

IDF Chief of General Staff

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Dear Lieutenant General,

I am writing to you with regards to conscientious objector, 20-year-old Yuval Dag, who is currently serving a 20-day detention order at Neve Tzedek military prison, in southwestern Tel Aviv, Israel, after he refused to enlist in compulsory army service on 20 March and again on 2 April. I am concerned that he is at high risk of being detained again after he is released, as expected on 19 April.

Yuval Dag was first arrested and detained for 10 days after refusing a conscription summons at Metzudat military base on 20 March. He had made his objection to military service on grounds of conscience clear prior to the summons date, but the army considered his refusal to be disobeying of orders. Days after his release, on 2 April, he was summoned and refused to enlist again, receiving another detention order this time for 20 days. Amnesty International considers Yuval Dag a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned for exercising his right to conscientious objection.

In his statement, written on 19 March, explaining his reasons for refusing conscription, he wrote that he would not take part in "military invasions, violence, killings and oppression which is the norm for many Palestinians [...] who live under [the Israeli military's] rule. Conscript soldiers serving in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are commonly tasked with enforcing lockdowns on villages and neighbourhoods, as he describes in his statement. The use of excessive or reckless force, arbitrary restrictions on freedom of movement and freedom of peaceful assembly violate human rights and, insofar as they are perpetrated in the context of a military occupation and lead to unlawful killings, injuries and collective punishments, also breach international humanitarian law. He also wrote: "The body responsible for executing this project is the Israeli military. [...] I refuse to give my body and my life to any system, for any country, and in the current situation, especially not to the state of Israel and the Israeli military."

I urge you to ensure Yuval Dag's immediate and unconditional release and to refrain from further prosecutions should he refuse to take part in future calls for conscription. I further call on you to support the introduction of legislation recognizing the right to conscientious objection to compulsory military service in line with the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Israel is a party.

Yours sincerely,