



المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



# Annual Report

January to December, 2007





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## Table of Content

ABOUT THIS REPORT .....	3
WHO WE ARE .....	4
ORGANIZATION'S PREFACE .....	5
I. MONITORING & DOCUMENTING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS .....	7
II. HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION & RAISING AWARENESS .....	20
III. ADVOCACY & NETWORKING .....	29
IV. DIALOGUE .....	39
V. LEGAL RESEARCH & AID .....	46
CONCLUSIONS .....	52
PHRO FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007 .....	53



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## \*\*\*\*\**About This Report*\*\*\*\*\*

The Palestinian Human Rights Organization - PHRO Annual Report for the period 2007 documents PHRO's carried activities and initiatives within its 5 programs' areas. It reflects PHRO's efforts in monitoring and documenting human rights violations that Palestinians experienced throughout this year. Also, the report presents PHRO's educational and raising awareness actions in the field of human rights and other related themes such as conflict resolution, good governance, dialogue ...etc. Moreover, it spots the light on the advocacy and dialogue schemes and presents their results, effects and the potential plans for auxiliary achievements. Furthermore, it updates PHRO's information regarding the legal research topics taking place, the legal aid assistance and their potential aims.

PHRO's Annual Report 2007 consists of 54 Pages and it presents a brief definition about the PHRO, the Organization's Preface, Programs Overview and the Financial Statement

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## Who We Are? \*\*\*\*\*

The Palestinian Human Rights Organization - PHRO is an independent non-governmental "NGO" working for promoting, defending and protecting the rights of the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon. PHRO raises the awareness of the Palestinian Refugees as to their rights in the international law and encourages the community to translate this knowledge into legitimate peaceful campaign to obtain recognition of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in Lebanon. PHRO is a staunch supporter of UN Resolution 194, and appeals for the international pressure on Israel until Resolution 194 is implemented and the occupation of the Palestinian territories ends.

PHRO was established in 1997 to address the human rights situation of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon. Starting from 4 February 2006, and under the registration no. 36/AD, the PHRO became an NGO OFFICIALLY recognized in Lebanon.

PHRO's initiatives are carried out on local, national, regional, and international levels. Where as our main objectives are:

- 🇵🇸 to raise awareness among the Palestinian Refugees communities with their Human Rights and peaceful means of civil struggle (Dialogue, Conflict Prevention, Good Governance ..etc) in order to enhance the structural development amongst the community
- 🇵🇸 to conduct researches on Palestinian Refugees situations in Lebanon and other hosting countries
- 🇵🇸 to advocate for the improvement of the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon
- 🇵🇸 to provide legal aid for Palestinian Refugees

The PHRO works to raise the profile of the Palestinian Refugees, to address the discrimination against them and to raise the awareness of human rights principles amongst both the refugee and host communities.

PHRO's work is based on the declarations relevant to the International Human Rights Conventions, namely International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Convention against Torture and other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), and Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), The Association Agreement between the EU and the Republic of Lebanon, and on UN Resolution 194 which calls for the Right of Return.

PHRO is a member of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN).



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## *Organization's Preface*

Our 2007 preface will introduce you, in brief, to major circumstances that we have experienced through out this year within our organization which celebrated this year its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

10 years have passed since our establishment during which we have grown a lot, gained a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the fields of human rights, defended and protected hundreds and maybe thousands of the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon particularly through our programs on: **Monitoring and Documenting Human Rights Violations, Education and Raising Awareness, Advocacy, Dialogue and Legal Research & Aid** which on their turn have gradually developed a lot. Membership at the PHRO amplified as well as the skilful team professionalism. We have passed many stages where obstacles, achievements, threats, intimidations, success and attainments were experienced. All these strength and weakness have been always used as powerful evaluation indicators in order to modify and improve the quality of our work within the mandate: **Promoting, Protecting and Defending the Rights of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon.**

Nevertheless, the anniversary did not pass without any sadness and sorrowful incidents; In 2007, the PHRO was shocked to lose one of its founder members and believable activist. In September 2007, **Mr. Hammouda Lotfi Hammouda**, aged 40 years, passed away in a brain clot episode in the Netherlands. **Mr. Hammouda** was forced to leave Lebanon where he sought asylum in the Netherlands, in late 2002, after he has been tracked, insulted and threatened by a Palestinian armed group because of his echoed activism with the PHRO particularly in the Media and Monitoring & Documenting Human Rights Violations Units. In September 2007, and almost one week before his death, **Mr.**

**Hammouda** asylum application was approved and he was granted the solution of getting settled in the Netherlands, but death was faster to steal his happiness and his dream to enjoy his life without worries ...

Another sudden and sorrowful incident in 2007, was the non-return of a PHRO member, **Mr. Mohammad Suleiman El-Najjr**, who travelled to attend a training course on human rights in Copenhagen – Denmark and stayed afterwards in Scandinavia without notifying, on such action, in prior. In its 10 years history of action, it was the first time that PHRO experience such a deceiving occurrence, which in fact has lots of disadvantages

In February 2007, the PHRO held its first **OFFICIAL** General Assembly Meeting during which we elected the 3 years operational Board of Directors (one year after being officially recognized in Lebanon under the registration no. 36/AD, in accordance with the Lebanese Laws). During this meeting, and on the membership level the PHRO members voted on: approving 10 joining memberships, accepting 1 resignation, considering 2 as resigned, correcting the status of 3, and congealing 3). Furthermore, PHRO members voted on fixing the General Assembly meetings on



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April of each year and on amending the Status and the Bylaws in accordance with what suit the daily work nature, the donors' policy(ies) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs Requirements.

Another benchmark within this year was PHRO's high coverage to the humanitarian consequences on the civilians due to the Naher El-Bared Clashes that took place from May to September 2007. Responding to such an emergency was a major duty especially in terms of spotting the light to the humanitarian side of the crisis that media marginalized a lot during their coverage. The PHRO reported on the numerous types of violations that were taking place during the clashes and in the aftermath. All the necessary details in relation to these facts are covered in our annual report.

On another level and as a matter of condensing the focus of our efforts (for 2007 & the upcoming two years) on advocating towards the improvement of the rights situation of the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, the PHRO prioritized three rights: **Identity (Non-IDs)<sup>1</sup>, the right to Work and the Right to Own Property**. These three rights were planned up in programs that we hope to be sustained and are included in all the discussions with the concerned local and international bodies such as Parliament Blocks, Ministers, EU representatives, PLO representation Offices ...etc. All the related developments/deterioration with respect to these three rights, are included in our annual report.

By the end of the 2007, the PHRO started its planning for its next three years Strategy which will mainly focus on the socio-economic rights of the Palestinian Refugees and on introducing the PHRO as a resource organization about the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon. The PHRO will put more efforts in keeping up the political readings for the situations that are governing the Palestinian refugees' presence in Lebanon and which in fact is affecting the policies used to treat them in Lebanon. Furthermore, the PHRO will amplify its fundraising initiatives and discussions with the intention to increase the donors' record and the fruitful cooperation credibility that we have gained over the precedent years which delivered fertile results. Besides the PHRO will develop strategies/programs that enhance the abilities and the skills of its staff and members in order to fit with the future plans of the resource institution.

We put between your hands our Annual Report for the year 2007 which will transparently introduce you to our 2007 efforts in the human rights march and we hope that the future years will brought in more improvement for the Palestinian Refugees' rights situations in Lebanon, stability, human security and peace all over.

*Ghassan S. Abdallah*  
*PHRO General Secretary & Director*

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<sup>1</sup> The majority of Non-ID Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are Palestinians who entered Lebanon in the 1970s due to the Black September events, and who over the past three decades have expanded to include their spouses, descendants and other immediate family. Other Non-ID refugees are Palestinians who were in Lebanon for other reasons (work, education, family...etc), became trapped in Lebanon, and were refused re-entry to their previous countries of residence. Today, a new undocumented generation is growing. Non-ID Palestinian refugees are restricted from: free movement, gaining a stable form of income, accessing health care system, graduating from high school or university, getting married legally, free movement inside Lebanon and travel outside it. For more info on that, kindly visit the following link [http://www.palhumanrights.org/reports/phro\\_%20report\\_non-id.pdf](http://www.palhumanrights.org/reports/phro_%20report_non-id.pdf)



# المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

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## I. Monitoring & Documenting Human Rights Violations

Monitoring and documentation efforts undertaken by PHRO monitors, who gather the information from the victims throughout Beirut, Lebanon's Mountain, Southern and Northern Lebanon, inside the Palestinian refugees' camps & gatherings, constitute the backbone of most PHRO programs' activities. Nevertheless, 2007 field reports did not cover all the areas that include Palestinian refugee presence, since this year as well, the PHRO didn't have the sufficient funds that enables us to increase the human resources within this program's unit.

PHRO's Monitoring and Documenting Violations unit reported in 2007 about cases where individual violations covering human rights abuses that highlight a specific trend occurred throughout this period.

It is essential to indicate that gathered information within this unit is channeled into PHRO's other programs that deal with:

- human rights education where some of these info constitute case studies during the conducted trainings
- advocacy at the local and international levels, including its interventions such as appeals, reports and missions
- dialogue, where these info constitute topics to discuss and intervene to solve in dialogue meetings with concerned bodies

### ❖ General Overview

In 2007, the Monitoring and Documenting Violations Unit was depending on four monitors, including the coordinator, in addition to several volunteers who all together carried out the unit's affairs. Despite such tight situation, **the unit succeeded to document, mostly in the first half of the year, 117<sup>2</sup> cases**, which exceeded the number of cases documented during the entire last year by 62. Within the second half of the year, the unit's efforts were directed towards monitoring and documenting the violations that took place in Northern Lebanon (*Naher El-Bared Camp Clashes and the afterwards Consequences*)<sup>3</sup> where plenty of severe breaches were encountered.

In general we could reveal that bad and impoverished situations, misery and poverty, are still the head titles of the Palestinians' daily living conditions inside the camp. Rape, theft, violence, drugs addiction, currency counterfeiting, family disintegration, all these problems

<sup>2</sup> It is essential to clarify that the 117 cases do not include neither the prisons' ones nor the violations that took place in light of the Naher El-Bared Clashes that broke out from May 20<sup>th</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 between the Lebanese Army and the so-called Fateh El-Islam Group which lead to thousands of displaced people and plenty of critical health, housing, torture, humiliations ...etc violations

<sup>3</sup> Kindly visit the monitoring and documenting human rights violations section on PHRO's website in order to obtain detailed particulars on the violations occurred/resulted in light of the Naher El-Bared Camp Clashes



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

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are cases that increased in eruption inside the camp as a result of the repression, frustration, lack of social awareness and civil guidance. Nevertheless, this year, new trends surfaced in addition to the same violations that were mentioned beforehand and which we elaborated on them in our previous reports.

2007 witnessed blatant breaches of human rights against the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon since heightened tensions triggered due to the fighting between the Lebanese Army and the so-called Fateh El-Islam group as well as the deteriorating economic and social conditions. These breaches will become clearer throughout our report.

### ❖ *Specific Overview*

Despite that the 117 cases were monitored in the first half of the 2007, however they included a coverage of: **child labor, discrimination, poverty, dreadful social & environmental conditions, crime conductance, arms usage, genuine control "usage of power", chaos & rioting, medical lapse and negligence in health sector ...etc.** The underneath details provide a specific overview of PHRO's 2007 record of human rights violations;

✚ **Right to Education: Exploiting & Pursuing Arbitrary Methodologies with Students;** After UNRWA's rigorous in emphasising the disposal of beating as a method of punishment, this phenomenon diminished in taking place, however, many other phenomena began to surface. Examples on these observable facts could be outlined by:

- Student(s) are subjected to insults and humiliations
- teacher(s) sending group(s) of students to buy goods for them during the class hours which consequently subjects them to danger
- using the methodology of expelling the student(s) from the school for a number of days as a mean of punishment and without informing the parents which allow the student to predict going to school these days and instead he/she spend them out in streets with friends ...etc
- Collective punishment, which hinders accessing the sufficient benefit that education, should cover. Hereby we mean that in some cases the naughty students might be 3 or 4 within the class, and if things that teachers dislike happened, then the whole class maybe subjected to the same punishment

*The above mentioned actions, accompanied with the appalling economic situations, contributes to students drop out from school and lead to:*

- **Children engagement in law labor:** working children are considered an easy target for violence, maltreatment (unfair payment for their work), and bad habits, furthermore, they suffer illness (Breathing System – e.g. children working in car-



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

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painting garages) and problems in adequate growing (Bones System – e.g. children working in building workshops).

- **Children find alternatives for bringing money rather than work:** this is represented by referring to actions such as begging, theft ... etc which consequently increase the intentions of children restoration to violence in order to solve their problems. Gradually, children might be abused by actors who transform and train them to be child-soldiers!!

