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Dear Mr. President,

Sheikh Sayyah Abu Mdeighim al-Turi was granted an early release from Maasiyahu Prison, in the city of Ramle in central Israel. On 15 May 2019, the scheduled date of his release, Israeli police requested from the Israeli Prison Service to include two conditions for release. First, a pledge from Sheikh Sayyah not to live in his village of al-'Araqib in the Negev/Naqab in southern Israel, which the Israeli government considers illegal. Second, to remain under a night-time house arrest regime at his family's house in the city of Rahat, in southern Israel, until the end of his original prison sentence in October 2019.

Sheikh Sayyah's lawyer, Adv. Shehadeh Ibn Bari, appointed by the Israeli organization Human Rights Defenders Fund (HRDF), negotiated with the Israeli police that the removal from his land cannot be used as a condition for release, resulting in the withdrawal of the first condition. The second condition, however, remained in place. Sheikh Sayyah rejected any conditions for his release, and therefore, remains imprisoned until the end of his original sentence in October 2019.

I urge you to immediately and unconditionally release Sheikh Sayyah, as he is a prisoner of conscience imprisoned solely for peacefully defending his human rights and those of his community. I call on you to immediately stop all demolitions in the al-'Araqib village as they systematically violate the Bedouins' right to adequate housing; and to respect the Bedouin population's right to live on their ancestral land and to officially recognize al-'Araqib and other "unrecognized" villages.

Kind regards,