

URGENT ACTION

PALESTINIAN ACTIVIST'S SENTENCING RESCHEDULED

Palestinian activist Abdallah Abu Rahma will be sentenced on 8 February to up to five years in prison, at the Israeli Ofer Military Court. If he is jailed, he will be a prisoner of conscience.

Abdallah Abu Rahma was convicted on 21 October 2014 in connection with a demonstration that had taken place on 10 May 2012 at the Bitunya checkpoint near the Israeli Ofer Military Prison to commemorate the *Nakba* (Catastrophe) (events in 1948 when more than 700,000 Palestinians lost their homes) and in support of Palestinian prisoners and detainees. He was first scheduled to be sentenced on 5 January but this has since been adjourned until 8 February.

As well as sentencing him to imprisonment for his conviction in 2014, it is possible that the court could activate two six-month suspended prison sentences which were handed to him in 2010. Those sentences followed his convictions on charges that included, in one case, "incitement" and "organizing and participating in illegal demonstrations" between 2005 and 2009 and, in the other, violating a military curfew on his village, Bil'in, between June and September 2005. In the first case, the military judge accepted the prosecution's argument that Abdallah Abu Rahma had encouraged demonstrators in Bil'in, in the occupied West Bank, to throw stones at Israeli soldiers. This was based on the statements of three children, who later retracted them in court, saying they had been coerced. They did not understand Hebrew, the language in which their statements were written.

In the May 2012 protest, Abdallah Abu Rahma was detained by Israeli forces for standing in front of bulldozers carrying concrete blocks for use as road blocks and released on bail after a few hours. He was not summonsed until February 2013 on charges of obstructing a soldier in the line of duty.

Please write immediately in Hebrew, English or your own language:

- Condemning the harassment of Abdallah Abu Rahma and calling on the authorities to ensure that his conviction is rescinded immediately since it arose as a result of his peaceful exercise of the rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 MARCH 2015 TO:

Prime Minister
Benjamin Netanyahu
Office of the Prime Minister
3 Kaplan St, PO Box 187
Kiryat Ben-Gurion
Jerusalem 91950, Israel
Email: b.netanyahu@pmo.gov.il
pm_eng@pmo.gov.il
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Military Judge Advocate General
Brigadier General Danny Efroni
6 David Elazar Street
Hakiryia, Tel Aviv, Israel
Fax: +972 3 569 4526
Email: avimn@idf.gov.il
Salutation: Dear Judge Advocate General

And copies to:
Minister of Defence
Moshe Ya'alon
Ministry of Defence
37 Kaplan Street, Hakiryia
Tel Aviv 61909, Israel
Fax: +972 3 691 6940
+972 3 696 2757

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 320/14. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE15/040/2014/en>

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

PALESTINIAN ACTIVIST'S SENTENCING RESCHEDULED

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Abdallah Abu Rahma is a well-known political activist with a long-term public commitment to using peaceful means to raise international awareness of the human rights violations suffered by Palestinians as a result of Israel's fence/wall. He is the head of the Popular Committee Against the Wall in the West Bank village of Bil'in, in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). The committee holds weekly protests against the approximately 700km-long "security" fence/wall, which is built mainly on Palestinian land, separating many Palestinians from their land. Since 2005, the villagers of Bil'in, together with Palestinian, Israeli and international supporters, have been holding weekly demonstrations in protest against the fence/wall and the confiscation of their land by the Israeli authorities for its construction.

In September 2007 the Israeli High Court of Justice issued a ruling instructing the Israeli military authorities to reroute the fence/wall in Bil'in to give the villagers access to more of their land, but this ruling has yet to be fully implemented. The right to peaceful protest is very important for Palestinians in the OPT, as they have no other way, such as voting, to influence the policy of the occupying power. They are frequently met by the use of excessive force by Israeli forces. For more information, see *Trigger-happy: Israel's use of excessive force in the West Bank* (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE15/002/2014/en/349188ef-e14a-418f-ac20-6c9e5c8d9f88/mde150022014en.pdf>).

Name: Abdallah Abu Rahma

Gender: m

Further information on UA: 320/14 Index: MDE 15/004/2015 Issue Date: 5 February 2015