

15 January 2020

Israel: human rights defender Jonathan Pollak detained

On 6 January 2020, human rights defender **Jonathan Pollak** was arrested on charges of assaulting soldiers and Border Police officers during peaceful protests in the West Bank. He is currently detained in Abu Kabir Detention Center in Tel Aviv.

[Jonathan Pollak](#) is an anti-occupation activist, human rights defender and journalist at Haaretz newspaper. He co-founded the Anarchists Against the Wall, a group that opposes the construction of the Israeli Gaza Strip and West Bank barriers. Jonathan Pollak regularly participates in the weekly anti-wall demonstrations in the Palestinian villages of Bil'in and Na'alín.

On 6 January 2020, plain-clothed police officers arrested Jonathan Pollak at the Haaretz newspaper office in Tel Aviv. He is currently detained in Abu Kabir Detention Center in Tel Aviv. The human rights defender suffers from a medical condition requiring a special diet, which he has been denied while in detention. He has also been refused family visits.

Jonathan Pollak refused to pay the NIS 500 (approximately 130 euros) bail set by a Tel Aviv judge on 6 January. On the next day, the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court ruled that he would remain in jail.

The arrest of the human rights defender comes after his refusal to appear in court in relation to a criminal complaint filed against him by the far-right group 'Ad Kan', accusing him of attacking soldiers and Border Police officers during peaceful demonstrations in Palestinian villages in the West Bank. Jonathan Pollak has refused to recognise the legitimacy of this complaint as cases concerning assaults against public servants, including soldiers, can only be filed by the authorities themselves. His refusal to appear in court is also in protest against the systematic denial of due process rights, which are enjoyed by Israeli citizens, to Palestinian detainees in the West Bank.

Jonathan Pollak has frequently been subjected to judicial harassment by the Israeli authorities. In 2011, he was sentenced to 3 months' imprisonment after participating in peaceful anti-war demonstrations.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the detention of and charges against human rights defender Jonathan Pollak, as it believes that he is being targeted solely as a result of his human rights activities and his exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.

Front Line Defenders urges the Israeli authorities to:

1. Immediately release Jonathan Pollak and drop all charges against him as it is believed that they are solely motivated by his legitimate and peaceful work in defence of human rights;
2. Ensure that the treatment of Jonathan Pollak, while in detention, adheres to the conditions set out in the '*Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment*', adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988;
3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.