

# Israeli military court renews Palestinian teen's administrative detention

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An Israeli military court judge approved a new four-month administrative detention order against 17-year-old Amal Nakhleh on May 20. (Photo courtesy of the Nakhleh family)

**Ramallah, June 3, 2021**—Israeli authorities decided last month to imprison a 17-year-old Palestinian boy without charge for an additional four months despite the boy's rare autoimmune disorder.

An Israeli military court judge at Israel's Ofer military court, located near Ramallah in the occupied West Bank, approved a new four-month administrative detention order against 17-year-old Amal Nakhleh on May 20, 2021, according to information collected by Defense for Children International - Palestine. Previously, Amal was imprisoned without charge pursuant to a six-month administrative detention order issued by Israeli authorities on January 25. That order was later reduced by two months on appeal and expired on May 20. Amal has been detained at Israel's Megiddo prison, located inside Israel, north of the occupied West Bank since the initial administrative detention order was issued.

Amal suffers from myasthenia gravis, a rare chronic autoimmune, neuromuscular disease that causes muscle weakness, including in the muscles used for breathing and swallowing. His treatment requires ongoing medical treatment and that he takes medication regularly and without interruption.

"Israeli authorities must either file charges against Palestinian children or release them," said Ayed Abu Eqtaish, accountability program director at Defense for Children International – Palestine. "Administrative detention must never be used to justify the detention of children and amounts to a clear violation of fundamental due process rights. Israeli authorities must immediately end the arbitrary detention of Palestinian children."

Amal was previously arrested on November 2, 2020, and charged with throwing stones. However, on November 24, 2020, he was ordered to be released on bond by Israeli military judge Sharon Keinan, according to [Haaretz](#). The Israeli military prosecution appealed the ruling to the Military Court of Appeals, arguing a secret file on Amal would justify an administrative detention order against him. On December 10, the Israeli military prosecution appeal was rejected, and Amal was subsequently released. Military prosecutors said that if released on bail, Amal would be put in administrative detention, according to [Haaretz](#).

Then, Israeli forces arrested Amal from his home around 3:30 a.m. on January 21, 2021, in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah, and the initial administrative detention order was issued and accepted against him on January 25, [reported](#) DCIP.



Administrative detention is a form of imprisonment without charge or trial regularly used by Israeli authorities to detain Palestinians, including children, according to documentation collected by DCIP. Palestinian children held under administrative detention orders are not presented with charges, and their detention is based on secret evidence that is neither disclosed to the child nor their attorney, preventing them from preparing a legal challenge to the detention and its alleged basis.

In situations of international armed conflict, administrative detention is permitted in strictly limited circumstances in only the most exceptional cases for “imperative reasons of security” when there is no other alternative. The practice should never be used as an alternative to filing charges or as a general deterrent for future activity.

Military court judges, who are active duty or reserve officers in the Israeli army, have the authority to approve administrative detention orders issued by the Israeli military commander of the area lasting up to six months. There is no limit to the number of times an administrative detention order can be renewed. As a result, children held in administrative detention face the added uncertainty of indefinite imprisonment, in addition to the ordinary struggles child prisoners encounter in Israeli custody.

Between 2012-2014, Israeli authorities briefly suspended the practice of detaining Palestinian children under administrative detention orders. However, since October 2015, DCIP has documented a total of 39 Palestinian children held by Israeli authorities pursuant to administrative detention orders.

At least three other 17-year-old Palestinian boys are currently imprisoned without charge by Israeli authorities pursuant to administrative detention orders, according to information collected by DCIP.

Israeli forces detained Mohammad Ghassan Ahmad Mansour, 17, during a night raid on his home in Jenin in the northern occupied West Bank on April 9. He was detained for 15 days at Israel's Huwwara detention center in the northern West Bank, where Mohammad and other children have described being detained under inhumane conditions. On April 25, an Israeli military court judge at Ofer military court approved a six-month administrative detention order against Mohammad. He is currently detained in Megiddo prison in northern Israel.



Israeli forces first detained Bara' Yousef Mohammad Ahmad Mohammad. from Dura, a city located southwest of Hebron, on May 12 and charged him with possession of brass knuckles. He was sentenced to two days in custody, one-month probation, and a 1000 NIS (\$308) fine. He was detained a second time on May 16, days after his release from Israeli custody, according to information collected by DCIP. An Israeli military court judge at Ofer military court approved a four-month administrative detention order against Bara' on May 18, which is set to expire on September 11.



Ahmad Anwar Ahmad Bayed, 17, from Aqabat Jaber refugee camp, located southwest of Jericho, was detained by Israeli forces on May 12. Three days later, an Israeli military court judge at Ofer military court approved a four-month administrative detention order against Ahmad, which is set to expire on September 11.



International juvenile justice standards, which Israel has obliged itself to implement by ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991, demand that children should only be deprived of their liberty as a measure of last resort and must not be unlawfully or arbitrarily detained.

Israel has the dubious distinction of being the only country in the world that systematically prosecutes between 500 and 700 children in military courts each year that lack fundamental fair trial rights.