

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, Hasan 'Afif Hasan 'Afifi, of Palestinian nationality, holder of ID number 206959496, born on 14 March 1996, a student and a resident of Old City of Jerusalem, Jerusalem governorate, would like to declare the following:

Every Friday, I sit in front of my house in the Bab al-Hadid area of Jerusalem's Old City. I sit there with my father and friends on the stone platform at the front of the house after the Friday prayer, which is at around 1:00 pm in the afternoon. On Friday 5 October 2012, since our house is exactly adjacent to the al-al-Aqsa mosque wall, I heard from where I was sitting confrontations in the mosque's yards between the Israeli police and the Palestinian worshippers, who were protesting the recurrent storming of the al-Aqsa mosque by Israeli settlers.

As I sat there, I heard the sound of sound bombs exploding and rubber-coated bullets being fired at the worshippers. At that moment, I went to the gate leading to the al-Aqsa mosque – the Bab al-Hadid – that is around two metres away from where I was sitting. I looked into the al-Aqsa mosque yards; I saw members of the police in black uniforms throwing sound bombs into the al-Aqsa yards as people ran away. Moments later, one of the police officers threw a sound bomb towards me and other bystanders near me. The bomb exploded two metres away from me, so I ran towards the door of my house. I had almost reached it when they hurled a second sound bomb at our door and it exploded near me. Thank God I was not hurt by these bombs. Suddenly, I saw around ten or 20, or maybe more, police officers in black uniforms attacking my father. I didn't know where they had come from. My father was near the stairs trying to close the door. The policemen punched and kicked him. I tried to close the door to prevent them from entering and continuing to attack my father. I felt them dragging me outside by my shirt and pushing me down the stone platform so much so that I was about to fall down but I managed to keep my balance. More than 15 policemen in black uniforms attacked and pushed me to the floor before punching and kicking me. I noticed that they were punching me with a solid object on their fists similar to a "metal fist". They were kicking me with their boots. They beat me all over my body including my genitalia. I could do nothing but cry out, "enough let me go, enough let me go". The beating was so severe that I almost fainted. I cannot estimate the time that I was being beaten but it felt very long.

I found myself on the ground inside the al-Aqsa mosque yard, where the policemen in black uniforms were holding my face to the ground and cuffing my hands behind my back while my face, as I said, was to the ground. I turned my head slightly just as a policeman surprised me with a punch to the face, exactly on the right side of my head, pushing my face against the stone floor. I felt my skull smash against the ground because of the punch, as if I were being beheaded. I almost fainted after that. I only regained consciousness at the al-Silsila gate, almost twenty metres away from the place where I was hit. The police officers were holding me by my arms behind my back and my shirt was covering my face. I was bleeding from my eyes and face; I knew where I was since I could see slightly from behind my shirt.

The policemen took me to a place near the al-Silsila gate outside the Jerusalem sanctuary. They made me sit on my knees with my hands cuffed behind my back and my face to the wall, still covered by my shirt. Half an hour later, they took the shirt off while vulgarly cursing at and spitting on me. They were looking and laughing at me while blood covered my face and clothes. After that they dragged me towards the al-Buraq wall to a "Toyota" police car that was waiting there. In the car they replaced my plastic handcuffs with metal ones. They put me in the back seat and forced me to kneel with my face to my knees, as one of them pushed my head and neck all the way to the police station. Later on, they took me to the police station; I'm not sure if it was the "al-Qishlah" or the "al- Moskobiyah".

There the policemen dragged me inside the building and made me sit down. I waited for three hours, handcuffed and surrounded by Israeli border police in green uniforms. They did not offer me water, food or medical treatment although I had requested it since I was bleeding. They did not even let me go to the toilet. Three hours later, the police took me to the Hadassah Ein Kerem Medical Centre in a police car. At the entrance, I saw my father and uncle, but the police did not let me talk to them. At the Hadassah Medical Centre, the doctors conducted several medical tests, of which some were for the eyes. They sewed up my left eyelid with four stitches. I saw my father and uncle at the hospital, they were a few meters away from me at the emergency centre but the policemen would not allow us to talk to each other. I stayed at the hospital until 11:30 pm that night. I was on a bed with my hands and legs tied.

After that, the policemen took me back to the "al- Moskobiyah" prison (Russian compound police station in West Jerusalem). I know that because a policeman told me it was the "al-Moskobiyeh". The policemen took me into a room and made me change into clothes they gave me. Before that, they searched me while I was naked, and then took me to a prison cell. I was alone in a room that had several beds but no TV. They did not offer me any food. I slept badly that night because of the pain in my body. The next day, the police woke me up at six in the morning and gave me breakfast, which consisted of milk and cornflakes, before bringing me to an interrogation room. There, a person, in civilian dress who called himself Bilal, interrogated me. I was sitting on a chair in front of the interrogator who was sitting at a desk. My uncle 'Allam was also there, sitting behind me. The interrogator asked me what had happened and accused me of attempting to steal a knife from a member of the Special Forces in order to stab him with it, adding that my fingerprints are on the knife. He also accused me of throwing stones, but I denied both of the charges. The interrogator warned me that if I remained stubborn throughout the interrogation, the police would do the same, but if I confessed, then the maximum punishment would be house arrest. I told him that I was telling the truth and would not say anything else. I think the interrogation lasted for an hour and a half. After the interrogation, the policemen took me back to the first prison room before transferring me to another prison room where there were youths around the same age as me. I had my breakfast in the first room.

That same day, they took me to the court, where I saw my father and mother and the lawyer Mohammad Mahmoud. The female judge extended my detention until Tuesday, until after the fingerprint examination on the knife. She refused to release me and place me under house arrest, which is what my lawyer had requested. After the hearing, I returned to the prison where they took my fingerprints. The prison doctor examined me the following day. On Monday, I was given food to take a medicine for the breathing difficulties I was having. The food was water mixed with some substance. On Tuesday, I was brought before the court once again and stayed in the court's waiting room from 7:00 to 11:00 am. The judge placed me under house arrest for 14 days and ordered me to pay a fine of 5000 NIS and an additional fine of 10000 NIS to be paid if I committed any other crime within a period of six months.

I returned home at around 5:00 pm. They had taken me back to the prison room after the trial that didn't last more than five minutes. Following my release, my father took me to the Hadassah Ein Kerem Medical Centre, where the doctors examined me. The doctor told me to see the family doctor five days later. As for school - I study at the Lutheran school - I'm not allowed to go to or return from school without being escorted by my father or mother. I can't go to my friends' houses; they can only see me at my house.

This is my declaration, which I hereby sign on 10 October 2012

Signature:

Name not withheld

Field researcher: 'Umran Rishiq