

**BLACK YEAR FOR DEMOCRACY IN JORDAN  
THE 1998 PRESS AND PUBLICATION LAW**

**Report prepared by Ms Sa'eda Kilani with the support of ARTICLE 19; Centre for Media Freedom, Middle East and North Africa; the Committee to Protect Journalists; the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network; F.I.D.H.; Human Rights Watch; and Reporters sans Frontières.**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In November 1997, Jordan signed an Association Agreement with the European Union (EU). The signing took place in the spirit of the Barcelona Declaration of November 1995, which aims at fostering dialogue, peace, stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean region.

Article 2 of the Agreement states that all of its provisions shall be based on respect for democratic principles and fundamental human rights as set out in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which guides the Parties' internal and international policy and constitutes an essential element of the Agreement.

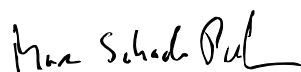
With the signing of the Agreement, Jordan strengthened its commitment to uphold universal human rights, as it had done previously when it ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which includes free expression guarantees enshrined in Article 19.

Jordan's enactment of the press and publications law on September 1, 1998, deeply concerns ARTICLE 19; Centre for Media Freedom, Middle East and North Africa; the Committee to Protect Journalists; the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network; Federation Internationale des Droits de l'Homme (F.I.D.H.); Human Rights Watch; and Reporters sans Frontières.

As Sa'eda Kilani's report amply documents, the law imposes a sweeping regime of censorship, grants the government extensive control over independent newspapers, allows the closure of newspapers for a variety of broadly-worded infringements and restricts the work of foreign and local research institutes and centres. Hence, it represents a serious setback for the protection and promotion of democracy and respect for human rights.

Sa'eda Kilani, a Jordanian writer and human rights activist, has entitled her report "Black Year for Democracy in Jordan". The report provides background on the Jordanian government's attitude towards the press, and gives a chronology of events for the past year. Finally, it lists key provisions in the Law. Sa'eda Kilani makes it clear that freedom of press and opinion has seriously deteriorated in Jordan. In the final paragraph of the report, Kilani offers a series of key concerns and recommendations specifically the need for Jordanian authorities to revoke the law.

On behalf of ARTICLE 19, Centre for Media Freedom, Middle East and North Africa, the Committee to Protect Journalists, the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, Federation Internationale des Droits de l'Homme (F.I.D.H.), Human Rights Watch, and Reporters sans Frontières.



Marc Schade-Poulsen  
Executive Director, EMHRN

## **2. BLACK YEAR FOR DEMOCRACY IN JORDAN, by Sa'eda Kilani**

On September 1, Jordan breached her international obligations and violated her own constitution and National Charter by promulgating a press law that severely restricts freedom of expression. The law grants authorities broad powers over the press, limits access to all types of printed information, and restricts the activities of independent research institutes.

Jordan is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and is bound by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as customary international law. Jordan is also a member of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership which has adopted the Barcelona Declaration. Despite these commitments, Jordan has failed to respect even basic standards of freedom of expression and the press as it prepares to close down newspapers and dismiss the chief editors of several newspapers, while further encouraging a regime of self-censorship among newspapers.

In January 1998, amendments to the 1993 Press and Publications Law (PPL) along the lines of the present law were ruled unconstitutional in a landmark decision of the High Court of Justice. Although the ruling was made on procedural grounds, it was generally viewed as a clear statement to the government that the law was unacceptable. Nonetheless, the government insisted on introducing the 1998 PPL which even represents a more repressive piece of legislation than the amendments that were struck down by the High Court. Indeed, the government has gone even further, dismissing the Head of the Judiciary Authority and censoring and harassing journalists who dared to criticise its undemocratic behaviour.

The government also ignored the persistent waves of local and international criticism of the law last year. Former prime ministers, former information ministers, and senators along with professional associations, political parties and prominent figures in Jordan voiced clear and unprecedented objection to the law. International organisations, such as the Committee to Protect Journalists, ARTICLE 19, Human Rights Watch, Fédération Internationale des Droits de l' Homme, and Reporters Sans Frontières also strongly condemned the law and appealed to the authorities to revoke it to no avail.

In August, 1998, the parliament passed the law, one of the most controversial bills in the country's history, in three weeks time. A royal decree was issued soon afterwards, on September 1, putting the law into effect. The promulgation of the 1998 press law had abruptly ended nine years of positive progress in the area of press freedoms.

### 3. MAIN OUTLINE OF THE LAW

The new press law, which was discussed and ratified by parliament last August, empowers the authorities to:

- Indefinitely close local publications deemed in violation of the law,
- Restrict the activities of foreign and local research centres in the country,
- Confiscate foreign publications.

\* The law severely limits the right of citizens to disseminate and obtain information, and imposes prior censorship on foreign publications entering Jordan. If it is strictly enforced, any offense by a journalist could cost the publication JD 10,000. In addition, courts overseeing litigation involving newspapers can, at their discretion, indefinitely close down newspapers.

\* According to the new law, private publications are required to secure a minimum capital of JD100,000 within a three-month period in order to publish - a sevenfold increase from the JD15,000 stipulated in the previous 1993 Press and Publications Law. And the right of journalists to legally challenge the government or the executive authority for misuse of power was cancelled in the law. The new law also fails to provide explicit guarantees against the use of pre-trial detention of journalists implicated in alleged publication offenses.

\* The law imposes a number of sweeping restrictions on the content of journalists' work by prohibiting the publication of any news or opinion that disparages the King or Royal Family; relates in any way to the Armed Forces unless authorised; fails to present news in an objective manner; insults the heads of Arab or friendly States; leads to moral corruption; undermines confidence in the national currency or incites public gatherings in violation of the law. Newspapers found to be in violation of any of these content bans face heavy fines and/or the possibility of closure.

\* Under the law, authorities can also confiscate foreign publications if they publish anything deemed to violate the above-mentioned content bans. The law also bans research centres from receiving local and foreign funding for joint research projects unless approved by the minister of information.

According to analysts, the new law is dangerous as it will:

- Protect corruption and deter coverage of sensitive political issues,
- Generate a loss of confidence in the policies of the regime which has pledged to promote democracy that was restored in 1989,
- Nurture suspicions about the work and funding of foreign institutes.

The government argued that the freedom allowed by the previous 1993 law had negatively affected the Kingdom's interests and policies, especially vis-a-vis the peace treaty with Israel and Jordan's relations with neighbouring Arab countries. It maintained that the private press engaged in constant criticism of the country's foreign policy that reflected badly on its foreign relations.

