**APF Chairperson statement on the death of Raafat Salha, ICHR Director**

The Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF) is deeply saddened by the death of Raafat Salha (Abu Mohammed), Director of the Gaza and North Office of the Palestine Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), an APF member.

Raafat died from injuries sustained during an Israeli airstrike on the Shahin family home in southern Deir Al-Balah, Gaza. The attack also resulted in the deaths of 13 members of his family, including his wife, Faten Shaqoura, and his children, Mohammed, Ahmad, Hala, and Saba.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is currently investigating war crimes allegedly committed by the Israeli military, including starvation, murder, deliberately targeting civilians, and persecution. The death of Raafat and his family highlights the crisis faced by Palestinian civilians from Israeli attacks. We call on the international community, particularly the ICC, to launch investigations into these crimes, hold those responsible accountable, and ensure the protection of civilians from further violence.

We also express hope for the current ceasefire agreement and the opportunity it presents to reduce violence and protect civilian lives. It is vital that this leads to meaningful dialogue and concrete steps towards peace and justice.

We offer our condolences to Raafat’s family, friends and colleagues. Raafat devoted his life to advocating for human rights and justice, and his loss is a significant tragedy for the ICHR and the Palestinian people.

Raafat’s work and commitment to human rights will continue to inspire our efforts in advocating for justice and accountability. We stand in solidarity with the ICHR and all who seek to defend the rights of individuals facing human rights violations.

*Samar Haj Hassan,*

**Chairperson, Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions**