

15 May 2018

Lebanon: Interrogation and ongoing detention of Palestinian human rights defender Ghassan Abdallah

On 15 May, Palestinian human rights defender Ghassan Abdallah was transferred to the Lebanese Military Intelligence for interrogation. **Ghassan Abdallah** had been kept in detention at the General Directorate of the Lebanese General Security since his voluntary appearance before the Directorate General on 14 May at 9:00am following a formal summons for interrogation.

[Ghassan Abdallah](#) is the founder and executive director of the Palestinian Human Rights Organisation (PHRO), an NGO established in 1997 and registered under the Lebanese law. PHRO, which primarily focuses on the rights of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, is a member of the International Federation of Human Rights, the EuroMed Rights, and the Arab Organisation for Human Rights.

On 10 May, Ghassan Abdallah received a letter summoning him to appear before the General Directorate of Lebanese General Security for questioning at 9:00am on 14 May. He attended the questioning, and was kept in detention at the General Directorate overnight. On 15 May, he informed his family by phone that he had been transferred to Military Intelligence for further questioning.

Lebanese authorities have so far refused to provide information about the charges against the human rights defender and he has been denied access to his lawyer. He informed his family that the questioning has primarily focused on his activities on the rights of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and his ties with Palestinian human rights defenders and NGOs outside Lebanon. Since yesterday, his family has been trying without success to give him his essential medication for blood pressure and diabetes.

Ghassan Abdallah's summons came just a few days after he had returned from France, where he attended an international meeting on human rights in Palestine and the rights of Palestinian refugees organised by EuroMed Rights in Paris on 27-28 April.

Front Line Defenders condemns the questioning and ongoing detention of Ghassan Abdallah, which it believes is solely motivated by his peaceful and legitimate activities in defence of human rights, particularly the rights of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Front Line Defenders is also concerned for Ghassan Abdallah's health given that he is being denied access to his medication.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Lebanon to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Ghassan Abdallah as Front Line Defenders believes that he is being held solely as a result of his legitimate and peaceful human rights work.
2. Provide Ghassan Abdallah proper access to medication and allow him immediate and

unfettered access to his family and his lawyers.

3. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Ghassan Abdallah;

4. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Lebanon are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.