

EXTERNAL

AI Index: MDE 15/29/95

*This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 10 per Section.*

UA 214/95

Fear for Safety

8 September 1995

**ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES** Bassem Eid, aged 38, human rights activist including the area under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority

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Bassem Eid, a researcher at B'Tselem, a human rights organization based in Jerusalem, may be in danger of violent extrajudicial punishment by members of the Palestinian Preventive Security Service (PSS).

On 25 August 1995, the day that B'Tselem launched a report detailing activities of the PSS (see below), Bassem Eid was publicly described by the Head of the PSS in Jericho, Colonel Jibril Rajub, as an "Israeli agent". Later, a colleague of Bassem Eid reported receiving a telephone call in which the caller said that PSS was investigating Bassem Eid's house and his routes to work.

Amnesty International has received reports of Palestinians who have been shot in the legs or arms, apparently as punishment, by individuals who were either unknown or said to be members of the PSS. Many of those who have received such extrajudicial punishments were alleged Israeli "collaborators", but they have also included a university-based critic of Yasser Arafat who was shot by unknown assailants in Nablus on 20 August.

Colonel Rajub is reported to have told B'Tselem that he could not guarantee Bassem Eid's safety but he would not give the order to authorize any action against him. However, in a press conference held on 31 August Colonel Rajub repeated the personal attacks on Bassem Eid. On 7 September, B'Tselem was reportedly telephoned by the Israeli police who warned that their information suggested that an attack on Bassem Eid might be planned.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

B'Tselem was set up by concerned Israelis in 1989 to document and publicise human rights violations committed in the Occupied Territories. It describes its goal as "bringing human rights violations in the Occupied Territories to the attention of the general public and policy and opinion makers and of fighting the repression and denial which have spread through Israeli society". The centre has produced a number of reports detailing violations of human rights by the Israeli government and other Israeli authorities. Recent reports have described the torture of Palestinians by the Israeli General Security Service (GSS) and the Israeli settlement of East Jerusalem.

B'Tselem's 25 August report is entitled *Neither Law nor Justice* and examines actions by the PSS in the occupied West Bank. The report describes PSS operations including extrajudicial punishment, arrest without warrant, and torture performed both in the West Bank and in Jericho. Most of these actions appear to have been taken against people accused of "collaborating" with Israelis or of selling Arab land to Jews. The report also underlines the fact that the Israeli security services refrained from interfering in PSS activities in the West Bank except in East Jerusalem, part of the Occupied Territories annexed by Israel.

Most of the research for this report was apparently carried out by Bassem Eid, one of B'Tselem's fieldworkers, who lives in Shu'fat Camp in East Jerusalem.

The PSS replied to the report by denying that it was operating outside Jericho and said that violations attributed to them were fabricated or were the work of people who do not belong to the PSS.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:**

- reminding the Palestinian Authority that Chairman Yasser Arafat stated to an Amnesty International delegation that he was committed to respect all internationally recognised human rights standards; pointing out that torture and extrajudicial punishment, such as shooting in the arms or legs, is outlawed by all international standards;
- urging Chairman Yasser Arafat and Colonel Jibril Rajub to state publicly that they would totally oppose any violent action taken against Bassem Eid;
- regretting that members of the Palestinian Authority have attempted to discredit a human rights activist rather than investigating the serious human rights allegations;
- urging the Palestinian Authority to set up a thorough and independent investigation into allegations of extrajudicial punishments, torture and other human rights abuses committed by the PSS and to make public its findings.

**APPEALS TO:**

Chairman Yasser Arafat  
Head of the Palestinian Authority  
Palestinian Authority  
Abu Khadra Building  
Omar al-Mukhtar Street,  
Gaza, via Israel

**Faxes: +972 7 823 744**

**Telegrams: Chairman Arafat, Gaza, via Israel**

**Salutation: Dear Mr Arafat**

Mr Freih Abu Meddein  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
Palestinian Authority  
Abu Khadra Building  
Omar al-Mukhtar Street  
Gaza, via Israel

**Faxes: +972 7 864 840**

**Telegrams: Justice Minister Meddein, Gaza, via Israel**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Colonel Jibril Rajub  
Head of Preventive Security Service  
Jericho  
via Israel

**Faxes: +972 2 921 273**

**Telegrams: Colonel Rajub, Head of PSS, Jericho, via Israel**

**Salutation: Dear Colonel**

**COPIES TO:**

The Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights

Ritz Hotel  
Jerusalem  
via Israel  
**Faxes: +972 2 282 869**

and to diplomatic representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 31 October 1995.