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## Issa Amro Released on Bail



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The oppressive nature of the occupation has been with us since 1948. None of its actions come as a shock to us, whether it be the continued suffocating of Gaza or mass incarceration in the West Bank.

That said, the past few months have represented something of a shift. The policy of security cooperation between the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the occupation has been a known fact for years, but the current form of oppression is something new.

Following increased political turmoil and uncertainty in regard to the PA, Hamas, and Dahlan, both regimes have become more heavy handed in regard to dissent. In response to a number of arrests of Fatah and PA-friendly journalists in Gaza, the authority in Ramallah instituted the 'Electronic Crimes Law'. If unfamiliar with the details of the Presidential decree, please take a look at our analysis [here](#).

As a result, the PA now has the legal power to imprison any dissenting voice and it has not been shy about using it. The most recent individual to be imprisoned under this decree has been human rights defender Issa Amro.

Issa turned himself in to the Palestinian security forces on 4 September 2017. He was requested to present himself in regard to a Facebook post that questioned the PA's arrest of Ayman al-Qawasmī, the director of Hebron's Minbar al-Hurriya radio station. The charges against him include 'causing strife' and Article 20 of the 'Electronic Crimes Law'.

Article 20 states that, "anyone who creates or manages a website or an information technology platform that aims to publish news that would endanger the integrity of the Palestinian state, the public order or the internal or external security of the State shall be punished..." with a fine between one thousand dinar [\$1414 USD] and five thousand dinar [\$7070 USD], at least a year of jail time, or

both.

He appeared in front of a judge on 7 September, who extended his detention period until 11 September. It appears that, as of today 10 September 2017, Issa has been released on bail with the charges against him still standing.

This case represents more than simply a gross violation of the freedom of expression, it tells us all as Palestinians that the PA, our supposed government, values its own survival and prestige over the rights of its people.

Addameer calls for the immediate dropping of charges against Issa Amro, the nullification of the presidential decree entitled the 'Electronic Crimes Law', and for the PA to abide by its international obligations as signatories of the basic instruments of human rights law.

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