

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, Mas'oud Muhammad Jamil Tamboura, of Palestinian nationality, holder of ID No. 802357030, born on 8 December 1989, unemployed and a resident of Beit Lahiya town, Northern Gaza governorate, would like to declare the following:

My name is Mas'oud Muhammad Jamil Tamboura. I am 19-years-old, single, and unemployed. Sometimes, I sell figs. I live in my family's house in the area of al-Qur'a al-Khamsa, al-'Atatra neighbourhood, near the Um al-Fahem Girls Preparatory School, west of the town of Beit Lahiya in the governorate of Northern Gaza.

At around 3:00 pm on Monday, 24 August 2009, my cousin Sa'id 'Ata Muhammad al-Hasoumi, 16-years-old, and I rode a horse cart to the area of the Birak al-Samak (formerly the settlement Nisanit), where there is a fish market on the beach of Beit Lahiya town. The pools are located on al-Ghola Street, more than one kilometre from the northern border with Israel. Fishermen are constantly present in this area as they sell and store fish here. Other Palestinians also frequent the area.

We rode the cart to the beach, stopped near the water, and sat on the cart. Usually, we come to this area to play and pass the time. We also pick figs from the trees and sometimes sell them in the market. I saw Sa'id walk northwards. He wandered around looking at the fish. I should note that we were about 900 metres away from the border. When Sa'id was 200 metres away from me, I suddenly heard the sound of bullets, which were fired one after another, from the border towards us. I saw Sa'id raise his hands towards me and fall on the ground. After he fell, the shooting stopped. I hurried to see Sa'id. He was bleeding heavily. As I checked him, I saw a hole in the front part of his neck as well as two other holes in his chest. Sa'id did not move and seemed to be lifeless. I stood up and tried to carry him, but I heard the sound of bullets fired towards me and saw bullets hit the sand around me.

I was scared that I would be hit. Therefore, I left Sa'id and decided to return to the cart and ask for help. I sustained more than one bullet wound in my chest and fell on the ground. I lay bleeding for several minutes. I decided to get up and hurried towards the cart. As no one was present in the area, I was afraid I would die near Sa'id. After the shooting stopped, I decided to flee from the area and ask for help for Sa'id and I. Despite my bleeding, I walked hurriedly for a distance of 200 metres until I reached the horse cart.

Muhammad and 'Ata al-Hasoumi, Sa'id's brothers, arrived. I told them what had happened. They put me on the cart and rode to the main street. A private vehicle transported me to Kamal 'Udwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya. After I received first aid, doctors told me that I had sustained two bullet wounds in the chest at a very close distance to the heart. They also said that my condition was critical. I was moved to the operating room and operated on. I spent three days in the intensive care unit. After I came around, I was relocated to the surgery section, where I stayed for five days. My relatives told me that my cousin Sa'id had died of injuries sustained while he was with me on the beach.

On 3 September 2009, I returned to my house. I still suffer from sharp pains in my chest and report to the hospital every day for medical treatment. I do not know why the occupying soldiers opened fire on us in a vacant area, where Palestinians are allowed to be present.

This is my declaration and hereby I sign, 12 September 2009.

Signature: Mas'oud Tamboura

Name not withheld

Field researcher: Muhammad Abu-Rahma