

URGENT ACTION

ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION OF NGO WORKER RENEWED

An Israeli military court renewed, for the third time, the administrative detention of NGO worker Abdul Razeq Farraj for another three months. Abdul Razeq Farraj has been held by Israel without charge or trial for 325 days.

On 10 April, **Abdul Razeq Farraj's** detention order was renewed for the third time for another three months and is now expected to end on 17 July. Abdul Razeq Farraj was arrested by Israeli soldiers on 21 May 2017 at around 3am from his home in Ramallah in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). The military commander of the West Bank issued a four-month administrative detention order against him later that day, without Abdul Razeq Farraj having been questioned beforehand. Initially, the order was to end on 20 September but was since renewed three times. Abdul Razeq Farraj is currently held in Ofer prison, near the city of Ramallah.

Abdul Razeq Farraj is taking part in the ongoing boycott of Israeli military courts by Palestinian administrative detainees and their lawyers who demand an end to Israel's decades-long use of administrative detention that allows detention without charge or trial on indefinitely renewable military orders. The boycott, which was announced on 13 February (<http://cda.gov.ps/index.php/ar/ar-news/5025-2018-02-20-08-49-53>), is now in its second month, and the Israeli authorities are currently confirming administrative detention orders without detainees or their lawyers being present at court hearings.

Abdul Razeq Farraj, aged 55, has spent 10 years of his life in administrative detention and a total of 16 years in Israeli prisons. From 1985 to 1991, he served a six-year sentence imposed by an Israeli court for being affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP, a left-wing political party with an armed wing, banned by Israel). Since his release he has been arrested six times, and each time placed under administrative detention. He has spent a total of 120 months (3650 days) in detention without charge or trial.

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

- Calling on the Israeli authorities to immediately release Abdul Razeq Farraj, 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;
- Calling on the Israeli authorities to stop the harassment and arbitrary detention of Palestinians working in civil society organizations including human rights groups;
- Urging the Israeli authorities to take immediate steps to end the practice of administrative detention.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 25 MAY 2018 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

Commander of the IDF – West Bank

Major-General Roni Numa
GOC Central Command
Military Post 02367, Battalion 877
Israel Defence Forces, Israel
Fax: +972 2 530 5741, +972 2 530
5724
**Salutation: Dear Major-General
Roni Numa**

And copies to:

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 MR MARK REGEV, Embassy of Israel
2 Palace Green Kensington W8 4QB, 020 7957 9500, info@london.mfa.gov.il

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Abdul Razeq Farraj, 55, a father of two, holds a BA in Economics and a Diploma in Management from Birzeit University. He is the Finance and Administration Director at the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC), a development NGO based in Ramallah in the OPT, where he has worked for more than 30 years. UAWC was established in 1986 to support Palestinian farmers affected by Israeli occupation and land confiscation policies. The organization aims to build the capacity of farmers to improve their living standards and defend their land rights.

In 2012, Farraj went on hunger strike for around 24 days in protest at his detention conditions in Ofer prison, along with other administrative detainees. At the time, 2,000 Palestinian prisoners and detainees declared a mass hunger strike in protest at poor detention conditions, solitary confinement, denial of family visits and detention without charge or trial. The strike ended on 14 May 2012 following an Egyptian-brokered deal with the Israeli authorities. Farraj went on hunger strike again in April 2014 along with other administrative detainees in protest of Israel's administrative detention policy. The hunger strike lasted more than 60 days, ending after administrative detainees reached an agreement with the Israeli Prison Service (IPS).

Abdul Razeq Farraj's family has been hugely affected by his continuous detention and the uncertainty about the date of his release. His son, Basil, told Amnesty International: "I had planned to leave my university in Geneva for a few weeks, hoping that my father will be released. I dream of the day that our family becomes reunited again. Yet, as always, the occupation stands in front of our hopes and dreams of moments of joy."

As with all cases of administrative detention, the "evidence" against Farraj is secret, and neither he nor his lawyer is allowed to review it. This violates a central tenet of fair trial standards.

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 arresting, charging and prosecuting people suspected of criminal offences, or to detain people who should not have been arrested at all. 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. 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, assembly or association. 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 have responded by carrying out mass arrests, issuing more and more administrative detention orders, and resuming its use against children. According to the Palestinian human rights organization Addameer, as of March 2018, there were 427 administrative detainees, including three children, held without charge or trial by Israel.

All but one of the Israeli prisons holding Palestinian administrative detainees are located inside Israel. The detention of Palestinians from the OPT inside Israel violates international law. The Fourth Geneva Convention stipulates that detainees from occupied territories must be held in the occupied territory, not in the territory of the occupying power.

Amnesty International has documented an escalation of acts of intimidation by the Israeli government against Palestinian civil society organizations and human rights activists in the OPT. Israel has also taken steps to curtail freedom of expression inside Israel with officials using intimidation and smear campaigns to target human rights organizations and their staff.