✚ **Right to Security: Misuse of Weapons:** weapons are considered the ruling tool inside the camps (*especially Ain El-Hilweh Camp*) to resolve the conflicts particularly in light of the proliferation of numerous types of weapons and their ammunition in the hands of people, even the youth and children. The tense situations in the camps resulted from the deterioration in the life's adequate standards "*economic, social ...etc*", the presence of the various and diverse political parties as well as the abundance of extremists and fundamentalists, all together lead to conflicts that, in most of the times, cause casualties (*killed, wounded*) amongst the civilians, this is without mentioning the cases of panic and fear. On the other hand, the level of misery amplifies due to the absence of adequate health care system, as well as the sufficient financial means amongst the civilians to secure the satisfactory medication in case of affect with such incidents. *i.e. Civilians who got affected by these incidents receive assistance mostly at the first stages of the treatment, however, the afterwards consequences, particularly in cases of incurred disability, people have to depend on themselves to confront the medical distress.*

✚ **Right to Equality:** This year new breaches were brought up to public as a result of the latest war in Lebanon "Summer 2006". These new breaches could be identified by the non-medical adaptation of the Palestinians who were wounded during this war by any official party or even by Hizbollah who took upon itself the treatment of all wounded people. Several wounded Palestinians did not receive the adequate war medical and health care assistance because the long-term medication procedure did not cover the Palestinians and the foreigners. This discriminatory procedure left the Palestinians and their families to their fate such as cases of physical disabilities, particularly those who could not afford the treatment, as well as in cases of death, where in both instances, compensations were not afforded to the victims' families.

✚ **Immigration of Palestinian Refugees:** Due to the bad and deteriorating economic and social conditions inside the Palestinians' refugee camps and since Palestinians in Lebanon are experiencing a vast discrimination against them within Lebanon's legal system which



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**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

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deprive them from their political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights, add to all this, the unstable political and economic situation in Lebanon, in addition to the absence of camps' security and stability, Palestinians became thinking more about methodologies by which they can improve their situations and to a large extent, the "illegal" immigration was the key. This trend becomes so popular within the Palestinian communities in Lebanon and the Lebanese ones as well. Such a trend encourages the smugglers, brokers and the fraudulent to seize these needs and delude people in promises to secure them visas if they paid large amounts of money that could exceed 5,000 USD. Many Palestinians especially youth sold things they own and/or borrowed money to afford the visas fees. Within such a context, some cases occurred where either the broker took their money and escaped out side Lebanon so they were subjected to swindling where they lost their money, or they were smuggled across the sea from Turkey to Greece in small boats and get pursued by the Turkish Mafia where they were thrown to the sea and died drowning amongst them are children and youth, where as those who were rescued got arrested by the Greek Authorities and some others were missing and no one knows any thing about their fate even their families in Lebanon.

✚ **Right to Housing:** A live example on the high deterioration of the Palestinian refugees' camps and gatherings social conditions is the substandard houses. Many families are threatened to death at any moment since they are living in dilapidated houses that lack the minimum health requirements, suffer from high humidity, viable collapse over the heads of its residents, and to the lack of sewage channels. Furthermore, families who suffer from such severe conditions in addition to those whom their houses were affected by the Summer 2006 war were prevented from entering building materials to reconstruct damaged sections. Within the same context, several cases were monitored where the Lebanese Internal Forces (LIF) interfered and demolished<sup>4</sup> what people have managed to build or reconstruct in the gatherings.

✚ **Right to Health:** Recklessness and deterioration in the health sector at UNRWA clinics and the Palestinian Red Crescent Hospitals reached to underestimating and disdaining peoples' lives where the lack of attention, cleanliness and carelessness, endanger patients' lives and supplement them to death. Many cases appeared to take place where several patients were given wrong medicines, causing them serious troubles and many others experienced deadly mistakes during surgical operations.

<sup>4</sup> This took place in the Palestinian Gatherings and not the camps since the LIF have access to them. Gatherings are areas where plenty of Palestinians are living around each others. It is noteworthy to mention that gatherings' lands are not like camps' lands i.e. rented by UNRWA



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

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Furthermore, year 2007 witnessed an increase in the Palestinian refugees' cases who could not afford the payment of their health treatment and medication. As a result of UNRWA's abandonment in carrying its responsibilities in providing full hospitalization services for Palestinian refugees who are suffering from chronic and incurable diseases such as cancer, liver cereuses as well as surgeries and analysis such as heart surgeries, magnetic radiation images ...etc which in total are very expensive, plenty of Palestinians resort to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the humanitarian and charitable associations in order to seek their assistance in covering the treatment and hospitalization that all together do not reach 50% of the overall medical invoice which in fact is becoming increasingly expensive. It is noteworthy to mention that in their seeking assistance circuit, Palestinians undergo several obstacles that could be concise firstly by the complicated bureaucratic procedures that all the mentioned parties strongly have, and continued afterwards by the remedy that spoil the human's dignity.

✚ **Right to Free Movement:** Restrictions on the right to free movement are still imposed by the Lebanese army at the entrances of some Palestinian refugee camps especially in Southern Lebanon. After the eruption of the armed clashes between the Lebanese Army and the so-called Fateh El-Islam group in Naher El-Bared Camp, tangible and ethereal barriers started to be imposed on Palestinian Refugees. Hereby we could briefly illustrate that Palestinians were subjected to strictly entering and leaving operations to their camps (*especially the Northern Camps*) and waves of arrests, without any charges!! It is noteworthy to mention that such restrictions on the right to free movement disable and block the employees from reaching their works or homes and the students from reaching their schools and universities, causing in accordance turmoil and apprehension.

✚ **Right to Identity:** The Non-IDs problem still exists despite all the efforts that we exerted in extracting them official identification documents that are ratified from the Lebanese authorities. The Non-IDs are still lacking the access to rights especially the right to legal identity and free movement. Several cases were documented where the Lebanese Army arrested Non-ID Palestinians who are holding PLO nationality certificate document and fined them amounts of money and in some cases arrested Non-IDs were deported outside Lebanon, on the borders with Syria. Those had the bad luck and suffered again!! They can not enter to Syria, and they were manipulated by smugglers and brokers who abuse them in turn of assisting them to enter Lebanon again.



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

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### ❖ *Naher El-Bared Clashes*

The surprising violations that were brought up in year 2007 and that Palestinians have experienced again during their refuge period to Lebanon is the destruction of the Naher El-Bared Camp and the displacement of its almost 35,000 dwellers as per the armed clashes between the so-called Fateh El-Islam group and the Lebanese Army.

✚ *Overview of Naher El-Bared Camp and its Dwellers:* The Naher El-Bared Camp is situated at a distance of 16 kilometers from Tripoli in Northern Lebanon, very close to the coastal road. It was originally founded by the Federation of Red Cross societies in 1949 to provide shelter for Palestinian refugees. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency in the Near East (UNRWA) started caring for the refugees living in this camp in 1950. The camp has been the scene of several incidents that caused great damage to it, particularly during mid 1980s throughout the war that was backed by Syria, and which took place with the intention of expelling Fateh Movement Groups who returned to Northern Lebanon, after being expelled from Lebanon in early 1980s by the Israelis.

When the clashes started, the camp was crowded with some 35,000 refugees, according to camp popular committee sources, while the number, according to UNRWA statistics, is 30,803 refugees living in poor, social, health and environmental conditions, where no modern infrastructure such as wide paved streets and a waste disposal system exist.

✚ *Who is Fateh El-Islam Group?* The so-called "**Fateh El-Islam group**" firstly appeared in November 2006 when it split from the Palestinian "**Fateh El-Intifada**" which had itself split from the "**Fateh movement**" in 1983 with the support of Syria. The so-called "**Fateh El-Islam group**" was headed by "**Shaker El-Absy**" who came to Lebanon from Syria, and who was well-known for his role in military trainings for radical groups that fought in Iraq. He is sentenced in absentia to death in Jordan for killing the American diplomat "**Laurence Foley**" in the Jordanian capital "**Amman**" in 2002 and also previously been jailed in Syria for about three and a half years after which he had been released.

The so-called "**Fateh El-Islam group**", centred in Naher El-Bared Camp with about 200 fighters after drawing its men from the camps in which it tried to spread out initially (Burj el-Barajneh and Shatila that are close to Beirut and El-Baddawi Camp in North Lebanon). After that it added to its ranks miscreants from the camp, in addition to other elements who were affiliated with the fundamentalist "**Jund El-Sham/El-Islam group**" after leaving the al-Taamir area on the periphery of Ain El-Hilweh Camp in Sida.

The Palestinian factions considered the so-called "**Fateh El-Islam group**" an intruder to the Palestinian society and unconcerned with the legitimate Palestinian struggle. There



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

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were suspicions that relate this fundamental movement to Al-Qaeda. It should be pointed out that fighters from different nationalities were members in the so-called "Fateh El-Islam group".

✚ **The Clashes:** The clashes started at **the dawn of Sunday 20 May 2007**, after the fighters of the so-called "Fateh El-Islam" radical group tried to control camp entrances by attacking the fixed Lebanese Army checkpoints at the entrances of the Naher El-Bared Camp, which led to the martyrdom of several Lebanese soldiers. This happened as a reaction to the attack performed by the Lebanese Security Forces, which was supported by the Lebanese Army, on an apartment in Tripoli where elements of the so-called "Fateh El-Islam" who had robbed a bank in Tripoli were hiding.

✚ **PHRO's Action and Response to the Emergency:** due to such an emergency, the PHRO directed its monitoring efforts towards Northern Lebanon, particularly Naher El-Bared. There were regular missions to the North in order to keep an intensive follow-up on the situation there. Our District Coordinator for the South was mobilized to the North, especially at the early stages, where our monitor for Northern Lebanon was lively providing us with the updates on the situation since he was trapped inside Naher El-Bared Camp as the other civilian dwellers. It is noteworthy to mention that the PHRO received assistance regarding monitoring violations during and after the end of the clashes from beneficiaries of the Human Rights Education & Raising Awareness Program. The PHRO condemned the terrorist action that the Lebanese Army was subjected to. We were pressuring to cease fire so the victims "*killed and wounded*" could be evacuated as well as food and medicines could be entered. After perceiving that the battle is continuing, we condensed our demands in safely evacuating the civilians. Issues<sup>5</sup> under violations that we were monitoring and following up were:

- Casualties Amongst Civilians – *wounded and killed*
- The Mistakes that lead to the death of civilians during the evacuation and entering food processes
- The Random Arbitrary Detention and Torture
- The Living Conditions after the Displacement

Furthermore, and as a response to this emergency, we developed a working team from volunteers who we provided an advanced and condensed training course on monitoring violations. Also, we applied pressure towards granting security for the Non Identified

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<sup>5</sup> All the publications related to our monitoring efforts regarding the Naher El-Bared Camp are available for download on our website at the following link [www.palhumanrights.org](http://www.palhumanrights.org)



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

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Palestinian Refugees as well as the Wanted<sup>6</sup> Palestinians, who in total were frightened to evacuate the camp fearing to get arrested and subjected to unfair trial, treatment or being accused in crimes that they did not commit. Despite that we succeeded in explaining such issue for the concerned parties amongst the Lebanese Authority who declared such guarantees, but also detention for some of them "Non-IDs" took place, contrary to the revealed declaration.

Even after the termination of the clashes, our missions continued to take place, which were always encountered with difficulties especially in relation to issuing permissions to enter to the camp and the areas in its neighborhood. At this stage, PHRO efforts were directed towards monitoring the violations related to rebuilding the camp and the return of the displaced camp's dwellers. PHRO endeavor aimed at persuading the concerned bodies to take the necessary steps that ensure the rebuilding of the camp, the return of the camp's inhabitants as well as guaranteeing the respect of their human dignity and releasing the arbitrary detained Palestinians. Equivalently, when Palestinians underwent a discriminative treatment from the Lebanese, especially in Northern areas near/adjacent to Naher El-Bared Camp, the PHRO focused on working with youth "*Lebanese and Palestinian*" on topics related to peace building particularly dialogue and peaceful techniques for conflict resolution.

 **The Humanitarian Consequences of the Clashes on Civilians:** As we briefly mentioned beforehand, the clashes had severe humanitarian consequences on the Naher El-Bared Camp civilian dwellers, especially:

- at the early stages of the clashes
- before giving the chance for the civilians to safely evacuate the camp
- during the evacuation where mistakes happened of which, up till now, no investigation regarding them took place
- during entering food and medicines to the camp

Thousands of families were displaced to bareness where they hardly find adequate shelters, school students were transferred to a situation where they could not tolerably study for their official exams, university students and other Palestinian men underwent waves of arbitrary arrest and detention because they are Palestinians, the right to privacy and to dignity respect were hardly humiliated, inciting against Palestinians took place and we add to all this the dilemma of re-building the camp after its destruction and the

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<sup>6</sup> A majority of the Wanted Palestinians are required to the Authorities because of security reports that were submitted from parties inside the camps against them. For this category we worked with the concerned bodies to insure the Wanted Palestinians, who will give up themselves at the checkpoint, a fair investigation as well as a fair trail if they appeared to be guilty



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



law conflict for such case, furthermore to the animosity of the Lebanese northern neighborhood to the Palestinians in the area there. All these violations were addressed in PHRO's reports, appeals, and position papers that were published during the clashes and after their end

✚ **The Emergency's Effects on the PHRO:** since it is an emergency, the PHRO found itself before a situation, which is highly essential to address within our work from a humanitarian perspective, however on the same time our response should keep adhered to our mandate in protecting and defending the rights of the Palestinian Refugees. As it was highlighted beforehand, the PHRO responded to Naher El-Bared crisis in several ways accordingly:

- Monitoring and Documenting the Human Rights Violations taking place
- Mobilizing and Developing a working team to apply condensed follow up for the situation
- Advocating through dialogue on ensuring the safety of the civilians, guarantee the respect of their human dignity at the all levels i.e. ensure that they are not subjected to danger, maltreatment, torture, arbitrary detention ...etc.
- Working with Palestinian youth particularly through raising their awareness in order to neutralize them from being mobilized by the concept, which reveal that: "**Palestinians are the ones targeted**", which by consequence lead us to find our selves before a **Palestinian Mobilization against the Lebanese and the army.**

Such a response called upon the PHRO to apply some modifications to its programs in order to cope with the emergency. The applied adjustments took into consideration the importance of keeping on the spirit of the program's concept, and the objectives' fortitudes. The underneath table provides a clearer example on such illustration:

Program	Original Plan	Modification Done
<b>Monitoring</b>	Finalize the Computerized Data Base related to Documenting Violations	Respond to the crisis in Naher El-Bared by Monitoring and Documenting the Violations that are taking place.
<b>Legal Aid</b>	Conduct Two Training Courses on Human Rights for Palestinian Prisoners	Condense and Intensify the visits to the Prisons in order to stand on the reality of the arbitrary detained Palestinians in light of the Naher El-Bared Clashes and raise their



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



Program	Original Plan	Modification Done
		awareness about their rights especially the legal representation and fair trial
<b>Dialogue, Human Rights Education and Raising Awareness</b>	Work through dialogue with the intention to encourage the conductance of Popular Committee Elections in Burj El-Barajneh Camp	Condense the dialogue efforts with the concerned bodies in order to insure the safety of the civilians, guarantee the respect of their human dignity at all the levels.  Also, condense the work with the Palestinian youth particularly through raising their awareness in order to neutralize them from being mobilized by the concept, which reveal that: " <b>Palestinians are the ones targeted</b> ", which by consequence lead us to find our selves before a <b>Palestinian Mobilization against the Lebanese and the army</b> .

