DCAF wish to emphasise that the Palestinian authorities have

<sup>1</sup> See *Palestinian Women's Perceptions of Protection*, Ramallah: WCLAC, 2009, and *Palestinian Women and Security: Why Palestinian Women and Girls Do Not Feel Secure*, Geneva: DCAF, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> The project builds upon previous work undertaken by WCLAC and DCAF in the field of Palestinian women and girls' security. During the past twenty years, WCLAC has been promoting the reform of laws affecting Palestinian women and girls' security. DCAF has been working in the field of security sector reform in Palestine since 2006, and started working on gender issues in 2009 with the financial support of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo - AECID).

<sup>3</sup> See Annex 2 of this paper for the list of taskforce meetings and members.

<sup>4</sup> Available in Arabic at <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Palestinian-Women-and-Security-A-Legal-Collection>, published with the financial support of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID).

adopted resolutions to promote women and girls' security, such as the Council of Ministers Resolution to Improve the Protection of Women Subjected to Violence (2005), and the Presidential Decree ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 2009.

WCLAC and DCAF also wish to underline that Presidential Decree No. 7 of 2011, issued on 15 May 2011, has recently suspended some highly problematic articles with respect to women's rights. This is the case of Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Code of 1960, and Article 18 of the Egyptian Penal Code of 1936. The two suspended articles stipulate that perpetrators of crimes against close female relatives in so-called "honour crimes" can be exempted from punishment or can benefit from a mitigation of their sentence.

In addition to these legal steps, the Palestinian authorities have established a National Committee and a Strategic Plan for Combating Violence Against Women, and have created gender units in PNA ministries, the Civil Police, and most recently the National Security Forces.

WCLAC and DCAF wish to thank all members of the Taskforce for their commitment and valuable contributions to these discussions. Taskforce members did not always agree on the solutions to the legal challenges highlighted during their meetings. This Working Paper aims to present possible options presented by the majority as well as dissenting opinions.

## Main findings

Many members of the WCLAC-DCAF Taskforce consider that the current laws applicable in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip do not always provide sufficient protection to Palestinian women and girls. They note that some laws or specific articles discriminate against women and do not grant them the same rights and protection under the law awarded to men, while others simply fail to acknowledge the specific needs of women and girls. Taskforce members have thus highlighted the following issues:

### *Women and constitutional rights*

There are currently a number of draft constitutions in circulation; the latest one dating back to 2003.

In 2011, President Mahmoud Abbas issued a decree to form a Committee to draft another constitution. The members of this Committee have been appointed, whereas international best practice is to elect members of such committees. Moreover, at the time of taskforce meetings, all members of the Committee were men, and no mechanism has been established to ensure that women are represented. Many Taskforce members also highlighted the lack of public involvement and consultations on constitutional issues.

Article 9 of the currently applicable Amended Basic Law provides that "Palestinians shall be equal before the law and the judiciary, without distinction based upon race, sex, colour, religion, political views or disability". However, other applicable laws do not provide for any enforcement mechanisms, making it difficult for citizens to make a case in court if they are victims of discrimination.

### *Penal law*

In 2011, a Presidential Decree suspended Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Code No. 16 of 1960 and Article 18 of the Egyptian Penal Code of 1936, which provide mitigating circumstances to a man who kills his wife or another female relative if they are caught committing adultery. However, the Taskforce mentioned that other problematic articles of the Jordanian Penal Code remain applicable. This is the case of Article 62/2/A related to disciplining children and Article 98, which provides mitigating circumstances to perpetrators of violent acts if they acted in "a state of rage". Article 308 was also mentioned, as it allows rapists to escape punishment if they marry their victim and stay married for a minimum period of three years (if the crime committed is considered a misdemeanour) or five years (for a felony). In case of a divorce without legitimate reason before the end of the period stipulated in the law (three or five years), the legal proceedings shall continue and the perpetrator shall be sentenced.

Many Taskforce members also raised the issue of incest, which is not always classified as a type of sexual assault. In addition, some Taskforce members also noted that psychological (harassment) and verbal violence are not currently criminalised.

