

URGENT ACTION

RELEASE TERMINALLY ILL PALESTINIAN PRISONER

Walid Daqqah is a terminally ill Palestinian prisoner who was diagnosed with a rare case of bone marrow cancer. Since 7 October 2023, Walid Daqqah has been tortured, humiliated, denied family visits and has faced further medical neglect. During this period, he was transferred to hospital twice due to health deterioration. In March 2023, Walid Daqqah completed a 37-year sentence for his involvement with an armed group that had abducted and killed an Israeli soldier in 1984. However, in 2018, an Israeli court sentenced him to a further two years in prison, delaying his release until March 2025, a date which he may not live to see. The Israeli authorities must immediately release Walid Daqqah on humanitarian grounds and allow him to spend his remaining time with his family.

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

The President of the State of Israel

Mr. Isaac Herzog

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Jerusalem 921880, Israel

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Dear President Herzog,

I am writing to urge you to exercise your power to **pardon Walid Daqqah**, a terminally ill Palestinian prisoner, and to release him immediately on humanitarian grounds. Pending his release, I urge you to ensure that he is provided with the adequate and specialised medical treatment to which he is entitled, in accordance with Rule 24 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Treatment of Prisoners, and which the Ayalon prison clinic is ill-equipped to provide, according to medical opinion.

In 2022, Walid Daqqah was diagnosed with myelofibrosis, a rare form of bone marrow cancer, which was exacerbated by numerous instances of medical neglect in prison. According to two separate medical evaluations of Walid Daqqah's case, he faces a real and imminent danger to his life, and his health condition is extremely complicated. According to one of his doctors, "his days are short and there is real danger to his life".

In recent months, and despite his well-known and documented health situation, Walid Daqqah was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment – including physical assault by prison guards – humiliation and further medical neglect. For nearly a month, he was kept in the extremely over-crowded Gilboa prison, deprived of access to proper hygiene and denied access to adequate medical care. As a result, he had to be transferred to the hospital twice due to health deterioration.

Since 7 October 2023, Walid Daqqah has been denied any contact with his family and was only allowed to meet with his lawyer once. Walid Daqqah's appeal for a parole was rejected by the Israeli District Court in August 2023, and his leave to appeal was turned down by the Israeli Supreme Court on 22 November. Having exhausted his last legal resort, Walid is due to be released from prison on 25 March 2025. Yet, with the continued deterioration of his health and the already dire medical prognosis, he may not live to see this day.

In light of the imminent danger to his life and exhaustion of all legal remedies, I urge you to apply your power to pardon Walid Daqqah on humanitarian grounds and allow his immediate release from prison. Pending his release, I also urge you to ensure that the Israeli prison authorities grant Walid Daqqah his right to the adequate and specialized healthcare as required for his conditions, and to immediately resume family visits, which have been arbitrarily denied to all Palestinian prisoners and detainees – as a form of collective punishment – since 7 October.

Walid Daqqah has already spent most of his adult life behind bars and lost his father while in prison. In the name of humanity, Walid Daqqah must be allowed to spend his remaining days with his family, his wife Sanaa and their only daughter Milad.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Walid Daqqah is a 63-year-old Palestinian citizen of Israel. He is a writer and father to a four-year-old daughter. On 25 March 1986, Israeli forces arrested Walid Daqqah, then 24. In March 1987, an Israeli military court sentenced him to life imprisonment after convicting him of commanding the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)-affiliated group that had abducted and killed Israeli soldier Moshe Tamam in 1984.

In 2012, Walid Daqqah's life imprisonment sentence was capped at 37 years, after then-president Shimon Peres accepted his request to cap the sentence. However, in early 2018, five years before the end of his sentence, he was sentenced in a separate case to an additional two years in prison for attempting to get mobile phones into prison to help other prisoners get in touch with their families.

Walid Daqqah's health deteriorated throughout the years due to medical neglect by the Israeli Prison Service (IPS). In December 2022 Walid Daqqah was diagnosed with a rare form of bone marrow cancer, necessitating an urgent bone marrow transplant.

On 6 November 2023, Walid Daqqah was unexpectedly transferred to Gilboa Prison in northern Israel, where cells are extremely over-crowded, and prisoners and detainees, including sick prisoners, are denied even minimum adequate access to medical care and hygiene. At Gilboa, he was tortured and humiliated repeatedly. The lawyer who visited him told Amnesty International that on the day of Walid Daqqah's transfer to Gilboa prison, about twenty officers, including a medical staff, waited for him there, they handcuffed him behind his back, dragged him and tried to force him to kiss the Israeli flag while beating him hard. The beatings were aimed at his stomach. During the beating they told him that it is a message from Miri Regev. When she served as Israel's culture minister, Regev notoriously ordered the freezing of state funding of the Haifa-based al-Midan theatre for staging a play written by Walid Daqqah in prison.

Due to the extreme medical neglect and ill-treatment - exacerbated during his stay in Gilboa prison - he had to be hospitalized twice since December following sharp deterioration in his health. His wife Sanaa has not so much caught a glimpse of him for nearly five months. He is currently held in Ayalon prison (formerly Ramleh prison).

Take action and write to Mr. Isaac Herzog, the President of the State of Israel, and urge him to pardon Walid Daqqah, allow his immediate release from prison, and demand that Walid Daqqah be provided with the adequate standard of medical care he requires, pending his release, in accordance with Israel's obligations under international human rights law.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Hebrew and Arabic.
You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 6 May 2024.
Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Walid Daqqah (He/him).

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: [Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territories: Release terminally ill Palestinian prisoner: Walid Daqqah - Amnesty International](#)