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OPT/Israel: Continued intimidation and harassment against Nasser Nawaj'ah

Human rights defender **Nasser Nawaj'ah** has been facing continued acts of intimidation by the Israeli authorities whilst carrying-out his human rights work, documenting human rights violations in Hebron. On 15 April 2021, the human rights defender was stopped for approximately 20 minutes at Susiya checkpoint whilst on his way home, the most recent incident in a string of attempts by the Israeli authorities to intimidate Nasser Nawaj'ah.

[Nasser Nawaj'ah](#) is a Palestinian human rights defender and works as a field officer with B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories. In his work with the organisation, Nasser Nawaj'ah documents human rights violations in Hebron, including demolitions and confiscations of the homes of Palestinians, military violence, and the arrest of Palestinian minors.

In recent months, Nasser Nawaj'ah has been subjected to increased harassment, and is regularly stopped and questioned by the Israeli Military Forces. The human rights defender is being stopped at the Susiya checkpoint in particular, whilst on his way home from observing demonstrations in Hebron and surrounding villages. From 6-15 April 2021, Nasser Nawaj'ah was stopped at the checkpoint on four occasions by Israeli soldiers and questioned about his human rights work. On one occasion, Israeli soldiers confiscated the human rights defender's car keys and Nasser Nawaj'ah was only allowed to pass through the checkpoint after an hour of waiting. When the human rights defender questioned this incident, an Israeli soldier informed Nasser Nawaj'ah that his name was on their computer systems and that the soldier was following orders. On several other occasions, the human rights defender was not permitted to pass through the checkpoint, and was forced to go home via a bypass road. Nasser Nawaj'ah believes that this harassment is in reprisal for his work, documenting human rights violations in Hebron and the surrounding villages.

On 8 March 2021, Nasser Nawaj'ah was in a Palestinian village close to Hebron, covering a peaceful demonstration against settlements, when an Israeli soldier approached him and subsequently detained the human rights defender for several hours. According to Nasser Nawaj'ah, the soldier claimed that the human rights defender was working in a closed military zone. On 6 March 2021, Nasser Nawaj'ah was summoned to a meeting the following day by the Israeli Security Authority (ISA) by phone. During the meeting, an ISA officer reportedly accused Nasser Nawaj'ah of "threatening the Israeli military and sending B'Tselem activists to harass the soldiers". According to Nasser Nawaj'ah, the officer mentioned one incident in particular that B'Tselem had documented, the shooting of Harun Abu 'Aram, a young Palestinian man, reportedly by an Israeli soldier on 1 January 2021, which left the young man paralysed. The ISA officer reportedly threatened that "this incident can happen again if the soldiers were provoked" and told Nasser Nawaj'ah "consider yourself warned". The human rights defender considered this to be a direct threat from the ISA.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned by the continual harassment and threats against human rights defender Nasser Nawaj'ah, which it believes is in reprisal for his legitimate and peaceful efforts to document human rights violations and in attempts to preclude him from conducting this work.

Front Line Defenders urges the Israeli authorities to:

1. Cease the harassment against Nasser Nawaj'ah and hindering his passage through the Israeli checkpoints as it is believed that this is solely motivated by his peaceful and legitimate work in the defence of human rights;
2. Cease targeting all human rights defenders in OPT/Israel 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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