

31 July 2020

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### **OPT/Israel: Arbitrary detention of human rights defender Mahmoud Nawajaa**

On 30 July 2020, several Israeli soldiers stormed the house of human rights defender **Mahmoud Nawajaa** and arrested him.

[Mahmoud Nawajaa](#) is a human rights defender, who advocates for the rights of Palestinian people under the Israeli occupation. He is the general coordinator of the Palestinian National Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Committee (BDS). The BDS Movement is an international movement founded in 2005, which has pioneered a non-violent mobilisation against Israel's occupation of Palestine through exerting social, economic and political pressure on the State. BDS seeks to hold Israel accountable for human rights abuses and other violations of international law, defends the 'right of return' of Palestinian refugees to family properties lost in the 1948 war and engages in advocacy and non-violent campaigning for Palestinian rights.

On 30 July 2020, at 3:30am, several Israeli soldiers with a police dog, stormed the house of human rights defender Mahmoud Nawajaa who was subsequently blindfolded, handcuffed and arrested. He was taken to the interrogation centre of Al-Jalama prison, located in Israel, which is a breach of International Humanitarian Law, as the IV Geneva Convention prohibits transferring prisoners outside their territories. The prison authorities have informed Mahmoud Nawajaa that he will not be allowed to see his lawyer or family for four days, according to his lawyer. The charges against Mahmoud Nawajaa are not known yet. The Israeli soldiers confiscated the mobile phones and laptops of Mahmoud Nawajaa and his wife upon storming his house.

The BDS movement believes that the arrest of human rights defender Mahmoud Nawajaa comes as a result of Palestinian civil society's peaceful work against the Israeli illegal annexation plan which aims to annex parts of the West Bank including the illegal Israeli settlements and parts of the Jordan Valley. Members of the BDS Movement are reported to have been regularly harassed by the Israeli forces.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the arbitrary arrest of human rights defender Mahmoud Nawajaa and believes that his arrest is a result of his peaceful and legitimate human rights work.

#### **Front Line Defenders urges the Israeli authorities to:**

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Mahmoud Nawajaa as Front Line Defenders believes that he is being held solely as a result of his legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights;

2. Ensure that the treatment of Mahmoud Nawajaa 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. Allow Mahmoud Nawajaa immediate and unfettered access to their families and lawyers;
4. Return the confiscated items during the raid, as they are manifestly not linked to any criminal activity;
5. Cease targeting all human rights defenders in the OPT and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.

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