

AYMAN AMEEN AHMAD NASSER

Date of Birth: 20 June 1970

Date of arrest: 15 October 2012

Residence: Saffa village (near Ramallah)

Marital Status: Married with four children

Occupation: Researcher with Addameer Prisoner Support

& Human Rights Association and part time lecturer at Al Quds Open University

Place of detention: Megiddo Prison



'I believe that every human being has opinions and positions and if it's not violating the law he can freely think and speak these opinions. I am a human rights defender who supports the Palestinian prisoners and I represent my opinions in the public media. My thoughts are not secret, they are public, and everyone knows them'

Ayman Nasser addressing Israeli military court, 18 October 2012

ARREST AND INTEROGATION

At 1.00am on the morning of 15 October a large number of Israeli Occupying Forces (IOF) raided Ayman's home in the village of Saffa, near Ramallah. The raid lasted about 1.5 hours, during which time IOF used sniffer dogs to search each room in the house and confiscated Ayman's computer and mobile phone.

They also searched the computer of Ayman's children and confiscated some of its pieces. Ayman's wife was kept in a separate room during the raid with two Israeli soldiers pointing their weapons at her for the duration of the raid. At approximately 3.00am Ayman was taken away by IOF and is currently being held in Moskobiyeh detention center in Jerusalem.

As of 4 December 2012, Ayman has spent 45 days in Israeli interrogation and detention. These interrogation sessions have steadily increased in length from a few hours per day after his initial arrest to over 20 hours per day. During interrogation Ayman is held in painful stress positions.

When not under interrogation, Ayman is held in a windowless isolation cell and subject to numerous forms of intimidation, including sleep deprivation from a constant fluorescent light, freezing temperatures from an air conditioning unit and lack of proper clothing and blankets. Furthermore, Ayman is routinely denied the proper medication he needs for pre-existing health issues. Under these conditions, his health has deteriorated drastically in detention.

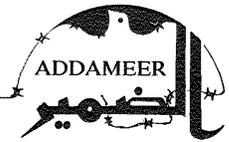
The lengthy duration of the interrogations are causing Ayman immense pain, particularly in his back, due to his existing back problems. The pain is further compounded when his hands are shackled behind his back.

COURT APPEARANCES

On October 18 Ayman appeared in Israeli court in Jerusalem, where the prosecution requested that his interrogation period be extended by another 15 days. During the court appearance Addameer lawyer Mahmoud Hassan refereed questions to the prosecution regarding the failure of the interrogators to provide Ayman with his medication, as Ayman is currently only getting two out of the five medications that he requires daily.

During his court appearance Ayman said that the main focus of the interrogation had been his involvement in the Handala Center, which is an educational, artistic center in Ayman's village Saffa and of which he is the Chairperson. Ayman argued that the center is completely transparent and is registered with the Palestinian Authority, in full compliance of Palestinian law.

Addressing the court Ayman said he believes 'that every human being has opinions and positions and if it's not violating the law he can freely think and speak these opinions. I am a human rights defender who supports the Palestinian prisoners and I represent my opinions in the public media. My thoughts are not secret, they are public, and everyone knows them'.



The judge ruled that based on ‘secret evidence’ he would extend Ayman’s interrogation period for another seven days and referred the situation of the medicine to the doctor at Moskobiyyeh detention center. This referral to the doctor is quite worrying as it has been well documented by Addameer and other human rights organizations, that the withholding of medication or medical treatment is systematically used by doctors in the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) to pressure prisoners into complying with IPS demands.

Since Ayman’s first court appearance on 18 October 2012 he has had his period of interrogation extended on a number of occasions. In total, Ayman spent 45 days in Israeli interrogation before charges were brought against him on 28 November 2012. The charges include support and solidarity with Palestinian prisoners, participating in the annual Prisoner’s Day on 17 April (the charges specified participation in 2011 and 2012), as well as participating in solidarity activities during hunger strikes (both collective hunger strikes and individual hunger strikes), in addition to attending a festival anniversary of Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa on 27 August 2012.

Ayman was denied bail and will remain in Israeli detention until the end of his trial. The next court appearance will take place on 17 December 2012. Since charges were brought against Ayman he was transferred to Megiddo prison.

PREVIOUS ARRESTS

Ayman has previously spent six years in Israeli prisons. He was arrested in 1992 and eventually released on 27 October 1997.

AYMAN’S EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

At the time of Ayman’s imprisonment in 1992, he had earned his high school certificate. However, upon his release he completed his BA in Social Work. In 2010, he also earned his Masters in Social Educational Psychology from Abu Dis University.

Since 2008 Ayman has been working with Addameer as a researcher in its documentation unit and has represented Addameer in many local human rights coalitions, including the Coalition against Torture and the Coalition against the Death Penalty. He is also Addameer’s representative on the ‘High Committee for Palestinian Political Prisoners’, which includes various human rights organizations, representatives from the Ministry of Prisoners Affairs and political parties that advocate on behalf of Palestinian political prisoners.

Ayman has also been lecturing on a part-time basis at Al Quds Open University where he teaches BA students Social Work.

He is also the Chairperson and one of the founders of the Handala Center in Saffa which was established 1999. The Handala Center is an educational, artistic and sports center that is based on the principal of voluntary work and serves all the residents of Saffa.

Prior to his arrest Ayman was standing as a candidate on the ‘United Saffa’ list in the upcoming local elections in his village of Saffa, which believes in justice, development and the rule of law. While under Israeli interrogation Ayman was elected to the village council and like many other Palestinian elected representatives, serves his people from the confines of an Israeli prison cell.

HEALTH CONDITION

Ayman suffers from a number of health issues including inflammation in his colon and back pain. Prior to his arrest he was receiving medical treatment by specialized doctors and is in constant need of medical attention.

FAMILY

Ayman has been married to his wife Haleema for almost 20 years. They have four children together, Ameen (13), Naji (11), Nadeem (8) and Mohammad (3). According to Ayman’s wife Haleema, their children are “looking forward to see their father, a father who taught them the meaning of freedom and loving life”.

Ayman is an extremely well educated man, who is an avid reader with extensive knowledge about cultural, social and political aspects of life.