In fact, the private press had succeeded in:

- Stimulating free debate,
- Reflecting for the first time debate by proponents and opponents of peace with Israel,
- Breaking centuries-old taboos on subjects related to tradition, religion and culture in a tolerant atmosphere,
- Reinforcing the confidence and trust of Jordanians in their leadership.

The 1994 Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty was certainly a recurring subject addressed by the private press. To normalise or not to normalise relations with the Jewish state after almost 50 years of animosity was one topic that triggered creative writings and generated heated debate. But many disregarded the fact that Jordan for the first time witnessed audacious writings by advocates of both sides of the issue whose opinions would have never been tolerated had press freedom been absent and legal penalties more severe.

Unparalleled in Jordan and in many other Arab countries, debates on centuries-old taboos began to fill the front and inside pages of newspapers without the least embarrassment or fear. Tackling stories such as tribal retaliation (*lex talionis*), crimes of honour, child abuse, or even the sensitive Palestinian-Jordanian relationship became normal feature of weekly publications over a short span of time. Issues such as extremism, apostasy, polygamy and women's rights - whose mere mention was prohibited for the past ten centuries - were being discussed in a normal, healthy atmosphere.

The freedoms introduced over the last eight years, although limited, also helped to reinforce confidence in the regime. Certain foreign policies the regime had adopted might not have been popular but they won gradual acceptance during the democratic opening, were tolerated and even defended by the regime's opponents. Open debate about controversial issues related to culture, tradition and religion, the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty and the lifting of decades-old laws that characterise Israel as an enemy were met with fierce opposition, it is true. But this opposition was expressed in a democratic manner in Parliament. Islamist deputies, who led the opposition bloc, left one of the sessions in protest and abstained from voting in another session. But there were no devastating riots.

Ironically, the riots that threatened the country's security and stability erupted last February came in protest against the many restrictions imposed on public freedoms, including a ban on all demonstrations.

#### **4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PRESS**

After the law was endorsed in September, the government promised that it would work for the establishment of a higher council for the media and would, in the meantime, ensure a soft application of the law. It is still unclear how the government will apply such a repressive law in a "lenient" way. Newspapers are now dull, having adopted a stricter regime of self-censorship for fear of incurring the law's harsh penalties. Headlines, news and analysis tend to cover foreign issues rather than local ones. There appears to be less of a difference now between pro-government and opposition newspapers except for layout and presentation.

The chronology of events that led to the endorsement of the press law, and the measures the government adopted to curb press freedoms and endanger the democratic process, raise serious doubts as to the government's intentions.

On May 17, 1997, the government of former prime minister Abdul Salam Majali imposed amendments to the 1993 press law in a bid to control private newspapers prior to the November parliamentary elections. Efforts to introduce similar legislation began in 1995, several months after Jordan signed the treaty with Israel but successive governments either failed to issue such a law due to fierce opposition or on principle.

Under the Majali government the task was easier. It viewed the press, and the private press in particular, as a potential threat to the outcome of the parliamentary elections since it believed that independent newspapers would provide an unprecedented campaigning forum for opposition deputies.

The press amendments of May 1997 raised the minimum required capital for weekly newspapers from JD 15,000 in the 1993 press law to JD 300,000, a sum which was impossible for most of the weeklies to secure by the state-imposed deadline. The amendments also increased the penalties for violations. While fines in the previous law did not exceed JD 1,000, the temporary amendments set minimum fines at exorbitantly high levels of JD 15,000 and maximum fines at JD 50,000. The amendments, in conjunction with the 1993 PPL, established wide-ranging content bans, prohibiting any published material which offends the King or Royal Family; threatens national unity or violates general ethics, shows contempt for a recognised religion, refers to the armed forces, or insults the head of Arab or friendly countries.

The amendments, ratified by a Royal decree and introduced two months after Parliament went into recess, also allowed the government to keep its shares in daily newspapers, and increase the number of content-based restrictions on publications. Under the temporary law, the government provided a three-month grace period for newspapers to rectify their situation and increase their capital. All newspapers which failed to meet the set requirements were ordered suspended.

Tens of journalists were taken to court last year, many others were incarcerated, and still others lost their means of income. The law and its amendments of May 1997 led to the suspension of 13 newspapers in advance of the parliamentary elections in November 1997, the dismissal of the chief editor of a pro-government daily and the ban of prominent columnists from writing - in addition to the recurrent arbitrary confiscation of internationally recognised foreign publications. The Jordan Press Association (JPA), the country's only representative body of journalists, failed to protect its members under threat. And except for very rare cases, failed to defend their right to free expression.

Although the High Court declared the amendments unconstitutional in January 1998, the government insisted on re-introducing a similar law. In a threatening gesture on February 24, it forced the dismissal of the head of the Judiciary authority, Farouq Kilani, in apparent retaliation for his perceived role in the ruling. In a public speech two months later, King Hussein criticised the High Court's ruling and threatened that "such a precedent should not be repeated."

Publicly, the government argued that it was acting to protect the public from sensational journalism and sexually provocative material found in some weekly newspapers. In a tribal, traditional society like Jordan, it succeeded at the time in winning public sympathy, particularly from Islamists, in its struggle to end tabloid journalism.

In fact, the amendments of 1997 were not used to prosecute newspapers for publishing obscene photos or fabricated news as the government claimed, but were used instead, according to prominent figures including Islamic personalities, to suppress political opinions that opposed the government's policies.

## **5. CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS SINCE MAY LAST YEAR AND UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1, 1998**

\* May 19, 1997: Several Journalists are violently attacked by police during a peaceful demonstration held in front of the Council of Ministers headquarters, to protest the temporary press amendments introduced two days earlier. Some 50 journalists from the daily and weekly press attended the

demonstration.

\* June, 1997: Abed Rabbo, the only satirical weekly in Jordan and probably in the Arab world, was closed down because of what the publishers said was the lack of press freedoms. Another paper, Al Majd, a pro-Nasserite newspaper, closed shortly afterwards. It reappeared in December after it secured the JD 300,000.

\* Censorship of foreign publications and official pressures on newspapers editors increased during the months of September and October as the country was preparing for the Parliamentary elections that were scheduled for November 4, 1997:

\* September 23, 1997: The government suspends 13 weekly newspapers for failing to meet the new capital requirements stipulated under the press amendments. They include: As-Sayyad, Al Hayat, Al Bilad,, Sawt al Mar'a, Al Umma, Al Hadath, Hawadet Sa'ah, Al Mithaq, Al Urdun, Tareeq al Mustaqbal, Al Najm Al Arabi and Fares. The suspension decision left an estimated 200 employees, journalists and technicians unemployed.