## *Personal status laws*

For Muslims, the Jordanian Personal Status Law No. 61 of 1976 is applied in the West Bank and the Egyptian Law of Family Rights of 1954 is applied in the Gaza Strip.<sup>5</sup> These laws apply principles of Shari'a Law to many social issues, such as marriage, guardianship, polygamy, divorce, alimony, child custody and testimony. The law sets gender-specific rights and duties for the spouses, which reflect a traditional, patriarchal structure of family relations. According to many Taskforce members, these provisions are not consistent with the constitutional right to equality granted by Article 9 of the Amended Basic Law of 2003, which is also enshrined in international treaties, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW) that was endorsed by the Palestinian Authority in 2009.<sup>6</sup>

For instance, both the Jordanian Personal Status Law of 1976 and the Egyptian Family Rights Law of 1954 set the age of marriage under 18 years old. The institution of guardianship in marriage was also criticised by many Taskforce members for infringing on a woman's right to choose her spouse. The fact that these laws do not grant the same weight to a woman's testimony in court as to a man's is also a cause of great concern. Furthermore, the unequal treatment of women in issues related to divorce and child custody was highlighted as a discrimination and protection gap.

## *Political participation*

By passing the Election Law No. 1 of 2007 by Presidential Decree and the Local Councils Election Law No. 10 of 2005, the Palestinian Authority acknowledged Palestinian women's right to political participation.<sup>7</sup> Both laws guarantee a minimum quota for women's representation in local councils and the PLC. The different election laws oblige all electoral lists for PLC elections to include women candidates (at least one woman candidate among the first three candidates of a list, a second woman among the

<sup>5</sup> Each Christian denomination has its own set of personal status laws in the Palestinian Territories.

<sup>6</sup> See CEDAW, Article 16.

<sup>7</sup> The Elections Law No. 13 of 1995, which organised the first elections of the PNA, acknowledged this right for the first time in 1995. Article 1 of the 1995 law provides that whenever the term elector and the term candidate are mentioned in the law, they mean all Palestinians, whether male or female.

next four to seven candidates, and a minimum of one woman candidate for all groups of five candidates that follow). As a result of this rule, the PLC is composed of at least 30% of female lawmakers. Law No. 12 of 2005 Amending Some Provisions of the Law on Elections of Local Councils (No. 10) of 2005 stipulates that in a council with up to thirteen members, at least two of them must be women. If a council has more than thirteen seats, every fifth elected member must be a woman. No quota for women participation exists for very small councils with an electorate that represents less than 1000 voters.

However, it is important to note that the quota system only guarantees a minimum participation of women on each electoral list, but does not achieve equal representation of men and women. Moreover, the Political Parties Law No. 15 of 1955, which was inherited from the Jordanian era and remains applicable in the West Bank, does not include any provision on women's political participation.

## *Protection against violence*

According to Taskforce members, the absence of a family protection law constitutes a critical gap in the current legislation.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the PNA is taking steps to improve the protection of women and girls against violence, as is illustrated by the Council of Ministers Resolution 366 of 2005, which concerns the protection of women subjected to violence. However, this Resolution does not provide any enforcement mechanism. Moreover, some Taskforce members noted that the confidentiality of trials dealing with cases of violence against women is not currently guaranteed by law.

In addition, many legislative gaps remain in the field of protection against violence, including when it comes to protecting juveniles. In particular, the work of women's shelters and their relations with the authorities are not regulated by law. Another gap highlighted by the Taskforce is the need for the Public Prosecution to rely on the victim or her/his relatives to press charges in order to be able to prosecute some crimes (Article 6 of the Law of Penal Procedure of 2001).

## *Economic security*

In consistency with Article 25 of the Amended Basic Law of 2003, the Palestinian Labour Law No. 7 of 2000 acknowledges the right of women to

<sup>8</sup> A draft law does exist, but it has not been approved.

work and prohibits gender-based discrimination in the workplace. However, Article 3 of the Labour Law specifies that this principle “does not apply to domestic workers”. The fact that the work of domestic workers is not regulated by law makes them particularly vulnerable to abuse by their employers. Since a majority of these workers are women, they are predominantly affected by this legal gap. In addition, Taskforce members noted that the Civil Service Law No. 4 of 1998 does not grant child allowances to women, but only to men working in the public sector. They also highlighted the lack of social insurance law, and underlined the discrimination in the treatment of men and women in inheritance law.