These modifications assisted in exerting useful efforts that assured a condensed response to the emergency that took place from a human rights perspective which was not fully covered due to the lack of resources, add to this, the concept that vast civil society organizations have regarding responding to crisis which, according to them is equivalent to relief services.

### ❖ *Prisons*

As an advanced continuation to PHRO's efforts that took place in 2006 regarding this important section in monitoring and documenting its violations, the PHRO had five Certified IDs from the Lebanese Republic – Ministries of Justice and Interior Affairs – that allowed five of its staff members and volunteers to enter to Prisons on the Lebanese territories where three of them had access to men prisons on time that two had access to both men and women prisons. It is noteworthy to mention that in 2006, PHRO had three delegates to the Prisons and this year, efforts were intensified and we guess that the results were so as well.



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro - Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



**In 2007 there were 380<sup>7</sup> Palestinian Refugees Prisoners<sup>8</sup> (including 30 Juveniles and 8 Women) distributed over the 13 prisons over the Lebanese territories.**

The PHRO monitored the human rights violations that were taking place within these Prisons especially Romieh Prison<sup>9</sup> and these violations can be briefly illustrated in:

- ✚ Sentenced Prisoners, detainees and arbitrary arrested (politically, ...etc) are not separated from each others
- ✚ Most detainees underwent physical torture while being investigated
- ✚ Prisoners living conditions are considered below the Humanitarian Standards
- ✚ Prisoners do not know their rights and duties (some prisoners have been living under detention for several months without being trailed)
- ✚ Most cells within the prison are overcrowded and prisoners sleep on floor
- ✚ Prisoners' Psychological situations are not taken into consideration
- ✚ Medications, Nutrition, Education, Sports are not convenient and to some extent are not available
- ✚ Family visits are difficult to access, and even if it took place, then meeting family is not humanitarian (several barriers exist to an extent that one can not clearly see the other)
- ✚ Prisoners are not separated in groups according to the body building of each. This is leading to have weak persons amongst strong ones causing continuous threats amongst the later whom cannot defend themselves
- ✚ Cases of violations and abuse (e.g. sexual harassment) are taking place amongst the prisoners which in some times are not dealt with on the level of the prisons' administration

On another level and in light of the clashes that erupted in the Naher El-Eared Camp between the so-called "**Fateh El-Islam Group**" and the Lebanese Army, a wave of arrests and detention took place against Palestinian Refugees (males) from the Lebanese Army. These arrests were random. They were not based on arrest memos or on non-discriminatory bases. As we previously highlighted, since the start of the clashes in 20 May 2007, the Palestinian refugees, particularly in Northern Lebanon, were subjected to intensive harassment and violation of their human rights for the simple reason of being Palestinian.

Responding to violations resulted due to arbitrary detention and maltreatment was one of the interventions that we carried out in this regard. The PHRO condensed and intensified its

<sup>7</sup> The figure of 380 prisoners do not include the Palestinians who were detained in light of the Naher El-Bared Clashes

<sup>8</sup> By prisoners we mean refugees who are imprisoned whether already sentenced or did not undergo the trial yet

<sup>9</sup> Romieh prison is the central prison in Lebanon, was established in 1962, and consists of four buildings. It is located in "Romieh" - northern eastern Beirut



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



visits to the prisons particularly after being continually receiving reports on the arrest and detention by the Lebanese Army of many Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and the visits to our organization by the families of detainees, in addition to the inquiries from legal and humanitarian organizations. The PHRO organized many inspection visits to Roumieh Prison with a view to meeting Palestinian detainees and investigating the circumstances surrounding their arrests. Briefly, we could reveal that we have managed to meet with detained Palestinians, got their testimonies and raise their awareness on their rights.

72 Palestinian detainees have been met in buildings (B) and (D) and also in the Juvenile Detention Building (it is to be noted that this building housed grown-up detainees too). Two of the detainees met had been arrested for criminal causes while the remainder were arrested for causes related to the Naher El-Bared incidents. Charges ranged from affiliation to "Fateh El-Islam", "the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command", "Al Quaeda", Jund El-Sham", in addition to the Barr Elias incidents and the explosions at Ain El-Hilweh Camp.

According to the testimony of some Palestinian camps' and gatherings' residents who were subjected to detention at army checkpoints on roads leading to Northern Lebanon (just for being Palestinians), they were insulted and beaten by soldiers. Among those who met this fate was PHRO colleague (W.H) who has reported that he observed a 13 year old child from Naher El-Bared Camp among tens of other detainees.

✚ **Causes of Arrest:** During the meetings that we conducted with them, the detainees have revealed that the reasons which prompted the army to tie them to the Naher El-Bared incidents and their eventual detention were several and different. Some of the met detainees testified that their relationship with Fateh El-Islam was restricted to selling them simple merchandise (shoes, food...) in their capacity as sales people or by renting (by the hour) a property or part thereof for sports activities. Others considered their arrest as a result of fraudulent complaints made for personal reasons. There were also those who were affiliated to certain squads or organizations who reported that their arrest was due to complaints by their supervisors related to thefts that occurred for the account of those supervisors. One detainee reported that he had been sent by some of his supervisors to deliver items to people outside the camp. Some of those who had been interviewed in the prison reported that they were arrested for old criminal charges such as: forming an armed gang, membership in an armed organization... They claimed that they had been promised by a responsible member of one of the PLO organizations at the North that they would not be arrested. Other detainees claimed that a Palestinian



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



religious body instigated them to stay in the camp while members of this body came to the camp and left, claiming that the end of the clash was at hand.

✚ **Treatment under Detention:** Most of the detainees interviewed stated that they were subjected to the ugliest kinds of physical and psychological abuse and torture immediately upon arrest. Some were forced to drink urine while some were made to stand for more than one day with eyes closed and hands tied behind their backs. Empty bottles were introduced into the backsides of some. There were some who were beaten by a thick stick armed with an iron cudgel on sensitive, weak and sick parts of the body. All this was accompanied by vile and abusive cursing, profanity and threats of ravishment. Investigators used all these instruments to secure confessions of ties to Fateh El-Islam. Torture has forced most of the detainees to sign minutes of the proceedings that had not been shown to them. Our team that made the visits to the prison witnessed the marks and scars of torture on the bodies of several Palestinian detainees. It should be mentioned that a very limited number of the detainees interviewed said that they had not been subjected to any abuse. It must also be pointed out that a number of detainees have not been accused and their detention continued until all signs of their scars resulted from abuse and torture disappeared.

✚ **Physical & Psychological Conditions:** Regarding the physical and psychological conditions surrounding Palestinian detainees, medical examinations of some of them have revealed the critical physical and psychological condition of some of the inmates as they suffer from incurable nervous system diseases that require special attention which is not available to them at present (like the detainee – Fawzy El-Sa'ady<sup>10</sup> who also suffers from bullet wounds). Also some detainees suffer from critical diseases including heart trouble, asthma, and diabetes, high blood pressure in addition to skin diseases who all revealed when interviewed that they are not receiving the imperative treatment.

The PHRO interference at such violations did not take place only for monitoring violations and interviewing detainees, however it extended to raise the detainees awareness on their rights, as well as to raise urgent reports to e.g. OHCHR<sup>11</sup>, Amnesty International, and follow up on that as well.

For the PHRO, prisons are considered an important field to work within. Three years of experience now, and we still look forward more coverage so as not only to cover as much as

<sup>10</sup> Fawzy EL-Sa'ady died at the prison on August 2007. A full document titled "The Death of a Palestinian Detained at Roumieh Prison as a Result of Negligence" about his case could be read at the monitoring and documenting human rights violations section on PHRO's website [www.palhumanrights.org](http://www.palhumanrights.org)

<sup>11</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



we could from monitoring the violations and providing the legal assistance, but as well to attain the full coverage to the prisons where we could keep on monitoring violations, provide the legal aid and other care services through partnerships with development and services organizations. In 2007, we succeeded to have five delegates for the prisons who covered Beirut, Romieh, Bequaa and Southern Lebanon including the women prisons and such widening impacts are precisely reflected in our reports.

## **II. Human Rights Education & Raising Awareness**

Despite the turmoil and disorder that the country experienced, however our educational program for the year 2007 succeeded to implement several training courses and educational workshops for various target groups amongst the Palestinian and Lebanese Youth Communities. In total, the performed activities met our designed objectives, despite the slight modification that we applied for the plan without changing the program's spirit. On another level, representatives from the PHRO "staff and members" benefited from local, regional and international capacity building trainings; the underneath provide full details about the situation and achievements of the educational program for the year 2007.

### **A. Building a Structured Youth Group through Education - Dbaieh Camp<sup>12</sup>:**

Targeting a new camp within our raising awareness program, and with the aim to establish a structured group of youth to be aware about their human rights as well as the methodologies that could assist them



in sustaining the work they will be conducting at their center that was newly established by the **Joint Christian Committee for Social Services (JCC)**, the Palestinian Human Rights Organization – PHRO in partnership with the JCC designed and implemented a condensed training that targeted 20 participants of the center's pioneers. The participants were foreseen to hold different responsibilities at the center where they will lead its activities and network with other NGOs and bodies that are acting in the camp at different levels.

Started in January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007 and over 6 consecutive weekends "Friday to Sunday" the participants were introduced to several educational themes "**human rights, refugees**

<sup>12</sup> Dbaieh Camp is located in eastern Beirut, 15 Kms far from the Center of Beirut towards the North. Its dwellers are mainly from the Christian Palestinians



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



rights, monitoring and documenting human rights violations, dialogue and conflict resolution, leadership, rights of youth to participate, democracy, elections, management & team work, gender and good governance"

The training was introduced through presentations, briefings, workshops, exercises and panels of discussion. It introduced the participants to the major fields of knowledge within the Human Rights Medium.

Further to the educational sessions that was taking place at the center, and in order to gain the practical experience, the PHRO asked two of the participants to administratively assist the committee working in preparing the PHRO's General Assembly Meeting and the Elections of the Board of Directors. Moreover, three other participants were tolerated to attend the meeting as observers with the condition to transmit the learned experience to their colleagues at the center afterwards.

Despite that we faced timing as a major obstacle, where we had no option rather than to divide the training and conduct it over 6 consecutive weekends, however we consider that we have succeeded in planting the seeds of human rights and the other related concepts within the characters of the targeted youth group. Later on, one of the youth who is studying film making and directing, and with the support of the PHRO, succeeded to enter the human rights concepts into his graduation documentaries where he reflected from a human rights perspective a brutal humanitarian calamity that is presented in our Palestinian community which is DISABILITY caused by wars and conflicts. Another youth from the training, joined PHRO executive office team where he started to work with us in the major he is studying at the university and he is engrossed by human rights. As for the center, it is worth mentioning that with 2007 it became well known through out its activities amongst the community in Dbaiieh Camp, particularly along the youth and children groups.

**B. Human Rights Concepts Training for Journalists Affiliated with Palestinian Political Parties:** From April 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> 2007, the PHRO in partnership with the **Center for Education on Journalism - Nawras**, who are located in Mar Elias Camp, conducted four days training on Human Rights, Refugees Rights and Documenting Violations. This initiative came to the sight after several discussions that revealed the necessity to raise the awareness of the journalists whom are involved with the Palestinian Political Parties "Media Department" on human rights with the perspective of media humanization.

As you might know, the Palestinian Camps in Lebanon are governed by almost 16 Palestinian Political Parties that are divided and sub-divided amongst each others and



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO

Member: Euro - Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



themselves, this is without mentioning the broaden existence of fundamentalists and extremist Islamic groups whom are introverted amongst themselves, where there is no approach to target/address them. Each party has its own mandate and agenda, which might meet or contradict with others mandates and agendas. In order to publicize

their opinions, almost each political party has its own media department and journal where the journalists working within it are polarized to write with the party's voice and express, to a greater extent, its opinions and not the writers' ones.

