

31 March 2016

Israel/OPT – Death threats against human rights defender Imad Abu Shamsiyya and his family

On 25 March 2016, Israeli soldiers attempted to storm the house of human rights defender Mr **Imad Abu Shamsiyya** in Hebron, and insulted him and his family. The human rights defender and his family have been receiving death threats since 24 March 2016, when Imad Abu Shamsiyya published a video recording of the killing of a wounded Palestinian man by Israeli soldiers on Shuhada Street in Hebron.

[Imad Abu Shamsiyya](#) is a long-standing activist in Palestine and volunteer at **B'Tselem**, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, where he is involved in documenting the occupation of Tel-Rumeida. He is also the founder of the **Human Rights Defenders Group**, a non-partisan group that aims to document and expose violations of international law and injustice against families in areas of conflict under Israeli occupation.

On 24 March 2016, Imad Abu Shamsiyya and his wife, Ms **Fayza Ayoub Abu Shamsiyya**, who is also an activist with the Human Rights Defenders Group, were in Tel Rumeida when they heard gunfire coming from Shudada Street. They rushed to the scene to record what was happening on video. A group of Israeli soldiers were at the scene, helping a wounded Israeli soldier into an ambulance. Two injured Palestinian men were also lying on the road. One of the soldiers then pointed his rifle at one of the injured men, Mr Abdul Fatah Yusri al-Sharif, who was still moving, and shot him in the head, killing him.

Having captured the incident on film, Imad Abu Shamsiyya uploaded the video to the Internet. It subsequently received worldwide coverage and he and his family have been receiving death threats, allegedly from Israeli soldiers, since. These threats have included an anonymous call, in which the caller stated: ‘we will burn you just like we burned the Dawabshehs’, a family who were killed in an arson attack in July 2015. Pictures and printed t-shirts of Imad Abu Shamsiyya and his family, calling for their murder, have also reportedly been circulating throughout the Israeli settlements in Hebron.

Imad Abu Shamsiyya and his family have been subjected to [repeated harassment](#) as a result of his human rights activism, including physical attacks, raids on their family home, and repeated arrests. In September 2015, the human rights defender and his son were subjected to travel restrictions after being invited to talk about their family life and the importance the documentation work of the Human Rights Defenders Group on television. In May 2015, Imad Abu Shamsiyya's family home was subjected to an attempted arson attack by settlers in the middle of the night. In March 2015, a group of soldiers [invaded](#) his family home, searched the house and confiscated the family's computer hard disk and a memory card containing footage filmed by B'Tselem volunteers.

Front Line Defenders expresses grave concern about the threats against Imad Abu Shamsiyya and his family and the repeated acts of harassment and intimidation against him, which it believes to be directly motivated by their peaceful and legitimate human rights activities.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories to:

1. Immediately take all necessary measures to ensure the physical and psychological security of human rights defender Imad Abu Shamsiyya and his family;
2. Launch a full and impartial investigation into the threats made against Imad Abu Shamsiyya and his family, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.