



British Consulate General
15 Nashashibi Street
Sheikh Jarrah Quarter
Jerusalem
East Jerusalem 97200
The Occupied Palestinian Territory

To the British Consulate in Jerusalem

CC: The Rt Hon Amanda Milling MP, Minister for Asia and the Middle East

Re: Imprisoned Palestinian-French lawyer and human rights defender, Salah Hammouri

As a group of UK-based humanitarian, development, human rights and faith organisations working to support the rights and welfare of the Palestinian people, we are gravely concerned by the arbitrary detention and ongoing harassment of Palestinian-French lawyer and human rights defender Salah Hammouri.

Salah Hammouri was arrested by Israeli authorities on 7 March 2022 and is currently detained at Ofer military detention centre, under a three month administrative detention order - without charge or trial, and with possible renewal on 6 June 2022. Mr Hammouri has suffered persistent harassment and rights violations by Israeli authorities because of his human rights activities. Since 2000, he has been repeatedly incarcerated, including three periods of administrative detention in 2004, 2017, and his present detention. Mr Hammouri has been incarcerated by Israel for a total of eight years and eight months.

Israel has subjected Mr Hammouri to repeated rights violations. He has been separated from his wife and children, who have been banned by Israel from entering Israeli controlled territory since 2016. In 2021, an investigation by human rights experts found that Salah Hammouri's mobile phone had been infected with Pegasus software, developed by Israeli company NSO group.

In October 2021, Israel revoked Mr Hammouri's permanent residency in Jerusalem, where he was born and has lived since 1985, on the grounds of 'breach of allegiance' to the State of Israel. Consequently, he is now at risk of deportation and forcible permanent expulsion from his hometown. We are deeply concerned that Israel intends to use this most recent administrative detention order against him in order to expedite his forcible deportation from Jerusalem.

Israel's practice of administrative detention allows for the detention of individuals without a criminal trial. Administrative detention orders can be renewed indefinitely, and are based on 'secret evidence' which is not disclosed to the prisoner or their lawyer. This means that detainees do not know when they will be released, and are not able to effectively challenge their imprisonment. Israel intentionally uses administrative detention to target and repress human rights defenders, and to punish them for their activism.

Israel's systematic and widespread use of administrative detention is a gross violation of international law that has been [repeatedly condemned by UN human rights experts](#), whilst the UK

government has expressed concern over its extensive use. Since 1 January 2022, all Palestinian administrative detainees held by Israel, including Salah Hammouri, have been boycotting Israel's military courts in protest of this unjust practice. As of May 2022, Israel holds 600 Palestinians under administrative detention, according to human rights group Addameer – Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association.

Israel's treatment of Salah Hammouri is a prominent case in a broader pattern of targeted campaigns of harassment and delegitimisation against human rights defenders and Palestinian civil society. Mr Hammouri's case has been highlighted by the [UN Human Rights Committee](#) as an example of Israel's chilling policy of revoking the residency of Palestinians in Jerusalem, based on 'breach of allegiance', in order to control the demographic composition of Jerusalem and to silence human rights defenders. His case has also been highlighted in [Amnesty International's landmark report](#) on Israel's apartheid policies as an example of Israel's illegal forcible transfer of Palestinians.

The UK government has pledged to [support human rights defenders around the world](#). It has [called on Israel](#) to "fully respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of human rights defenders and organisations and to allow them to freely operate in Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories".

Salah Hammouri's current administrative detention order is due to expire on 6 June 2022. We are gravely concerned that the Israeli authorities will use this opportunity to enact his forced deportation from Jerusalem, or prolong his arbitrary detention by renewing his administrative detention order.

As such, we are writing with urgency to request that the British Consulate General in Jerusalem take action:

1. To pressure Israeli authorities for Salah Hammouri's immediate and unconditional release, the continuation of his Jerusalem residency status, and to demand that he is allowed to continue with his human rights work without fear of reprisals.
2. To visit Salah Hammouri as soon as possible, whilst he continues to be imprisoned under administrative detention
3. To meet with the coordinators of the 'Justice for Salah' campaign, led by Palestinian and international civil society organisations, for a briefing on Salah Hammouri's case and supporting measures

Yours sincerely,

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On behalf of:

Amnesty International UK

Interpal

Amos Trust

Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights (LPHR)

Caabu (Council for Arab British Understanding)

Sabeel-Kairos UK

War on Want

FONSA - Friends of Nablus and Surrounding Areas