

14 August 2019

Occupied Palestinian Territories: Arbitrary arrest of human rights defender Issa Amro

On 10 August 2019, several human rights defenders were arbitrarily arrested and ill-treated in Hebron, including **Issa Amro**, who was arbitrarily arrested when he passed checkpoint 56 on his way home.

[Issa Amro](#) is a human rights defender and founding member of many non-violent organisations in Hebron who work peacefully to protect the human rights violated by the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. Amongst these organisations are the Hebron branch of the **Arab Non-Violence Network**, **Youth Against Settlements** and the **Hebron Defenders**.

In the afternoon of 10 August 2019, Issa Amro passed through checkpoint 56 on his way home. The checkpoint leads to Al-Shuhada street and separates the part of the city governed by the Palestinian Authority from the Israeli-controlled area. Palestinians can only access Al-Shuhada street under certain conditions. Issa Amro has a permit to use the street as he lives in the area. At the checkpoint, he was questioned by several Israeli soldiers before an army commander ordered his arrest. Issa Amro was violently handcuffed and beaten by the Israeli soldiers, forcefully dragged into a military jeep, and blindfolded. He was then brought to the military base of Al-Shuhada street. On the way there, soldiers took pictures of him. Issa Amro was suffering from a previous injury which was affected by the violent treatment during the arrest. Since he was in need of medical attention, a paramedic was called. Even though the paramedic referred him to a doctor, no doctor was called. After two hours in detention, Issa Amro was brought back to the checkpoint 56 where he was left blindfolded and handcuffed on the street. He did not receive any justification for the reasons behind his arrest.

Issa Amro has been [arrested](#) several times in the past and faces judicial harassment in relation to his human rights work. He currently faces 16 charges, including “participating in a march without a permit”, “assaulting a soldier”, and “incitement” before the Israeli Military Court. The next hearing is scheduled for 22 September 2019. He furthermore faces three charges in front the Palestinian Criminal Court, the next hearing will be held on 11 September 2019.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned at the continued harassment of human rights defenders in Hebron by Israeli military forces, which occurs within the context of a tense situation in the area of Al Shuhada street. Front Line Defenders condemns the arbitrary arrest and ongoing judicial harassment of human rights defender Issa Amro, as it believes that it is solely motivated by his peaceful and legitimate work in the defence of human rights.

Front Line Defenders Call the Israeli Authorities to:

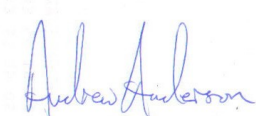
1. Immediately drop all charges against Issa Amro, as it is believed that it is solely motivated by his legitimate and peaceful work in defence of human rights.
2. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the arbitrary arrest and ill-treatment against Issa Amro, with a view to 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 Hebron are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.

Front Line Defenders respectfully reminds you that the United Nations Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by consensus by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1998, recognises the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders, their right to freedom of association and to carry out their activities without fear of reprisals. We would particularly draw attention to Article 6 (c): "Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others: (c) To study, discuss, form and hold opinions on the observance, both in law and in practice, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and, through these and other appropriate means, to draw public attention to those matters", and to Article 12 (2): "The State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present declaration."

Please inform us of any actions that may be taken with regard to the above case.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Anderson

Executive Director