### *Women and the criminal justice process*

Taskforce members noted that laws dealing with crime suspects or prisoners do not consistently take into consideration the specific needs of women during trials and investigations. For instance, Article 47 of the Law of Penal Procedure of 2001 provides that only females can search other females. However, other articles related to physical examinations do not make this point clear; this is the case of Article 99 of the same law.

Similarly, Article 13 of the Correction and Rehabilitation Centres (‘Prisons’) Law No. 6 of 1998, which deals with health services in the Palestinian correction and rehabilitation centres, does not require the authorities to provide the services of a female doctor for female prisoners. This also compromises women’s right to privacy. Moreover, the absence of separate prisons for detainees under investigation and for common law inmates under this law constitutes a risk of further abuse for female detainees who are held in prison under protective measures. Most people deprived of liberty and imprisoned as a protective measure are women – this is due to the lack of other housing options, such as shelters. They are thus primarily affected by the lack of separation between common law inmates and other detainees.

## **Recommendations**

Based on their review of the main laws affecting the security of Palestinian women and girls, Taskforce members have suggested specific recommendations to address the gaps they have identified. Their recommendations are addressed to PNA and PLC decision-makers. As the review

process involved the analysis of numerous laws, many of which are closely linked, it would be necessary to take a comprehensive approach when amending legislation that affects the security of women and girls.

### *Concerning constitutional rights, Taskforce members recommended the following:*

- ▶ To replace the appointed Constitution Drafting Committee with an elected constitutional assembly;
- ▶ To include women in the constitution drafting process by applying a quota system requiring a minimum of 30 percent of female members in the constitutional assembly, based on the experience of the legislative elections of 2006;<sup>9</sup>
- ▶ To organise consultations in different governorates to gather citizens’ opinions on the principles that should be promoted in the new constitution, and to take these opinions into consideration in the draft;
- ▶ To include gender-sensitive language in the new constitution and to specify that the word Palestinian means Palestinian men and women;
- ▶ To take international standards into account while drafting the constitution;
- ▶ To establish a specific mechanism or separate constitutional court in order to monitor the application of the constitution; and
- ▶ To submit the draft constitution to a popular referendum.

### *Concerning penal laws, Taskforce members recommended enacting a new gender-sensitive penal code, so as to:*

- ▶ Ensure that Article 308 of the Jordanian Penal code of 1960 (which gives the possibility to rapists to escape punishment by marrying their victim) cannot be applied;
- ▶ Criminalise harassment in the private, public and professional spheres;
- ▶ Criminalise verbal violence;

<sup>9</sup> A quota system was established for electoral lists in legislative elections in 2006, which allowed women to hold 30 percent of the seats in the PLC.

- ▶ Classify incest as a type of sexual assault, regardless of the circumstances, and state that the notion of consent is not applicable to incest;
- ▶ Amend Articles 97, 98, 99, and 100 (which deal with mitigating circumstances) of the Penal Code No. 16 of 1960 in a way for these articles not to be applicable in the case of so-called 'honour killings'; and
- ▶ Limit the scope of Article 62 of the 1960 Jordanian Penal Code (which deals with disciplining children) to avoid its application in the case of murder in the name of honour.

*Concerning personal status laws, Taskforce members recommended the following:*

- ▶ To raise the age of marriage to 18 years, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Other Taskforce members recommended, as a first step to improve the current practice, to give the power to marry persons under 18 years to a judge, or a committee comprising judges and doctors, and only under strict conditions;
- ▶ To grant women's testimonies the same weight as that of men in personal status issues;
- ▶ To state that only competent courts can pronounce divorces, and to give women the same rights as men in filing for divorce;
- ▶ To grant men and women equal custody rights, regardless of their children's age;
- ▶ To take children's best interest into account when ruling on custody cases;
- ▶ To give girls the right to choose the custody of their father or mother (the current practice based on the Hanafi school is that, after puberty,<sup>10</sup> only boys choose, while girls are automatically placed in their father's custody); and
- ▶ To adopt a system of joint funds between the spouses. This would mean that all goods and funds that have been acquired after the marriage are considered joint property of the spouses. In case of a separation, the funds would be divided on an equal basis

<sup>10</sup> According to Article 162 of the Jordanian Personal Status law, divorced mothers or widows who do not remarry have custody of their children until they reach puberty.

between the spouses. Taskforce members recommend making this system mandatory.<sup>11</sup>

*Concerning political participation, the Taskforce members recommended the following:*

- ▶ To modify the quota system to increase the number of seats allocated to women in the PLC and all other elected councils;
- ▶ To adopt a 50 percent quota for women on electoral lists and guarantee that if the first candidate on a list is a man, then the second one must be a woman; and
- ▶ To enact a Palestinian Political Parties' Law respectful of equality between all citizens.

