

## **The Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies**

**(CIHRS)** The Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS) is an independent non-governmental organization, established in 1994, working on promoting respect for values and principles of human rights and democracy in Egypt and the Arab region. It undertakes such mandate through publications, education, research and specialized studies. It also promotes coordination and networking among civil society associations, and assists in suggesting legislative and constitutional alternatives in cooperation with, and in favor of, the civil society and pro-democracy movements. The CIHRS works through various regional and international mechanisms on raising and identifying human rights issues, priorities and attitudes in the Arab world. It enjoys a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC) and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. It is also a member in the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN) and the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX).

### **CIHRS Programs:**

#### **Enhancing the role of civil society in the Arab world:**

This program aims at promoting cooperation with human rights NGOs, the human rights movement as a whole, and pro-democracy movements in the Arab world. This takes place through conducting activities with a view to impacting decision-making in Arab countries with regard to issues and challenges imposed by the human rights situation in the Arab world. Such activities are conducted through reinforced interaction with various regional and international human rights mechanism and systematic consultations on current issues through all available means. The latter includes organizing civil society forums parallel to official meetings and summits, presenting civil society recommendations before such meetings and endeavoring to represent civil society in an observer's capacity. This program also endeavors to engage in dialogue with various political and human rights actors on issues of political reform and democratic transformation. Finally, theoretical and applied researches and studies are conducted within the framework of the program on human rights-related problems in the region.

#### **Human rights education:**

This program aims at promoting human rights education and dissemination and developing means and methods of education about the universal standards of human rights and democracy. This takes place through conducting seminars and workshops for various sectors with special focus on young people. These seminars aim at providing young people with basic skills, and educating them about human rights' values and principles. They also aim at building the capacities of human rights NGOs' cadres and staff, and enabling them to make use of regional and international human rights mechanisms. The program also endeavors to integrate human rights principles in school and universities' curricula, and includes conducting research and studies on human rights-related issues in the Arab world.

### **Publications Unit:**

The Publications Unit reflects CIHRS' priorities and programs. It endeavors to add to the Arab literature specialized publications in human rights and democracy. It encourages female and male researchers in the Arab states to tackle human rights issues from various perspectives. This is meant to contribute to human rights education and dissemination and to provide alternatives and visions to improve the human rights situation in the Arab world. Since its establishment, the CIHRS has produced 200 books on democratic transformation; civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights; women's rights in the Arab world; Arab and religious-culture-related problematiqués; development of political and social movements; and the impact of Arab political changes on human rights. The Publications Unit also dedicates special attention to problems and challenges relating to human rights education; some intellectual and philosophical topics like the universality- specificity dichotomy, and the disparity between the current make-up of the Arab and popular culture on the one hand, and the international human rights law on the other hand.

### **Periodicals:**

**Rowaq Arabi:** A quarterly aiming at examining the Arab status quo from a human rights perspective and reviewing developments of the international human rights law. It seeks to explore and analyze problems facing promotion of human rights' principles and values in the Arab world.

**Sawasia bulletin:** A monthly bulletin covering the CIHRS' activities and programs in addition to information related to current discussions on human rights. It contributes to raising awareness about human rights among a wide range of readers.

### **CIHRS Library:**

The library constitutes an integral part of the CIHRS. It is considered one of the very few libraries specialized in human rights in Egypt and the Arab world. It includes a large number of books, periodicals and reference books in Arabic and English. Books in Arabic amount to 6000 books, whereas English books amount to 4000. The common theme of most books is human rights. However, the library also includes a large gamut of reference books in history; literature; economy; religious and political thinking; women and gender; and children, in addition to the CIHRS' publications.

**Adalah** is an independent human rights organization, registered in Israel. It is a non-profit, non-governmental, and non-partisan legal center. Established in November 1996, it serves Arab citizens of Israel, numbering over one million people or close to 20% of the population. Adalah ("Justice" in Arabic) works to protect human rights in general, and the rights of the Arab minority in particular.

Adalah's main goals are to achieve equal individual and collective rights for the Arab minority in Israel in different fields including land rights; civil and political rights; cultural, social, and economic rights; religious rights; women's rights; and prisoners' rights.