Such situation, make it a necessity to intervene from a human rights perspective in order to ensure a humanitarian language amongst the journals spread almost on weekly basis within the camps spread over the Lebanese territories and some times in other hosting countries.

"Nawras" was planning to conduct 10 days training on the concepts and theories of journalism and the importance of its independency for a group of journalists who are affiliated at different political parties "Media Departments". The PHRO found it an opportunity to support such plan and conduct a partnership with the "Nawras" where as to introduce the participants over four consecutive days to themes related to Human Rights, Refugees Rights and Documenting Violations.

Aged between 25 and 45 years old, 35 participants from different political parties and from different camps joined this training where they were introduced to human rights and refugees rights where we highlighted the universal norms that govern these themes. The training was run using different training methodologies such as presentations, workshops, debates and discussions as well as exercises. A special focus on the **right to freedom of expression** took place where we extensively discussed this right and the enhanced styles that could be used to independently achieve and enjoy it. The participants were highly encouraged to draw the attention to the Palestinian Refugees dilemmas in Lebanon from a humanitarian outlook and not only from the political one.

This training was special in its type and it was highly recommended to follow up on it since it will contribute to having conservative journalists amongst the members of the media department at the political parties who could gradually achieve results in expressing not only the thoughts that they are paid to write it down, but also their own



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



believes and opinions that could be based, on the first rate, on the advantage of the Palestinian human.

It is noteworthy to mention that the PHRO has gained a lot from this training especially in networking with the participants at their areas of residency. At least 10 participants from different camps are in continuous contact with the PHRO. This was greatly useful for matters of interaction as well as transmission the human rights thoughts within their diverse communities, especially in light of the emergency in Naher El-Bared which took place one month after the training. Hereby, participants from the North were encouraged by the knowledge they gained in the training, where they showed high enthusiasm in cooperating and volunteering with the PHRO and its monitoring team.

It was planned that we hold two specialized trainings for journalists active in the camps located in Northern and Southern Lebanon within the months "June and July 2007". Unfortunately, these trainings did not take place due to the humanitarian crisis in the Naher El-Bared Camp that resulted from the military clashes between the Lebanese Army and the so-called Fateh El-Islam Group which took place from May to September 2007 and which led to core modifications in the working priorities.

**C. Trainings Designed to Respond to Naher El-Bared Crisis:** As one response to the emergency that erupted in the Naher El-Bared Camp and affected the civilians "youth, elderly, children from both genders" as well as had impacts on the cohesion and adherence between the two adjacent Lebanese and Palestinian Communities who were living in the same neighborhood or even beyond, the PHRO found it necessary to set two module training courses which target a group of youth whom had already benefited in the previous years from our educational activities in order to:

- i. *Nourish their knowledge on the trainings' topics*
- ii. *Encourage them to provide voluntary assistance within this crisis from a human rights perspective which is still not dominant in the fields of crisis management*
- iii. *Strengthening the targeted group's confidence in human rights values and enhancing their believe in the importance of monitoring and documenting human rights violations as well as the concepts of resolving disputes non-violently*

Through out its missions to Northern Lebanon, the PHRO managed to mobilize a group of youth where number of them has previously benefited from prior trainings with the PHRO. This group (18 youth) was introduced successively to the following two major training topics:



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



### 🚩 Monitoring and Documenting Human Rights Violations; June 21 to 24, 2007:

Within this four days training, the participants were introduced to the definition of the two actions "monitoring and documenting" as well as to the violations that occur to human rights and the impacts of these violations on the individual and collective levels. Furthermore, they were introduced to the importance of conducting these actions on times of crisis and they revealed through out the presentations and discussion the importance of this work in achieving the protection. Participants underwent several activities that assist in formulating cohesion between the whole group since they will be working as a volunteering team with the PHRO and its monitors. The participants were introduced to the mechanisms of conducting the monitoring and the methodologies of writing the reports about these violations.

### 🚩 Principles of Dialogue, Peaceful Means of Conflict Resolution and Respecting Human Rights;

July 12 to 15, 2007: the four days training introduced the participants to techniques of dealing with Conflicts "*Dialogue and Negotiation Skills*" in addition to the different aspects of



Human Rights and its respect. It aimed to bridge building between the Palestinian participants from Naher El-Bared and Beddawi Camps, as well as to capacitate their knowledge in-group work and its continuity. It also intended at providing the youth with the techniques of Dialogue, Negotiations, Prosecution, Arbitration as peaceful means and techniques of dealing with the conflicts. The training also discussed "*conflict resolution: a mean to build peace and attain democracy*". It created a platform to discuss and experience the introduced techniques through different group and individual exercises. Also, the training introduced the principles of Human Rights and the necessity of respecting it, where it showed the various levels of discrimination occurred within our societies as well as the current crisis (referring to Naher El-Bared Clashes).

During these trainings and in light of the awareness raising that we achieved with youth, the PHRO was assaulted from political groups that were abusing the conflict taking place through mobilizing and encouraging youth by publicizing the concept that reveals "**Palestinians are the targeted ones by these incidents**", which by consequence lead us to



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



find our selves before a **Palestinian Mobilization against the Lebanese and the army.**

Within such a context, the PHRO found it self before the accusation stereotype that describes us as agents for the west, the Lebanese Government, the PLO in Lebanon and it's representative, Mr. Abbas Zaki.

**D. Training Targeting Lebanese and Palestinian Youth:** In order to achieve a mutual respect between the Lebanese and the Palestinians and with the purpose of attaining a level of accepting the others between them in spite of their diverse belongings, the PHRO has been conducting several educational activities that raise the awareness of the participating Lebanese and Palestinian Youth on **Principles of Dialogue, Peaceful Means of Conflict Resolution and Respecting Human Rights.**

In 2007, the necessity to carry out such activities amplified due to several reasons of which the most remarkable one was the Naher El-bared Clashes, which caused a humanitarian crisis and thousands of internally displaced Palestinians. These clashes



were abused by different media corporations and politicians whom together conceived the Palestinians as trouble makers in the country and recouped the history where the Palestinians were accused to start the civil war in Lebanon.

In order to contribute to the efforts that consolidated to prevent widening the gap between the both communities, the PHRO within its education and raising awareness program and in partnership with the **Fraternity Association for Social and Educational Work**, held from 6 to 10 August, 2007 conducted in Ain Zehalta in El-Chouf – Lebanon, an educational training activity that spotted the light on this dilemma through introducing **the Principles of Dialogue, Peaceful Means of Conflict Resolution and Respecting Human Rights.**

Through out different educational methodologies, the participants were introduced to the human rights concepts and the mechanisms of conflict resolution amongst where a special focus was made on dialogue and negotiations. Around 30 participants "Lebanese



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



and Palestinians<sup>13</sup> joined this training, which was characterized by high level of harmony and understanding between the participants. The friendly spirit was presented especially on the dialogue and group works sessions. The training was conducted where presentations, workshops, documentary screening, discussions and debates took place.

**E. Training Workshop on Children Rights:** In collaboration with the **Refugees Palestinian League (Rajeaa)**, the PHRO implemented a three days training workshop on children rights where the beneficiaries were 20 children aged between 11 and 15 years old. The training targeted a group of children whom are affiliated within this league and play an important role in its cultural band. The training took place from August 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Ain El-Hilweh Camp – Saida, Southern Lebanon. The participants were introduced to their rights based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child through friendly educational methodologies that could attract their attention and do not make them feel bored. A special focus was made on the concept of **child soldiers** and the necessity to protect children from the political and military polarization. This was important to spot



the light on since the beneficiaries are living in a camp that is well known about the variety of political parties that are governing it and the tension that usually takes place there in addition to the military conflicts between these parties that frequently occur.

The training was a first attempt to tackle the issue of protecting the children from being

soldiers.

As an organization working for protecting and defending the rights of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, we find it essential to follow up on this initiative and publicize the situation that is taking place in order to create a strong voice that could help in protecting the children from getting abused and used in armed conflicts.

**F. Capacity Building on Human Rights for PHRO Staff:** Building the capacity of its staff is considered one of the PHRO's priorities within its education and raising awareness program. In addition to their participation within PHRO's activities, the PHRO yearly receives a number of local and international opportunities and scholarships to participate in educational trainings and seminars where we assign it with our staff members

<sup>13</sup> The Palestinian Participants were from different camps, but a priority was given to the Palestinians who were displaced from Naher El-Bared as an attempt to provide confidence, space to express their thoughts and beliefs ...etc



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



depending on the conditions and requirements stated within each opportunity. In 2007, several staff members benefited from these opportunities, which contributed to enhancing the quality of work of the members who benefited from these prospects.

### ✚ **University of Malta - Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC):**

From July 3<sup>rd</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> 2007, Ms. Ghina Ali<sup>14</sup> attended the annual international summer training course organized by the University of Malta - Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Training was provided by 80:20 NGO and the



training's target group was diplomats from the Arab countries, Journalists, and Human Rights Activists who have educational role in their NGOs. The variety of trainees "Arab countries from Asia and Africa in addition to Europe, Western Europe and Scandinavian countries as well" presented a very wide and various cultural communications exchanges. For more information about the annual summer training course, please check the following link

<http://home.um.edu.mt/medac/Conferences/Summer%20Course/2007.htm>

✚ **Euro Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN):** From July 23<sup>rd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> 2007, Ms. Ghina Ali participated in the international summer school that was organized by the Euro Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN), Working Group on Education and Youth. The Summer School was held in Limassol, Cyprus and it focused on the human rights education methodologies with the intention to facilitate human rights learning in youth related environments "formal and informal sectors". Designed as training for trainers, the Summer School aimed at promoting the dissemination of human rights culture and values through active educational



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<sup>14</sup> PHRO Member, Administrative Assistant & Accountant



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



ities. It desired to empower those who work with youth with the tools and the ideas behind human rights learning on a number of levels. For more information about the summer school, please check the following link <http://www.euromedrights.net/pages/433>

- ✚ **Association Lebanese for Education and Formation (ALEF):** Through out two different track periods, the PHRO participated in ALEF's 9 days training course on **Torture Prevention and Monitoring in Lebanon** where two of its staff members (Mr. Jaber Abo Hawash<sup>15</sup> and Ms. Ghina Ali) joined its educational and practical activities that lasted for three days over three consecutive months.



The training aimed at strengthening the mechanisms for the prevention of torture in Lebanon, and to the empowerment of workers and activists from individuals and civil society institutions in dealing with cases of torture, by producing a practical guide.

- ✚ **Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR):** From November 26<sup>th</sup> to December 7<sup>th</sup> 2007, two staff members from the PHRO (Mr. Mohammad El-Najjar<sup>16</sup> & Ms. Ghina Ali) participated in the international basic human rights course that was organized by the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR). The course was held in Copenhagen, Denmark at the DIHR's premises. The training intended to enable participants to form networks with like-minded professionals so as to benefit from each others experiences and perspectives. It gathered participants who are members and staff of NGOs, state institutions, and international organizations who work in developing countries, countries in transition to democracy, and post-conflict countries. The course provided the participants with the basic knowledge of human rights which will assist and enable them to integrate human rights principles, standards, and approaches into their daily work. The methodological approach of the course was lectures, case studies, and group and individual work, where the participants were introduced to several themes related to human rights. For more information about this international human rights course, please check the following link <http://www.humanrights.dk/education/international+courses/dihr+courses>

<sup>15</sup> District Coordinator for Southern Lebanon with PHRO's Monitoring and Documenting Violations Program

<sup>16</sup> Coordinator - Legal Research & Aid Program



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

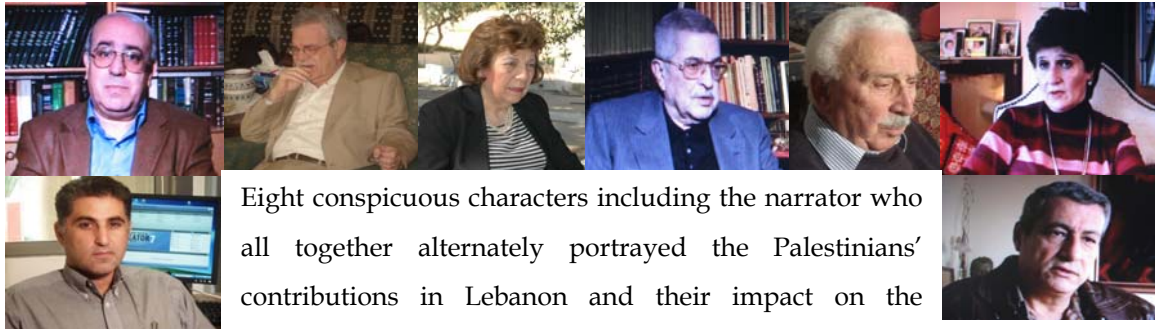


Further to the benefit that the PHRO perceived from this training regarding the capacity building of its staff member(s), however it was the first time to experience a deceiving incident that is represented by the non-return of one of its beneficiaries within this course.

### **III. Advocacy & Networking**

#### **A. Documentaries - A strong Advocacy Tool:**

After experiencing the success of the documentary produced by the PHRO in year 2006 that focused on the Non-ID families dilemma in Lebanon, which was titled "**Refugees without Papers ... Do they Exist?!!**" and sensing the effect of such tool within the Advocacy Program due to its direct relation with people in an audio-visual coordinated way, the PHRO in 2007 produced a documentary that is related to the Palestinians rights in Lebanon and it was titled **Palestinians in Lebanon ...Marginalized Impacts**.



