

Journalist Omar Nazzal placed under Administrative Detention



02 May 2016

Ofer Military Court has issued an administrative detention order against journalist Omar Nazzal today, Monday 02 May 2016. The order is set to end on 22 August 2016, but may be renewed indefinitely.

Occupation forces arrested the journalist Omar Nazzal, a member of the General Secretariat of the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate, and president of the Democratic Journalists Union on 23 April 2016, from the Allenby Bridge while en route to participation in the European Federation of Journalists General Meeting.

Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association condemns the continued and systematic targeting and arrests of journalists, including Mr. Nazzal, in contravention with the internationally codified freedom of expression and of movement. Journalists continue to be targeted for practicing their professions and reporting and investigating human rights violations in occupied Palestine.

In the occupied Palestinian West Bank, the Israeli army is authorized to issue administrative detention orders against Palestinian civilians on the basis of article 285 of Military Order 1651. This article empowers military commanders to detain an individual for up to six-month renewable periods if they have “reasonable grounds to presume that the security of the area or public security require the detention”. No definition of “security of the area” or “public security” is given. On or just before the expiry date, the detention order is frequently renewed; there is no explicit limit to the maximum amount of time an individual may be administratively detained, leaving room for indefinite detention.

Administrative detention orders are issued either at the time of arrest or at some later date and are often based on “secret information” collected by the Israeli Security Agency. Neither the detainee nor his lawyer is ever informed of the reasons for the detention or given access to the “secret information”.