\* September 1997: Several prominent writers in Ad Dustour daily, such as Rakan Majali and former deputy Toujan Faical, were suspended and others, such as Basem Sakijhah, were threatened following mounting government pressure on their chief editor, Nabil Sharif. As editor, Sharif had tackled controversial issues such as tribal traditions in Ad Dustour, providing a forum for opposing views on the subject. The government repeatedly expressed its objection to Ad-Dustour's editorial line and threatened to dismiss Sharif. In fact, Sharif was eventually dismissed and was replaced by his father. The newspaper subsequently abstained from publishing material related to tribal culture and traditions.

\* September 16, 1997: Suhair Tal, a prominent writer, novelist and researcher, was banned from writing in the press upon orders from the minister of Culture. The reason for the ban was a letter that Ms. Tal, head of the festivals section at the Ministry, wrote recommending that Jordan should not be participating in a conference on Jerusalem that was expected to take place in Paris.

\* October 1, 1997: Amman governor bans a conference for the Professional Associations in which they intended to express solidarity with the suspended weeklies.

\* October 1997: Nabil Sharif, a respected writer and chief editor of the second leading pro-government Ad-Dustour daily, was dismissed from his post for opening up his newspaper for debates on tribalism in Jordan. The government used a provision in the May amendments that stipulates that chief editors must be members of the Jordan Press Association for a minimum of ten years. Despite reconciliation efforts initiated by Ad-Dus-

tour newspaper, Nabil Sharif was replaced by his father Mahmoud Sharif, who pursues a more conservative editorial line.

\* October 1997: Columnists Abdul Rahim Malhas, a writer in the first daily Al Ra'i, and Basem Sakijhah, a columnist in Ad-Dustour, complained in their writings of the high level of censorship that their chief editors employed in their columns.

\* October 1997: The private-owned daily, al Arab Al Yawm complained of what it perceived as a government-led campaign against it. It said its reporters were banned from covering press conferences of the prime minister's; that its edition did not appear on Television as it is the case with all other dailies; and finally that the newspaper was not available to travellers boarding the Royal Jordanian flights.

\* During the months of October and November 1997 and until June of 1998, tens of copies of foreign publications were confiscated, namely, the London-based Al Hayat, Al Sharq al Awsat, Al Quds Al Arabi and the Lebanese daily An-Nahar. Two weeks before the parliamentary elections, an estimated 70 newspapers and magazines were confiscated by the Press and Publications Department.

\* November 1997: Head of the Press and Publications Department, Bilal Tal, asked for the dismissal of Taher Udwan, the chief editor of the private daily Al Arab Al Yawm. Tal claimed that Udwan did not have the ten year minimum experience in journalism as stipulated in the new amendments. It was only after a court ruling in his favor that Udwan retained his post.

\* December 1997: The Press and Publications Department confiscated Al Minbar Al Tullabi, a leaflet prepared by the Council of Students at the Jordan University. The Department said the leaflet was printed outside the university and had tackled issues that are not related to University life.

\* January 1998: Government bans newspapers from covering news related to a triple-homicide that occurred in Al Rabia district of Amman.

\* January 26, 1998: The High Court of Justice rules that the May 1997 amendments to the Press and Publication Law are unconstitutional.

\* January 1998: The government initially refuses to implement the court's ruling and orders the confiscation of Hawadeth As-Sa'ah weekly. The government accepted the ruling only later following mounting public pressures, but threatened to introduce a similar law that will be presented to Parliament.

\* January 1998: The government refused to give up or reduce its equity in newspapers as stipulated in the 1993 press law. It maintains 61% of

shares in Al Ra'i newspaper and 35% in Ad-Dustour.

\* February 24, 1998: The head of the Judiciary Council, Farouq Kilani was dismissed in apparent retaliation for the 26 January High Court ruling against the press amendments.

\* March 1998: Fakhri Ka'war and Muna Shuqair, prominent columnists at Al Ra'i daily, were suspended following government pressures exerted on Mahmoud Kayed, the Chairperson of the Jordan Press Foundation, which publishes the leading daily Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times.

\* March 2, 1998: Security agents detained Abdul Hadi Raji Majalli, editor in chief of the weekly Abed Rabbo, at his home, in response to a front-page photograph published in Abed Rabbo, which satirized Prime Minister Abdel Salam Majalli. Abdul Hadi Raji Majalli was held for five days without charge at General Intelligence in Amman.

\* March 2, 1998: Security agents detained Omar Qoulab and Sami Zubaidi, editors for Al-Bilad weekly, at the paper's office in response to an article published in the newspaper, which discussed former Prime Minister Abdel Karim Kabariti's alleged links to a Jordanian bank. Both men reportedly were held without charge by General Intelligence in Amman for five days.

\* March 7, 1998: Bassam Badareen, the Amman correspondent for the London-based daily Al-Quds al-Arabi was formally charged with "distorting Jordan's image abroad," harming state relations with a friendly country, and offending the state-charges criminalized under the penal code. The case against Badareen stems from a series of articles he wrote for Al-Quds al-Arabi in late 1997, dealing with such topics as tensions between the government and the Islamist opposition following its boycott of last November's parliamentary elections, and criticism of the Arab Israeli peace process. Badareen faces up to three years in prison if convicted of the charges.

\* March 16, 1998: the Court of First Instance convicted Raja Talab, editor in chief of the weekly Shihan; Riad Hroub, the paper's publisher; Riham Farra, a columnist; and Abdul Hadi Raji Majalli, a former editor, of defaming parliamentary deputy Muhammad Ra'fat. The four journalists were each sentenced to six months in prison and a fine of 1,000JD. The basis for the charge against them was an article and a cartoon published in Shihan in late 1997, which criticized Ra'fat for a visit he made to the Israeli Knesset. All four have appealed the court's decision.

\* March 19, 1998: In a letter to the Jordanian press, Press and Publications director Bilal al-Tal ordered newspapers not to publish any information about the case of opposition figure Leith Shubeilat, who has been

charged with inciting an illegal demonstration in the southern town of Ma'an in late February.

Authorities issued subsequent warnings after several newspapers ignored the media blackout and published criticisms of the ban. On March 26, Mr. al-Tal sent a second letter to newspapers, also with a letter from state security court prosecutor Mamoun Khaswaneh, reiterating the ban and warning that violators would be subject to prosecution. He sent a third letter on March 30, accompanied by a letter from Yousef al-Fa'oury, a military judge at the state security court, again warning publications against violating the ban.

