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Dear Sir,

The undersigned NGOs express their concern about the forced treatment inflicted upon Palestinian journalist Mohammed al-Qiq by Afula hospital's medical staff.

Following his arrest at home on 21 November 2015, Mohammed al-Qiq was tortured and interrogated for two weeks by the Israel Security Agency. His interrogators kept him tied up for hours in painful positions, threatened him with sexual assault, insulted him and continuously screamed at him.

On his fourth day of interrogation, Mohammed al-Qiq went on hunger strike.

On December 17th, military authorities ordered his administrative detention without charge or trial for a period of six months renewable indefinitely, on the basis of secret evidence to which neither he nor his lawyer has access. Mohammed al-Qiq filed an appeal against that decision. He saw his lawyer for the first time on December 24th, when he was presented before the military judge in a wheelchair.

On December 30th, as Mohammed al-Qiq's health was deteriorating, he was transferred from Ramle prison to Afula hospital. There, the prison guards tied him to his bed and helped medical staff to treat him by forcibly placing an IV. Mr. Al-Qiq had yet clearly notified his refusal to receive treatment. This forced treatment was approved by the hospital's medical ethics committee even though it is considered as a form of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture.

The World Medical Association (WMA) aims at establishing and promoting the highest standards in medical ethics and care among doctors. To this end it has adopted the Malta Declaration which recalls in its preamble that "The principle of beneficence urges physicians to resuscitate them but respect for individual autonomy restrains physicians from intervening when a valid and informed refusal has been made."

We welcome the fact that the Israel Medical Association (IMA) has endorsed this commitment and recalled it in his Practitioners Guide on the treatment of detainees and prisoners on hunger strike, published in 2014.

However, we regret that the IMA hasn't made any public statement condemning the forced treatment of Mohammed al-Qiq. This act is yet even more reprehensible that it is a violation

of both the Convention against Torture of the United Nations and medical ethics as envisioned by the Malta Declaration.

The silence of the IMA might be interpreted by the Israeli authorities as a permission. We fear that the treatment or forced feeding of detainees on hunger strike will spread as prompted by the force-feeding law adopted by the Knesset in July 2015.

In these circumstances, we urge you to publicly condemn Mohammed al-Qiq's forced treatment by Israeli doctors.

Sincerely Yours,

Jean-Etienne de Linares, General Delegate of Action by Christian for the Abolition of Torture

Tawfiq Tahani, President of Association France-Palestine Solidarity

Geneviève Garrigos, President of Amnesty International-France

Françoise Dumont, President of the French Human Rights League

Claude Léostic, President of the French Platform of NGOs for Palestine