

Lawyers  
for justice  
Group



محامون  
من أجل العدالة  
مجموعة

# **Palestinian Social Movements Documentation Form**



**Movement Objecting to Judicial  
Authority Amendment**

## Section One: General Information

1. Name of Movement: Movement Objecting to Judicial Authority Amendments
2. Year of Establishment: 2020
3. Geographical Location / Spread: Ramallah and Al-Bireh Governorate - Occupied West Bank
4. Nature of the Movement (multiple options can be selected):
  - Legal
  - Human Rights-based
  - Union-related
5. Does the movement have an official name or slogan?

Yes, it is a series of movements organized by the Bar Association, known as the Movement Objecting to Judicial Authority Amendments.

## Section Two: Background and Founding

6. Drivers and context that launched the movement (event/crisis/issue/demand):

The Movement Objecting to Judicial Authority Amendments in Palestine was launched in response to a series of changes and measures undermining the independence of the judiciary and strengthening the executive branch's control over the judicial system.

These actions were seen as a public and civil rejection of attempts to undermine the separation of powers and threaten constitutional guarantees related to justice and judicial integrity.

The movement began after presidential decrees were issued regarding the formation of the Transitional High Judicial Council and major amendments to the Judicial Authority Law. These were viewed by legal experts and civil society organizations as violations of judicial independence and a direct threat to public trust in the Palestinian justice system.

7. Initiating body or founding groups (independents, activists, unions, institutions...):

Palestinian Bar Association, activists, and civil society organizations.

8. Organizational Structure (leadership, coordination, committees...):

There is no fixed structure; however, the movement is organized by the Bar Association whenever there is a reason to hold peaceful protests.

9. Decision-making mechanism within the movement:

Initiatives are proposed by members within the Bar Association, discussed, and adopted if there is consensus. The proposer is then tasked with following up on the initiative.

10. Is the movement officially registered?

No.

## Section Three: Objectives and Mission

11. Short-term Goals:

- Influence political decisions and amend them to reflect the needs of Palestinian society and ensure they do not violate individual rights.
- Protect citizens' rights and advocate for their needs, ensuring fair trials and timely access to justice.
- Long-term Goals:
  - Amend laws to align with legislative foundations and previous laws, uphold core legal principles, and guarantee judicial independence without violating constitutional rules.
  - Reinforce the rule of law and establish the judiciary's independence as a true guarantor of public rights and freedoms.

12. Movement's Mission/Vision:

13. Cancel or amend decisions that violate legal and constitutional guarantees.
14. Conduct thorough reviews of proposed or amended laws to ensure alignment with the current Palestinian legal framework.
15. Ensure legal amendments comply with the Palestinian Basic Law and international standards related to human rights and fair trials.
16. Involve legal experts and civil society organizations in legal discussions to avoid unilateral legislation.

17. Target groups (youth, women, workers, marginalized areas...):  
The general public.

## Section Four: Activities and Impact

18. Main types of activities:
- Protests / demonstrations
  - Bar Association strikes, which paralyzed the judicial system
  - Media campaigns
  - Community meetings and consultations
  - Advocacy and lobbying

19. Examples of notable activities conducted:

A. In 2021:

The Palestinian Authority issued a series of amendments to the Judicial Authority Law, widely criticized as unconstitutional and harmful to judicial independence. In response:

- Legal appeals were filed in relevant courts.
- Protests and sit-ins were organized in front of the High Judicial Council.
- Demands were submitted to the (inactive) Palestinian Legislative Council to review the amendments.
- The appointment of Issa Abu Sharar as Chief Justice was publicly opposed, citing legal and procedural violations.

Despite extensive activism and legal opposition, the authorities maintained their stance, and the amendments were not revoked. This eroded public trust in the justice system and raised concerns about the judiciary's independence.

- B. In 2022:

New amendments were issued—proposed by the High Judicial Council and endorsed by the Presidency—affecting:

- Criminal Procedure Law
- Execution Law
- Evidence Law

While the government justified these changes as efforts to “accelerate judicial procedures,” the Bar Association and civil society saw them as threats to fair trial principles and litigants’ rights.

In response, the Bar Association launched an open-ended strike lasting nearly five months, accompanied by dozens of protests across the West Bank. It became the largest legal/professional movement in the Palestinian judiciary’s history.

Under growing pressure, the authorities rescinded the contested amendments, marking a rare professional and civic victory.

C. In 2024:

The Palestinian Authority, again backed by the High Judicial Council, proposed further amendments to:

- Execution Law
- Civil Procedure Law
- Criminal Procedure Law

This time, however, the Bar Association was included in the consultation process, leading to consensus on most changes, especially those to the Execution and Civil Procedure Laws.

This was seen as a positive shift toward participatory lawmaking and underscored the role of legal and civil pressure in protecting rights and judicial independence.

## 20. Impact of the movement (local, national, media, legal...):

The movement significantly raised public and legal awareness and succeeded in building public opposition to legal amendments that compromised fair trial guarantees. It fostered a culture of civic oversight over legislation and reinforced the need for constitutional compliance in legal reforms.

21. Key achievements / changes accomplished:

- Some legal amendments—particularly those to the Criminal Procedure Law—were revoked due to incompatibility with fair trial standards.

## Section Five: Challenges and Sustainability

22. Main obstacles faced by the movement:

- Security interference: Security forces under the Palestinian Authority sought to obstruct and suppress the movement, particularly since it challenged executive overreach into the judiciary.
- Low participation: Although various unions, institutions, and individuals joined, engagement levels were not sufficient given the movement's goals. This was partly due to weak public trust in real change, compounded by persistent repression and lack of accountability.

23. Is the movement still active?

- No.

24. Are there efforts to reactivate it or transform it into ongoing initiatives?

- The movement functions as a responsive civic framework to exert pressure for legal reforms aligned with constitutional standards and human rights, particularly fair trial guarantees. It remains a flexible advocacy tool activated as needed.

## Section Six: Relations and Support

25. Does the movement have partnerships with local or international organizations?

- No formal partnerships, but general cooperation with local and international institutions exists.

26. Has the movement received any (financial/moral/technical) support from any party?

- No.

27. Has it faced rejection or attack from certain entities?

- Yes, the movement faced incitement and marginalization efforts during its active periods.

## Section Seven: Additional Information

- Name of form filler: Ammar Jamous
- Role in the movement: Active member and lawyer
- Contact Information (optional):
- Phone number: 0569338800