\* April 10, 1998: Police stormed Al Arab Al Yawm private daily and banned it from covering news related to a murder in Rabia in Amman.

\* April 16, 1998: Chairperson of the Jordan Press Foundation, that publishes al Ra'i and the Jordan Times dailies, was replaced by Abdul Salam Tarawneh, a government representative.

\* June 1998: The government secretly prepares a draft press law similar to the amendments that were revoked by the Court and passed it on to parliament for endorsement and ratification. The draft law, once published, was met with harsh criticism from local and international organisations which described it a drawback against democracy that was restored in the Kingdom in 1989 after 25 years of martial law. The law restores the right of the government to suspend newspapers and imposes heavy penalties for journalists who violate its elastic content-bans.

\* June 2, 1998: the Amman Court of First Instance sentenced Nidal Mansour, editor-in-chief of the weekly "Al Hadath", to six months in prison. Mansour was charged under Jordan's penal code with harming the country's relations with a friendly state in connection with a 1994 article published in the weekly "Al-Bilad", which Mansour headed at the time as editor-in-chief. The article reported on allegations in Lebanon about the involvement of Lebanese parliamentarians and the son of President Elias Hrawi in narcotics trafficking. The story was widely reported in both the Lebanese and international media. Mansour is free pending the outcome of his appeal.

\* June 6, 1998: King Hussein orders an end to censorship of foreign publications entering the Kingdom. His directives goes unheeded as the Press and Publications Department continues its practice of confiscating publications.

\* June 29, 1998: Head of the Press and Publications Department, Bilal Tal, distributes a booklet to parliamentarians containing controversial articles excerpted from the private press in an effort to smear the weeklies. It was followed by a government campaign in the state-owned televi-

sion station against the tabloids and other weekly newspapers.

\* June 29, 1998: the Amman Court of First Instance sentenced writer Mansour Shamout to four months in prison for allegedly defaming the judicial authority in Jordan. The conviction stemmed from an article Shamout wrote in the March 4, 1998, edition of the independent daily Al-Arab al-Yawm titled "The Judiciary, al-Kilani, and the Minister of Justice." The article discussed the case of Farouq al-Kilani, head of the Judicial Council (JC) and the Court of Cassation, who was voted into early retirement in February by Council members. Shamout strongly criticized Minister of Justice Riad al-Shakaa, who had recommended that the JC take its action. Al-Kilani's "dismissal" was widely believed to have been triggered by his efforts toward comprehensive judicial reform in Jordan as well as his position in support of the Court of Cassation's ruling in January that struck down draconian temporary amendments to the Press and Publications Law.

\* June 30, 1998: Prince Hassan, the regent, recommends that the press should not be a mouthpiece for the government. His advice was not reflected in the spirit and the letter of the press law.

\* August 10, 1998: Parliament discusses and endorses the press law over a period of three weeks amid mounting public protests.

\* August, 1998: The press is ordered not to publish news on a water pollution crisis that shakes the country last summer until the state prosecution concludes its investigation.

\* September 1, 1998: A royal decree is issued endorsing the law.

## **6. KEY PROVISIONS IN THE LAW**

The National Guidance committee, which is entrusted with discussing the law at the Lower House of Parliament, met with specialists, ministers, human rights advocates and representatives of civil society institutions who expressed their utmost rejection of the law. Nevertheless, the House of Parliament insisted on endorsing the law which includes provisions deemed dangerous to the development of the democratic process in the Kingdom. The most important of these provisions include the following:

1) Article 10.c in the previous 1993 law which forced the government to divest of its equity to 30% in newspapers was cancelled in the new draft.

2) Article 13: The publication that seeks a licence must, with regard to its capital, meet the following conditions:

a: its paid-up capital must not be less than 500,000 dinars if it is a daily.

b: its paid-up capital must not be less than 100,000 dinars if it is not a daily.

**3) Article 37.a.** It is prohibited for the printing press to publish the following in any form:

i) What disparages the King and the Royal family.

ii) Any information on the number of the Jordanian Armed Forces or their weapons, hardware, locations, and movements unless the publication of such information has been authorized by a responsible authority in the Jordanian Armed Forces; or any report, picture, or commentary that is harmful to the Armed Forces or security organs.

iii) What infringes on the judiciary or undermines its independence.

iv) What contains any contempt or harm to any of the religions and denominations whose freedom is guaranteed under the Constitution.

v) What harms national unity, incites crime, provokes grudges, or sows the seeds of hatred, divisions, and estrangement among the members of the community.

v) What harms the dignity, personal freedoms, or reputation of individuals.

vii) Articles or reports containing personal insult to the heads of Arab, Islamic, or friendly states, or the heads and members of diplomatic missions accredited to the Kingdom, provided that the principle of reciprocity is observed.

viii) What encourages perversion or lead to moral corruption.

ix) What contains false information or rumours.

x) What contains the proceedings of the secret sessions of the parliament without prior permission.

xi) State secrets and documents that are protected under the provisions of the law.

xii) What leads to shaking confidence in the national currency.

xiii) Advertisements promoting medicine and medical supplies whose publication is not authorized by the Health Ministry.

xiv) All that incites strikes, sit-ins, or public gatherings in violation of the provisions of the law.

**4) Article 37.B:** The entry of foreign publications containing material whose

dissemination is banned under the provisions of this law shall not be allowed into the country.

5) Article 38: Reproduced or quoted press material shall be treated as authored or original material.

6) Article 39: A. The publication is prohibited from publishing anything pertaining to any stage of the investigation into any case or crime in the Kingdom, unless it has been authorized by the public prosecution.

7) Article 39.B. It is prohibited to publish the minutes or deliberations of the courts in any case that is still under consideration and before the final sentence has been announced, except with the permission of the court.

8) Article 41: Studies and research centres, polling centres can not accept by virtue of their work any financial aid or grant or any financing from a Jordanian or non-Jordanian party. Funding for joint projects and researches that are approved by the minister of information are excluded.

9) Article 47.c: If the periodical publishes any material violating any provision of articles 37 and 39 of this law, it shall be penalised by a fine of not less than 5,000 and not more than 10,000 dinars. Paying the fine shall not prevent the prosecution of the responsible one according to the valid provisions of the law.

10) Article 50: The court shall decide to suspend the issuance of the publication while looking into a case for any period of time it deems fit if it finds that serves public interest and national security.