Eight conspicuous characters including the narrator who all together alternately portrayed the Palestinians' contributions in Lebanon and their impact on the

economy strongly exhibited that Palestinians are catalysts within Lebanon's different sectors where they have played an important and essential role in re-construction, trade, education, business ...etc

These efforts were conducted in order to reveal a different impression about the Palestinians rather than the mainly dispersed one about their involvement in Lebanon's war. It aimed at proving that Palestinians are part of Lebanon's social structure and not a burden or even a foreigner who is coming to work and transfer his money to abroad.

"**Palestinians in Lebanon ... Marginalized Impacts**" is considered a powerful advocacy tool that contributes to persuade towards improving the situation of the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon about their right to work by showing that Palestinians are part of this community.

With the intention not to lose the impact of the profound efforts that were highlighted within the documentary, especially in light of the highly disseminated propaganda about the Palestinians as a dominant result of the Naher El-Bared Clashes, the documentary was not screened yet, but its screening and discussion sessions will take place at the utmost suitable time within 2008.



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



### **B. Advocacy Missions & Visits**

✚ **Berlin - Germany 20 to 26 February 2007:** Parallel to EMHRN's Working Group meeting on Palestine/Israel and Palestinians that took place in Berlin - Germany<sup>17</sup> in February 2007, Mr. Ghassan Abdallah, PHRO General Director, conducted several advocacy meetings that aimed at introducing the PHRO and its work to national and international organizations working in Berlin, presenting the various levels of the Palestinian Refugees situations in Lebanon as well as advocating, particularly with the ministry of foreign affairs, towards implementing a persuading strain in order to improve these situations.

Within this mission, Mr. Abdallah conducted meetings with representatives at the Federal Foreign Office (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the National Human Rights Institute, Care International and other active NGOs in Berlin.

Within these meetings, Mr. Abdallah focused on introducing the met representatives to PHRO's efforts in protecting and defending the rights of the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon. He elaborated on the integrity between PHRO's programs<sup>18</sup> and the efficiency resulted from Program's mainstreaming. Mr. Abdallah mainly elucidated on our efforts in the dialogue and advocacy programs, which directly inspire policy decisions. He further highlighted the occurred discrimination against the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, particularly the distinction in the legislation. He stressed on the importance of enhancing the human dignity respect and implication for the vulnerable group(s) - Palestinians - in Lebanon.

✚ **EU Consultation Meeting with the PHRO 28 Feb 2007:** On the occasion of holding the first meeting of the Human Rights Subcommittee between the European Union and Lebanon in April 12<sup>th</sup> 2007, the PHRO was consulted during a meeting that took place on February 28<sup>th</sup> 2007, where two representatives from the PHRO (Mr. Ghassan Abdallah; General Director and Ms. Rola Badran; General Director Assistant, Acting as Programs Director) met with representatives of EU presidency, EU Commission Delegation in Lebanon and EU Commission RELEX Department on which they elaborated the Palestinian Refugees Situations in Lebanon.

In the meeting, the PHRO representatives expressed their overall observations on the EU-Lebanon Action Plan and regretted that Palestinian refugees' rights were not mentioned within its Human Rights Chapter. They as well welcomed its adoption in

<sup>17</sup> From January 2007 to June 2007, Germany was chairing the Presidency of the European Union

<sup>18</sup> PHRO Strategy incorporates five main programs: Searching, Monitoring and Documenting Human Rights Violations; Education and Raising Awareness; Advocacy; Dialogue; Legal Research & Aid.



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy. They further articulated their belief that the human rights chapter of the Action Plan should constitute a roadmap for the implementation of mutual commitments regarding respect for human rights where the subcommittee represents a major opportunity to assess the evolution of the situation of human rights in Lebanon with regards to the Action Plan.

In relation to *“the special circumstances of the Palestinian refugees presence in Lebanon”* and *“the need to improve their economic and social situation”* mentioned in the Action’s Plan Migration Chapter, the PHRO presented the underneath successive recommendations that are directly linked to human rights and the various calls for ending the non-discriminatory policies against Palestinians in Lebanon. These recommendations<sup>19</sup> are related to the right to work, right to own property and the right to identity ( Case of Non-IDs).

Nevertheless, these recommendations are considered priorities, and issues that could be adopted by the EU without being phased with political pretexts that could hinder their implementation and essential to frankly and directly improve the Palestinian refugees’ situations. The PHRO, and as a human rights organization, expressed its gratitude for being consulted before the meeting. On parallel, PHRO representatives urged for broader human rights NGOs consultation especially whom are actively involved in the implementation and evaluation of the Action Plan, and within the entire presented context, the PHRO hoped that representatives in this meeting especially from the EU Delegation and the EU Presidency (Germany) would raise the above-mentioned recommendations within the meeting.

Within our follow up for the Human Rights Sub Committee Meeting, we knew that both the Non-ID issue as well as the Right to work were addressed throughout the discussion with the Lebanese Government and there was a European recommendation to the Lebanese Representatives to concretely tackle (solve) the issue of the Non-IDs.

✚ **Italian Delegation Visit – March 2007:** On March 2007, an Italian Delegation from the **Italian Co-ordination of Local Authorities for Peace and Human Rights** visited Lebanon where the PHRO arranged for them a field mission during which they visited several Palestinian Camps and Gatherings and met representatives from the camps' leaders and popular committees. During their meeting at the PHRO office, the Italian Delegation were introduced to the Palestinian Refugees situations through a PowerPoint presentation that explains the civil, political, economic, social and cultural

<sup>19</sup> The Executive Summary that highlights the details & context of these recommendations is accessible through our website [www.palhumanrights.org](http://www.palhumanrights.org) at the advocacy page(s)



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



rights conditions of the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon. Also, PHRO screened for the delegation the documentary titled "**Refugees Without Papers ... Do they Exist?!!**" that was produced by the PHRO on 2006 and that raise the voice and highlight the dilemma of the Non-Identified Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, which revealed a discussion afterwards. Several visibility documents were distributed amongst the Italian Delegation representatives for their further awareness about the PHRO's works, its targeted groups, and the beneficiaries. At the end of their visit, the head of the delegation, Mr. Flavio Lotti invited the PHRO to participate in the activity that they will organizing in October 2007 in Italy and to present the same PowerPoint document on the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon as well as to screen the Non-IDs Documentary.

✚ **Italy, Vienna and Spain – March 2007:** With the intention of advocating about the Palestinian Refugees' situation in Lebanon within new countries in order to create more awareness about marginalized and vulnerable conditions that Palestinians are suffering from, as well as to generate a human rights solidarity support with our community that lacks rights on all the levels, the PHRO supported and encouraged its member, Mr. Gabi Jammal<sup>20</sup> who was invited by several European institutions, whom constantly have representatives visiting Lebanon and the Palestinian Camps and Gatherings within it, and whom always Mr. Jammal had accompanied in their field visits, to conduct an advocacy mission which covered Italy, Vienna and Spain. Within this mission that was carried out in March 2007, Mr. Jammal presented the situations of the Palestinian Refugees in a tutorial that covered the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of them as well as the recent political developments that are taking place in Lebanon which shed its heaviness on polarizing the Palestinians by the diverse sectarian struggling groups. Further to the presentation, the documentary titled "**Palestinians without Papers ... Do they Exist?!!**"<sup>21</sup> which was produced by the PHRO and directed by Mr. Jammal was screened, where a discussion to its soul elaboration with the targeted groups was revealed.

The mission's presentations and screenings took place with the following insituations:

- *In Italy: Youth Action for Peace (YAP) and the Political Affairs Faculty at the Bologna University*
- *In Vienna: Arab-Austrian Relationship Association*
- *In Spain (Madrid & Barcelona): XARXA Palestina as well as CIEMEN<sup>22</sup>*

<sup>20</sup> Journalist & Film Maker

<sup>21</sup> PHRO Documentary, produced in 2006 and discussed the dilemma of the Non-Identified Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

<sup>22</sup> Part of the NGOs solidarity movement with Palestinian Population



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



Further to the scheduled presentations and screenings, Mr. Jammal was interviewed by the Bolonga University Review as well as Sherwood Radio.

- ✚ **Italy – Rome 10 to 15 May 2007:** As part of the EMHRN's Working Group Meeting on **Migration and Asylum (MAWG)** that took place in Rome – Italy in May 2007, the EMHRN in collaboration with the **National Centre for European Information and Documentation**<sup>23</sup> held on **11 May 2007** a press conference about the situation of the Iraqi Refugees in the post of the war. The press conference was moderated by Mr. Christopher Hein<sup>24</sup> and the speakers were Mrs. Maria De Donato<sup>25</sup>, Mrs. Tana de Zelueta<sup>26</sup>, Mr. Marc Schade-Poulsen<sup>27</sup> and Mrs. Rola Badran<sup>28</sup> who presented PHRO's concept note on the "**Necessary Protection for Palestinian Refugees – Case of Iraq**"<sup>29</sup>. At a later stage within the same day, and as a matter of awareness about the Non-IDs situations in Lebanon, the PHRO screened its Non-ID Documentary which was followed by a discussion amongst the attendees from the NGOs and Journalists in Rome. PHRO's representative moderated the discussion and visibility documents about the PHRO and the Non-Identified Palestinian refugees in Lebanon – were distributed. Parallel to the MAWG meeting, the PHRO representative conducted several advocacy meetings that aimed at introducing the PHRO and its work to national and international organizations working in Rome as well as presenting the various levels of the Palestinian Refugees situations in Lebanon. Within this mission, the PHRO representative conducted meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Italian Refugee Council, The Vatican Radio Station that broadcasted the dialogue that was conducted with the PHRO's representative on their channel and on their website [www.radiovaticana.org](http://www.radiovaticana.org)
- ✚ **Oslo – Norway, August 2007:** Within its efforts to increase the number of advocators amongst the Palestinian refugees, the PHRO encouraged and supported a Palestinian Community Educational Advocator, Mr. Khaled Sarris<sup>30</sup> to accomplish an advocacy mission to Norway during August 2007. Within this mission, Mr. Sarris presented the Palestinian refugees situations in Lebanon where he spotted the light on the

<sup>23</sup> Unofficial translation for: Centro Nazionale di Informazione e Documentazione Europea (CIDE)

<sup>24</sup> Director of the Italian Refugee Council (IRC)

<sup>25</sup> Italian Refugee Council (IRC)

<sup>26</sup> Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Italian Senate, President of the Culture Committee of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly

<sup>27</sup> Executive Director of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

<sup>28</sup> General Director Assistant, Acting As Programs Director and supervises the Human Rights Education Program at the PHRO

<sup>29</sup> This concept note is available on PHRO's website

<sup>30</sup> Previous Headmaster for an UNRWA School, Member of the on Social Security Committee o the Palestinian Debate Meeting Organized by the PHRO on September/October 2005



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



circumstances related to education conditions and students drop out whom mostly became labors children or got abused by parties that transform them to children soldiers. Mr. Sarries meetings were accomplished within the event organized by the Twinning Initiative between the educational institutions in Norway and Chatila Palestinian Refugees Camp. Within this event, many Norwegian institutions were presented and in particular, we mention Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, as well as local and international civil society organizations acting in Norway.

✚ **Cairo - Egypt, October 2007:** Parallel to the second MAWG<sup>31</sup> meeting within 2007 that took place in Cairo – Egypt, the PHRO representative conducted several advocacy meetings that aimed at introducing the PHRO and its work to national and international organizations working in Cairo as well as presenting the various levels of the Palestinian Refugees situations in Lebanon. Within this mission, the PHRO representative conducted meetings with the Swedish Refugee Aid, Italian Refugee Council, FIDH, MAAT for Judicial and Constitutional Studies, Al-Fanar Association, Habitat International Coalition and the Ford Foundation

✚ **Perugia, Italy; October 2007:** Upon an invitation from the **Tavola della Pace/Peace Roundtable and the Italian Co-ordination of Local Authorities for Peace and Human Rights**, the PHRO participated in the **7<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Peoples' UN**<sup>32</sup> that took place in **Perugia – Italy** from the 5<sup>th</sup> until the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2007. The topic of this year's Assembly was **"All Human Rights for all"**. Hundreds of people coming from all over the world met in Perugia. Representatives were from over than 50 countries and they included grassroots activists, international networks, local government authorities, parliamentarians and experts whom are committed to work on promoting peace, human rights development, social justice, democracy.



<sup>31</sup> Migration and Asylum Working Group of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

<sup>32</sup> The 7<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Peoples' UN is a project organised by the Tavola della Pace/Peace Roundtable and by the Italian Co-ordination of Local Authorities for Peace and Human Rights, which together co-ordinate more than 1200 associations, local authorities and religious and civic organisations promoting peace, human rights and solidarity. For more information about the partners and the event, kindly visit the following web address [www.tavoladellapace.it](http://www.tavoladellapace.it)



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



During the meeting, the PHRO representative, Mr. Bassam Hubeichi - Public Relations Director and Coordinator of the Monitoring and Documenting Human Rights Violations Program, presented the Palestinian refugees situations in Lebanon where he highlighted the major conditions with respect to the legal, economic, social and cultural rights without forgetting the political and the civil ones. Mr. Hubeichi also presented the latest frightened developments that happened within the Palestinian Communities "Naher El-Bared Clashes" and its consequences on the Palestinian Refugees.

