

Sworn Statement

After having been warned to tell the truth and nothing but the truth or else I shall be subjected to penal action, I, the undersigned, Mazen Shehdi Saleem Nassar, of Palestinian nationality, holder of ID No. 941595068, born on 02 April 1981, a worker, and a resident of Shuyoukh Al Arroub, Hebron governorate, would like to declare the following:

I recall that on 1 November 2000, I was appointed to a position with the Tourist and Antiquities Police in the city of Bethlehem as a tourist security agent that worked around tourists and ensured their protection in the city.

At the beginning, I received training for three months at al-Thahiriya Training Center and then in early February 2001, I started my job officially with a salary of NIS 938 per month, starting from the date of my appointment. I used to receive my salary in my hand through a financial committee. After about six months of work, I obtained the rank of Sergeant. As a result, my salary increased to about NIS 1200, which I received from the financial committee – a branch of the military finance department.

I started to receive my salary through the bank in 2004 which was transferred from the Ministry of Finance to the Bank of Palestine – Bethlehem Branch. My salary at that time was of NIS 1826 with an annual raise of NIS 30.

In 2004, specifically on 1 May 2004, I was promoted to First Sergeant. As a result, my salary increased to NIS 1845. I continued to work until 2007, when I surprisingly discovered through a formal letter from the Minister of Interior that my position was terminated without any justifications stated.

The termination was enforced on 01 August 2007. However, since 1 January 2006, before the date of the termination of my position, I had not received my salary on a regular basis due to the financial freeze imposed to the Palestinian Authority by the donor states during that period. After termination, I was not granted any of the financial dues or compensation owed to me prior to the termination of my position. The Ministry of Finance now owes me an amount of about NIS 10,489.

I hired a lawyer in order to collect my dues, but I have not received any answer. I have also not received any compensation following the end of my service. I did not even request compensation because I was sure that the termination of my services took place as a result of the political dispute between the Fatah and Hamas governments, and should, therefore be considered an unfair termination.

I would like to mention that the termination of my services came as a result of the political division, after which I was immediately arrested by the Palestinian military intelligence. They came to my workplace and took me to the military intelligence office in Bethlehem, and I was then transferred to the intelligence services office in Ramallah, where I was interrogated about the elections, and about whom I had voted for. I stayed in prison for 13 days and then I was released and returned directly to my work, where I stayed only six days. However, I was notified by the Department of Tourism and Antiquities that they have not received any letter from the intelligence services stating that I could resume my work again and as a result, they asked me to stay at home in on

leave until 06 September 2007. After the end of the month, I checked with the Bank but I did not get my salary or my dues, therefore I checked again with the Department of Tourism and Antiquities and asked them about the reason why I was not receiving my salary. It was at that time that they told me verbally that I was fired from my job. I asked them to give me an official letter stating so, but they kept postponing this issue, until I instructed lawyer Yousef Bakhtan, who followed up the case and got a letter from the Ministry of Interior stating that I was formally fired from work. To date, I have still not received the salaries I was owed during the months I worked without any payment.

I approached several human rights organizations to follow up on my case, but I was threatened in person by the Fatah authorities if I continued to claim my dues. This was also what my lawyer was informed of.

In this affidavit that I drafted for Al-Haq on 12 November 2011, I would like to emphasize that in the period between the beginning of 2006 and 6 September 2007, I did not receive my salary on a regular basis because of the financial freeze mentioned earlier. I used to get some payments from time to time during that period, they did not cover my full due salary. Accordingly, the Ministry of Finance should pay me about NIS 10,489 to cover the aforementioned period.

Since the termination of my services, I paid numerous visits to the Fatah authorities in relation to the issue of the due amount but they used to delay and postpone the issue of payments.

In July 2010, I went to the military finance department to ask for my financial dues; on that occasion they told me that the dues were available, but that I would not be able to claim them without obtaining written approval from the military intelligence. I went to the intelligence services twice to check; the first time they asked me to bring a formal letter in regard to my claim, while the second time I met them for an hour and a half in which they bargained with me to either admit officially that I was affiliated with Hamas, or else I would not receive my dues.

I refused to bargain and I went back to the military finance department asking them to send a formal letter to the intelligence services, in which they clarify the reason behind not paying my dues.

Today on 12 November 2011, I went to the military finance department to investigate about my financial dues. Once there, the person in charge showed me a list from the military intelligence, with several names including mine, pointing out that the intelligence services do not recommend paying me my dues.

This is my declaration and hereby I sign, 12 November 2011

Signature: Mazen Shehdi Saleem Nassar

Name not withheld

Field researcher: Hadeel Hniti