11) Article 51: Publications should rectify their situation, i.e.: increase the minimum capital from 15,000 to 100,000 dinars and employ new chief editors according to the new regulations within three months of the endorsement of the law.

## **7. KEY CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations:

1. The 1998 press and publications law should be repealed.
2. All existing forms of censorship on journalists and newspapers should be lifted.
3. Jordan should introduce new legislation that ensures the right to freedom of expression. The legislation should be free of sweeping, vaguely worded censorship provisions that place in jeopardy the exercise of the right of free expression.

Proposed new legislation should not include:

- \* the licensing regime for newspapers, other media, and research centres that restricts press freedom or the free flow of information;
- \* restrictions on who may practise journalism or occupy positions in the media or research centres;
- \* restrictions on the content of what may be published which do not meet the strict standards established under international law;
- \* imposition of unwarranted restrictions on the activities and operations of independent non-governmental organisations, including research institutes;
- \* prior censorship of domestic and foreign publications
- \* pre-trial detention of journalists for their professional activities

4. Independence of the judiciary should be respected; judges should never be subjected to political sanction or dismissal for their professional activities.

5. Practices aimed at intimidating journalists and other media workers by government officials and other public figures should cease.

6. The government should divest itself of its monopoly over radio and television and renew its commitment in the 1993 Press and Publications Law to reduce its ownership of the print media.

7. Immediate steps should be taken to ratify the (first) Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

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Signatories to the document urge the EU and its member states to take the following measures:

1. EU officials should communicate concern about the pattern of restrictions on freedom of expression in Jordan in bilateral and multilateral meetings with Jordanian government officials.

2. EU officials should urge that the press and publications law be repealed and replaced with legislation in conformity with the free expression standards of Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

3. Until the law is repealed, EU officials should closely monitor developments in Jordan that unnecessarily restrict freedom of expression, communicate concerns directly to Jordanian government officials, and make such demarches public.

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## Appendix a: ADDITIONAL READINGS

- 1998 Memorandum by ARTICLE 19, International Centre Against Censorship on Jordan s Proposed 1998 Press and Publications Law.
- 1998 Jordanie: la liberté de la presse en péril, La lettre hebdomadaire de la FIDH, no. 753-755.
- 1998 Jordan Reins in the Press, Committee to Protect Journalists.
- 1997 Blaming the Press: Jordan s Democratisation Process in Crisis. ARTICLE 19.
- 1997 A death knell for free expression? The New Amendments to the Press and Publications Law. Human Rights Watch.

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## **Appendix b: NOTE ON THE AUTHOR**

Sa'eda Kilani, is a Jordanian writer, journalist, and investigative reporter. She has worked extensively on issues related to press freedoms, human rights, women, Islamist movements, the Jordanian Parliament, and Jordanian political parties.

She has previously worked as a senior reporter for Jordan Times, columnist at the Star-Jordan, reporter for CBS and Canal +, and researcher at Al Urdun al Jedid Research Centre. She has lectured, written, edited and co-edited several booklets within her field of interest.

In 1997 she wrote a book-report on Press Freedoms entitled Blaming the Press, published by the London-based ARTICLE 19. Since 1996, she is correspondent for Reporters Sans Frontières. She is also a founding member of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network.

Sa' eda Kilani is currently working on a new research centre on human rights as well as on a book on the influence of tribal traditions on press freedoms.

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## **Appendix c: TRANSLATION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLICATION LAW** **prepared by Sa'eda Kilani**

Following is an unofficial translation of the Jordanian Press and Publications Law of 1998, as published in the Official Gazette on 1 September 1998.

### Article 1

This law shall be called "The Press and Publications Law of 1998." It shall come into force as of the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

### Article 2

Wherever they occur in this law, the following words and terms shall have the meanings stated hereunder, unless the context indicates otherwise:

- \* Ministry: The Ministry of Information.
- \* Minister: The Minister of Information.
- \* Department: The Press and Publications Department.
- \* Director: The Director General of the Department.
- \* Association: The Jordan Press Association.
- \* Person: The natural or corporate person.
- \* Publication: Any media in which meanings, words, or ideas are expressed in any way whatsoever.
- \* Periodical: A specialized press publication of all types that is issued regularly and includes:
  - A. Press publication, including:
    - i) Daily publication: A publication issued daily and regularly under a certain name and serial number and is prepared for distribution to the public.
    - ii) Non-daily publication: A publication issued weekly or at longer intervals, and is prepared for distribution to the public.
  - B. Specialized publication: A publication specialized in a specific area and is prepared for distribution as stipulated in its issuance license.
  - C. News agency bulletin: A bulletin that is prepared to provide press institutions with news, information, articles, pictures, and drawings.
- \* Journalism: The profession of preparing, editing, and issuing, and distributing press publications.
- \* Journalist: Every person registered as member of the Jordan Press Association and takes journalism as a profession in foreign press, and other news media
- correspondent: Every person, of any nationality who practices journalism by dealing with non-Jordanian publications and other news media.
- \* Printing Press: The place and equipment used to produce publications of various types, forms, and in all their stages. This definition does not include printing machines, typewriters, photocopiers and photographic equipment used for purposes other than publication.
- \* Publishing house: An institution undertaking the preparation, production, and the sale of publications.
- \* Distributing house: An institution undertaking the distribution or sale of publications.
- \* Publishing and distributing house: An institution undertaking the work of the publishing house, and the distributing house at the same time.
- \* Bookstore: A commercial enterprise licensed to sell books, stationery, newspapers, magazines, and other publications.
- \* Studies and research centre: An institution that conducts or publishes studies and research and gives advice in political, social, cultural, economic, humanitarian, and

other areas.

\* Public opinion polling centre: An institution in charge of conducting research with the aim of surveying public opinion trends on any specific subject through questionnaires and other methods.

\* Translation house: An institution undertaking translation from one language into another, including simultaneous translation.

\* Publicity and advertising agency: A bureau undertaking advertisement and publicity, producing their materials and publishing or transmitting them by any means.

### Article 3

The press is free and freedom of opinion is guaranteed to every Jordanian. Jordanians have the right to express their opinion freely through speech, writing, photography, drawing, and all other means of expression and information.

### Article 4

The press shall freely exercise its task of presenting news, information, and commentaries and shall contribute to the dissemination of thought, culture, and science within the limits of the law and within the framework of preserving public liberties, rights and duties as well as respecting the private life of others.

