



War Resisters' International
5 Caledonian Rd, London N1 9DX, Britain

29 January 2010

To whom it may concern

The War Resisters' International condemns the arrest on 28 January 2010 of Mohammed Khatib of Bil'in, Palestine.

The War Resisters' International Council, assembled in Ahmedabad, India, learned of the arrest of Mohammed Khatib by the Israeli military at his home at 1:45 am yesterday. Mohammed Khatib has played a central role in the popular committee planning and coordinating the struggle of the Bil'in village against the Apartheid Wall, constructed by Israel inside the 1967 occupied territories.

The Bil'in struggle – in its steadfastness, in its great creativity and in the exemplary cooperation between the Palestinian, Israeli and international activists taking part in it – has become a symbol of nonviolent struggle and an inspiration to nonviolent movements worldwide.

Khatib's arrest is part of a large wave of dozens of similar arrests of Palestinian nonviolence organizers in Bil'in itself and elsewhere. He is only one of many targeted in an escalating Israeli repression of nonviolent activism in the West Bank and indeed in all parts of Israel/Palestine.

Mohammed's arrest is particularly relevant for us as he had planned to come speak at our conference, but had to remain in Bil'in after the recent arrest of another Bil'in Popular Committee organizer, Abdallah Abu Rahmah.

The repression of nonviolence organizers in Palestine concerns all of the participants in this WRI conference, entitled "Nonviolent Livelihood Struggles and Global Militarism: Links and Strategies." Bil'in is a stark example of a struggle against militarism that is also a nonviolent struggle for livelihood, as villagers have been separated from their land and means of subsistence by the military and the Apartheid Wall.

The criminalization of dissent in Israel/Palestine, initiated and executed by the Israeli military, has escalated over recent months. Khatib is being charged with "incitement," defined under Israeli military law as "an attempt, whether verbally or otherwise, to influence public opinion in the Area [the 1967 occupied territories] in a way that may disturb the public peace or public order," hence criminalizing any and all protest. These nighttime raids of organizers' homes have increased all over the West Bank, as Israeli and Palestinian nonviolent protestors are arrested every week in East Jerusalem, and as the siege of Gaza continues.

War Resisters' International supports Mohammed Khatib and the nonviolent resistance struggle in Palestine. We condemn the wave of arrests and demand the immediate release of Mohammed and his comrades. We call upon supporters of peace around the world who believe in democracy to take action in support of the right of an people under occupation who are waging nonviolent struggle to demonstrate. A just and peaceful struggle cannot be broken by repression.

Howard Clark

(chairperson, War Resisters' International)

signed on behalf of the WRI Council in Ahmedabad, India, 29 January 2010.

"War is a crime against humanity. I am therefore determined not to support any kind of war, and to strive for the removal of all causes of war."
WRI declaration

War Resisters' International is an international network with 83 affiliated organisations in 42 countries. It aims to:

- ▶ connect and support war resisters around the world
- ▶ promote nonviolent action to remove the causes of war

War Resisters' International

5 Caledonian Road
London N1 9DX
Britain

☎ +44-20-7278 4040
Fax: +44-20-7278 0444
Email: info@wri-irg.org
Web: <http://wri-irg.org>

Chair:

Howard Clark

Treasurer:

Dominique Saillard

Staff (London):

Javier Gárate
Andreas Speck
Seth Wheeler

Accounts

Britain:

War Resisters' International
Account No: 5072 7388
Sort Code: 08-60-01
Unity Trust Bank
Nine Brindley Place
4 Oozells Square
Birmingham B1 2HB
IBAN GB11CPBK 0800
5150 073210
SWIFT CPBKGB22

Eurozone:

War Resisters' International
Bank of Ireland
IBAN IE91 BOFI 9000
9240 41 35 47
SWIFT/BIC BOFIE2D