



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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Palestine

PAL/05 - Ahmad Sa'adat

Decision adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 201st session (St. Petersburg, 18 October 2017) ¹

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Ahmad Sa'adat, elected in January 2006 to the Palestinian Legislative Council, and to the decision it adopted at its 195th session (October 2014),

Referring to the study produced by the Israeli non-governmental organization Yesh Din (Volunteers for Human Rights) on the implementation of due process rights in Israeli military courts in the West Bank, entitled *Backyard Proceedings*, which reveals the absence of due process rights in those courts, and to the study published in September 2006 by B'Tselem (the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories), entitled *Barred from Contact: Violation of the Right to Visit Palestinians Held in Israeli Prisons*,

Taking into account the letter from the head of the Knesset Delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union dated 26 September 2017 and of the hearing which the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians held with the Palestinian delegation during the 137th IPU Assembly, (St. Petersburg, 14-18 October 2017),

Recalling the following information on file regarding Mr. Sa'adat's situation:

- On 14 March 2006, Mr. Sa'adat, whom the Israeli authorities had accused of involvement in the October 2001 murder of Mr. R. Zeevi, the Israeli Minister of Tourism, was abducted by the Israeli Defence Forces from Jericho Jail and transferred to Hadarim Prison in Israel, together with four other prisoners suspected of involvement in the murder; the Israeli authorities concluded one month later that Mr. Sa'adat had not been involved in the killing but charged the other four suspects; 19 other charges were subsequently brought against Mr. Sa'adat, all arising from his leadership of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), which Israel considers a terrorist organization, none of these charges alleges direct involvement in crimes of violence; on 25 December 2008, Mr. Sa'adat was sentenced to 30 years in prison;
- Mr. Sa'adat suffers from cervical neck pain, high blood pressure and asthma, and has reportedly not been examined by a doctor and is not receiving the medical treatment he needs; when he was first detained, the Israeli authorities refused to let his wife visit him; for the first seven months, Mr. Sa'adat received no family visits; his children, who have Palestinian identity cards, were not allowed to visit their father, for reasons unknown; in March and June 2009, Mr. Sa'adat was placed in solitary confinement, prompting him to go on a nine-day hunger strike in June 2009;

¹ The delegation of Israel expressed its reservations regarding the decision.

- On 21 October 2010, Mr. Sa'adat's isolation order, due to expire on 21 April 2011, was confirmed a fourth time for a further six months; it was apparently again extended in October 2011, bringing Mr. Sa'adat's time in isolation to three years; his isolation ended in May 2012, as part of the agreement ending the April-May 2012 hunger strike by some 2,000 Palestinian detainees in Israel; one of the complainants affirmed in September 2012 that, while Mr. Sa'adat's wife and oldest son had been able to visit him, his other three children continued to be denied permits;
- According to his letter of 6 January 2013, the Diplomatic Advisor to the Knesset stated: "Mr. Sa'adat was detained in Hadarim Prison. He was held in a regular cell with other inmates, without any separation or isolation. Mr. Sa'adat is entitled to and, in fact, receives regular visits from his family, the last of which was on 4 December 2012",

Recalling that, according to the information provided by one of the complainants, a complete ban on family visits was imposed on Mr. Sa'adat from July 2014, at a time when violence had flared up in the region, which was only lifted in September 2015,

Considering that, according to a letter from the Speaker of the Knesset dated 23 November 2015, Mr. Sa'adat was detained in Hadarim Prison and held in a regular cell with other inmates and without separation or isolation; the Speaker further said that Mr. Sa'adat was entitled to and received regular visits from his family, the latest having taken place on 8 October 2015; however, according to information provided on 25 January 2016 by one of the complainants, Mr. Sa'adat's daughter had been denied visiting rights from 2006 to 2015 during which she was granted a single visit,

Considering that, in April 2017, Mr. Sa'adat took part in a mass hunger strike conducted by Palestinian detainees in protest against the detention conditions in Israeli prisons and was reportedly temporarily moved to solitary confinement in Ohlikdar Prison as a result,

Considering also that, according to one of the complainants in September 2017, Mr. Sa'adat's general health is satisfactory but he still suffers from poor medical care; Mr. Sa'adat was denied visits from other family members for security reasons and only his wife could visit him,

Considering that the letter from the head of the Knesset delegation to the IPU dated 26 September 2017 did not provide any information on Mr. Sa'adat's case and declined the Committee's invitation to a hearing during the 137th IPU Assembly (14-18 October 2017) in that regard,

Considering that according to Mr. Azzam Al-Ahmad, member of the Palestinian delegation and head of the parliamentary group of Fatah, the head of the PNC had tried to work with members of the Knesset to obtain access to their Palestinian colleagues detained in Israeli prisons, particularly Mr. Sa'adat, but that these efforts were to no avail,

1. *Regrets* that the head of the Knesset delegation to the IPU declined the Committee's invitation for a hearing; *considers* this all the more regrettable given the long-standing concerns and requests for information in this case; *emphasizes* that the Committee's work is based on the principle of dialogue with the authorities of the country concerned, first and foremost its parliament; *sincerely hopes* therefore that the Knesset will engage in regular written and face-to-face exchanges of views with the Committee in order to facilitate progress towards a satisfactory solution of the case;
2. *Deeply deplores* that more than 11 years after his arrest Mr. Sa'adat remains in detention as a result of a politically motivated trial; *reaffirms* in this regard its long-standing position that Mr. Sa'adat's abduction and transfer to Israel were related not to the original murder charge but rather to his political activities as PFLP General Secretary;
3. *Calls on* the Israeli authorities to release him without delay and to provide, until that occurs, new official information on his current conditions of detention and on the extent to which he has access to the required medical treatment; *remains concerned* in this regard about the reported prison conditions in which Palestinian prisoners are held in Israel;

4. *Regrets* that the authorities have not yet acceded to its own long-standing request, for as long as Mr. Sa'adat remains imprisoned, to be granted permission to visit him; *sincerely hopes* that the authorities will finally respond favourably and facilitate such a visit;
5. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the relevant authorities, the complainant and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information;
6. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report back to it in due course.