

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/israel-palestinian-journalists-at-the-19-04-2012,42331.html>

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Middle East/North Africa - Israel

Basic rights ignored

## Palestinian journalists at the mercy of arbitrary Israeli justice

19 April 2012

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Reporters Without Borders deplors the verdict announced by Israeli military court sentencing the Palestinian journalist **Suhaib Al-Assa** to four months' imprisonment and a fine of 3,000 shekels (about 600 euros).

"We condemn the lack of transparency of Israeli justice which refuses to disclose the indictment and evidence in the case of Suhaib Al-Assa," the press freedom organization said. "The right to a fair defence must be observed."

According to the *Ma'an News Agency*, Israeli troops raided the journalist's home in the village of al-Ubeidiya, near Bethlehem, on 5 February and took him to Ashkelon prison. They seized his personal computer and cell phone. Al-Assa works for [Radio Bethlehem 2000](#).

Following Palestinian Prisoners' Day on 17 April, Reporters Without Borders wishes to draw attention to the fate of Palestinian journalists who have been arrested and held in custody by the Israeli authorities.

Disregarding the most basic rights, administrative detention – a legacy of the British mandate – is regularly used to detain Palestinian journalists arbitrarily. The measure, renewable every six months, allows the Israeli authorities to keep people in detention without charge.

Some Palestinian activists and journalists have been in prison for several years without trial. More than [320 Palestinians](#), journalists among them, are currently held in administrative detention. Whenever media workers face trial, it is usually before a military court.

Reporters Without Borders calls on the Israeli authorities to try Palestinian journalists before civilian courts, observing their right to a fair defence, and to release them unless there are valid grounds not to do so.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of Palestinian journalists in detention:

[Walid Khaled](#), the editor of the Gaza-based newspaper *Filisteen* was arrested by Israeli troops in May last year near Salfit in the northwest of the West Bank. Currently held in administrative detention, he has been imprisoned previously and has a total of 16 years in Israeli jails.

[Raed Sharif](#), a journalist for a local radio station in Hebron in the south of the West Bank, was arrested last November. His trial has been continually postponed. He is held in Ofar Prison, Israel's main detention facility.

[Nawaf Al-Amer](#), programme director for the satellite station *Al-Quds*, was arrested in June last year at his home southwest of Nablus, in the northern sector of the West Bank. His administrative detention was renewed in January this year.

**Amin Abd Al-Aziz Abu Warda**, a reporter for the *Palestinian News Network* and the Emirati newspaper *Al-Khaleej*, was arrested last December in Nablus and placed in administrative detention.

**[Amar Abd Al-Halim Abu Urfa](#)**, a reporter for *Shehab News Agency* was arrested in Hebron in August last year, since when he has been held in administrative detention.

**Hamza Slimane Barnat**, a photographer, was sentenced last month to 18 months' imprisonment and fined 5,000 shekels (almost 1,000 euros) for his work opposing Israel's separation barrier in the West Bank within the organization Friends of Justice and Freedom. He previously served a nine-month prison sentence for his activism at the age of 17.

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You can download those documents on our website :

- [Palestinian journalists at the mercy of arbitrary Israeli justice - In Arabic, \(PDF - 65.3 kb\)](#)
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