### Article 5

Publications shall respect the truth and refrain from publishing anything that conflicts with the principles of freedom, national responsibility, human rights, and values of the Arab and Islamic nation.

### Article 6

Freedom of the press shall include:

- A. Informing citizens of events, ideas, and information in all fields.
- B. Enabling citizens, parties, unions, and cultural, social and economic institutions to express their thoughts, opinions, and accomplishments.
- C. Obtaining information, news, and statistical reports of concern to the citizen from the various sources, and analysing, circulating, publishing, and commenting on them.
- D. The press publication and the journalist have the right to keep secret the sources of their information and news unless the court decides otherwise while investigating lawsuits in order to protect state security, prevent crime, or enforce justice.

### Article 7

The code and ethics of journalism are binding on the journalist. They include:

- A. Respecting public liberties, safeguarding the rights of others, and refraining from encroaching on their private life.
- B. Considering the freedom of thought, opinion, expression, and access to information an equal right for the press and the citizen.
- C. Maintaining balance, objectivity, and honesty in presenting press material.
- D. Refraining from publishing anything that might incite violence or discord among citizens.

### Article 8

Official agencies shall allow journalists to get acquainted with their programs, projects, and plans, and facilitate the task of the Jordanian Studies and Research

Center.

#### Article 9

- A. The correspondent of foreign periodicals and other news media should be a Jordanian, Arab, or foreign journalist allowed by the Press Association Council to perform that job with the approval of the minister.
- B. Accrediting foreign news media correspondents shall be organized in accordance with regulations issued for this purpose.
- C. The journalist is prohibited from committing himself to any work relationship with any foreign quarter contrary to the regulations stipulated in paragraph B of this article.

#### Article 10

It is impermissible for any person who is not a journalist to practice journalism in any form, including corresponding with foreign press and other news media, or presenting himself as a journalist. This shall not apply to persons whose work is confined to writing articles.

#### Article 11

- A. Every Jordanian and every company owned by Jordanians shall have the right to issue a press publication.
- B. Every registered Jordanian political party shall have the right to issue its press publications.
- C. The Council of Ministers, at the recommendation of the Minister, shall grant a license to the following quarters for the issuance of publications:
  - i) The Jordanian News Agency.
  - ii) A non-Jordanian news agency, provided that the principle of reciprocity is observed.

#### Article 12

The application for obtaining a license to issue a press publication shall be submitted to the minister, enclosing the following documents:

- A. The name of the applicant, his place of residence, and address.
- B. The name of the publication and its printing and issuance place.
- C. The times of its issuance.
- D. Its specialization.
- E. The language or languages in which it is published.
- F. The name of its responsible chief editor.

#### Article 13

Notwithstanding the provisions of any other legislation, the press publication seeking a license must, with regard to its capital, meet the following conditions:

- A. Its paid-up capital must not be less than 500,000 dinars, if it is a daily.
- B. Its paid-up capital must not be less than 100,000 dinars, if it is not a daily.
- C. Its paid-up capital must not be less than 5,000 dinars, if it is a specialized publication.
- D. A daily or non-daily published by a potential party is exempt of the minimum capital stipulated in Paragraph A and B of this article.

#### Article 14

Specialized publications issued by ministers, official departments, universities, and general-welfare private institutions, at the recommendation of the minister, shall be exempted from the capital stipulated in Article 13 of this law.

#### Article 15

A. The application for the license to establish a printing press, a publishing house, a distributing house, a studies and research centre, a public opinion polling centre, a translation house, or a publicity and advertising agency shall be submitted to the Minister, using the form that has been prepared for this purpose.

B. The statements and procedures for submitting an application to obtain a license, which is stipulated in Paragraph A of this article, including introducing any changes or amendments to the contents of the license, as well as the procedures for giving up the license, shall be specified in the regulations which will be issued under this law.

#### Article 16

Each institution mentioned in Article 15 of this law shall have a responsible director who must meet the following conditions:

A. He must be Jordanian and permanent resident of the Kingdom.

B. He must not have been convicted of a crime or misdemeanour violating honour or morality.

C. He must be a full-time employee. It is impermissible for any person to serve as responsible director for more than one institution.

D. He must have acquired the academic qualifications, expertise, and experience that are appropriate for the work in the institution he will run, in accordance with the instructions issued by the minister for this purpose.

#### Article 17

A: The cabinet shall, at the recommendation of the minister, issue its decision on the application for licensing the press publication within a period of not more than 30 days as of the date of submitting the application. The applicant shall be informed of the decision within 15 days of its issuance at the latest.

B. The minister shall issue his decision on the application for licensing a specialized publication or any of the institutions mentioned in Article 15 of this law within 30 days from the date of its submission. The applicant shall be informed of the decision within 15 days of its issuance at the latest.

#### Article 18

In consideration of conditions stipulated in this law, a license is granted for a press publication to the owner, who can transfer this license in part or whole to others on condition that the Council of Ministers' prior permission is obtained in accordance with the following:

A. That the party wishing to cede ownership and the new recipient inform the minister 30 days in advance of the transfer.

B. The recipient of the license prescribes to the conditions of this law, allowing partial or whole ownership of the publication.

C. The two parties submit a copy of the concession agreement registered at the official quarters to the department.

D. Selling people's shares in public share-holding companies issuing press publications shall be exempted from the provisions of this article.

#### Article 19

A. The license of a publication is deemed cancelled by law under the following conditions:

- i) If it was not published within six months from the date of obtaining the license.
- ii) If the daily stopped publication for three consecutive months.
- iii) If the non-daily, which is published regularly once a week, stopped publication for 12 consecutive issues.
- iv) If the non-daily, which is published regularly within an interval of more than one week, stopped publication for four consecutive issues.
- v) If its proprietor concedes it wholly or partially, contrary to the provisions of Article 18 of this law.
- vi) If the conditions for its licensing have been violated, such as its specialization, without the prior approval of the Minister, provided that it has already been warned twice due to its violation of these terms.

B. The press publications issued by the registered political parties shall be exempted from the terms stipulated in Paragraph A of this article.

#### Article 20

A. For revenue, the periodical or specialized publication must depend on legitimate sources. It is prohibited from receiving any financial support from any foreign state or quarter.

B. The proprietor of the press or specialized publication must provide the minister with a copy of its annual budget and reports on its revenues, sources of finance, and financial status during the first four months of the next year.

#### Article 21

The proprietor of a press or specialized publication must meet the following conditions:

- A. He must be a Jordanian or a company owned by Jordanians or a registered Jordanian political party.
- B. He must not have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanour violating honour or morality.

