

convicted in a police disciplinary court, his rank was lowered, he was warned and fined. Ohion was sentenced by the court in Jerusalem to six months of public service, given a suspended sentence and ordered to pay NIS 2,000 in compensation to the victim. The suit filed by HaMoked in October 1997 on behalf of the complainant against the State and soldiers ended, as previously noted, in additional compensation of NIS 20,000.

Proposed Legislation to Deny Compensation to Palestinians

In addition to filing individual compensation suits, HaMoked continued its campaign against the proposed legislation to deny compensation to Palestinian victims of Israeli security force violence. The proposal, which passed its first reading in the Knesset in July 1997, would exempt the State, its security forces and all those acting on its behalf, from responsibility for injuries caused in the Occupied Territories. During 1998 there were several discussions of this proposal in the relevant Knesset committee. HaMoked, in the framework of a wide coalition of human rights organisations, succeeded in enlisting the assistance of international organisations, in addition to leading attorneys in Israel, in objecting to this law. This proposal was also condemned by the UN Committee for Human Rights. At the same time, much pressure was applied on the committee by the government to quickly move this proposal back to the Knesset for its second and third readings. The Minister of Justice Tsachi Hanegbi and Minister of Defence Yithak Mordechai themselves appeared before the committee to support this proposal. Despite the governmental pressure objections to this law arose in the committee, even among Knesset members from the conservative parties, and discussions were frozen.

Freedom of Movement

Entry to the Gaza Strip

In 1998 the Gaza Strip continued to be under a severe closure imposed by the Israeli authorities. The "safe passage" arrangements concluded in the Oslo Accords for movement between the West Bank and Gaza Strip have yet to be implemented, and there are no signs that this will occur soon. Exit from the Gaza Strip is most selective and limited: Many do not receive permits from Israel to exit, not even to Israel and East Jerusalem, and there is no entry into Gaza - not even for residents of Israel and East Jerusalem. Limited criteria permit a few visits to Gaza by first degree family members, although these visits entail a complex bureaucratic procedure. The intervention of HaMoked is required not only for exceptional cases, but also for the submission and follow-up on all individual requests. Thus, HaMoked is constantly advocating for a group of women, residents of Israel, who are married to residents of the Gaza Strip. These women receive three month permits to enter Gaza and when the permits are due to expire, HaMoked must recommence intensive advocacy with the Israeli authorities to permit these couples to continue their lives together.