

URGENT ACTION

ANAS BARGHOUTI FREED ON BAIL, FACING TRIAL

Prisoner of conscience Anas Barghouti was released on bail on 23 October, on the orders of a military judge, on the grounds that confessions from other detainees submitted as evidence against him failed to prove he was a security threat. He is facing trial before a military court and if convicted could be imprisoned for up to 18 months.

Anas Barghouti, a 30-year-old human rights lawyer and activist, was released by a judge at Ofer Military Court on bail of 12,000 Israeli shekels (approx. US\$ 3,400). He had been held in Ofer military complex.

He now faces trial before a military court on charges of “membership of the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine” (PFLP), an organization which Israel has banned, and “leadership of a committee to organize demonstrations”. He denies both charges. If convicted and imprisoned on these charges, Amnesty International would consider him a prisoner of conscience, held solely for his work as a lawyer on behalf of prisoners and for the peaceful expression of his political views.

Anas Barghouti was arrested on 15 September at a military checkpoint near Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank. He was held without charge until 24 September when an Israeli military court presented him with the above charges.

His arrest appears to be related to his work and human rights activism and to be part of a pattern of harassment by the Israeli authorities of Palestinian human rights organizations and activists in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which includes arbitrary detentions, restrictions on movement, and raids of homes and offices.

Please write immediately in Hebrew, English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to drop all charges against Anas Barghouti, and pointing out that if convicted and imprisoned Amnesty International would consider him a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for his work as a lawyer on behalf of prisoners and for the peaceful expression of his political views;
- Calling on them to put an immediate end to harassment of human rights defenders in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 6 DECEMBER 2013 TO:

Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu
Office of the Prime Minister
3 Kaplan St.
PO Box 187
Kiryat Ben-Gurion
Jerusalem 91950, Israel
Email: b.netanyahu@pmo.gov.il
pm_eng@pmo.gov.il
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Military Judge Advocate General

Brigadier General Danny Efroni
6 David Elazar Street
Hakiryia, Tel Aviv, Israel
Fax: 011 972 3 569 4526
Email: avimn@idf.gov.il
Salutation: Dear Judge Advocate
General

And copies to:

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence
Moshe Ya'alon
Ministry of Defence
37 Kaplan Street, Hakiryia
Tel Aviv 61909, Israel
Fax: 011 972 3 691 6940
011 972 3 696 2757

Also send copies to:

Ambassador Michael Oren, Embassy of Israel
3514 International Dr. NW, Washington DC 20008
Fax: 1 202 364 5607 | Email: info@israelemb.org -OR- info@washington.mfa.gov.il

Please check with the AIUSA Urgent Action Office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Anas Barghouti was arrested by the Israeli army at a military checkpoint north of Bethlehem in the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 15 September 2013. He had been on his way home to Ramallah after a visit to friends and family. At around 7pm soldiers stopped the car in which he was travelling and arrested him after he said he was a lawyer and presented his Bar Association card. Soldiers confiscated his phone and questioned him, then blindfolded and handcuffed him and transferred him to a detention centre in the illegal Israeli settlement of Etzion. He was then taken to Ofer military complex where he was held until his release. He was first presented to a military court on 16 September when a judge agreed to the military prosecutor's request to extend his detention without charge until 22 September. On that date, his detention was again extended until 24 September when he was charged. He had a court hearing on 1 October at which his trial was postponed until 9 October and then adjourned again until 23 October.

Anas Barghouti is from the village of Dier Ghassaneh, north of Ramallah. He has worked as a lawyer for Addameer Association for Prisoner Support and Human Rights since 2009 and, through this work, has provided legal support and representation for Palestinians held by the Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces. His main responsibility was to follow up on cases of arbitrary arrests by the PA and represent victims in court, including the Palestinian Supreme Court. According to Addameer, Anas Barghouti was often harassed by the PA security forces for his work in defending the human rights of Palestinian detainees.

Anas Barghouti's other human rights work included organizing and participating in events and activities calling for the protection and respect of the human rights of Palestinian detainees and prisoners in Israeli prisons. His arrest was part of a pattern of harassment by the Israeli authorities of Palestinian human rights organizations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and activists working with them, which includes arbitrary detentions, restrictions on movement, and raids on homes and offices.

Addameer is one of the organizations affected. On 11 December 2012, Israeli forces raided their offices and two other Palestinian NGOs in Ramallah, seizing computers, work files and equipment and ransacking the premises. Addameer workers other than Anas Barghouti have been targeted individually. Israeli military orders have banned Addameer's chair, Abdullatif Ghaith, from entering the West Bank or travelling abroad since 2011. On 23 September 2013, one week after Anas Barghouti was arrested, Israeli forces arrested Addameer's accountant, Samer Arbid. He was placed in custody for questioning until 21 October, when he was given a four-month administrative detention order (a military order by which the authorities hold him without charge or trial, renewable indefinitely).

The most serious allegations concern the case of Addameer researcher and human rights defender Ayman Nasser. According to his lawyer, he was tortured during interrogation following his arrest by Israeli forces on 15 October 2012. He told his lawyer that he was interrogated for up to 20 hours every day and that during the interrogation he was kept in a stress position on a chair with his hands tied behind his back. He was convicted by a military court in November 2012 on charges including membership of the PFLP and carrying out activities in support of Palestinian prisoners. He spent a year in prison and was released on 21 October 2013.

The Israeli authorities also frequently prevent Addameer lawyers from visiting the prisoners and detainees they represent.

Name: Anas Barghouti (m)

Issue(s): Prisoner of conscience, Freedom of expression, Arbitrary detention, Legal concern

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