

URGENT ACTION

PALESTINIAN LAWYER IN ARBITRARY DETENTION

French-Palestinian lawyer Salah Hammouri has been issued a three-month administrative detention order. He is a field researcher for Palestinian NGO Addameer and has been held without charge or trial since 7 March. Since 2002, Israeli authorities have persistently harassed Salah Hammouri, who has been detained several times. He is also at risk of deportation as Israel's Ministry of Interior has taken action to revoke his residency status in East Jerusalem. The Israeli authorities must release Salah Hammouri immediately and ensure that he is allowed to keep his residency status in Jerusalem and continue with his human rights work without fear of reprisals.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Minister of Defence, Benny Gantz

Ministry of Defence

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Dear Minister,

*I am writing to express grave concern for the arbitrary detention and ongoing harassment of French-Palestinian lawyer **Salah Hammouri**, arrested on 7 March by Israeli forces at his home in the occupied East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Kufr Aqab, an area within the boundaries of the Jerusalem Municipality, yet segregated from the rest of the city by the wall and other military checkpoints. He was taken to Ofer military detention center and then transferred to a detention centre within the Russian compound in Jerusalem, where he remains held without charge or trial. On 10 March, the Military Commander of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) in the occupied West Bank issued a three-month administrative order, extending his detention without charge or trial until 6 June 2022 and without any means to effectively challenge the detention. The order, which an Israeli military judge is due to confirm during the week of 14 March, can be renewed indefinitely.*

Israel's systematic use of administrative detention violates international human rights law. Its use as such results in arbitrary detention, and if prolonged or repeated can amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment. This could constitute as an inhuman act perpetrated to maintain a system of apartheid, which is crime against humanity.

Salah Hammouri is also at risk of deportation as the authorities have been taking steps since September 2020 to revoke his permanent residency status on the grounds of "breach of allegiance" to the State of Israel. He is currently waiting for the ruling by the Israeli High Court. According to his lawyer, there is concern that this most recent administrative detention order will be used against him to expedite actions towards his forcible deportation. Salah Hammouri is a lawyer and field researcher at the prominent Palestinian human rights organization, Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association. This is not the first time he has been arbitrarily detained in connection to his human rights work.

I urge you to immediately release Salah Hammouri and all others who have been placed under administrative detention, unless they are promptly charged with an internationally recognizable crime and tried in proceedings that adhere to international fair trial standards. I urge the authorities to ensure that he is allowed to keep his residency status in Jerusalem and continue with his human rights work without fear of reprisals.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Salah Hammouri is a French-Palestinian lawyer who lives in the neighbourhood of Kufr Aqab in East Jerusalem. He holds a Jerusalem residency permit and works as a field researcher for Addameer, a legal aid and prisoners' rights NGO that, together with five other civil society groups, was declared by the Israeli government a "terrorist organization" in October 2021. UN human rights experts condemned this move as a misuse of counterterrorism measures and a "frontal attack on the Palestinian human rights movement, and on human rights everywhere".

The Israeli authorities have persistently harassed and targeted Salah Hammouri. Since 2000, he has been detained multiple times, including twice when he was placed under administrative detention – for five months in 2004 and for 13 months in 2017.

The Israeli authorities have also violated his rights to freedom of movement and to family. He is also at risk of forcible deportation as the Israeli authorities have taken action to revoke his residency status. On 3 September 2020, the Israeli Ministry of Interior notified Salah Hammouri of its intention to revoke his permanent residency status on the grounds of "breach of allegiance" to the State of Israel. Salah Hammouri awaits a final ruling by the Israeli High Court, after exhausting the appeals process. According to his lawyer, there is concern that this most recent administrative detention order will be used against him to expedite actions towards his forcible deportation. Israel's discriminatory state policies, regulations and conduct against Palestinians in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories have involved the crime against humanity of deportation or forcible transfer under both the Rome Statute and Apartheid Convention.

In 2021, Salah Hammouri—along with five other Palestinian human rights defenders—was [hacked with Pegasus](#), a spyware developed by Israeli cyber-surveillance company NSO Group.

Under administrative detention, individuals are detained by state authorities without intent to prosecute them in a criminal trial. Orders can be renewed indefinitely and evidence is kept secret, meaning that detainees are not able to effectively challenge their detention and do not know when they will be released. Since 1 January 2022, hundreds of Palestinians held in administrative detention have been boycotting Israeli military courts in protest of their detention without charge or trial. According to his lawyer, Salah Hammouri will be joining the boycott and will not attend hearings at the Israeli military court.

Evidence collected by Amnesty International and other human rights groups over the decades indicates that administrative detention is used as an intentional Israeli policy to detain individuals, including prisoners of conscience held solely for the exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and association and to punish them for their views and activism challenging the policies of occupation and Israel's system of apartheid. According to Addameer, as of February 2022, there were 500 people in administrative detention, including one child, held without charge or trial by Israel.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or Hebrew

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 26 July 2022

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Salah Hammouri (he/his)