### C. Advocacy via Networking Participation & Supporting

✚ **Supporting Youth Initiatives:** The PHRO within its working policy have been targeting the youth throughout its programs with the intention to strengthen their abilities that could foster and enhance the youth relations (between each others and between their community) particularly in such circumstance where depression, frustration and unemployment are the major headlines for their daily life. Within such a context, the PHRO supported:

- ❖ **Palestinian Cultural Club (Chatila):** who has planned a campaign that gathered a number of youth on the idea of protecting the environment within the camp. They conducted some awareness activities amongst their community within the camp and spread pamphlets about the right to be living within a clean environment. Their campaign included a painting day where they portrayed pictures on the camp's wall as a matter to raise people's awareness about the importance of the camp's hygiene and clean view and its relation with the mental health.
- ❖ **Young Filmmaker:** Beshara Damouni is talented young filmmaker. He has not graduated yet and he was one of the beneficiaries within our human rights education and raising awareness program, which encouraged him to include human rights concepts and visions in his graduation documentaries. In 2007, Mr. Damouni produced and directed his second documentary that discussed the Palestinians' Disability, which was resulted due to the lack of Security. In his documentary titled "**Life's Hope**" Mr. Damouni spotted the light on the war that was targeting the camps. A group of people told their story that revealed; "*... there was a cease of fire that hour, and we all went out. We were a group of men and women, suddenly a bomb fell between us, and we all got injured, but some died ... We are living a lots of misery ...*"



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



✚ **EMHRN<sup>33</sup> Seminar on Justice; 10 & 11 March 2007:** This seminar on the “**Independence and impartiality of the Judiciary – Lebanon**” was the third of the four national seminars planned by the EMHRN's Justice Working Group under its current project. Taking its outset in the 2005 regional report on *Justice in the South and East of the Mediterranean Region*<sup>34</sup>, the seminar aimed at evaluating the situation of the judiciary in Lebanon in respect to its level of independence and impartiality and identifying and appreciating any positive or negative changes that had occurred recently within the field. The seminar was organized in cooperation with the Lebanese members of the Justice Working Group, i.e. The Palestinian Human Rights Organisation – PHRO and Mouvement Franco-Libanais - Solida. It was financially supported by the European Union and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. To view the seminar's related documents, kindly visit the following address <http://www.euromedrights.net/pages/414> and to get acquainted with its proceedings, kindly download its minutes by visiting the following link <http://www.euromedrights.net/usr/00000019/00000070/00002009.pdf>

✚ **FIDH<sup>35</sup> Congress in Lisbon; 19 to 25 April 2007:** Under the auspices of the **President of Portugal**, the Forum on Migration, 19 to the 21 of April 2007, gathered FIDH member organizations, international and regional organizations, other partner civil society organizations, researchers and experts. It examined the human rights situation of economic migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced people in the different regions of the world, with a special focus on South-South migration. During the Forum, the participants explored the many challenges arising as a result of global mobility: growing feminization, the development of irregular migrations, the diversification of flows and trajectories, the limits of regional and international bodies in charge of protecting migrants rights, etc. The Forum's opening session took place with the moderation of Mr. João Correia, President of CIVITAS where speakers presented their speeches that dealt with the situation of migration in several areas of the world and the humanitarian impacts of migration.

In its second day, the Forum had regional workshops on Migration, Asylum and Refugees. These Regional workshops were accordingly as follows: "**Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, The Americas, Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia**". Within the workshop on the Middle East and North Africa, Mr. Ghassan Abdallah – PHRO General Director – presented an overview about the

<sup>33</sup> Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

<sup>34</sup> This report is available on EMHRN's website [www.euromedrights.net](http://www.euromedrights.net)

<sup>35</sup> International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



situation of the Palestinian Refugees in the countries of refuge. His presentation included **The establishment of UNRWA and its scope of work and the situation of Palestinian refugees in Diaspora** which accordingly included the situations of the Palestinian refugees in Gaza Strip, West Bank, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Arab Gulf Areas, Iraq and the Western Countries and provided a unique focus on Lebanon (Country of expertise). Mr. Abdallah's presentation focused on the numbers of the Palestinian refugees in each country and their legal and socio-economic situations in these countries. To view the executive summary of Mr. Abdallah's presentation, kindly visit the Advocacy section and PHRO's website.

The forum's last day was dedicated to the discussion of thematic issues. Three workshops took place accordingly "**Women and Migration, International Protection Mechanisms for Migrants and Refugees, Fundamental Rights and State Sovereignty**".

Afterwards, i.e. from the 22<sup>nd</sup> until the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2007, FIDH's members and affiliated organizations joined its general assembly meeting "36<sup>th</sup> congress" that took place in Lisbon-Portugal as well where they discussed internal issues related to FIDH's strategy, reports, finances ..etc. FIDH's 36<sup>th</sup> congress underwent as well elections to a new board. It is worth mentioning that the PHRO, within this meeting, acquired FIDH's full membership, after being an associate/affiliated member organization.

✚ **EMHRN Seminar on Gender; 26 & 27 May 2007:** This seminar titled "**Gender Mainstreaming in the Euro-Med Region**" was a sub-regional training seminar that introduced the participants who joined from different Arab and European Countries to the training pack on Gender that was prepared by the EMHRN. The training seminar took place at a very sensitive time in Beirut, with respect to the security conditions. It was organized in cooperation with the Lebanese members of the EMHRN, i.e. The Palestinian Human Rights Organisation – PHRO and Mouvement Franco-Libanais - Solida. To view the seminar's related documents, kindly visit the following address <http://www.euromedrights.net/17>

✚ **FIDH Conference on Migration; Qatar 9 to 12 June 2007:** The International Federation for Human Rights - FIDH in co-operation with the National Human Rights Committee of Qatar – NHRC organized an inter-regional conference to discuss the situation of migrant workers in Asia and Arab regions. This conference was held in Doha - Qatar on 10 and 11 June 2007, and was the first one to gather 50 participants, among which Qatari Officials and representatives of the civil society, human rights NGOs and trade



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



unions from several Arab and Asian origin and host countries were presented. The PHRO participated in this meeting which provided an enormous environment to share experiences with regional and international NGOs' representatives and experts in the issues of migration and asylum.

- ✚ **ENP Conference; Brussels 3 Sep 2007:** Upon an invitation from the European Commission, General Directorate of External Relations, and with the support of APRODEV, the PHRO was represented in the conference titled **“Working Together - Strengthening the European Neighborhood Policy”**. After the conference, the PHRO joined the efforts of the several NGOs who were attending the conference and who worked on drafting a letter to the representatives of the European Commission "Mr. José Manuel Barroso, President and Mrs. Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner". The letter signatory NGOs expressed their gratitude for being invited to participate in the conference and within the letter they drafted, they aimed at sharing with the European Commissioner representatives their observations from this first and important conference.



It is noteworthy to mention that the conference succeeded in bringing together a wide range of high level state representatives in order to share perspectives in this ambitious and important policy initiative. The signatory NGOs welcomed that the EU and neighborhood governments expressed a clear wish to work together within the framework of the ENP and to participate in similar ENP events to be organized on a yearly basis.

**The Reflections from Civil Society Representatives on the conference** and within the following themes "Trade liberalization, Climate change and Energy, Ownership, Poverty eradication and Millennium Development Goals, Human Rights, Gender, Conflict prevention and International law, Regional dimension and Towards democratic ownership and civil society participation" can be downloaded from PHRO's website.



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



✚ **AUC<sup>36</sup> Conference on Migrants and Refugees for Researchers; Cairo, 23 to 25 October**

**2007;** Upon an invitation from the FMRS<sup>37</sup> at the AUC, the PHRO was represented in the researchers and experts meeting titled "**Towards a Middle Eastern and African Center for Migration and Refugee Studies at the AUC**" which was held from the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2007. The FMRS invited selected researchers from across the MEA to attend this preparatory meeting in Cairo, which aimed at:

- Identifying scholars willing to take part in FMRS initiative;
- Making an inventory of the current state of knowledge regarding migration and refugee movements in the MEA;
- Setting the research priorities in the identified region

After the official opening of the meeting, FMRS Director, Dr. Philippe Fargues presented an overview of the Migrants and Refugees in the Middle East and Eastern Africa. Afterwards the invited researchers presented their concept papers about the situation of the migration and refugee movements in the following countries Sudan, Egypt, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Yemen, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

PHRO representative within this meeting, Mrs. Rola Badran, presented the situation of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon with respect to demography, geographical location, legal status and socio-economic conditions. Within its presentation, Mrs. Badran highlighted to the discrimination that the Palestinian Refugees are suffering from in Lebanon. The situation in Northern Lebanon "during and after the clashes between Fateh El-Islam group and the Lebanese Army" was highlighted within the presentation as well. It is worthy to mention that the Palestinian situation of the migration and refugee movements had four presentations within the meeting.

### **IV. Dialogue**

#### **A. Lebanese – Palestinian Youth Dialogue Meeting – 18 May 2007**

In 2007, as in the previous years, the PHRO supported NGOs' and youth centres' initiatives that serve dialogue goals and approaches. Within this context, the PHRO has provided the consultancy support in addition to the financial one to organizing and holding a **Lebanese – Palestinian Youth Dialogue Meeting**. This activity was organized by the Fraternity Association for Social and Educational Work and took place at the Onisko Palace in Beirut over a complete day.

<sup>36</sup> American University in Cairo

<sup>37</sup> Forced Migration and Refugees Studies Department and the American University in Cairo



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



The meeting aimed at gathering the youth representatives (first leaders) in both the Lebanese and the Palestinian Political Groups. This was considered a very hard task especially on time that the political situation in Lebanon is not stable and further, it is polarized between two main groups known as 8 and 14 March groups. After condensed preparation efforts, the meeting took place under the patronage of the Lebanese Parliament Members Mrs. Bahia El-Hariri and Mr. Samir Frangeieh from the Lebanese Side and the President of the Union of Palestinian Leagues and Committees, Mr. Fathi Abo El-Aradat from the Palestinian Side.

In her speech, MP Bahia El-Hariri called upon Lebanon and Palestine Youth to adopt new condensed and continued mechanism in order to raise the humanitarian idiocy from the Palestinian Presence in Lebanon. She as well appealed them to find follow-up frames for each of the following matters: health, education and the legal situations as well as the governmental process to revive the Palestinian actuality with what honor the Lebanese-Palestinian brotherhood and protect for the Palestinians their right to live in dignity until returning to their home land "Palestine" and establishing their independent state there.

The Palestinian Representative in the meeting Mr. Fathi Abo El-Aradat called in his speech the youth to extract the lesson from the history and to establish a new logic to treat the issues of diversity and destiny as well as to have more deepened and extensive converging to serve the joint objectives of the Palestinians and the Lebanese. He hinted as well to the fact that "the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue on the official level was put on a positive track, and that the Palestinian-Lebanese relation is calmly developing towards producing an agreement which guarantee both interests on the bases of Palestinian abidance to the Lebanese sovereignty and his conviction with a rights & duties relationship.

MP Samir Frangeieh assured in his speech that the Palestinian Cause is not any more a problematic issue between the Lebanese. 14 March Group ingathered for refusing the political abuse that the Palestinian presence in Lebanon is facing. He completed on that by saying: "Seniora government consecrated this rejection when it started to dialogue on the humanitarian problem of the Palestinian refugees in a committee whom is working on finding serious solutions for this catastrophe". MP Samir Frangeieh saw that the camps' weapons is an issue that might be solved through dialogue with the Palestinian Authority on the bases of respecting Lebanon's sovereignty. He further called to raise the PLO representation in Lebanon to the level of Embassy in order to assure on the logic of dealing between two legal states.

32 youth joined the meeting where they have discussed several issues related to the Palestinian presence in Lebanon and their Human Rights on the bases of rights and duties.



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



These issues included "Camps' Weapons", "Palestinians Human Rights", "Security" and "the Rights of Youth".

Such a meeting was essential to take place and it was planned to be followed up where advanced meetings should have taken place amongst the same target group, however the clashes that erupted, two days after the meeting, in the Naher El-bared Camp between the so-called "Fateh El-Islam" group and the Lebanese Army, shed its weight on holding such meetings due to the revealed emergency.

***B. Lebanese Palestinian Youth Summer Camp for Dialogue; August 2007:*** With the intention to conduct five days training course on **the Principles of Dialogue, Peaceful Means of Conflict Resolution and Respecting Human Rights** amongst the 10 days summer camp The PHRO joined the efforts of the organizers of the summer camp titled "**Towards Improving the Joint Subsistence**", a partnership on that was endorsed.

Under the patronage of the Parliament Member Mrs. Bahia El-Hariri and the Representative of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in Lebanon Mr. Abbas Zaki, an opening reception for the summer camp activities took place at the Hariri residence in Majdelion – Saida, Southern Lebanon. In addition to the speeches of Mrs. Hariri, and Mr. Zaki, the PHRO represented by its General Director, Mr. Ghassan Abdallah had a speech as well as the other organizers "Palestinian Youth Association (Refugee) and the Higher Commission of

Agriculture. In his speech, Mr. Abdallah focused on the importance of working with youth and neutralizing them from being polarized by the various political affiliations, which attract them by different ways "money, weapons, power ...etc". Mr. Abdallah also focused on the importance of advanced education for the youth.



He hinted to the significance of introducing youth to the concepts of human rights and raising their awareness on peaceful means of conflict resolution such as dialogue, negotiations and respecting the others.

