

The President of the State of Israel

Mr. Isaac Herzog
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Dear President Herzog,

I am writing to urge you to exercise your power to pardon Walid Daqqah, a terminally ill Palestinian prisoner, and to release him immediately on humanitarian grounds. Pending his release, I urge you to ensure that he is provided with the adequate and specialised medical treatment to which he is entitled, in accordance with Rule 24 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Treatment of Prisoners, and which the Ayalon prison clinic is ill-equipped to provide, according to medical opinion.

In 2022, Walid Daqqah was diagnosed with myelofibrosis, a rare form of bone marrow cancer, which was exacerbated by numerous instances of medical neglect in prison. According to two separate medical evaluations of Walid Daqqah's case, he faces a real and imminent danger to his life, and his health condition is extremely complicated. According to one of his doctors, "his days are short and there is real danger to his life".

In recent months, and despite his well-known and documented health situation, Walid Daqqah was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment – including physical assault by prison guards – humiliation and further medical neglect. For nearly a month, he was kept in the extremely over-crowded Gilboa prison, deprived of access to proper hygiene and denied access to adequate medical care. As a result, he had to be transferred to the hospital twice due to health deterioration.

Since 7 October 2023, Walid Daqqah has been denied any contact with his family and was only allowed to meet with his lawyer once. Walid Daqqah's appeal for a parole was rejected by the Israeli District Court in August 2023, and his leave to appeal was turned down by the Israeli Supreme Court on 22 November. Having exhausted his last legal resort, Walid is due to be released from prison on 25 March 2025. Yet, with the continued deterioration of his health and the already dire medical prognosis, he may not live to see this day.

In light of the imminent danger to his life and exhaustion of all legal remedies, I urge you to apply your power to pardon Walid Daqqah on humanitarian grounds and allow his immediate release from prison. Pending his release, I also urge you to ensure that the Israeli prison authorities grant Walid Daqqah his right to the adequate and specialized healthcare as required for his conditions, and to immediately resume family visits, which have been arbitrarily denied to all Palestinian prisoners and detainees – as a form of collective punishment – since 7 October.

Walid Daqqah has already spent most of his adult life behind bars and lost his father while in prison. In the name of humanity, Walid Daqqah must be allowed to spend his remaining days with his family, his wife Sanaa and their only daughter Milad.

Yours sincerely,