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IBPP Research Associates: Palestinian Human Rights

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Keywords: Civil Rights, Human Rights, Israel, Palestinian National Authority

From the LAW website at <http://www.lawsociety.org>. LAW is a Palestinian human rights organization based in Jerusalem. It was founded in 1990 by a group of Palestinian lawyers to promote human rights and further the principles of the rule of law, and to defend Palestinian rights in accordance with international human rights law and United Nations declarations. LAW is affiliate to the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Federation Internationale des Ligues de Droits de l'Homme (FIDH), and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT).

LAW Item. LAW strongly condemns the increased political interference with the media. The most recent arrests, again, concern reporting that "harm the reputation of the PNA." and closely follow the arrest and detention of Maher Adisouqi under the same grounds.

In the recent incident, on 28 September 1999, the Palestinian Civilian Police in Ramallah and Gaza arrested four journalists: Journalist Fatihi Sabbah al-Ayyam in Gaza, Saleh al- Na'ameh of al-Resala newspaper, Munir Abu Riziq of al- Hayah al-Jadidah newspaper in Gaza, and Wa'el Abu Daqqah, director of al- Jazeera TV in Ramallah.

The action of the Palestinian police violate Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Articles 3 & 4 of the Palestinian Press Law of 1995.

LAW immediately demands the Palestinian Police stop all politically motivated arrests violating the freedom of the media. The Attorney General and the Ministry of Information must act in all cases to prevent the police and other security bodies from violating the freedom of journalists.

IBPP Commentary. While the world's attention continues to largely focus on a sort of zero-sum game between the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Israel, an extremely important quest to establish human and civil rights consonant with international law is ongoing throughout PNA-controlled territory. Of utmost significance are the difficulties such a quest faces in the context of a literal struggle for national existence. History shows us that in many other such struggles, human and civil rights are often severely curtailed or given cursory attention. Political psychologists should closely follow the fate of human and civil rights as influenced by organizations like LAW and by the "facts on the ground" as the latter continue to change. (Keywords: Civil Rights, Human Rights, Israel, Palestinian National Authority.)