*Concerning protection against violence, Taskforce members recommended the following:*

- ▶ Regarding a family protection law, Taskforce members proposed two different options: 1) Draft and enact a family protection law; or 2) Add articles providing for family protection in a new Penal Code;
- ▶ To draft and enact a law providing for the establishment of government-supported shelters or safe houses for victims of domestic violence. The law should also provide mechanisms for the protection of women after they leave the shelters;
- ▶ To establish a referral system between the police, relevant ministries and civil society organisations for handling cases of violence against women and girls in a confidential and efficient manner;<sup>12</sup>
- ▶ To enact a juvenile law that takes into account the particular needs of juvenile detainees and victims of violence. The law should provide measures for the protection of boys and girls based on gender-specific needs;
- ▶ To legally guarantee the confidentiality of trials and investigations dealing with cases of violence against women; and

<sup>11</sup> In other Muslim countries where such a system already exists, it is only optional.

<sup>12</sup> An initiative to establish a referral system has already been taken by the Ministry of Women's Affairs in a joint endeavour with civil society. To this end, a draft law has been submitted and adopted by the National Committee Against Violence. In August 2011, the Council of Ministers passed a resolution to that effect.



- ▶ To amend Article 6 of the Law of Penal Procedure (2001) in order for the Public Prosecution to be able to press charges on behalf of the victim of a crime, without having to rely on a complaint from the victim or one of her/his relatives.

*Concerning economic security, Taskforce members recommended the following:*

- ▶ To enact a new law on social insurance or reinstate the previous law;
- ▶ To enact a law to regulate the work of domestic workers;
- ▶ To provide child allowances to all mothers working in the public sector; and

*Concerning women and the criminal justice process, Taskforce members recommended the following:*

- ▶ To amend the Law of Penal Procedure of 2001 with a view to enhancing the protection of women and girls against violence during law enforcement operations, notably by amending Article 99 to guarantee that only female staff perform physical examinations on women;
- ▶ To guarantee that female prisoners have access to female medical staff; and
- ▶ To amend the Correction and Rehabilitation Centres ('Prisons') Law No. 6 of 1998 in order to guarantee that female prisoners

receive proper medical attention, to ensure that common law inmates are separated from other detainees, and to establish pre-trial detention centres for female suspects awaiting trial.

## Next steps

Based on the review of the existing legislation as well as recommendations of the Taskforce, WCLAC and DCAF recommend the following next steps:

- ▶ Secure political support from the Office of the President, the Council of Ministers, the PLC, and other relevant ministries (such as the Ministries of Women's Affairs, Justice, and Social Affairs) in order to promote gender-sensitive legal reform;
- ▶ Establish a working group of PLC members and civil servants working in parliamentary committees as well as representatives of the Council of Ministers to examine the laws affecting women's security and propose amendments to guarantee that women's specific needs are taken into account;
- ▶ Raise Palestinian citizens' awareness of gender-sensitive legal reforms; and
- ▶ Encourage donor support to the PNA and PLC in enacting gender-sensitive legal reform.

### Offer of Services

WCLAC and DCAF remain available to engage in a dialogue with the Palestinian authorities on needs and opportunities for extending further assistance in enacting legislation which enhances the security of Palestinian women and girls, and promotes their equal rights.