In order to achieve these goals, Adalah:

- Brings cases before Israeli courts and various state authorities regarding the rights of the Arab minority.
- Advocates for legislation that will ensure equal individual and collective rights for the Arab minority.
- Provides legal consultation to individuals, non-governmental organizations, and Arab institutions.
- Appeals to international institutions and forums in order to promote the rights of the Arab minority in particular, and human rights in general.
- Organizes study days, seminars, and workshops, and publishes reports on legal issues concerning the rights of the Arab minority in particular, and human rights in general.
- Trains stagiaires (legal apprentices), law students, and new Arab lawyers in the field of human rights.

## B'Tselem - The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories

B'TSELEM - The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories was established in 1989 by a group of prominent academics, attorneys, journalists, and Knesset members. It endeavors to document and educate the Israeli public and policymakers about human rights violations in the Occupied Territories, combat the phenomenon of denial prevalent among the Israeli public, and help create a human rights culture in Israel.

B'Tselem in Hebrew literally means "in the image of," and is also used as a synonym for human dignity. The word is taken from Genesis 1:27 "And God created humans in his image. In the image of God did He create him." It is in this spirit that the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "All human beings are born equal in dignity and rights."

As an Israeli human rights organization, B'Tselem acts primarily to change Israeli policy in the Occupied Territories and ensure that its government, which rules the Occupied Territories, protects the human rights of residents there and complies with its obligations under international law.

B'Tselem is independent and is funded by contributions from foundations in Israel, Europe, and North America that support human rights activity worldwide, and by private individuals in Israel and abroad.

B'Tselem has attained a prominent place among human rights organizations. In December, 1989 it received the Carter-Menil Award for Human Rights. Its reports have gained B'Tselem a reputation for accuracy, and the Israeli authorities relate to them seriously. B'Tselem ensures the reliability of information it publishes by conducting its own fieldwork and research, whose results are thoroughly cross-checked with relevant documents, official government sources, and information from other sources, among them Israeli, Palestinian, and other human rights organizations.

## Activities

[\(2003 Activity Report\)](#)

The focus on documentation reflects B'Tselem's objective of providing as much information as possible to the Israeli public, since information is indispensable to taking action and making choices. Readers of B'Tselem publications may decide to do nothing, but they cannot say, "We didn't know."

## Reports

B'Tselem has published scores of reports, some comprehensive in scope, covering most kinds of human rights violations that have occurred in the Occupied Territories. The reports have dealt, for example, with torture, fatal shootings by security forces, restriction on movement, expropriation of land and discrimination in planning and building in East Jerusalem, administrative detention, and settler violence.

Press conferences are often held when a new report is published. In addition, reports often lead to B'Tselem accompanying and assisting journalists reporting on human rights violations, and to other activities intended to affect public opinion in Israel.

### **Activity in the Knesset**

B'Tselem regularly provides Knesset members with information on human rights violations in the Occupied Territories, and injustices caused by Israeli authorities. Several Knesset members, from various factions, assist B'Tselem in placing human rights matters on the public agenda and in safeguarding human rights.

### **Public action**

B'Tselem has hundreds of supporters and volunteers who work to improve the human rights situation in the Occupied Territories. These activities include, in part, setting up information stands, distributing printed material, addressing problems and requests to decision-makers, and participating in protests in the Occupied Territories.

## **Mossawa, The Advocacy Center for Arab Citizens of Israel**

Mossawa, The Advocacy Center for Arab Citizens in Israel, was established in October of 1997 as a Non Governmental Organization. Mossawa works to promote equality for Arab/Palestinians within the borders of Israel.



Mossawa utilizes advocacy methods to change the social and political status of Arab/Palestinians in Israel in an attempt to gain minority recognition and rights, without sacrificing their national and cultural rights as Palestinians.

Mossawa cooperates with other NGO's, local councils, elected representatives of society, international and local human rights organizations, and embassies in an effort to achieve our set goals and establish a solid networking arena.

Mossawa's team and board are involved in every aspect of programming, including advocacy, analysis, outreach, public knowledge, social & political justice and change -- including the improvement of women's status in society. The activities that Mossawa implements focus on the empowerment of persons and organizations that cooperate to change the existing Palestinian situation.

Mossawa implements programs on several tiers:

- Social and economic justice for Arab citizens in Israel

- Protection of human rights and anti-racism work
- Political mobilization through advocacy for policy change
- Capacity building for Arab local councils and NGO's
- International advocacy and cooperation

The center publishes position papers and policy analysis and disseminates them to political and social activists.