

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 Hamza Hasan al-'Azayza, of Palestinian nationality, holder of ID No. 912358108, born on 7 November 1971, a Police officer and a resident of Bishara neighbourhood, Deir al-Balah city, Central Gaza Governorate, would like to declare the following:

At about 1:30 am on Tuesday, 29 July 2008, myself, along with my brother Hamza Shawqi al-'Azayza, 22 years old, and two friends of mine, where on my land adjacent to my house in Bishara neighbourhood, west of al-Baraka Street in the centre of Deir al-Balah city. About eight masked armed individuals arrived at my place, onboard of a white ISUZU D-MAX jeep. They identified themselves as members of the Internal Security Agency of the Ministry of Interior. An individual, who I assume was the officer of the group, requested that I bring him my ID card, which I did. Then, he told me that they wanted to enter and search the house. A number of individuals entered the house and searched the rooms. They seized a computer, a number of CDs, my private documents and my two cellular telephones. The officer also requested my personal email and password.

Later, two individuals took me to the vehicle and blindfolded me with a piece of cloth. The vehicle drove for about 20 minutes and then stopped. The individuals pulled me out of the vehicle and placed me in a closed space but I could not identify where I was. They forced me to stand with my arms raised for about 30 hours. Take into account that I have been suffering from cartilage infection and backache for five years.

Over the detention period, I was subjected to interrogation, beating and verbal abuse. I also sustained several contusions on my arm. Interrogators inquired about my hierarchical position within the Fatah movement as well as about Fatah activities in the area of Deir al-Balah. They also interrogated me about my relation with certain persons in the West Bank, including Thafer Abu-Mathkour, who had been Director of the Criminal Investigations Police in the Central Gaza governorate before Hamas seized control of the Gaza Strip.

Later, they transported me to another unidentified location. I was detained there for about 12 hours, during which they forced to stand and raise my arms. Then, they put me onboard a vehicle, which travelled for about ten minutes. Meanwhile, I heard an individual saying that I would be transported to al-Saraya Headquarters in Gaza.

The vehicle stopped near a building, which I later knew to be al-Saraya Headquarters. They led me into a somewhat spacious place, which they called the "baas". I heard people screaming from severe torture and being beaten. I stayed in that place for around 72 hours. For a long period of time, they forced me raise my arms. In addition, I was subjected to several rounds of interrogation.

I was punched and cursed at with obscenities. Then, I was forced into a 4x4-square metre room, with a window measuring 40x40 centimetres. Approximately 24 people were held in the room, which had eight beds. Of these, I recognised Na'im Abu-'Anza, who I knew was the Director General of the Human Rights Commission in the Palestinian Authority. I was detained in this room for about five days.

At around 1:00 pm on Thursday, 7 August 2008, I was released. They gave me a notice to report to al-Mashtal Headquarters in Gaza on 1 September 2008 with regard to my computer and cellular telephones, which had been seized.

This is my declaration and hereby I sign, 14 August 2008.

Signature: Hasan al-'Azayza

Name not withheld

Field researcher: Tareq Zaqqout