NEWS RELEASE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

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UN Human Rights Office calls on Government to publicly condemn hate speech.

RAMALLAH – The UN Human Rights Office urges the State of Palestine to uphold its human rights obligations and to protect the rights of all Palestinians without discrimination, including discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

On 17 August the Palestinian Police published a statement banning all activities of the group "alQaws for Gender and Sexual Diversity in Palestinian Society" and calling on Palestinians to report to the Police their members and activists in order to be prosecuted. Such calls issued by public officials infringe on freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and create a climate of hostility and discrimination, where the rights to life and physical integrity of individuals are put at risk. The Office notes with deep concern that the Police statement was followed by thousands of hate messages on social media and threats, including incitement to violence and even death threats against persons perceived to be associated with alQaws.

While welcoming the decision of the Palestinian Police to withdraw the statement from the public domain, the Office calls on the Government to publicly condemn hate speech and incitement to violence, especially by public officials and members of the security forces.

It also urges the Government to take steps to ensure that all Palestinians, without discrimination, are protected from violence, and take steps to create a safe environment where all Palestinians can exercise their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

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The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been present in the occupied Palestinian territory since 1996 and has a mandate, among other things, to monitor and publicly report the human rights situation in the territory by all human rights duty bearers.
For media inquiries, contact OHHCR OPT (Ramallah): Tel: +972 2 296 5534, email: ohchr-opt@ohchr.org

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UCI Building, 4th Floor
Nizar Qabbani St., 17, Ramallah

www.ohchr.org
Email: ohchr-opt@ohchr.org
Tel: +972 (0)2 2965534