



## Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association

### Abu Dis Human Rights report

### A month in Abu Dis, May 2015

The people of Abu Dis continued to suffer on a daily basis from the restrictions and violence of the occupation: the huge Separation Wall, the ID system and the checkpoints all round them, the constriction and loss of land to the settlements, and the almost-daily incursions of fully-armed Israeli soldiers because of the presence of a military camp right in the middle of town. Major issues this month were the prisoners' hunger strike, house demolition in Aizariya (next to Abu Dis), a new gate relating to the Separation Wall in Azzaem. Then towards the end of May, the Israeli army shot and killed a man in nearby Al Tur.



In May 2015, there were 35 prisoners from Abu Dis in Israeli jails. This includes 9 children (one released this month) and at least three others who were arrested as juveniles but have been in prison for long periods since (one young man who has been in prison since he was sixteen is now nineteen years old, another who was arrested aged seventeen and is now nineteen years old and a third, released this month, who was first arrested aged 13, and later again when he was 16). In addition there are prisoners from the Al Quds University; we are still seeking an estimate of the current number.

Below some of the more dramatic events are listed, but it should be remembered that the people of Abu Dis suffer many quieter daily violations of their human rights.

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May**, the Israeli army fixed a checkpoint in front of Al Quds University in Abu Dis. The soldiers stopped students and checked their IDs. At the end of the school day, when school students were leaving the two boys' schools next to the university (Abu Dis Boys' School and the Arab Institute), soldiers threw tear gas and shot rubber bullets towards the students.

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May**, early in the morning, the Israeli army invaded houses in Abu Dis and nearby Aizariya. They searched the houses of Mukfeh Abu Rumi, Tariq abu Zayyad and Ziad Rabiyyeh from Abu Dis and gave the young people in those houses orders to go to Maale Adumim police station to meet the Israeli Intelligence Officer.

**Weds 6<sup>th</sup> May**, prisoners who had been imprisoned without trial ('administrative detention') started a hunger strike. Initially it was three well-known prisoners: Khader Adnan who had endured a three-month hunger strike the year against his imprisonment without trial and had been released the previous year; Shireen al-Issawi, sister and lawyer of her brother Samir al-Issawi who had been on a long hunger strike the year before. Note that Samir has been rearrested since then and given a sentence of a lifetime in prison, while their brother Mdhat Assawi, who had been released on the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange had (like many others) since been rearrested and in his case given 4 years. Following this, many other prisoners on administrative detention joined the hunger strike calling for their release.

**Weds 6<sup>th</sup> May**, the Israeli Civil Department gave house demolition orders to three Bedouin families living in Aizariya, near to Al-Zaytouneh terminal. These houses belonging to Ahmad Tarabin, Mahmoud Jahaleen, Salim Jahaleen are home to 16 people.



**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May**, hundreds of people from AzZayem neighbourhood made a demonstration against the Israelis' construction of a gate in their neighbourhood. AzZayem is currently cut off

from Abu Dis and Aizariyah both by the Separation Wall (leaving them on the

Jerusalem side) and a major Israeli settlement road. A gate was constructed after the Israelis killed a Palestinian teenager in April (Ali Abu Ghanam) and the protest was to prevent the gate from being shut, which will close the residents of the town from Jerusalem too, although they have blue Jerusalem IDs. Cut off from everywhere they face (like other areas of Palestine) living in a cage, as the Israeli soldiers will decide when to open the gate and for how long and when to close it. This will affect every aspect of their life: their children's schooling, their work, their economic situation.

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May**, Ahmed Hassan Eriqat, aged 16 was sentenced 25 months and bill of 5000 shekels – he is the brother of a prisoner who has been in jail for 4 years.

**20<sup>th</sup> May**, Amran Abu Dheim, aged 46 and the father of five children, was shot and killed in At Tur. Below\*\* is the report we wrote at the time:

**21<sup>st</sup> May** Khalil Qurie, now aged 18 but arrested at 16, was released from prison Khalil came to London with CADFA when he was fourteen.



**25<sup>th</sup> May**, a huge fire started in Al Zayem neighbourhood in the early morning when workers tried to jump the Separation Wall to get to work in Jerusalem and the Israeli army shot tear gas at them, causing a fire in a scrap yard.



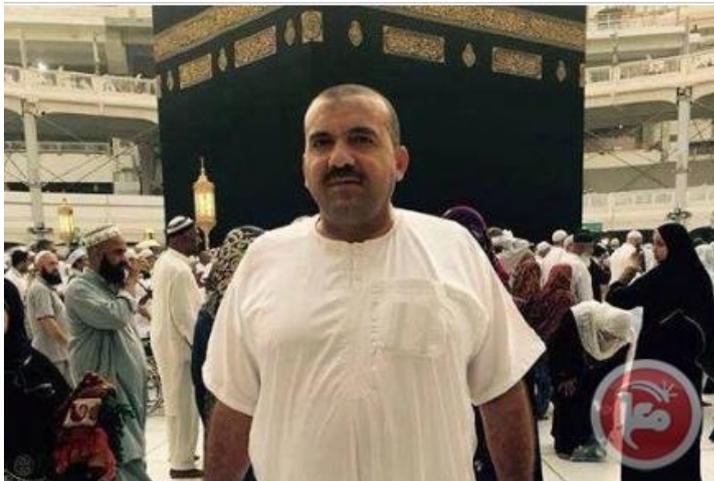
**Friday 30th May**, there were clashes on University Street Abu Dis. Soldiers shot tear gas and rubber bullet directly into the houses and the photograph here shows someone removing the metal ('rubber') bullet from the window of his house.



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\* CADFA report issued 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015

How appalling is this.



At one and the same moment we heard from Abed in Abu Dis that a distant cousin of his mother's, aged 41, had been shot by the Israeli soldiers while driving a car in Al-Tur, Jerusalem – just on the other side of the Separation Wall from Abu Dis – and we saw these pictures of the main street in Al Tur posted on Facebook by our volunteer from Jerusalem.

And we read news of today's next step in apartheid in Jerusalem – already very divided, the bus system is to be officially completely separated, so that Palestinians and Israelis must line up in

different queues at bus stops and have their ID checked: they are not allowed on the same bus. The Israeli rules



about the passage of Palestinians through the military checkpoints into and out of Jerusalem are to be tightened, making everything more and more difficult.

GRIEF for the person killed – الله یرحمه – and for his young family - and for all Palestinians caught in this impossible situation, with their lives valued at nothing. Will we hear anything of this on the news in England? Or will we hear instead from friends Palestine of another killing by Israel in Hebron, another one in Jenin As our friends in Palestine say, 'It seems that when it is quiet for a bit, the Israelis attack someone to provoke a reaction.'

CADFA [www.camdenabudis.net](http://www.camdenabudis.net)