

URGENT ACTION

PALESTINIAN NGO WORKER RELEASED

On 30 September, Salah Hammouri, French-Palestinian lawyer and NGO worker, was released from Ketziot prison in southern Israel. He had spent one year in administrative detention without charge or trial.

On 30 September, a French-Palestinian NGO worker and lawyer **Salah Hammouri** was released from Ketziot prison in southern Israel, after spending 378 days in administrative detention without charge or trial. Salah Hammouri works as a field researcher in Jerusalem for Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, a Palestinian human rights organization based in Ramallah, in the occupied West Bank. According to Addameer, Salah Hammouri's release came after an Israeli judge ruled to not renew his administrative detention again. He has now returned to his home in the neighbourhood of Kafr Aqab, in occupied East Jerusalem.

On 17 August 2017, Israel's Minister of Defence Avigdor Lieberman issued a six-month administrative detention order against Salah Hammouri. Consequently, he was arrested during an overnight raid on 23 August 2017, at his home in occupied East Jerusalem. On 5 September, the day of the hearing to confirm the six-month administrative detention order, an Israeli district court in Jerusalem decided instead to reinstate a three-month sentence, the remainder of a previous prison sentence Salah Hammouri had served following a conviction in 2005. However, on 13 September, Israel's High Court ruled in favour of the prosecution's appeal against reinstating the sentence and approved placing him under administrative detention for six months. And on 17 September, the Israeli District Court confirmed the initial six-month administrative detention order, which was renewed twice by the same court on 5 March and 27 June, each time for a further four months.

In February 2016, the Israeli authorities deported and banned Salah Hammouri's wife Elsa Lefort, also a French national, from entering the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) and Israel, after detaining her for three days at a detention centre near Ben Gurion airport. She and their two-year-old child have not been able to see Salah Hammouri since his arrest.

Salah Hammouri spoke to Amnesty International after his release and delivered the following message of thanks to all those who took action on his behalf: *"Despite my deprivation of liberty, I had no doubt that the mobilization would grow in support of my case. I had no doubt that supporters from all over the world would stand again to denounce the injustice and arbitrary detention and to demand my release."*

He added: *"This was a real hope for me, for my family, for my wife and son that I have not seen in over a year. I thank you all sincerely. I want to tell you that I will be worthy of the support you are giving me and keep fighting the injustice that strikes us. Our freedom is not for sale, even if we sometimes pay a very high price. The Palestinian people, like all others, should live freely. The fact that you do not intend to give up, gives me and others so much strength to continue our struggle against the occupation. The support and mobilization should continue until the release of all Palestinian political prisoners and detainees, including my colleagues from Addameer Ayman Nasser and Khalida Jarrar, which are cases that Amnesty International continues to campaign on."*

Thank you to all those who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network.

This is the third update of UA 226/17. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/7211/2017/en/.

Name: Salah Hammouri
Gender m/f: m

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