The training took place in Saida - Southern Lebanon and was conducted from August 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Forty participants "Lebanese and Palestinians" joined the activities that were held



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



within this training course. Over the training days, the beneficiaries participated in different actions that consecutively took place with the intention to spread a culture of human rights respect amongst them and create an environment where every one could express his opinion and share the other his/her thoughts and believes. Several educational methodologies were used to extensively introduce the training themes. Explanation sittings, workshops, debates, presentations, documentary screenings took place where the participants show a high level of commitment and involvement.



Due to the deteriorating situation concerning the Naher El-Bared Clashes where hundreds of Palestinians were detained and plenty of them were tortured under investigation, we found out that it is essential when introducing the human rights to focus on **the right to fair trial**. Also,

and within the same context, a particular spotlight was comprised on **the right to the freedom of expression** due to the media corporations proceedings within these clashes where they were generally focusing on the military actions, on time that other humanitarian issues should have been equally covered at that time.

Furthermore, the participants practiced the mechanisms of resolving conflicts especially the dialogue and the negotiations. They were divided into two groups and were assigned with certain methodology to conduct eight rounds of dialogue and two negotiation rounds in order to wade a war or go forward peace. This activity is considered a basic one within the education on peaceful means of resolving conflicts. It is a practical commotion to the theoretical explanation of the concepts of dialogue and negotiations.

The training was practical and it created a climate of exchanging thoughts and opinions amongst the participants who came from diverse communities and have various backgrounds. It assisted in rectifying some perceptions that some youth in both communities held about the each others.



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



**C. Meeting with General Micheal Aoun; 17 September 2007:** On September 17, 2007 a delegation from the PHRO headed by its General Director, Mr. Ghassan Abdallah met with the **President of the Free National Movement (FNM)** and the **President of the Change and Reform Bloc Parliamentary Group, the Parliament Member General Micheal Aoun** in his residence in Rabie in the presence of the leader in the FNM Mr. Simon Abi Ramia.

The meeting aimed at discussing number of issues and topics of common interests especially those relating to the tragic conditions experienced by the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon at the humanitarian, legal, economic and social levels, especially in the aftermath of the sorrowful incidents that took place in the Naher El-Bared Camp and the prominence of several voices that contained seditious contexts that loaded the Palestinian Refugees with the burden of what happened in the Naher El-Bared Camp. Within the meeting, the PHRO re-affirmed on denouncing and condemning the attacks on the security forces and striking Lebanon's stability and considered that the Palestinian refugee was the first to be harmed, and that the so-called "Fateh El-Islam" group is not related to the Palestinians whom affirmed that on both the official and the popular levels.

The meeting addressed the Palestinian refugee humanitarian rights and the legal complexities that affect the Palestinian actuality in Lebanon at all its levels which hinder every attempt that aims at improving the situation of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Hereby, the focus was on the necessity to work on the abolition and the amendment of all the laws and the procedures that deny the Palestinian from his human rights in order to attain a just and equitable legal system that reserve the Palestinian's dignity and determine his/her rights and duties towards the hosting country on the mutual basis of: "**sovereignty of the State of Lebanon over all its territories, security and stability for the Palestinian refugee until his/her return to his/her homeland in accordance with the international resolutions**" which will accordingly form a network of security that protect both the Lebanese and the Palestinians from the danger of the resettlement perception .

General Aoun showed understanding and affirmativeness in dealing with the issues that were discussed during our meeting where we deliberated some ideas that could be developed and depend on it in order to treat several thorny issues.

At the end of the meeting, General Aoun promised to substantiate the discussed matters to experts and specialists from the FNM for further follow-up in order to overcome obstacles through organizing bilateral dialogue meetings that gather expert representatives from both the PHRO and the FNM. These dialogue meetings should be designed with the objective to dispel misgivings and remove ambiguities that ascertain some terms and concepts such as



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



"settlement" in order to lift complexities that govern the Lebanese-Palestinian relationship with what suit both people interest.

### **D. Dialogue Efforts and Initiatives on the Local Level**

In year 2007, the PHRO continued in conducting persuading meetings with Palestinian Representative, Lebanese Parliamentary groups, Ministers and key persons within the Lebanese community and countries embassies where until early May 2007, twenty meetings were conducted. The level of these meetings escalated due to the Naher El-Bared Clashes which revealed a necessity to conduct an intensive follow up on the official level especially with regards to intervening to secure the safe evacuation of the civilians from the camp and to ensure the respect of their human dignity.

Within the first five months of the year, the PHRO was highly presenting its memo titled "**Sovereignty for the Lebanese Government on its territories, Security and Stability for the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon until their Return**" which included 10 intensified recommendations about the Palestinian refugees demands in Lebanon and suggestions about granting these rights where Palestinians get their rights and stand on respecting and conducting their duties. Since the Naher El-Bared Clashes erupted in May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007, you could easily notice the heavy burden that these clashes left and which revealed other priorities within both the Palestinian and Lebanese Communities amongst which it is coming day after day necessary to hold the Lebanese- Lebanese Dialogue as well as the Lebanese – Palestinian meeting, and which is getting delayed and postponed due to instability and insecurity within the country.

Also, within the response to the Naher El-Bared Crisis, the PHRO joined the Protection Working Group (PWG) as a core member. The PWG is a group which was established by the Office of the Higher Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Gradually, the PWG had members form the local and international organizations who are working on Naher El-Bared Crisis at the different levels. The PWG holds meetings on weekly basis in order to discuss the recent situations with respect to the civilians' protection from a human rights perspective. Since not all the members who joined the PWG have the human rights as a background, it was difficult at the first stages to work adequately. Afterwards, the PWG started to arrange it self by designing terms of reference, aims and objectives ..etc. The main objective of the PWG is to mainstream data related to Human Rights Violations that are taking place in light of the crisis and respond to these violations in accordance with the expertise and resources available at the PWG. Follow up through meetings and communications was taking place with the Government, Army, Internal Security Forces, Palestinian Representation Office, the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee ...etc.



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



Within its membership at the PWG, the PHRO always reflect the human rights situations within the camps and share opinions with the representatives of the OHCHR as well as other UN and civil society organizations about possible methodologies to use in order to humanitariously improve the conditions within the Palestinian camps, particularly with respect to protection.

On another level, the PHRO and after sensing that many Lebanese parties are attempting to polarize the Palestinians into their sides in a way that they become an involved part within the internal Lebanese dilemma, the PHRO called upon the Palestinian community in Lebanon to launch an initiative towards neutralizing the Palestinians from the internal Lebanese problems. This call came into the sight as per the experience, since Palestinians in Lebanon are the one to blame at the end even for matters that they are not related to. At first, this initiative was difficult to formulate, however after several meetings with key persons and representatives amongst the Palestinian community, this initiative started to grow and even its echo started to be heard on the level of meetings with ministers and Parliament member. Working within this initiative was not only taking place on the level of leaders within the Palestinian Communities, however it also addressed the youth in their centers where PHRO highlighted this issue and its implications on the Palestinian community as a matter of raising the youth awareness who are the target group of such polarization either by abusing their feelings or through delighting them by money or potential weapon usage. This initiative as well covered the fact that Palestinians within their camps, especially youth, do not get affected by the clashes taking place between Hamas and the PLO in the Palestinian Territories.

It could be sensed that the dialogue activities were not numerous during 2007, thus it is very essential to clarify that the efforts that were exerted in this program especially at the Palestinian-Palestinian level in order to neutralize our community from being polarized within the internal Lebanese conflicts were vast. These efforts were taking a lot of time of arrangements and conductance which caused pressure on the working staff dealing with such topics. The dialogue program major staff were, Mr. Ghassan Abdallah, General Director and Mr. Edward Kattoura, Vice President in addition to people who were providing the logistical support on the administrative and technical levels. It is noteworthy to mention that the Follow Up Committees resulted from the Palestinian Debate Meeting that was held in September/October 2005 within our dialogue program, also had an extensive role in the neutralizing initiatives and the dialogues meetings that were taking place for such regard.



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

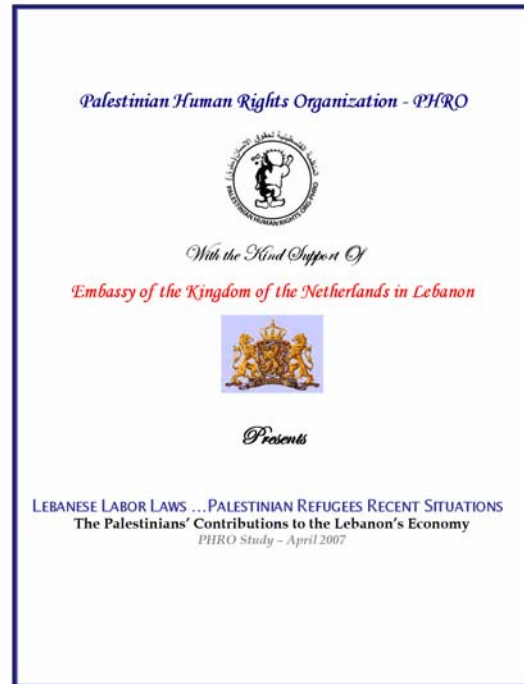


Despite all this condensed hectic efforts, however we feel that we are not achieving the results that we look forward to achieve!!! Such an observation came out as a result of being repeating similar actions which we do each time there is a single chaos or disorder within the camps. We always have to do the necessary communications in order to play a role in neutralizing the Palestinians from such conflicts due to: the absence of the unified political reference for the Palestinians in Lebanon as well as the diversity in the acting Political Groups which is not based neither on the national loyalty, nor on the democratic visions, but on the foreign belonging and the carrying out of outlandish agendas. This is besides the non-existence of the supporting policies that enables the renaissance of these compressed communities "especially within the camps and gatherings" which are very easy targets to be abused and polarized, at the cheapest, from actors who misuse money and power, benefiting from the absence of job opportunities that people could have referred to in order to secure their living, as well as the existence and implication of harsh laws against the Palestinians.

### ***V. Legal Research and Legal Aid***

#### ***A. Labor Study***

In order to clearly enhance the knowledge on the Right to Work for Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon and the occurred discrimination when comparing "the Lebanese Laws of Labor and its related regulations which could indulge or hinder the Palestinian Refugees from accessing their right to work" with "the international standards", and the impacts of such discrimination on the lives of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, we have implemented this research study that was titled "**Lebanese Labor Laws ...Palestinian Refugees Recent Situations; The Palestinians' Contributions to the Lebanon's Economy**" and which is accessible on PHRO's website. This research illustrated the status of the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon with regards to the Right to Work – Laws and Procedures of Labor, and provided a legal analysis when measuring them up with the international standards where a highlight to the occurred violations and thus discrimination that Palestinians suffer from were demonstrated as well. It also portrayed the Palestinians' contributions in Lebanon and their impact on the economy, which rebut several





## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



Lebanese groups' claims that Palestinians constitute a heavy burden on Lebanon's economy.

This study has consequently presented a different impression about the Palestinians rather than the largely disseminated one about their contribution and role in Lebanon's war. It showed that Palestinians are catalysts within Lebanon's different sectors where they have played an important and essential role in re-construction, trade, education, business ...etc

In this sense, the research is considered a qualitative study rather than a quantitative one. It addressed two complement tracks in 63 total pages:

✎ One track focuses on the socio-economic and political developments that governed the Lebanese and Palestinians since the Palestinian displacement in 1948 up to recent days.

✎<sup>38</sup>The second track encloses a legal research that conducts an in-depth analysis of: the Lebanese labor laws and regulations, relevant international refugee and human rights norms, international Labor conventions, UN and Arab League Resolutions.

The outcomes of this research which was finalized in April 2007 formed the main material for the documentary titled "**Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon ... Marginalized Impacts**" - *overviewed on advocacy section within this report* - that surmounts the obstacles between the Lebanese and the Palestinians and shows them part of the equation (Work, Integrity ...), which will be effectively used as an advocacy tool.

### **B. All laws Study**

Another legal research that was conducted within 2007 was about the Lebanese laws & regulations and the historical context in which they were issued. This demonstration indicated whether these laws and regulations were the outcomes of certain balances and disparities as well as the factors that formed its basis and played a role in the specific treatment outlook which in total govern the relations between the Lebanese State and its Palestinian Refugees. The research presented an overview of the Lebanese legislations ruling Palestinian refugees. It spotted the light on the following major themes within this legislation "right to: work, ownership, education, free movement, nationality and establish associations". The study further highlighted the Palestinians "previous and current" situations with respect to these themes under the legislation that incurred lots of changes depending on the period under discussion. Moreover, the study presented the contradictions of some Lebanese laws and regulations with the international standards and measures, which consequently form discrimination against Palestinian Refugees. The research was titled: "**Isolation and**

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<sup>38</sup> It is worthy to mention that the second track of this study constituted an integral part of an advanced comprehensive research about the Lebanese laws, regulations and the historical context in which they were issued. It is worthy to mention that the advanced study overview is detailed within this section of the narrative report as well.



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro - Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



**Despondency: The Cyclone of the Lebanese Legislation"** and will be available on PHRO's website soon.

The study underwent the same research methodology that was applied in the labor study. Thus, it as well has two major sections; the first one deals with the socio-economic and political developments that governed the Lebanese and the Palestinians since 1948 and the second one revealed an overview of the Lebanese legislation, a comparison for this legislation with the international norms and a general analysis for the impacts of these laws on Palestinian refugees.

