

URGENT ACTION

PALESTINIAN JOURNALIST TO BE RELEASED IN APRIL

Palestinian journalist Muhammed al-Qiq suspended his hunger strike on 10 March 2017 after he learned that the Israeli authorities were not renewing his administrative detention order. He is expected to be released on 10 April.

On 10 March, **Muhammed al-Qiq**, a Palestinian journalist from Dura, Hebron, suspended his hunger strike after learning of the Israeli authorities' decision not to renew his administrative detention order. His lawyer submitted an appeal on 7 February challenging the court's decision earlier in the day to issue Muhammed al-Qiq a three month administrative order. In a closed hearing held on 9 March, the judge asked the military prosecution to provide the court with more information on the basis for the detention and provide the court a decision as to whether they would seek a renewal of the detention order once it expired in April. On 10 March, the prosecution informed the judge that they will not seek renewal.

Muhammed al-Qiq was arrested by Israeli security forces on 15 January at Beit El checkpoint near Ramallah while on his way home. He was returning from a demonstration in Bethlehem against Israel's policy of refusing to return to their families the bodies of Palestinians they accuse of attacks. On 6 February, he was issued a six month administrative detention order by a military judge. He responded by announcing in court that he will go on hunger strike in protest at the Israeli authorities' decision to detain him again without charge or trial. The next day, the military judge reduced the detention order to three months.

Administrative detention orders allow for detention without charge or trial for periods up to six months. They are used by the Israeli military predominantly against Palestinians and can be renewed indefinitely.

Muhammed al-Qiq's lawyer told Amnesty International, "We see this as a victory for Muhammed. The Israeli military will not extend his detention. This decision exonerates Muhammed and proves his innocence; it demonstrates that there is nothing against al-Qiq and that he was being held arbitrarily". The lawyer also highlighted Amnesty International's campaigning efforts and the impact it had on the development of the case. He says, "We thank you for your efforts we feel that your statements and letters did help in bringing victory for al-Qiq".

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the first update of UA 48/17. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/5745/2017/en/

Name: Muhammed al-Qiq

Gender: m

Further information on UA: 48/17 Index: MDE 15/5878/2017 Issue Date: 17 March 2017

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