#### Article 22

The proprietor of the press publication shall publish very clearly in a prominent place in the publication his name, the name of its responsible chief editor, the place and date of its issuance, the subscription rate in it, and the name of printing press in which it is printed. He shall also inform the director of any change or amendment in that information within 15 days from the date of that change or amendment.

#### Article 23

A. Every press publication must have a responsible chief editor who must meet the following conditions:

- i) He must be a journalist.
- ii) He must be Jordanian and permanent resident of the Kingdom.
- iii) He must have worked as a full-time journalist for a period of not less than 8 years and must have been a member of the Press Association for not less than three years.
- iv) He must not be responsible chief editor in another publication.

v) He must be fluent in the language of the publication in which he serves as responsible chief editor, both reading and writing. If the publication is issued in more than one language, he must be fluent in the main language of the publication and adequately conversant with the other languages.

vi) He must not have been banned by court from practising journalism.

B. The provisions of Paragraph A of this article shall apply to the responsible chief editor of the publication which is published by a political party, with the exception of the provisions of Clauses i and iii.

C. The chief editor is responsible for what is published in the publication he heads. He, together with the writer of an article published in his paper, shall be held responsible for that article.

D. It is impermissible for the periodical to have more than one chief editor.

#### Article 24

A. The responsible chief editor in the press publication shall lose this capacity under any of the following situations:

i) Resignation.

ii) If he fails to meet any of the conditions stipulated in Article 23 of this law.

B. When the responsible chief editor's post becomes vacant or when the responsible chief editor is absent for any reason, the proprietor of the publication shall appoint a caretaker qualified to perform the chief editor's work for no more than two months and notify the director of this. If the responsible chief editor does not return to work within that period of time, the proprietor must appoint a new responsible chief editor. Otherwise, the minister shall issue a decision suspending the publication until this is done.

C. The proprietor or publisher of the press publication shall be fully responsible for what it publishes until the new responsible chief editor assumes his work.

#### Article 25

Every specialized publication must have a responsible chief editor who must fulfill the following conditions:

1. He must be Jordanian.

2. He must have acquired an academic qualification that is directly pertinent to the publication's field of specialization, or has certified experience of not less than five years in that field that can be accepted by the Minister upon the recommendation of the Director.

3. He must not have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanour violating honour or morality.

#### Article 26

A. It is prohibited for a specialized publication to write on any field other than the licensed

one or to change the field of its specialization without the prior approval of the minister, upon the recommendation of the Director.

B. Every specialized publication shall provide the Department with three copies of every issue.

#### Article 27

A. If the press publication publish an incorrect report or article that contained incorrect information, the person affected by the report or article has the right to reply to the report or article, or demand its correction. The responsible chief editor is

duty-bound to publish the reply or correction free of charge in the following issue and in the same place and with the same print in which the original report or article was published in the press publication.

B. If the press publication published an incorrect report or an article containing incorrect information affecting the public interest, the responsible chief editor must publish, free of charge, the written reply or correction which he receives from the competent quarter of the Director in the following issue and in the same place and print in which the original report or article appeared in the press publication.

C. The provisions of Paragraph A and B of this article shall also apply to any foreign press publication distributed in the Kingdom.

#### Article 28

The responsible chief editor of the press publication may refuse to publish the reply or correction which he received according to Article 27 of this law under any of the following conditions:

A. If the press publication had already corrected the report or article in an accurate and adequate manner before receiving the reply or correction.

B. If the reply or correction carried a pseudonym signature or was sent by an unconcerned quarter or was written in a language different from the one in which the report or article was written.

C. If the contents of the reply or correction were contrary to the law, public order, and public morals.

D. If received two months after the publication of the news report or article.

#### Article 29

If the party responsible for any foreign publication distributed in the Kingdom declines to publish the reply or the correction in accordance with the Provisions of Article 27 of this law, the Director has the right to ban the entry of the publication into the Kingdom for a maximum of two weeks. The Minister may extend the ban for a longer period upon the recommendation of the Director.

#### Article 30

A. It is impermissible for the chief editor to publish an article for any person under a pseudonym unless its writer has supplied him with his real name.

B. If a publication published a press report for any quarter against a fee, the publication must mention clearly and frankly that this is an advertisement.

#### Article 31

A. The proprietor of a distributing or publishing house must submit to the director two copies of each publication he imports from outside the Kingdom for his approval before distributing or selling them.

B. The Director may ban the entry of the publication into the country if it contains anything contrary to the provisions of this law.

#### Article 32

Each publication shall carry the name of its writer and publisher and their addresses, the printing press in which it is printed, and the date of its printing.

#### Article 33

The provisions of this law on banned import of publications do not apply to the copies that are obtained by government institutions, universities, and scientific

research centres, provided prior approval for their importation is obtained from the Director. These copies shall be put in special places for the sake of academic research.

#### Article 34

The proprietor or responsible manager of the printing press must observe the following:

- A. Keep a record of the names of the periodicals and the number of issues that are printed from each publication.
- B. Keep a record, in an alphabetical order, of the titles of the books that are printed and the names of their authors, as well as the number of issues that are printed from each book.
- C. Produce these records to the manager or his deputy when requested.
- D. Deposit with the department two copies of each non-periodical printed in his printing press before its distribution.

#### Article 35

A. Whoever wishes to print a book in the Kingdom must submit two copies of the manuscript of this book to the department before printing it. The Director may allow or disallow

its printing if the book contains anything that conflicts with the law, provided he communicates his decision to the author of the book within one month from the date of its submission.

B. The Director may cancel the license given to any book or manuscript if its author violates any condition of the license by adding or deleting anything. The director may also confiscate all issues.

#### Article 36

A. It is prohibited for the proprietor or the responsible manager of a printing press to print any publication whose printing, publication, distribution, circulation, or sale has been banned, or print any publication whose issuance or distribution has not been authorized.

B. It is prohibited to print any book, leaflet, or material without obtaining a written authorization from its original owner.

#### Article 37

A. It is prohibited for the printing press to publish the following in any form:

- i) What disparages the King and the Royal family.
- ii) Any information on the number of the Jordanian Armed Forces or their weapons, hardware, locations, and movements unless the publication of such information has been authorized by a responsible authority in the Jordanian Armed Forces; or any report, picture, or commentary that is harmful to the Armed Forces or security organs.
- iii) What infringes on the judiciary or undermines its independence.
- iv) What contains any contempt or harm to any of the religions and denominations whose freedom is guaranteed under the Constitution.
- v) What harms national unity, incites crime, provokes grudges, or sows the seeds of hatred, divisions, and estrangement among the members of the community.
- v) What harms the dignity, personal freedoms, or reputation of individuals.
- vii) Articles or reports containing personal insult to the heads of Arab, Islamic, or friendly states, or the heads and members of diplomatic missions accredited to the

Kingdom, provided that the principle of reciprocity is observed.

