

**Affidavit number: 7745/2012**

**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, Amjad Taher Salah 'Arafa, of Palestinian nationality, holder of ID number 040413296, born on 12 July 1980, a press photographer and a resident of Ras al-'Amoud, Jerusalem governorate, would like to declare the following:

I work as a freelance press photographer. On Friday 5 October 2012 at 11:30 am I headed to the al-Aqsa mosque to attend Friday prayer. I had my camera as usual, since I always take photos inside the al-Aqsa mosque. After the prayer which lasted about an hour, a rally began from inside the al-Aqsa mosque to protest the ongoing intrusions by the settlers into the al-Aqsa mosque yards. I started taking photographs of the rally, noting that my camera has video capture capability. As I said I started taking pictures and moments later clashes erupted between the protesting Palestinian worshippers and the Israeli forces. These clashes were concentrated in the area of the Bab al-Maghareba (Moroccan gate), one of the gates of the al-Aqsa mosque. I continued taking photographs and at the same time I was trying to take video clips of what was happening. I saw an attack by the Israeli border police, whose members wear black uniforms and helmets and carry shields, guns and stun grenades, in addition to other forces wearing green uniforms and masks and carrying machine guns; they are mainly snipers. These forces attacked the worshippers and shot... a large number of rubber bullets and stun grenades. After about twenty minutes of taking pictures, the clashes were still going but at a slower pace.

A heavy gathering of the border police in the area of the Bab al-Hadid, which is one of the gates of the al-Aqsa mosque on the eastern side, drew my attention. I estimated that there were around 20 members. They were closing off the area so I moved closer to photograph them. While I was heading to see what was happening, one of the members of the special force shouted at me telling me to go away in Hebrew. I told him in Hebrew that I am a photographer and he started shouting at me to go away and pointing his gun at me. During that exchange, I noticed a short boy dressed in civilian clothing amongst members of the Special Forces. Most of his shirt was up over his head and the Special Forces members were throwing him around and punching him. I could not take photos because the soldiers were blocking my view. I also had to leave because they were threatening me. When I was about ten metres away from the Special Forces, there were intrusions by soldiers who were firing stun grenades everywhere. I thought the boy had been arrested and taken by the Special Forces out of the al-Aqsa mosque.

The sound of a boy screaming out in pain drew my attention. I put my camera on video mode and tried to walk between the soldiers to reach the location of the scream. Then I saw that three members of the Special Forces were holding the same boy by the neck and dragging him. They were passing through the Bab al-Hadid area to the al-Aqsa mosque vicinity, heading towards a room to the right of the mosque, where the guards are located. I immediately rushed to where the Israeli soldiers and the boy were, while videotaping. When I was two metres away, I saw a Special Forces member holding the boy by his head while another one was pulling him by his right hand, and a third one kicked him in the genitals. They then threw him to the ground, and two of them continued to hold him down while the third one threatened me, saying "go away from here." At that moment I saw two members of the Special Forces surrounded by around ten other members of the Special Forces holding the boy to the ground, while one of them, or both, was hitting him on the head with his fist. The boy's head was very close to the ground so it hit the ground quite hard. The soldier's hand was covered in blood.

That is what I was able to capture with my camera, for some reason it stopped working after that. The same soldier punched him again and the boy screamed "enough... enough". Blood was streaming from his head and mouth. I think he was injured before that. Another member of the Special Forces also punched him in the head then hit him on the head with his knee. Each time, the boy's head was knocked against the ground. It is important to note that the ground is paved with stones. After that, I saw the boy faint. The soldiers came directly to me and threatened me; they were very close to me, telling me to go away. At that point, I moved about ten metres away. I believed that the boy had died from the severe beating. I left because I was afraid the Israeli soldiers would arrest me after repeatedly pushing me away from the area. After that, I continued taking pictures somewhere else as the events continued until about 2:30 pm. I uploaded the video to YouTube and in the evening I learned that the boy was Hasan 'Afifi, 16, from the Bab al-Hadid area in the old city of Jerusalem.

This is my declaration, which I hereby sign on 7 October 2012

Signature:

Name not withheld

Field researcher: 'Umran Rishiq