

# Appel urgent : Youcef Habbash, défenseur palestinien des droits de l'Homme, une nouvelle fois interdit par Israël de voyager à l'étranger - Addameer

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Ramallah - 18 septembre 2011 - l'ONG Addameer est très préoccupée par la nouvelle interdiction de voyager infligée à un de ses administrateurs, Youcef Habbash, un défenseur des droits de l'Homme de longue date, travaillant pour l'ONG palestinienne Health Work Committees (HWC), moins de trois mois après qu'il eut été interdit par l'armée israélienne de voyager en Jordanie et en Europe. **La suite en anglais.**

On 13 September 2011, Mr. Habash arrived at the King Hussein Bridge terminal, intending to exit the occupied Palestinian territory on his way to France where he was due to finalize his application for a scholarship at a French university and his French residency permit. After presenting his travel documents at the Israeli passport control desk, however, he was stopped and questioned for one hour about the purpose and length of his trip. He was then told that he was not allowed to travel but was given no further information on the reasons for, or duration of, his travel ban. Although he asked to speak to a superior, he was denied this request and instead sent back on a bus to Jericho after being told that he could contact the Israeli Security Agency from Ramallah.

Less than three months prior, on 29 June 2011, Mr. Habash had been prevented from traveling to Jordan and Europe where he was due to meet with a range of civil society organizations as part of his work with the HWC and other Palestinian platforms. These repeated denials clearly indicate that a travel ban has been imposed on Mr. Habash, although he has yet to be informed of the duration of, or the reason for, this ban.

Addameer strongly condemns Mr. Habash's continued travel ban, which not only violates his fundamental human rights, namely his right to freedom of movement, but also disregards the special protections afforded to him as a human rights defender according to the United Nations General Assembly Declaration on human rights defenders. "Human rights defenders" are formally defined as persons who work, peacefully, for any or all of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Mr. Habash, who currently works as the HWC's public relations officer, also serves on the board of the First Ramallah Group, is a member of the Euromed Non-Governmental Platform, represents Palestine in the International Forum of national NGO platforms (IFP), is a card-carrying member of the Palestinian Journalist Association and has served on the Steering Committee of the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO) in the past. His work therefore clearly falls within the category of a human rights defender, in that his activities are peaceful in

nature and aimed at the promotion of human rights.

Given that Mr. Habash has now been prevented from traveling twice in less than three months, Addameer calls on the international community to intervene immediately with the Israeli authorities to lift Mr. Habash's travel ban so that he may continue to carry out his work as a human rights defender unimpeded.

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