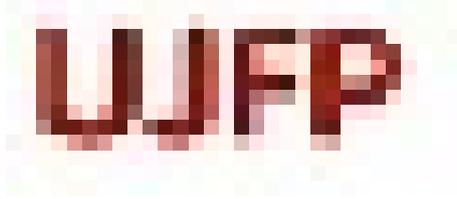


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# Statement: Israel government should free Ameer Makhoul on the second anniversary of his arrest



- Call -  
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## Statement: Israel government should free Ameer Makhoul on the second anniversary of his arrest



More than 25 organisations around the world have combined to urge Israel to free imprisoned human rights defender Ameer Makhoul on the second anniversary of his arrest.

Ameer has been in prison since May 2010. On 1 May 2012, Ameer was transferred from Gilboa prison to another jail in Majido, allegedly as punishment for participating in a hunger strike to highlight the conditions of political prisoners in Israel. His family was not informed, and only found out about the move when they tried to visit him at Gilboa prison. The transfer of Ameer to Majido adds to the harassment being faced by his family by making it difficult for them to reach him.

Ameer has been Director of Ittijah: Union of Arab Community-Based Associations since it was established in 1995. He has also served as Chair of the Public Committee for the Defence of Political Freedoms of Arab Citizens in Israel, in addition to being a prolific writer on political, social and civil society issues in Israel.

The circumstances surrounding Ameer's arrest by Israel's Shin Bet security agency, and the consequent failure by the Israeli government to follow the due process of law immediately after his arrest, smack of harassment and political interference.

On 6 May 2010, 16 agents from Shin Bet burst into Ameer's home in the middle of the night, searched it and confiscated laptops, hard drives, cell phones and a camera belonging to his family. Following his arrest, Ameer was detained incommunicado for 12 days, given no explanation of the charges against him and denied access to a lawyer. His detention was later extended by a court order and he was granted access to his legal team only after they threatened not to attend his detention extension hearing in court.

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Ameer was subjected to intense interrogation sessions and charged with assisting an enemy in time of war, and contact with a foreign agent, which he denied. Under severe pressure from Israeli agents, in October 2010, Ameer entered a plea bargain stating that he contacted a foreign agent and conspired to assist an enemy [Hezbollah] in a time of war. As a result of the plea bargain, the more serious charge of assisting an enemy in war which carried a life sentence was withdrawn by the prosecution. He was sentenced to nine years in prison with an additional years suspended sentence.

We believe that Ameer Makhoul is a prisoner of conscience whose work to defend human rights in Israel has been wrongly curtailed. As such he should be immediately and unconditionally released to prevent the continuation of this travesty of justice.

Issued on behalf of:

- ▶ Les Alternatifs, France
- ▶ Arab NGO Network for Development, Lebanon
- ▶ Asociacion pro Derechos Humanos de Andalucia, Spain
- ▶ Association des Travailleurs Maghrebins de France, France
- ▶ Association France Palestine Solidarite, France
- ▶ The Association of NGOs, the Gambia
- ▶ Une Autre Voix Juive, France
- ▶ Bahraini Transparency Association, Bahrain
- ▶ Campagne Civile pour la Protection Internationale du Peuple Palestinien, France
- ▶ CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
- ▶ Collectif Judéo Arabe et Citoyen pour la Paix, France
- ▶ Comité pour la Justice et la Paix en Palestine et au Moyen-Orient du 5ème Arrondissement of Paris, France
- ▶ Fondation Frantz Fanon
- ▶ The Gathering of the CSOs in Saida, Lebanon
- ▶ Mouvement Contre le Racisme et pour l'Amitié entre les Peuples, France
- ▶ Nigerian Network of NGOs, Nigeria
- ▶ Pakistan NGO Forum, Pakistan
- ▶ Palestinian NGO Network, Palestine
- ▶ Le Parti Communiste Français, France
- ▶ Plataforma de Solidaridad con Palestina de Sevilla, Spain
- ▶ Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, UK
- ▶ Sudanese Civic forum, Sudan
- ▶ United Civilians for Peace
- ▶ Union Juive Française pour la Paix, France
- ▶ Union Syndicale Solidaires, France
- ▶ Femmes en noir, Strasbourg, France
- ▶ Workers' Communist Party of France, France

**CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation is a global movement dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society across the world.**