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20 July 2020

Today 20 July 2020, the Military Court at Ofer sentenced the Palestinian Author and Academic, Ahmad Qatamesh, according to a listed of charges presented against him.

Ahmad Qatamesh was charged with the presence at an illegal gathering for an illegal organization, more specifically, he was charged for giving a lecture in one of the student activities organized by the Democratic, Progressive Student Pole at Birzeit University. He was sentenced for only a suspended sentence for four months in prison in the coming three years if he gives a lecture again in the mentioned period. However, Qatamesh was not released because he is detained under administrative detention in addition to the list of charges presented against him.

Qatamesh was in fact, arrested on 24 December 2019, he was presented with the list of charges against him shortly after the arrest. However, the military prosecution decided later on to give him a conditional release on bail. Instead of getting released, on 2 January 2020 the Military Commander of the West Bank issued a four-month administrative detention order against Qatamesh, which were later renewed for another four months. Thus, Qatamesh is charged and on trail and at the same time is facing administrative detention.

The case of detainee Ahmad Qatamesh is a clear example for the arbitrariness of the occupation authorities in using administrative detention against Palestinians. The occupation authorities continued the trail procedures against Qatamesh according to the list of charges presented against him in spite of the administrative detention order against him. The military prosecution took

advantage of the possibility of issuing him an administrative detention order because the charges brought against him are not enough for imprisoning him.

Furthermore, issuing an administrative detention order against Qatamesh was through alleging that the secret file against contains information that is different than what is presented in the list of charges. The Israeli occupation forces used administrative detention as an alternative to providing an actual trail then they failed to proof any suspicions against Qatamesh. This is a policy used by the occupation authorities constantly when targeting Palestinian activities, human rights defenders, and academics.

Ahmad Qatamesh is expected to be released on 31 July 2020, since the renewal of his administrative detention order is supposed to be the last in case no new "secret information" appeared against him.
