

URGENT ACTION

PALESTINIAN HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER CHARGED

Palestinian human rights lawyer and activist Anas Barghouti was arrested by the Israeli army on 15 September. He was held without charge until 24 September when an Israeli military court presented him with charges related to his work and human rights activism. He is a prisoner of conscience and should be released immediately and unconditionally.

Anas Barghouti, 30, was arrested by the Israeli army at a military checkpoint north of Bethlehem in the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 15 September 2013. He was on his way home to Ramallah after a visit to friends and family. At around 7pm soldiers stopped the car in which Anas was travelling and arrested him after he identified himself as a lawyer and presented his Bar Association card. Soldiers confiscated his phone and questioned him before they blindfolded and handcuffed him and transferred him to a detention centre in the illegal Israeli settlement of Etzion. He was then taken to Ofer military complex where he now remains.

He was first presented to a military court on 16 September when a judge agreed to the military prosecutor's request to extend his detention without charge until 22 September. On that date, his detention was again extended until 24 September when he was presented with two charges. The first charge is "membership in the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine", an organization which Israel has banned. The second charge is "leadership of a committee to organize demonstrations". Anas Barghouti denies both charges. He had a court hearing on 1 October at which his trial was postponed until 9 October.

Amnesty International considers Anas Barghouti to be a prisoner of conscience, detained for his work as a lawyer supporting the human rights of Palestinian prisoners and for the peaceful expression of political views.

Please write immediately in Hebrew, English, or your own language:

- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Anas Barghouti;
- Calling on Israel to put an immediate end to harassment of human rights defenders in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 NOVEMBER 2013 TO:

Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu
Office of the Prime Minister
3 Kaplan St.
PO Box 187
Kiryat Ben-Gurion
Jerusalem 91950, Israel
Email: b.netanyahu@pmo.gov.il
pm_eng@pmo.gov.il

mailto:pm_eng@pmo.gov.il
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Military Judge Advocate General

Brigadier General Danny Efroni
6 David Elazar Street
Hakiryia, Tel Aviv, Israel
Fax: +972 3 569 4526
Email: avimn@idf.gov.il

Salutation: Dear Judge Advocate General

And copies to:

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence

Moshe Ya'alon
Ministry of Defence
37 Kaplan Street, Hakiryia
Tel Aviv 61909, Israel
Fax: +972 3 691 6940
+972 3 696 2757

Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Anas Barghouti, 30, is a human rights lawyer and activist from the village of Dier Ghassaneh, north of Ramallah. He has worked as a lawyer for Addameer Association for Prisoner Support and Human Rights since 2009 and, through this work, has provided legal support and representation for Palestinians held by the Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces. His main responsibility was to follow up on cases of arbitrary arrests by the PA and represent victims in courts, including the Palestinian Supreme Court. According to Addameer, Anas Barghouti was often harassed by the PA security forces for his work in defending the human rights of Palestinian detainees.

Anas Barghouti's other human rights work included organizing and participating in events and activities calling for the protection and respect of the human rights of Palestinian detainees and prisoners in Israeli prisons. His arrest is part of a pattern of harassment by the Israeli authorities of Palestinian human rights organizations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and activists working with them, which includes arbitrary detentions, restrictions on movement, and raids of homes and offices.

Addameer has been among the organizations affected. On 11 December 2012, Israeli forces raided the offices of Addameer and two other Palestinian NGOs in Ramallah, seizing computers, work files and equipment and ransacking the premises.

Addameer workers other than Anas Barghouti have been targeted individually. Israeli military orders have banned Addameer's chair, Abdullatif Ghaith, from entering the West Bank or travelling abroad since 2011. On 23 September 2013, one week after Anas Barghouti was arrested, Israeli forces arrested Samer Arbid, Addameer's accountant, who, according to the organization, had previously been under administrative detention for 30 months.

The most serious allegations concern the case of Addameer researcher and human rights defender Ayman Nasser. According to his lawyer, he was tortured during interrogation following his arrest by Israeli forces on 15 October 2012. He told his lawyer that he was interrogated for up to 20 hours every day and that during the interrogation he was kept in a stress position on a chair with his hands tied behind his back.

Ayman Nasser was presented to a military court on 12 December 2012 and charged with offences including membership of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and carrying out activities within this organization in support of Palestinian prisoners. According to his lawyer, Ayman Nasser denies the charges and says that his activities in solidarity with prisoners were carried out in his capacity as a human rights defender with Addameer and the Handala Cultural Centre. He was sentenced to 13 months in prison after a plea bargaining process in the military court. He is currently detained at Megiddo prison in Israel and is due to be released in November 2013.

The Israeli authorities also frequently prevent Addameer lawyers from visiting the prisoners and detainees they represent.

Name: Anas Bargouthi
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 276/13 Index: MDE 15/017/2013 Issue Date: 3 October 2013