# Annex 1:

## Main laws examined by the WCLAC-DCAF Taskforce

### *Constitutional rights*

- ▶ Amended Basic Law of 2003
- ▶ Draft Constitution of 2003

### *Criminal procedures and detention*

- ▶ Jordanian Penal Code No. 16 of 1960 (applicable in the West Bank)
- ▶ Egyptian Penal Code No. 47 of 1936 (applicable in the Gaza Strip)
- ▶ Amended Egyptian Penal Code No. 1 of 1947 (applicable in the Gaza Strip)
- ▶ Palestinian Draft Penal Code of 2010
- ▶ Law of Penal Procedure No. 3 of 2001
- ▶ Correction and Rehabilitation Centres ('Prisons') Law No. 6 of 1998

### *Protection against violence*

- ▶ Jordanian Juvenile Law No. 16 of 1954
- ▶ Palestinian Child Law No. 7 of 2004
- ▶ Draft Law for Family Protection against Violence of 2009

- ▶ Council of Ministers Resolution of 2005 to Improve the Protection of Women Subjected to Violence

### *Personal status*

- ▶ Jordanian Personal Status Law No. 61 of 1976
- ▶ Egyptian Family Rights Law No. 303 of 1954

### *Economic security*

- ▶ Civil Service Law No. 4 of 1998
- ▶ Labour Law No. 7 of 2000
- ▶ Income Tax Law No. 17 of 2004
- ▶ Law of Insurance and Pension of the Palestinian Security Forces No. 16 of 2004
- ▶ Law of Public Retirement No. 7 of 2005

### *Political participation*

- ▶ Elections Law No. 9 for 2005
- ▶ Local Councils Elections Law No. 10 for 2005
- ▶ Elections Law No. 1 for 2007

## Annex 2: Participants in the WCLAC-DCAF Taskforce Meetings

### Introduction, 5 May 2011

Ghandi Raba'i	Head of Policy and Legislation Unit	Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR)
Haitham Arrar	Head of Human Rights and Democracy Unit	Ministry of Interior
Nahed Freitekh	Legal Advisor	Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC)
Wafa Hussein	Head of Gender Unit	Palestinian Civil Police

### Women and the criminal justice process, 19 May 2011

Abdel Jawad Al-Silwadi		Prisons and Rehabilitation centres, Palestinian Civil Police
Ahmed Barak	Head of Public Prosecution	Public Prosecution
Amal Salameh	Head of Juveniles' Care Department	Ministry of Social Affairs
Anas Barghouthi	Lawyer	Al-Dameer Association for Human Rights
Emad Hammad	Head of Legislation Unit	Council of Ministers
Ghandi Raba'i	Head of the Policy and Legislation Unit	Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR)
Marlin Al-Rabadi	Former General Manager of Impact, Media and Communication Unit	Ministry of Women's Affairs
Maysoon Ramadan	Director	Mehwar Center for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Families
Mohammed Dar Atta	Social Worker	Ministry of Social Affairs
Nahed Freitekh	Legal Advisor	Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC)
Najem Al-Molok	Consultant on violence against women issues	International and national NGOs
Salah Abu Saud	Lawyer, Legal Unit	Defence for Children International (DCI)
Salim Kawarik	Head of Social Defence Unit	Ministry of Social Affairs
Wafa Hussein	Head of Gender Unit	Palestinian Civil Police
Zeina Jallad	Lawyer	Faculty of Law, Birzeit University

### Protecting Palestinian Women and Girls against Violence, 30 May 2011

Ahmed Barak	Head of Public Prosecution	Palestinian Public Prosecution
Arij Odeh	Legal Advisor	Ramallah and Al-Bireh Governor's Office
Bassam Al-Mohor	Communications Officer	International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Haitham Arrar	Head of Democracy and Human Rights Unit	Ministry of Interior
Lina Abdel-Hadi	Legal Advisor, in charge of domestic violence	Nablus Governor's Office
Nahed Freitekh	Legal Advisor	Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC)
Sireen Hosho	Lawyer and Head of Empowerment Unit	Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC)
Wafa Hussein	Head of Gender Unit	Palestinian Civil Police
Wafa Muammar	Head of Family Protection Unit	Palestinian Civil Police
Yasser Alawneh	Legal Researcher at National Policies and Legislations Monitoring Unit	Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR)
Ziyad Othman	Head of Public Relations and Media Unit	Nablus Governor's Office

### **Palestinian Women and Penal Law, 9 June 2011**

Duaa Ibrahim Al Saghir	Legal Researcher	Higher Judiciary Council
Fateh Hamarshe	Deputy Head of the Technical Office	Higher Judicial Council
Ghandi Raba'i	Head of Legislation Unit	Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR)
Khulood Al Faqih	Shari'a Judge	Higher Shari'a Court Council
Luna Orikat		Legal Clinic, Al Quds University
Nasser Al Rayyes	Legal Advisor	Al-Haq
Taleb Awad	Director	Arab World Democracy & Electoral Monitor (Marsad)