- viii) What encourages perversion or lead to moral corruption.
- ix) What contains false information or rumours.
- x) What contains the proceedings of the secret sessions of the parliament without prior permission.
- xi) State secrets and documents that are protected under the provisions of the law.
- xii) What leads to shaking confidence in the national currency.
- xiii) Advertisements promoting medicine and medical supplies whose publication is not authorized by the Health Ministry.
- xiv) All that incites strikes, sit-ins, or public gatherings in violation of the provisions of the law.

B. The entry of foreign publications containing material whose dissemination is banned under the provisions of this law shall not be allowed into the country.

#### Article 38

Reproduced or quoted press material shall be treated as authored or original material.

#### Article 39

A. The publication is prohibited from publishing anything pertaining to any stage of the investigation into any case or crime in the Kingdom, unless it has been authorized by the public prosecution.

B. It is prohibited to publish the minutes or deliberations of the courts in any case that is still under consideration and before the final sentence has been announced, except with the permission of the court.

C. The provisions of Paragraph A of this article shall apply to foreign news media correspondents. They shall be subject to the penalties stipulated in Paragraph C of Article 47 of this law.

#### Article 40

The proprietor, chief editor, managing editor, journalist, or regular writer of any press publication is prohibited from receiving or accepting, by virtue of his ownership of, or association and relationship with that publication, any financial aid or grant from any Jordanian or non-Jordanian quarter.

#### Article 41

Studies and research centres, public opinion polling centres, or anyone working in them are prohibited from receiving or accepting, by virtue of their work, any financial aid or grant or any financing from a Jordanian or non-Jordanian quarter. This does not include the financing of joints ventures, studies, or research approved by the Minister.

#### Article 42

A. The Court of First Instance shall look into all crimes that are committed contrary to the provisions of this law, and shall give precedence to all press cases.

B. A lawsuit in the case of periodicals' violations shall be filed against the responsible chief editor of the publication, the writer, or the person who prepared the material in it in their capacity as the initiators. The owner of the publication shall be responsible collectively and equally for the personal rights stemming from those crimes as well as the court expenses. He will not be held responsible unless his

actual participation or involvement in the crime is proven.

C. A lawsuit in the case of crimes by non-periodicals shall be filed against their author as the initiator and the publisher as the accomplice. If the author or publisher of the publication is unknown, both the proprietor and the manager of the printing press shall be prosecuted under the criminal law.

#### Article 43

The prosecutor general shall investigate any violation of the provisions of this law upon his own initiative or according to a notification from the director or official quarter or a complaint filed by the person harmed from that violation.

#### Article 44

The proprietors of printing presses, publishing and distributing houses, studies and research centres, and public opinion polling centres are considered responsible for personal rights and court expenses resulting from sentences issued against their employees in publication cases which are subject to the provisions of this law.

#### Article 45

The court which issues the sentence may order the convicted party to publish the text or the summary of the final sentence free of charge in the first issue of the periodical that follows the announcement of the sentence, and also in the same place and with the same print where the contested article was published. The court may, if necessary, order the publication of the text or the summary of the sentence in two other papers at the expense of the convicted party.

#### Article 46

A. If the responsible chief editor of the press publication violates any provision of Paragraphs A and B of Article 27 of this law, the lawsuit shall be filed against him by the aggrieved party or the director.

B. If a foreign publication violates the provisions of Paragraph C of Article 27 of this law, the lawsuit against it shall be filed by the director.

#### Article 47

A. If the publication violates the provisions of Paragraph A of Article 20 of this law, or if any of those mentioned in Articles 40 and 41 of this law violate the provisions of these two articles, they shall be penalized by a fine of not less than double the amount of money received.

B. If the proprietor of the periodical fails to implement the provisions of Paragraph B of Article 20, he shall be penalized by a fine of not more than 500 dinars. If failure persists, the Court shall suspend the issuance of the publication for any period of time it deems fit.

C. If the periodical publishes any material violating any provision of Articles 37 and 39 of this law, it shall be penalized by a fine of not less than 5,000 dinars and not more than 10,000 dinars. Paying the fine shall not prevent the prosecution of the responsible one according to the valid provisions of the law.

D. The maximum fine shall be doubled if the violations mentioned in Paragraphs A, B, and C of this article are repeated.

#### Article 48

A. If the convicted party violates the provisions of Article 45 of this law, he shall be

penalized by a fine of not less than 100 dinars and not more than 1,000 dinars. The sentence shall be published at his expense.

B. Whoever brings a publication into the Kingdom in an illegal manner and helps in its distribution shall be penalized by a fine of not more than 1,000 dinars. This is in addition to confiscating the issues of the publication.

C. Whoever violates the provisions of this law, where penalties are not stated, shall be penalized by a fine of not more than 1,000 dinars.

Article 49

Whoever issues a periodical or runs any of the institutions mentioned in Paragraph A of Article 15 of this law without obtaining a license shall be penalized by a fine of not less than 5,000 dinars and not more than 10,000 dinars.

Article 50

The court shall decide to suspend the issuance of the publication, while looking into the case for any period of time it deems fit, if it finds that this is in the interest of public welfare and national security.

Article 51

A. The proprietor of every periodical that is subject to the provisions of this law must adjust his conditions according to the provisions of this law within 90 days from the date of the enforcement of this law.

B. The issuance of any press publication which fails to adjust its conditions under Paragraph A of this article shall be suspended. Its license shall be revoked if its conditions continue to be unadjusted for a period of 90 days after its suspension.

C. If any of the institutions mentioned in Article 15 of this law fails to meet any of its licensing conditions, the Director shall ask it to adjust its conditions within 90 days. Otherwise, he will order it closed. If it continues to be closed for 90 days without adjusting its conditions, its license shall be deemed revoked.

D. The institutions mentioned in Article 15 of this law shall adjust their conditions in accordance with its provisions within a period of not more than 90 days as of the date of its enforcement.

Article 52

The cabinet shall issue the necessary regulations for the implementation of this law, including specification of the fees which will be charged by the department in the application of this law.

Article 53

Press and Publication Law No. 10 of 1993 is hereby cancelled.

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