

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, Mu'taz Sharif Muhammad al-Suweiti, of Palestinian nationality, holder of ID No. 907418933, born on 13 February 1982, an electric technician, and a resident of the Beit 'Awwa town near the Mosque, Hebron governorate, would like to declare the following:

I live with my family, which consists of six members, including one who is just under 18 years of age. On Saturday, 13 October 2009, my nephew Isma'il lyad al-Suweiti, who is about 2 years old, spent the night at our house. I was awakened at around 1:00 am by strong knocking on the door of the house. As I opened the door, I saw outside approximately 30 Palestinian security officers, including female officers. I knew that they were officers because of their uniforms, which indicated the agency in which they worked. An officer wearing the civil uniform asked if I was Mu'taz and I said I was. He demanded that I present my ID card, which he examined and put in his pocket. He returned my university and bank account cards, which had been inserted in the ID card case. (I am a student at the al-Quds Open University).

The officer, who was in the civil uniform, did not introduce himself, nor did he present a search warrant. He said that they wanted to search the house and demanded that the women gather in one room. I informed all the women in the family and they gathered all in one room. Then about 40 security officers entered the house and thoroughly searched all of its contents. In my presence, security officers searched all rooms and facilities in the house. They scattered the contents of the rooms and cupboards, throwing them on the ground. However, they did not damage anything. The search was very thorough.

Having completed the search of the rooms and facilities of the house, the officers demanded that the women leave the room in which they had gathered. The women went out of the room, but left my nephew Isma'il behind. Then the security officers entered. Whilst searching the room one of the security officers unintentionally dropped some mattresses on Isma'il, who was asleep. As I was drawing the officer's attention to the child, the officer in the civil uniform arrived and demanded that I take him out of the room, which I did. After they had spent about one hour searching the house, security officers went out to search an external kitchen as well as the small stores around the house, where I used to repair electric devices. While searching the external kitchen, security officers examined contents of the utensils and dropped them on the ground. Before they left, almost two hours later, the security officer who was in the civil uniform served me a summons to report to the Military Intelligence agency in the city of Hebron on Sunday, 14 October 2009. I requested that he return my ID and other cards but he refused and said that I could retrieve them when I went to their office on Sunday.

At around 11:00 am on the allotted date, I went to the Military Intelligence headquarters in Hebron. During the interview an officer filled out an application, including my personal information. The officer who interviewed me demanded that I report to the Intelligence headquarters on 8 November 2009 and did not return my ID card. At around 11:00 am today, I went to the Intelligence headquarters in Hebron again. However, I was told that there was not an officer to interview me because they had been busy with President Mahmoud Abbas' visit to the governorate of Hebron on that day. They demanded that I report to them on the following Sunday.

The continued seizure of my ID card restricts my freedom of movement. Moreover, I have to sit for examinations at the university, but I cannot enter the examination room without presenting my university or personal card. I am a civilian and am bewildered why the Military Intelligence summons and interrogates me. This agency specialises in investigating cases of security personnel. Neither during the house search nor the interview with the Intelligence officer, was a charge made against me.

This is my declaration and hereby I sign, 8 November 2009

Signature: Mu'taz al-Suweiti

Name not withheld

Field researcher: Hisham Sharabati