



مركز الميزان لحقوق الإنسان
Al Mezan Center for Human Rights

*Toward Reinforcing
the Economic, Social and
Cultural Rights*

Press Release

In preparation for UN conference on small weapons, Al Mezan demands halt of the spread and misuse of small weapons in Palestine

In preparation for a UN international conference on small weapons expected in June 2006 and an international campaign launched by Amnesty International, the Middle East and North Africa Network to stop the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (MENAANSA), and Oxfam International, aimed at exerting pressure on governments in order to support a treaty on the weapons trade.

Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, a member of the MENAANSA, confirms that wealthy countries benefit from the continuation of misusing small weapons in the world, since it is a marketable trade for companies of arms manufacture. However, developing nations suffer greatly from this phenomenon which kills 1000 persons daily, eliminates attempts towards development, and weakens the importance of an international effective treaty to control it and hold to account the responsible countries for the global spread of the weapons trade.

In light of developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), notably in the Gaza Strip which is seeing an intensified state of insecurity and a lack of the rule of law, which are consequences of the spread and misuse of weapons and lack of security across Palestinian society. Accordingly, Al Mezan calls upon the PNA to take serious procedures to impose the law, punish those who illegally use weapons, and halt the phenomenon of carrying weapons illegally. It must abide by the Law of Weapons and Supply No. 2 of 1998, so as to stop the spread of weapons in streets and neighborhoods.

It is worth noting that around 1991 Palestinians, among them 275 children, were killed since 2003 due to the misuse of weapons in the Gaza Strip; 108 Palestinians have been injured in May 2006 alone in the Gaza Strip.

Thus, Al Mezan calls upon the mass media, and most notably Palestinian national and satellite TV stations, radio stations and local newspapers, to focus on constructive programs to end the phenomenon which has had such serious implications for Palestinian society.

Further, Al Mezan reconfirms that the ongoing state of security and the spread of weapons come during a period where the material capacities of the community are being wasted, thus depriving the OPT and particularly the Gaza Strip from real opportunities to refresh the economy and prevent investment.

Al Mezan Center for Human Rights highlights the importance of a national accord between political parties and the need for the PNA to eliminate the phenomenon and activate legal mechanisms as an introduction to regaining stability within Palestinian society.

To participate in the international campaign and for further information on this issue, please visit the following links:

<http://www.amnesty.org>

http://www.iansa.org/control_arms/100days/activities.htm

<http://www.oxfam.org>

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