

**Affidavit No. 7555/2012**

**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, Yihya Ibrahim Salim al-Madhoun, of Palestinian nationality, holder of ID No. 903188431, born on 23 April 1979, a journalist and academic, and a resident of the Beit Lahiya town, Northern Gaza governorate, would like to declare the following:

I work as a freelance journalist and lecturer at the Media Department at the College of Intermediate Studies of al-Azhar University in Gaza city. I am also Public Relations Coordinator at the College. My work at the *Sawt al-Shabab* (Youths' Voice) radio station was suspended after it had been closed down by the Hamas movement in the aftermath of the military takeover of Gaza in 2007.

At around 3:00 pm on Sunday, 17 June 2012, I received a summons, stating that I should immediately report to the Internal Security headquarters in Jabaliya town in Northern Gaza governorate. I left my house for the Internal Security agency at 4:00 pm on the same day. As soon as I arrived, Internal Security officers seized my personal ID card and led me into a small cell, which was constructed by the Israeli authorities. The cell had a concrete floor and measured less than one metre in width and almost two metres in length. With an unpleasant smell, the cell lacked ventilation, lighting and mattresses. They held me in the cell for four hours consecutively and no one talked to me. An Internal Security officer opened the cell door and said:

“Go home and come back tomorrow morning. Don't be late.”

At around 09:00 am on Monday, 18 June 2012, I notified the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate in Gaza that the Internal Security agency had summoned me. I also explained the way I was detained in a cell. I then went to the Internal Security headquarters to find out why I had been summoned abruptly. When I was there, they held me in a room for about two hours. An Internal Security officer, who was in civilian clothes, came in and started to question me. The officer interrogated me about an article I had published on the internet. Criticising the division between Fateh and Hamas, I stressed that amicable conditions should be created to help reach reconciliation between the two movements. To implement reconciliation agreements, sedition and hatred should be stopped. At the time, Mr. Isma'il Haniya, Prime Minister of the Gaza government, and Fathi Hammad, Minister of Interior, announced that the day of Hamas' military takeover of Gaza (14 June 2007) would be commemorated as a national day of the Police. Haniya and Hammad also stated that reconciliation would not be reached with secular groups. During the interrogation, the interrogator held the article I published and read some sections.

“This is a provocative article... Why have you started writing again after you stopped for years? I advise you to stop writing. This is better for you.” He said.

I denied that the article was provocative. I explained that it was concerned with the national interest and called for promoting unity between Palestinian factions. To create a positive environment that would help support reconciliation agreements, the article emphasised that defamatory media campaigns should be ceased.

“I will continue to write to serve my society and national unity because I am an objective journalist.” I added.

I stated that according to the law, no one could be held to account because they express their opinion. However, the officer repeated his order that I should not continue to write articles. I was interrogated for two hours about the same article. They detained me in the same room and then

I was returned home. I was released after the Journalists' Syndicate issued a statement denouncing my humiliating detention. The statement was published throughout media agencies.

This is my declaration, which I hereby sign, 19 June 2012

Signature: Yihiya al-Madhoun

Name not withheld

Field researcher: Muhammad Abu-Rahma