

URGENT ACTION

UNWELL PALESTINIAN IN ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION

Palestinian Muhammed al-Qiq has been on hunger strike since 6 February in protest against his administrative detention. The Israeli authorities have yet to respond to his lawyer's request for him to be transferred to a hospital to receive medical treatment. He is being held in solitary confinement and is increasingly weak.

Muhammed al-Qiq, a Palestinian journalist from Dura, Hebron, 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. Following his arrest, he underwent around 22 days of interrogations over allegations of incitement. 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 administrative order to three months. He remains held in Kishon prison, in northern Israel.

Muhammed al-Qiq's lawyer was scheduled to meet with him on 15 February, but officers from the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) informed him that his client was unable to see him as he could not walk or get out of bed. Following an appeal to Israel's high court, the IPS allowed Muhammed al-Qiq to meet his lawyer for the first time in 10 days, on 19 February. The lawyer told Amnesty International that Muhammed al-Qiq seemed frail and was feeling very tired, making it difficult for him to speak. His weight loss was already apparent. He said that he was being held in solitary confinement, in a two metre square room with a low ceiling, and that it felt like a 'freezing cold tomb'. He also complained of back pain and an inability to tolerate the cold, especially since he only had one thin blanket. His lawyer expressed concern about Muhammed al-Qiq's health to the IPS and demanded that he be transferred to hospital to receive medical attention. The IPS refused the request.

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 was previously held under an administrative order in November 2015 for seven months, 94 days of which he spent on hunger strike in protest against his detention.

Please write immediately in Hebrew, English or your own language:

- Calling on the Israeli authorities to release Muhammed al-Qiq and all others who have been placed under administrative detention, unless they are promptly charged with an internationally recognizable crime, in proceedings that adhere to international fair trial standards;
- Urging them to ensure that, pending his release, he is immediately transferred to a civilian hospital and receives the specialized medical treatment he requires, and is not subject to punitive measures as a result of his decision to go on strike;
- Urging them to take immediate steps to end the practice of administrative detention.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 5 APRIL 2017 TO:

Minister of Defence
Avigdor Liberman
Ministry of Defence
37 Kaplan Street, Hakiryia
Tel Aviv 61909, Israel
Email: minister@mod.gov.il
pniot@mod.gov.il
Fax: +972 3 691 6940
Salutation: Dear Minister

Israel Prison Service Commissioner
Lieutenant-General Ofra Klinger
Israel Prison Service, PO Box 81
Ramleh 72100, Israel
Fax: +972 8 919 3800
Salutation: Dear Lieutenant-General

Minister of Public Security
Gilad Erdan
Kiryat Hamemshala
PO Box 18182
Jerusalem 91181, Israel
Fax: +972 2 584 7872
Email: gerdan@knesset.gov.il
Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY Deputy Ambassador Eitan Na'eh, Embassy of Israel, 2 Palace Green Kensington W8 4QB, 020 7957 9500. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Muhammed al-Qiq was released from Nafha prison in the Negev/Naqab desert in March 2016 after being on hunger strike for [over 90 days](#). He was protesting being held in administrative detention since November 2015. He lost 53 kilograms in weight and suffers from back pain, dizziness and weakness, as well as problems with digestion, as a result of the hunger strike. On 25 February 2016, he ended his hunger strike after the Israeli authorities agreed not to renew his administrative detention order. Upon his release, he was in need of critical medical attention and was hospitalized for a few weeks before he was able to return to his family. His wife Fayha Shalash expressed concern for his health, and said her husband was still “weak and fragile”, and had not yet recovered from the grievous medical effects of the last hunger strike. “I am worried that he will not be able to handle another hunger strike,” she said. She believes the Israeli authorities want to silence her husband for his activism and punish him for his previous hunger strike. “Since his release” she says, “Muhammed has been talking to local and international human rights organizations about his detention and defending the human rights of Palestinians by calling on Israel to release the bodies of Palestinians who have been killed.”

Muhammed al-Qiq, like most other Palestinians from the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) held by Israel, is being detained inside Israel, in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. His family in Hebron therefore cannot visit him without a permit issued by the Israeli military.

Muhammed al-Qiq has been arrested and detained multiple times in the past. Since October 2015, violence in Israel and the OPT has increased dramatically. As during other periods of heightened tension in the OPT, the Israeli authorities responded by carrying out mass arrests, and issuing more and more administrative detention orders, including a resumption of its use against children. According to Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem, there were 644 administrative detainees by the end of August 2016 compared to 341 in August 2015.

Administrative detention – ostensibly introduced as an exceptional measure to detain people who pose an extreme and imminent danger to security – is used by Israel as an alternative to the criminal justice system to arrest, charge and prosecute people suspected of criminal offences, or to detain people who should not have been arrested at all. Orders can be renewed indefinitely and Amnesty International believes that some Palestinians held in administrative detention by Israel are prisoners of conscience, held solely for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression and association. The use of secret evidence denies detainees the right to a fair hearing. As detainees cannot mount a proper defence against their charges, and are uncertain as to when they will be released, Amnesty International considers that Israel's use of administrative detention itself may amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

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