### **Palestinian Women and Constitutional Rights, 22 June 2011**

Amal Jumaa	Coordinator of Audio-Visual Media	Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC)
Eissa Abdeen	Legal Advisor	Al-Haq
Emad Hammad	Head of Legislation Unit	Council of Ministers
Fateh Hamarshe	Deputy of Technical Office	Higher Judicial Council
Firas Melhem	Independent Researcher	
Haitham Arrar	Head of Democracy and Human Rights Unit	Ministry of Interior
Mohammad Al Khader	Professor of Constitutional Law	Birzeit University
Taleb Awad	Director	Arab World Democracy & Electoral Monitor (Marsad)
Najwa Yaghi	Project Coordinator	Miftah
Sireen Hosho	Lawyer and Head of Empowerment Unit	Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC)

### Palestinian Women and Personal Status Law, 21 July 2011

Haitham Arrar	Head of Democracy and Human Rights Unit	Ministry of Interior
Ismail Hammad	Advisor, Legal Unit	Ministry of Women's Affairs
Jawda Munir Ashour	Head of Guidance Department at the Women's Labour Unit	Ministry of Awqaf (Nablus)
Luna Orikat		Legal Clinic, Al Quds University
Noura Barahmeh	Research Assistant, Policy and Legislation Unit	Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR)
Nahed Frietekh	Legal Advisor	Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC)
Ruba Yasseen	Policy and Legislation Unit	Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR)
Sajeda Jamal Al Kayed	Legal Assistant, Women's Labour Unit	Ministry of Awqaf
Sheikh Muhammad Said Salah	- General Director of Research Planning - Member	- Dar Al Ifta - National Coalition to Combat Violence Against Women
Sheikh Saleh Abu Farha	Shari'a Judge, Chief Justice Bureau	Higher Shari'a Court Council
Sulafa Sawalha	Head of Family Guidance and Reform Unit	Higher Shari'a Court Council
Tahrir Hammad	Public Prosecutor - Personal Status Unit	Higher Shari'a Court Council
Wafa Al-Araj	Legal Advisor , Legal Affairs Unit	Ministry of Women's Affairs

### Palestinian Women and Political Participation, 15 September 2011

Aref Jaffal	General Director	Arab World Democracy & Electoral Monitor (Marsad)
Fatmeh Sihwail	Mayor	Ebwain Municipality
Hanan Emseeh	General Manager, Gender Unit	Ministry of Local Government
Nahed Frietekh	Legal Advisor	Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC)
Samiha Rimawi	Responsible for Ramallah area	Palestinian Women's Struggle Committee Union

### Palestinian Women and Economic Security, 6 October 2011

Amina Rimawi	Member	Palestine General Federation of Trade Union
Areej Khawaldeh	Head of Training at the Democracy and Human Rights Unit	Ministry of Interior
Buthaina Salem	General Manager of Legal Affairs Unit	Ministry of Labour
Eman Assaf	Head of Gender Unit	Ministry of Labour

Hussain Fuqaha	General Secretary	Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions
Ismail Hammad	Advisor, Legal Unit	Ministry of Women's Affairs
Israa Omar	Head of Unit	General Personnel Council
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Munir Qleibo	Special oPt Representative	International Labour Organisation
Razan Baida	Director of Monitoring and Evaluation, Gender Unit	Ministry of Women's Affairs
Shahinaz Saleh	Head of Gender Unit	Ministry of Planning
Suha Omar	Project Coordinator	Women's Studies Center
Yara Al Obweh	Programme Manager	Women's Studies Center



### **Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC)**

The Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC) was established in Jerusalem in 1991 as an independent Palestinian, non-profit, non-governmental organisation seeking to contribute to developing a democratic Palestinian society based on principles of equality and social justice between men and women. By forging a feminist vision based on equality and social justice, WCLAC has played a prominent role in addressing gender-based violence in Palestinian society in both private and public spheres.

### **The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)**

The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) promotes good governance and reform of the security sector. The Centre conducts research on good practices, encourages the development of appropriate norms at the national and international levels, makes policy recommendations and provides in-country advice and assistance programmes. DCAF's partners include governments, parliaments, civil society, international organisations and the main security and justice providers such as police, judiciary, intelligence agencies, border security services and the military.

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