



Salah and Elsa submitted a family reunification application to enable Elsa to stay and live in the occupied Palestinian territory.

However, the Israeli occupying authorities repeatedly delayed their response to the application, forcing Elsa to stay in the occupied Palestinian territory, fearing to be unable to re-enter the country in the event she travels to see her family in France. Finally, in 2015, Elsa was granted a one-year visa, which she received through her work at the Consulate General of France in Jerusalem. Accordingly, Salah and Elsa, who was pregnant, decided to travel to France to visit her family before she gave birth.

Upon Elsa's return on 5 January 2016, she was held at the airport for six to seven hours before being denied entry and ordered to return to France. Salah and Elsa immediately appealed the decision, and the hearing was set for the next morning. Pending her hearing, Elsa was detained at the airport, was denied contact with her husband and family, had her belongings confiscated, and was refused medical attention despite being seven months pregnant. The next morning, the judge rejected the appeal and Elsa was deported to France two days later. At around the same time, Salah's family reunification request was denied. Ever since, Elsa has been denied entry to the occupied Palestinian territory, eliminating the possibility of her, Salah and their new-born living a normal life as a family in Salah's hometown. Separating Salah from his wife and son, who was born in France, Salah has been travelling to Paris every three months in order to spend some time with his family. Following these visits, he returns home, alone.



"We experience Israel's apartheid regime on a daily basis, and that will continue to be the case as long as Israel enjoys its culture of impunity."

Salah Hammouri



Name: Salah Hasan Hammouri
Date of Birth: 25 April 1985 (35 years old)
Address: Jerusalem
Profession: Lawyer at Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association

Salah Hammouri's case illustrates the Israeli apartheid regime's protracted and systematic policies and practices intended to silence human rights defenders, who advocate for Palestinians and seek justice and accountability for violations of Palestinian rights; mainly through resorting to continuous arbitrary arrests and detention.

Salah Hammouri is a 35-year-old Palestinian-French human rights defender and a lawyer at Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association. He was born in East Jerusalem to a Palestinian Jerusalemite father and a French mother, and has lived in East Jerusalem his entire life. Salah was, and still is, subject to unrelenting harassment by the Israeli occupying authorities. In an attempt to regain control of his life following the seven years spent in prison, Salah enrolled in university, graduated from law school, and immediately enrolled in a human rights program for a master's degree. The Israeli occupying authorities have undertaken a targeted harassment campaign against Salah, who is a vocal Palestinian human rights advocate, with the aim of repressing his right to free expression and de-legitimising and discrediting his work as a human right defender. The persistent attacks against Salah have included arbitrary arrests, the imposition of exorbitantly high fines and bails, and the imposition of travel bans against him and his family.

Continuous Arbitrary Arrests

During the second Intifada, when he was only sixteen years old, Salah was detained for five months for participating in student activities and spray-painting slogans on walls. In 2004, he was arrested again and spent five months in jail under administrative detention, without trial or charges. His third and longest detention began in 2005, when he was imprisoned for

allegedly planning an attack on Israeli Rabbi, Ovadia Yosef. Salah denied the accusations and was imprisoned for seven years rather than accepting an offer to be deported to France for ten years. Three months before the end of his seven-year sentence, Salah was released as part of a prisoner exchange deal.

In September 2014, Salah was banned for a period of six months from travelling to designated areas within the occupied West Bank from his place of residency in Jerusalem. The travel ban order was renewed twice, until it was finally lifted in March 2016. Nonetheless, the Israeli occupying authorities continued to unremittably harass Salah.

On 23 August 2017, Salah was detained by the Israeli occupying authorities. During a hearing held on the same day, his detention was extended for five additional days to examine his confiscated devices. Following the prosecution's failure to present a list of charges against Salah during the second hearing, which took place on 27 August 2017, the judge decided to release Salah under a number of conditions, including a house arrest for ten days in Reineh near Nazareth, a ban from entering Jerusalem for 90 days, a travel ban for three months, and a NIS 10,000 bail.

Immediately after the court's decision, Salah's father went to pay Salah's fine. However, before he was able to finish the required procedures, the prosecution had issued a six-month administrative detention order against Salah from 29 August 2017 until 28 February 2018. Subsequently, this order was extended for four months, before being renewed for an additional three months. Salah was released on 30 September 2018.

On 30 June 2020, Salah was arrested near Sheikh Jarrah health centre in Jerusalem while he was being tested for COVID-19, in preparation for traveling to France to visit his family. Taken to al-Moscobiya for interrogation, his detention was extended for an additional eight days under the pretext of further investigation. On 7 July 2020, Salah was released under the condition of fulfilling the following requirements, which included paying a NIS 2,000 bail that had already been paid, and depositing a NIS 1,000 guarantee. Salah was also ordered to cease communication with certain individuals, a full list of whom has not been shared with him.

Threat of Jerusalem Residency Revocation

As a Palestinian human rights defender who challenges Israel's widespread and systematic human rights violations, Salah has endured constant Israeli attempts to intimidate him, including the latest threat of residency revocation. On 3 September 2020, the Israeli occupying authorities

notified Salah Hammouri of the ministry's intention to revoke his permanent residency status for so-called "breach of allegiance" to the State of Israel. He was given 30 days to challenge this decision by submitting a written response, which would later be examined ahead of a final decision.

The Palestinian population in occupied and illegally annexed East Jerusalem live with the risk of residency revocation, leading to their transfer from the city, in line with Israel's demographic plans to unlawfully establish and maintain a Jewish majority in the city. Residency revocation is one of the main tools used by Israel to transfer protected Palestinians from occupied East Jerusalem. While applied since 1967, in more recent times, Israel has gradually expanded the criteria for the revocation of residency rights, which includes granting authority to the Ministry of Interior to revoke Palestinian residency rights on punitive grounds.¹

If Salah's residency is revoked, Israel will violate Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits "individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not," regardless of the motive.² International criminal law further prohibits the serious crime of population transfer, including through demographic manipulation, which may amount to a war crime and crime against humanity. The transfer of the Palestinian civilian population is not only illegal, but it further results in the denial of basic human rights including rights to family life, health, education, work, and many other civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. The revocation of residency status violates the basic right of Palestinians to leave and return to their own country, in violation of Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which notes "no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of the right to enter his own country."³ Article 17 of the aforementioned Covenant further prohibits arbitrary attacks and unlawful interference with an individual's privacy, family, home or correspondence.⁴

Targeting Salah's Family

In 2014, Salah Hammouri married Elsa Lefort, a French national who, at the time of the wedding, had a visitor's visa for six months. Despite Elsa's persistent efforts, the Israeli occupying authorities refused to renew her visa, under the pretext that Salah was released through a prisoner exchange deal and is therefore blacklisted in all of departments affiliated with the Israeli government. Similarly,

1 Al-Haq, "Residency Revocation: Israel's Forcible Transfer of Palestinians from Jerusalem," 03 July 2017, at: <http://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/6331.html>.

2 Article 49, Fourth Geneva Convention.

3 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entry into force 23 March 1976) 16 December 1966, 999 UNTS 171 (henceforth the "ICCPR")

4 Article 17, ICCPR.