

Forced deportation of human rights lawyer Salah Hammouri

The undersigned organisations are gravely concerned about the forced deportation of French-Palestinian lawyer and human rights defender, Salah Hammouri. As a lawyer, Mr. Hammouri represents political prisoners in Israeli and Palestinian prisons. He has been held in [pre-trial detention](#) for nine months and has faced many forms of harassment from the Israeli authorities. Born of Palestinian and French parents and a life-long resident of Jerusalem, Mr. Hammouri was stripped of his residency in Jerusalem and was forcibly deported to France in December 2022.

On 9 August 2022, the undersigned parties published a statement about the administrative detention and judicial harassment of Salah Hammouri. Since Mr. Hammouri's arrest on 7 March 2022, his administrative detention order has been extended twice, covering a nine-month period until 4 December. Until today, it is not clear what the charges against Mr. Hammouri are, as his file is being kept secret.

Moreover, on 18 October 2021, Mr. Hammouri was [notified](#) of the Israeli Minister of Interior's decision to revoke his permanent residency status in Jerusalem purportedly because of a "breach of allegiance to the State of Israel", also based on a secret file. His appeal was rejected. According to the information received, during such procedures, Mr. Hammouri was questioned about his work as a lawyer at the Palestinian NGO Addameer.

On 30 November 2022, the day after the decision to revoke his permanent residency, Mr. Hammouri was notified by the prison services that he was due to attend a deportation hearing the next day. During the deportation hearing, the Israeli minister of Interior also re-affirmed her decision to revoke Mr. Hammouri's Jerusalem Residency.

On 5 December 2022, a second deportation hearing took place, which Mr. Hammouri's lawyers and family were not allowed to attend. On 6 December, a third residency revocation hearing took place, where Mr. Hammouri and his lawyers were allowed to be present. The court did not issue a decision on Mr. Hammouri's deportation, and ruled to maintain him under detention in Hadarim prison until further notice. As his administrative detention order had expired on 4 December, Mr. Hammouri was now detained on the basis of being a "*sagav*", a highly dangerous prisoner. The court scheduled a further judicial review hearing regarding his detention on [1 January 2023 at which hearing the court would also](#) look into updates on the residency revocation. However, his deportation to France had already taken place on 18 December 2022. He was hand- and foot cuffed during the entire flight from Palestine to France.

The undersigned organisations are deeply concerned that the forced deportation and continued harassment of Mr. Hammouri is connected to, and serves to unlawfully restrict, his legitimate activities as a lawyer and human rights defender.

UN Experts have [warned](#) that Israel's decision to deport Mr. Hammouri could constitute a War Crime under the Fourth Geneva Convention, [article 49](#), which prohibits "individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory". They have also urged Israel to retract the revocation of Hammouri's permanent residency, but this was without result.

Lawyers play a vital role in upholding the rule of law and the protection of human rights, including the rights to an effective remedy, due process of law, fair trials, and the right to freedom from torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. An independent legal

profession advocating before independent courts and tribunals is essential to the impartiality and integrity of the legal system. The work of independent lawyers is indispensable for the public to have confidence in the administration of justice and to ensure effective and impartial justice for all.

The UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers state in Basic Principle 16 that governments must ensure that lawyers “are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance or improper interference.” The Basic Principles further require that lawyers “shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards, and ethics.” Moreover, Basic Principle 23 states that lawyers have the human rights to freedom of expression and to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice, and the promotion and protection of human rights.

We call on the Israeli authorities to:

- Retract the revocation of the Jerusalem Residency of Mr. Salah Hammouri;
- Put an end to all forms of harassment, including at the judicial and administrative levels, against him; and
- Guarantee that all lawyers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel are able to practice law without threat, intimidation, hindrance, harassment, improper interference or reprisals, in line with international law and standards on the role of lawyers;
- Guarantee the independence of all judicial authorities in accordance with the UN Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary.