

Palestinian Feminist Leader Khitam Saafin Ordered to Six Months in Israeli Administrative Detention

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Global Research, November 10, 2020

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)
Theme: [Law and Justice](#)
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Detained Palestinian feminist and women's organizer Khitam Saafin was ordered by an Israeli military commander to [six months in administrative detention](#), imprisonment without charge or trial, on 9 November 2020. The President of the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees, Saafin was seized along with [six other Palestinian activists](#) and human rights defenders on 2 November 2020. She was last arrested by Israeli occupation forces in 2017, when she was ordered to three months in administrative detention — leading to a [global outcry](#). We urge all supporters of justice in Palestine and women's organizing to speak out and protest to demand freedom for Khitam Saafin and her fellow Palestinian women prisoners.

Khitam Saafin is a well-known international advocate for Palestinian women and freedom and justice for the Palestinian people. She has spoken around the world about the struggle of Palestinian women, including at the World Social Forum, and served as chair of the Global Women's March Palestine.

Administrative detention, a practice first introduced to Palestine by the British colonial mandate, imprisons Palestinians without charge or trial on the basis of a so-called "secret file." Even the detainee's lawyer is denied access to any of the contents of this file; instead, it is simply asserted by the Israeli occupation military commander. These detention orders are issued for up to six months at a time and are indefinitely renewable; Palestinians routinely spend years at a time jailed under administrative detention. There are currently approximately 370 Palestinian prisoners held under administrative detention orders, among approximately 4500 Palestinian political prisoners in total.

The Israeli policy of administrative detention is a colonial weapon targeting the Palestinian people. In addition, it is also a violation of international law, violating the Fourth Geneva Convention, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and representing a cruel, inhumane and degrading form of arbitrary imprisonment.

[Alkarama Palestinian Women's Mobilization](#) called for the release of Saafin, noting that

"Saafin's arrest occurs in the context of the ongoing imprisonment of Palestinian activists by the Israeli occupation authorities. This can be seen in the growing number of Palestinian Legislative Council members, human rights activists and civil society leaders arrested by Israeli occupation forces in recent years."

A group of [left and progressive women's organizations](#) in the Arab region, including the

Women's Sector of the Democratic Way in Morocco, Palestinian Working Women Committees Union, Jin Women Association of Lebanon, the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees and the World March of Women - MENA region, also urged her immediate release in a statement

"Demanding the human rights and women's organizations in the region to crystallize a regional and international solidarity campaign to demand the release of the comrade Khitam and the rest of the Palestinian prisoners and calls for serious and real support to the Palestinian captive movement."

Member of European Parliament Manu Pineda, chair of the parliament's Delegation for Relations with Palestine, issued a [statement to the European External Action Service](#), calling on the EEAS and the EU to "mobilize its diplomatic resources to obtain the prompt release of Ms. Saafin and all other Palestinian citizens detained without formal charges."

Saafin is among approximately 40 imprisoned Palestinian women, including several fellow administrative detainees, imprisoned student activists and political leaders, including feminist and leftist parliamentarian Khalida Jarrar. On 9 November, Palestinian journalist and advocate for political prisoners Bushra al-Tawil was also seized by Israeli occupation forces at a [checkpoint south of Nablus](#), only three months after her last release from administrative detention without charge or trial.

Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network denounces this latest attack on the Palestinian women's movement. We urge women's organizations, student organizations and people of conscience everywhere to raise their voices and act in solidarity with Khitam Saafin and her fellow Palestinian prisoners targeted by the Israeli occupation - including by building the movement for the boycott of Israel, its institutions and complicit corporations like HP, Puma, Teva Pharmaceuticals and G4S. The Israeli occupation wants to continue its colonization of Palestine unchecked by isolating and detaining the leaders of the Palestinian people's movement. Join us to act and urge their immediate release and the liberation of all Palestinian prisoners, and of Palestine, from the river to the sea!

Take Action:

1. Post pictures and graphics on your social media accounts urging the release of Khitam Saafin and all Palestinian prisoners. Send your photos to us at [Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network](#) on Facebook, [@SamidounPP](#) on Twitter, and at samidoun@samidoun.net.
2. Issue a statement from your group, association, women's organization or union demanding freedom for Khitam Saafin. In 2017, [dozens of organizations around the world](#) joined in the call for her release, making her detention - and that of Khalida Jarrar - an international issue. Send your statements to us at samidoun@samidoun.net
3. Organize protests, demonstrations creative actions. Ad hacks, postering and other outdoor actions - especially near an Israeli embassy or consulate - can draw a significant amount of attention to Khitam Saafin and the Palestinian cause at this critical time.
4. Build the boycott of Israel! Join the movement for boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel. Highlight the complicity of corporations like Hewlett-Packard and the continuing involvement of G4S in Israeli policing and prisons. Build a campaign to boycott Israeli goods, impose a military embargo on Israel, or organize around the academic and

cultural boycott of Israel.

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