



The Final Statement
The Sixth National Civil Peace and Rule of Law Conference
“Towards a Palestinian State in which Justice, Equality and the Rule of Law Prevail”

The Civil Coalition for Strengthening the Civil Peace and Rule of Law conducted its Sixth National Civil Peace and Rule of Law Conference, entitled: “Towards a Palestinian State in which Justice, Equality and the Rule of Law Prevail,” under the patronage of His Excellency, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Monday, 06th of December, Tuesday, 07th of December, and Wednesday, 08th of December. The Conference was broadcasted on satellite and local TVs, such as Ma’an TV. The Conference came in line with International Human Rights Day, which calls for respecting human rights, providing the highest levels of civil peace and achieving justice and fairness for citizens, and with the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence against Women.

The Conference focused on the continuation of the manifestations of violence and its synchronization with the political, social and economic conditions of the Palestinian society, contributed to creating an atmosphere harmful to social cohesion, in light of: (1) the occupation and its policies aimed at dismantling the structures of Palestinian society, (2) the internal political division and its repercussions at the national level, (3) the impact of traditional and tribal structures on civil peace, (4) the increase of violence and murder, the most prominent of which was the killing of the university student, Mahran Khalilia, at the Arab American University in Jenin, the spread of weapons in many universities of Palestine, along with the rape of the four-year-old girl in the city of Rafah, Gaza Strip, and (5) the loss of political prospects.

The participants further discussed the slow response of political will to confront the manifestations of this violence, the absence of legislations, the weakness of the judiciary and the failure of successive governments to confront violence, especially violence against women in Palestine. This is shown by the delay and procrastination in the ratification of the Family Protection Law or the amendment of the Palestinian Penal Code, which aim to intensify the penalties against perpetrators of societal violence.

National fragmentation in the Palestinian territories has weakened the role of law enforcement agencies in imposing the rule of law and encouraged the increase of tribal committees in circumstances that are not compatible with the rule of law, justice and the prosecution of violators. This indicates that the Israeli occupation is a factor in reinforcing lawlessness and chaos. In an attempt to contain chaos, it is through tribal committees which are far from civil values based on the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law.

The discussions of the three-day Conference concluded that the Palestinian society suffers from a state of great deterioration in all its political and social aspects, as the following: (1) the decline of civil values, such as the right to freedom of opinion and expression, (2) the transfer of power, (3) equality, justice, and the weakness of citizenship rights, (4) structural social and cultural gaps, (5) the absence of state authority at the expense of clan authority, (6) the weak influence of Palestinian political parties and movements and (7) the reflection of the Oslo Accords on the state's ability to impose security and the citizen's insecurity with high levels of fear and the loss of Palestinian social structures.



Over the course of three days, the participants discussed the role of civil, official and religious institutions in strengthening civil peace, the reality of democracy and public freedoms and the dangers of their regression to civil peace, and the risks of weak rule of law in C Areas.

In light of the participants' interventions, the Conference concluded the following recommendations:

1. On the level of the role of civil and official institutions:

- Reviving reconciliation on a practical basis, with the participation of all Palestinian national components, to develop a comprehensive national program.
- Separating between the work of the security services and political affiliation and building a security strategy
- Ensuring the independence of the judiciary, strengthening the judicial staff and resorting to alternative means, such as arbitration and mediation, to reduce the length of the litigation period.
- Inclusion of the concepts and values of civil peace in the Palestinian curricula.
- The need of conducting a national and societal dialogue to organize general elections, considering that general elections are one of the basic tools for strengthening civil peace and the rule of law.
- The need to launch a moderate religious discourse that contributes to deepening the concepts of civil peace, spreading security and safety in the Palestinian society. The need to refrain from generalizing partisan and political opinions in religious discourses and focus on what contributes to the exercise of freedoms in line with human rights.
- Including civil values in religious discourse by emphasizing the values of democracy, dignity and safety, and the importance of their implementation.
- Involving civil society organisations in the Supreme Council for Civil Peace, which was formed by the Council of Ministers to consolidate the values of civil peace.
- Strengthening dialogue as a means of consolidating the collective identity of Palestinians, civil peace and law enforcement to achieve partnership with official bodies in the state and various civil institutions.

2. On the level of strengthening the democratic environment and public freedoms:

- Preparing the Palestinian society to revitalize its democratic life by holding elections with the participation of all political and popular factions along with the supervision of civil society.
- Highlighting civil peace through the media, aiming to influence Palestinian public opinion.
- The need to activate the role of national institutions to address the imbalance that causes instability in the political and social spheres, emphasizing the need to achieve separation of powers in the political system.
- Integration between official and non-official institutions to address threats to civil peace, and create a national consensus in order to address the current situation that Palestinian society suffers from.
- Adoption of the law to obtain information and the promotion of critical thought, allowing the opportunity to obtain accurate information from its sources in order to avoid any defect in the information that poses a threat to the system of civil peace, freedoms and rights.



3. On the level of strengthening the rule of law in C Areas:

- Strengthening the concepts of human rights, democratic values and Palestinian laws amongst tribal reformers.
- Unification of legal construction in the Palestinian territories.
- Ensuring an equitable distribution of security forces in the Palestinian areas, especially in unstable areas, and providing the Palestinian police with additional security forces to enable them to impose security and safety.
- Inclusion of civil peace issues in police strategies.
- Emphasizing the cessation of practices related to collective punishment in cases of murder and the spread of violence, especially with regard to manifestations of collective punishment.
- Activating the Early Warning and Response System for Civil Society that supports the official institution in building its interventions and policies in areas outside the legal jurisdiction.
- Expedite the approval of the draft mediation agreement, and the amendments to the Palestinian Arbitration Law.

The Civil Coalition for Promoting Civil Peace and the Rule of Law Organisations: The Palestinian Association for Empowerment and Local Development—REFORM, the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy—MIFTAH, ACT institution for Studies and Alternative Means of Conflict Resolution, Human Rights and Democracy Media Center “SHAMS,” Palestinian Bar Association, Women’s Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling, Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies, Executive Office for Refugees in the West Bank, The Civil Commission for the independence of Judiciary and Rule of Law—ISTIQLAL, AI-DAMEER Association for Human Rights, Treatment and Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture, The Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution, Palestinian Youth Union, Ta’won For Conflict Resolution, Palestinian Association for Human Rights (Witness) and Raya News Network.