

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST RISKS CHARGES OVER FORCED 'CONFESSION'

On 9 January 2019, Suha Jbara was released after spending over two months in detention where she says she was tortured by interrogators. She spent over 26 days on hunger strike in protest against her treatment by security forces and prosecutors. Suha Jbara still has not been read her charges in court and her upcoming hearing is scheduled for 30 January. She is at risk of being charged based on information obtained under torture, although the prosecutor's office has not provided any credible evidence against her. On 13 December 2018, the Palestinian Attorney General's office concluded a brief investigation into her allegations of torture without finding any wrongdoing. Amnesty International believes the investigation was not independent, impartial, or thorough and was very limited in scope.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Mr. Rami Hamdallah
Prime Minister

Ramallah, State of Palestine

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Your excellency,

On 9 January 2019, Palestinian social justice activist Suha Jbara was released after spending over two months in arbitrary detention. On 13 December 2018, the Palestinian Attorney General's office that investigated her allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, concluded that there was no wrongdoing. Based on the information available to Amnesty International, we are concerned that the investigation conducted by the Attorney General's office was not prompt or effective. In fact, the forensic doctor examined Suha Jbara more than five weeks after she first made her torture allegations. We are also concerned that the investigation may not have been impartial or independent. Suha Jbara faces the possibility of being charged based on information obtained under torture as the prosecutor's office hasn't provided any credible evidence against her. Suha Jbara's next court hearing is on 30 January.

I urge you to act in accordance with Palestine's international human rights obligations and order a prompt, impartial, independent and effective investigation into Suha Jbara's allegations of torture and other ill-treatment in Jericho Detention and Interrogation Centre; to ensure that any officials identified as responsible are immediately suspended and subjected to disciplinary and criminal proceedings; and to ensure that any proceedings against her adhere fully to international fair trial standards, including the exclusion of evidence extracted under torture and other ill-treatment.

Yours sincerely,

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Social justice activist Suha Jbara was first detained on 3 November 2018, and spent 67 days in detention during which, she says she was tortured by interrogators. On 22 November 2018, she went on hunger strike to protest her arbitrary detention and torture by Palestinian Security Forces. On 11 December, she was admitted to a hospital in the West Bank city of Jericho to receive urgent treatment, as her health condition severely deteriorated. Suha Jbara was kept shackled to the hospital bed despite her health condition. On 17 December 2018, following an agreement between her lawyer and the Attorney General's Office, Suha Jbara ended her hunger strike. She was released from her detention in Al-Najjah hospital in Nablus on 9 January 2019. Upon her release she told Amnesty International that she suffered ill-treatment from officials including when she was in hospitals and when moved in ambulances.

On 4 December 2018, Amnesty International gained first-hand testimony detailing Suha's brutal treatment at the hands of her interrogators in an ordeal that lasted three days. Suha Jbara told Amnesty International that she was interrogated for three consecutive days during which she alleges she was tortured by several male interrogators; she was severely beaten on her chest and back, shaken and slammed against the wall, and threatened with sexual violence. She was also prevented from drinking water and using the toilet, and was deprived of sleep.

On 13 December 2018, the Palestinian Attorney General concluded a brief investigation into her allegations of torture without finding any wrongdoing. Amnesty International is concerned that the investigation conducted was not prompt or effective, especially that the forensic doctor examined Suha Jbara more than five weeks after she first made her allegations of torture. We are also concerned that the investigation may not have been impartial or independent, particularly in view of the close collaboration between the Attorney General's office and the security forces. In fact, prosecutors first took Suha Jbara's testimony regarding the accusations she faces in the presence of armed security officials at the detention centre where she alleges she was tortured. The same prosecutors took her testimony in relation to her torture allegations while she was in the Jericho hospital. The investigation is also limited in scope, as that it does not examine Suha Jbara's allegations of ill-treatment by officials following her hunger strike, especially when she was moved to and while she remained in hospitals.

Amnesty International has written to the Attorney General with these concerns in December 2018 and has yet to receive a response.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or Arabic

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 5 March 2019.

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Suha Jbara (she/her)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde21/9563/2018/en/>