

URGENT ACTION

PALESTINIAN LAWYER'S DETENTION EXTENDED

French-Palestinian human rights defender Salah Hammouri has been held without charge or trial since 7 March, under a three-month administrative detention order. The order was extended for another three months on 6 June, until 5 September 2022. He is also at real risk of deportation as Israel's Ministry of Interior has taken action to revoke his residency status in East Jerusalem. Israeli authorities must release Salah Hammouri immediately or promptly charge him with an internationally recognizable offence and ensure that he is allowed to keep his residency status in Jerusalem and continue 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

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Dear Minister,

*I am writing to express grave concern at the continued arbitrary detention and ongoing harassment of French-Palestinian lawyer and human rights defender **Salah Hammouri**.*

Salah Hammouri was arrested on 7 March by Israeli forces at his home in Kufr Aqab, an area within the boundaries of the Jerusalem Municipality, and has been held without charge or trial since 10 March in Ofer prison, near the West Bank city of Ramallah, under a three-month administrative detention order. On 5 June, a day before the administrative order was due to expire and he was due to be released, he was informed that the Military Commander of the Israeli army in the occupied West Bank renewed his administrative detention order for another three months, extending his arbitrary detention until 5 September 2022, with, again, the possibility of renewal. On 9 June, an Israeli military judge confirmed his administrative detention order.

Salah Hammouri is also at risk of deportation to France as the Israeli authorities have been taking steps since September 2020 to revoke his permanent residency status. According to his lawyer, there is serious concern that this continued harassment and subsequent administrative detention order is being used against him to expedite actions towards his forcible deportation, a crime against humanity as well as a war crime and absolutely prohibited under international humanitarian law.

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 offence and tried in proceedings that adhere to international fair trial standards. The authorities must also ensure that Salah Hammouri is allowed to keep his residency status in Jerusalem and continue his human rights work without fear of reprisals.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Salah Hammouri (37) is a French-Palestinian lawyer and field researcher who works for Palestinian NGO 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 anti-terrorism legislation and the European Union has indicated that Israel has failed to provide sufficient evidence for this designation.

The Israeli authorities have also violated Salah Hammouri's rights to freedom of movement and to family. He is 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 serious concern that this most recent renewal of his administrative detention order will be used against him to expedite actions towards his forcible deportation. The Israeli authorities' decision to revoke his residency status has already had repercussions on Salah Hammouri's legal status. Both administrative detention orders issued in March and June 2022 have been signed by the Military Commander of the Israeli army in the occupied West Bank, which is the procedure reserved for West Bank ID holders, instead of the Minister of Defense, which is the case for East Jerusalemite ID holders.

This is not the first time the Israeli authorities have targeted Salah Hammouri. Since 2000, he has been detained multiple times, twice placed under administrative detention – for five months in 2004 and for 13 months in 2017. This had a devastating effect on his ability to carry out his human rights work and to lead a normal family life.

On 5 April 2022, Salah Hammouri filed a lawsuit in a French court against Israeli cyber-surveillance company NSO Group for illegally surveillance of his phone. In 2021, Salah Hammouri—along with five other Palestinian human rights defenders—was hacked with Pegasus spyware.

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. According to Addameer, as of May 2022, there were 600 Palestinians held in administrative detention. Since 1 January 2022, nearly all Palestinians held in administrative detention—including Salah Hammouri—have been boycotting Israeli military courts in protest at their detention without charge or trial. These detainees have refused to attend hearings in Israeli military courts.

Israel's systematic use of administrative detention violates international human rights law and results in arbitrary detention. When prolonged or repeated, it can amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment. Amnesty International [has also shown](#) that Israel's use of administrative detention constitutes an inhuman act perpetrated to maintain its system of apartheid over Palestinians, which is a crime against humanity.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or Hebrew

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 9 August 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)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/5328/2022/en