The study reveals several exclamations and question marks on the reasons that stand behind the applied discriminatory policy against the Palestinians in Lebanon. It further propose several recommendations that in case they were adopted by the concerned bodies, will and from our point of view, achieve improvements in the situations of the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon.

***C. Developments in the Non- Identified Refugees Situations:*** At the beginning of our illustration for the 2007 developments regarding the legal situation of the Non-Identified Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, it is precious to reveal that PHRO has greatly succeeded in highlighting the humanitarian and legal aspects of the Non ID's issue, over the previous years. In 2006 within its legal aid program, 55 families with the total number of 271 individuals were granted a legal documentation "Identification Paper" that is issued by the residency area mayor and that is approved by the district's governor.

Due to such success, the PHRO received late in 2006 more than 113 new cases (individuals) requests for the legal assistance with the context of issuing ratified identification papers. Those 113, in addition to other applications that we received through out this year, were carried out in 2007 despite the shortage in funds for this program.

Further more, the PHRO continued its persuading efforts on the local and international levels in order to convince the concerned bodies about legitimizing the presence and residency of the Non-Identified Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon who count (4,000 - 5,000 individuals)<sup>39</sup> and who have been awaiting for so long and trying as well to legitimize their residency in Lebanon and feel the equality with the other categories of the Palestinian Refugees in the same hosting country whom are deprived from their human rights and discriminated against as well. It is essential to mention that these persuading meetings were carried with: the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee

<sup>39</sup> To know more about the legal and socio-economic situation of the Non-Identified Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, take a look about PHRO's study report and download it from PHRO website



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



(LPDC) headed by Ambassador Khalil Mekkawi, the European Commission Delegation to Lebanon, the European Embassies in Lebanon, Ministers and Parliament Members as well as civil society representatives.

The PHRO had plenty of meetings with the above mentioned bodies' representatives. These meetings were fruitful where we could mention the following:

1. The PHRO informed the concerned bodies about the reached success and continued to present the legal reading that legitimize the issuance of the Identification Paper for the Non-Identified Palestinian refugees in Lebanon as well as the issued Identification papers within its program for the year 2006 and 2007.
2. The PHRO handed out to the PLO its records concerning the documented names of the Non-Identified Palestinian refugees. The PHRO aimed from this step to integrate the efforts where the PLO will compare PHRO's records and other civil society lists with their own records "as a PLO" in order to hand out one unified list for the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC) headed by Ambassador Khalil Mekkawi
3. The PHRO classified legitimizing the Non-IDs presence in Lebanon as one of the three top priorities of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon besides granting all the Palestinians their right to work and their right to own property. This priority was fully reflected in the consultation meeting with the PHRO at the EC Delegation in Lebanon prior to the first Human Rights Sub-Committee Meeting in accordance with the European Neighborhood Policy – *see advocacy section* -
4. The PHRO knew from a European Official that the Non-IDs' Dilemma was listed on the meeting's schedule of the Human Rights Subcommittee that met in Lebanon in April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Furthermore, the PHRO knew that there were some promises from the side of the Lebanese Government towards solving this dilemma
5. During the Naher EL-Bared Clashes between the so-called "**Fateh El-Islam Group**" and the **Lebanese Army**, the Non-Identified Palestinian refugees who are residing in the camp were afraid to leave fearing to be arrested by the Lebanese Security Forces "Army, Internal Security ..." due to their lack of IDs and furthermore, they were frightened to be accused by belonging to this terrorist group. The PHRO was monitoring the situation and received several appeals from Non-ID families within the camp who asked us to interfere and assure their protection under such a critical and sensitive situation. Hereby, the PHRO corresponded with the PLO, the LPDC and other concerned bodies in order to perceive such a situation. Furthermore, the PHRO issued a position paper titled "**A Necessity to Consolidate the Vision of the**



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



**Non-Identified Palestinian Refugees Situations**<sup>40</sup> which aimed at clarifying their situation and creating a persuading climate towards the protection of the Non-IDs.

6. Despite that the PHRO did not organize a screening day for its documentary titled "**Palestinians without Papers ... Do they Exist?!!**" that we produced in 2006, the PHRO persevered to screen it during advocacy and persuading meetings as well as trainings in order to publicize the dilemma and create more advocates and supporters for the cause.

### ***D. Legal Aid for Prisoners***

In 2007 the PHRO managed to have five delegates to the prisons over the Lebanese territories in which two of those delegates were granted the access to women prisons "*see monitoring violations section*".

The PHRO managed over the first 4 and half months in 2007 to interview 80 Palestinian Prisoners out of the 380 presented in the 14 prisons in Lebanon including Romieh Prison which is considered the central prison and contains that largest number of prisoners within. Amongst the 80 interviewed prisoners, 32 benefited from the assistance provided and which can be briefed as follows:

- ❖ **14 Releasing Applications** were applied to prisoners who had spent their trialed period and awaiting to be released *taking into consideration that Palestinian Refugees in such cases are treated as Foreigners and releasing require firstly to pass by the General Security Offices and can not be conducted directly from the prison as Lebanese*. This points to the discrimination against Palestinian Refugees, moreover some prisoners can stay extra months in the prison because the General Security Car visits the prisons on weekly bases and most of the times there are no capacity in the car to accommodate all prisoners who should leave.
- ❖ **3 Combining Several Sentences Applications** were considered and performed. Combining Sentences is a legal procedure where the lawyer can request through applying such demand for his/her prisoner(s) knowing that within the Lebanese legal system if one has several sentences, they can be all combined together where the hardest punishment will be considered as the final sentence.
- ❖ **Miscellaneous Legal Aid/Assistance: 15** prisoners benefited from separated legal assistance that varies between: having a specific date to be trailed after being detained for a long period, having certificate for being innocent from actions prisoners were entitled

<sup>40</sup> This document is available on PHRO's website in both languages Arabic and English at the following link [www.palhumanrights.org](http://www.palhumanrights.org)



## المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



to, paying a penalty and having a releasing application in the afterwards, applying the procedure within which we request to revise the prisoner's judiciary document and provide a photocopy about it to the prisoner ...etc

Also, several prisoners benefited via PHRO delegates in prisons from several miscellaneous services "Medication, Nutritional, ...etc" provided by morale personalities, families ...etc

❖ **Naher El-Bared Clashes Detainees:** As for the second half of the year, the PHRO focused within its work at the prisons on providing the legal and consultancy assistance for the Palestinians who were detained in light of the clashes that erupted in the Naher El-Eared Camp between the so-called "**Fateh El-Islam Group**" and the Lebanese Army.

72 Palestinian detainees have been met and interviewed. Two of them had been arrested for criminal causes while the remainder were arrested for causes related to the Naher El-Bared incidents. Charges ranged from affiliation to "Fateh El-Islam", "the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command", "Al Quaieda", Jund El-Sham", in addition to the Barr Elias incidents and the explosions at Ain El-Hilweh Camp.

We have elaborated on the Monitoring and Documenting Human Rights Violations section the detainees causes of arrest, the treatment they received under detention as well as their physical and psychological conditions. For further information about these details, kindly visit our website to view the visibility documents that were issued on such circumstances.

The PHRO address the Palestinian prisoners not only for monitoring and documenting the violations that they are suffering from, but also to provide them with the suitable legal aid assistance that could be secured within our program. We further provide consultancy services for the prisoners and their families. Raising the prisoners' awareness about their rights also falls within our concern circuit; thus within the interviews that we conduct with the prisoners, we introduce the interviewee to his/her rights. Furthermore, we provide him/her with information on the legal procedures that should be carried out in order to guarantee that his/her rights "especially the right to fair trial and the right to be legally represented" is respected.

For the PHRO, prisons are considered an important field to work within. Three years of experience now, and we still look forward more coverage for advanced legal aid assistance such as assigning lawyers to follow up cases, file lawsuits for cases who underwent severe violations for their rights, secure protection for victims and witnesses of human rights violations ...etc.



# المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro – Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



## \*\*\*\*\* Conclusion

Despite of all the turmoil that underwent within the country this year as well where instability, insecurity and tension was felt on daily basis, particularly during the Naher El-Bared Clashes, PHRO and its staff managed to continue on working within PHRO's mandate and did their best to attain as much as successful implementation for the Strategy Paper 2006 – 2008 which positively affected the work sustainability.

Briefly, we can tell that with a focus on the youth through education, the civil society through dialogue, and the vulnerable groups through structural assistance that was provided in the legal aid, PHRO managed to have a fruitful results. These results can be liable when we present that in 2007:

- ✚ PHRO held it first official General Assembly meeting and elected its Board of Directors on February 2007 (one year after being officially recognized in Lebanon under the registration no. 36/AD, in accordance with the Lebanese Laws).
- ✚ Members Subscriptions, Members and Miscellaneous Donations dropped down from 29,700 USD in 2006 into 17,600 USD in 2007
- ✚ Donors Funding declined from 217,053.15 USD in 2006 to 173,410.85 USD in 2007
- ✚ With the intention to cover the shortages in the overall support, the PHRO received a member input (in the shape of endowment) amounted at approximately 28,500 USD
- ✚ The links between the different programs within PHRO served the mainstreaming and the continuous networking between the operational staff
- ✚ The Monitoring & Documenting Human Rights Violations unit managed to document, mostly in the first half of the year, **117<sup>41</sup> cases**, which exceeded the number of cases documented during the entire last year by 62. Within the second half of the year, the unit's efforts were directed towards monitoring and documenting the violations that took place in Northern Lebanon (*Naher El-Bared Camp Clashes and the afterwards Consequences*) where plenty of severe breaches were encountered.
- ✚ Our Educational and Raising Awareness activities in human rights, democracy and conflict resolution perspectives reached 193 beneficiaries where as it scoped 94 recipients in 2006.

<sup>41</sup> It is essential to clarify that the 117 cases do not include neither the prisons' ones nor the violations that took place in light of the Naher El-Bared Clashes that broke out from May 20<sup>th</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 between the Lebanese Army and the so-called Fateh El-Islam Group which lead to thousands of displaced people and plenty of critical health, housing, torture, humiliations ...etc violations



# المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro - Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



Despite that PHRO didn't receive the required funds for all its programs in 2007, particularly due to the situation of instability in the country, however we managed to overcome the occurred obstacles. We have fears that such conditions/turbulence might continue/occur in 2008, nevertheless we expect that it will be limited, where we anticipate that it will calm down, to an extent, in 2009 which might bring more relieve which consequently reflect itself on funding.

Beneficiaries level amongst the Palestinian Community and condensing networking with Lebanese communities leading to increase our credibility that we sensed from the solidarity of local, regional, and international communities when we experienced the threats and insults from the different non-state armed groups in Lebanon.

With such conclusions, we turn to present our budget and incurred expenses for the year 2007

## PHRO FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007

Description		\$	Totals	Expenses incurred in 2007, was paid early 2008; (Debt Appear in the Balance, but not counted)
<b>Credit from 2006</b>		<b>38,236.69</b>		
<b>Opening Cashier</b>		<b>2,250.00</b>		
<b>Contributions Received</b>		<b>225,210.54</b>		
Members Subscription	2,600.00			
Donation from members	6,450.00			
Miscellaneous Donations over the year (in kind contributions)	8,550.00			
January 2007; Member Input - 22061€ @ 1.3€//\$	28,458.69			
January 2007 - Reimbursement of Activities and travelling Tickets - Euro Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)	15,108.51			
March 2007; Premier Urgence	4,499.00			
May 2007 - Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	1,988.00			
May 2007 - Kerkinactie (49995 Euros @ 1.36 Euro/USD)	67,993.20			



# المنظمة الفلسطينية لحقوق الإنسان (حقوق)

**Palestinian Human Rights Organization (Rights) – PHRO**

Member: Euro - Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)

Member: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)



## PHRO FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007

Description		\$	Totals	Expenses incurred in 2007, was paid early 2008; (Debt Appear in the Balance, but not counted)
May 2007 - EMHRN reimbursement of Justice & Gender Seminar	4,111.14			
June 2007; Premier Urgence	4,499.00			
June 2007; EMHRN reimbursement of travelling ticket	240.00			
21 July 2007 - Ford Foundation	74,972.00			
Credit incurred due to Foreign Currency Exchange Rates	5,741.00			
<b>Total</b>			<b>265,697.23</b>	
<b>Expenses Incurred - Programs</b>		<b>131,056.37</b>		
Monitoring & Documenting Human Rights Violations	24,462.39			1,903.00
Human Rights Education and Raising Awareness	31,757.67			1,188.00
Advocacy	31,054.05			1,671.39
Dialogue	27,570.59			1,120.00
Legal Research & Aid	16,211.67			2,000.00
<b>Administrative Expenses</b>		<b>68,725.68</b>		
Administration Wages, Technical Support & Consultancy Services Fees	32,693.75			4,137.65
<i>Unpaid Remuneration Fees (Debt Appear in the Balance from year 2004 but not counted)</i>		<b>6,876.00</b>		
Shared Expenses Related to Administrating PHRO Programs; Office Expenses	25,244.86			950.50
Office Installations "Equipments and Furniture"	10,787.07			1,434.00
<b>Other Expenses</b>		<b>1,771.95</b>		
Emergency & Accidents Financial Aid	1,683.33			
Bank Account Expenses and Fees	88.62			
<b>Total Expenses</b>			<b>201,554.00</b>	<b>14,404.54</b>
<b>Credit carried for 2008 "Total - Total Expenses"</b>			<b>64,143.23</b>	

**\*\*\*End**