

**DUBLIN**

Front Line Defenders – Head Office
Second Floor, Grattan House
Temple Road, Blackrock
Co. Dublin, A94 FA39, Ireland

info@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +353 1 212 3750
fax +353 1 212 1001

BRUSSELS

Front Line Defenders – EU Office
Square Marie-Louise 72
1000 Brussels
Belgium

euoffice@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +32 2 230 9383
fax +32 2 230 0028

20 April 2020

Israel/OPT: Arbitrary detention of human rights defender Muhammad Al-Zughair

On 19 April 2020, the Israeli army forces raided the house of human rights defender **Muhammad Al-Zughair** and arrested him. There have been no charges filed against him since his arrest.

[Muhammad Al-Zughair](#) is a human rights defender and the spokesperson for Youth Against Settlements, a Palestinian group working to address human rights violations linked to the Israeli occupation through non-violent actions. Muhammad Al-Zughair's work focuses on documenting the violence of some Israeli settlers in Hebron.

On 19 April 2020, at 2:00 am several members of the Israeli army forcibly entered and raided the house of human rights defender Muhammad Al-Zughair, confiscated his laptop and cameras, and arrested him. Front Line Defenders believes that the arrest of the defender came after he documented the violence of some Israeli settlers who were reportedly using the COVID-19 curfew to build an outpost next to the office of Youth Against Settlements in Hebron, as well as raiding the office of the human rights group.

After his arrest, the human rights defender was taken to Gush Etzion military base, which is known for its inhumane detention conditions. He has not been allowed to contact his family or his lawyer since he was detained on 19 April 2020. No charges have been filed against him.

Muhammad Al-Zughair has been frequently harassed by the Israeli military forces and has been arbitrarily detained several times previously regarding his peaceful and legitimate human rights activities.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the arbitrary detention of human rights defender Muhammad Al-Zughair, and the harassment of the Youth Against Settlements group, as it believes that these acts are directly motivated by their peaceful human rights work.

Front Line Defenders urges the Israeli authorities to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Muhammad Al-Zughair, as Front Line Defenders believes that he is being held solely as a result of his legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights;
2. Ensure that the treatment of Muhammad Al-Zughair, while in detention, adheres to the conditions set out in the '*Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment*', adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988;
3. Allow Muhammad Al-Zughair immediate and unfettered access to his family and lawyer;

4. Return the equipment confiscated during the raid, as it is manifestly not linked to any criminal activity;
5. Cease targeting all human rights defenders in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.

Front Line Defenders Board of Trustees

Denis O'Brien, Noeline Blackwell, Jim Conway, Mary Lawlor, Maria Mulcahy,
Kieran Mulvey, Mary Jane Real (Philippines), David Sykes, Arnold Tsunga (Zimbabwe)

Front Line Defenders International Advisory Council

James L. Cavallaro, Maryam Elahi, Michel Forst, Hina Jilani, Maina Kiai

Front Line, The International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders trading as Front Line Defenders, is registered in Ireland as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. Registered Office: Second Floor, Grattan House, Temple Road, Blackrock, Co Dublin, A94 FA39, Ireland.

Company No. 593190; Registered Charity No. 20045241; CHY 14029