



URGENT ACTION

Calling on **Amnesty International** to stop exploiting human rights against Israel

Two researchers at Amnesty International's "Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories" section have displayed a political activist background and bias that is inconsistent with - and unsuited for - human rights research in this region. We call on Amnesty International and all of its members and branches to undertake an immediate and impartial review.

Deborah Hyams and **Saleh Hijazi** are both researchers at Amnesty International on "Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories." Hyams had previously volunteered to be a "[human shield](#)" in Beit Jala (near Bethlehem), to deter Israeli military responses to recurrent gunfire and mortars targeting Jewish civilians in Jerusalem. She [has stated](#) that "occupation is violence...and the consequence of this action must result in violence."

Hijazi, a Palestinian born in Jerusalem and raised in Ramallah, has also demonstrated a clear lack of objectivity in this regard. In 2005, [he worked](#) as a **Public Relations officer for the Palestinian Authority's Office of the Ministry of Planning** in Ramallah and in 2007 he was [listed as contact](#) for the NGO "Another Voice" – under the group's signature "**Resist! Boycott! We Are Intifada!**"

Reliance on blatantly biased researchers clearly violates Amnesty's "[core value](#)" of impartiality. As an NGO superpower with a budget exceeding €216 million, and which claims to be a global movement of more than 3 million supporters who campaign on human rights issues, Amnesty International should be held to higher standards!

Furthermore, Amnesty has a [history of targeting Israel through false and unsubstantiated allegations](#), including the June 6, 2012 publication entitled "Starved of Justice: Palestinians detained without trial by Israel." The document promotes the campaign focusing on Palestinian prisoners, including those tried, convicted and serving sentences for involvement in suicide bombings and other mass terror attacks against Israeli civilians, and ignores the victims of these brutal attacks. Many of the claims in this report simply repeat, without verification, the Palestinian political narrative.

Please write immediately in English or your own language:

- Calling on Amnesty officials to review the work of Hyams and Hijazi.
- Urging Amnesty to ensure that researchers do not have **clear, immediate, and pronounced conflicts of interest**.
- Calling on Amnesty to stop the policy of **disproportionate** focus on Israel, and to end the lack of moral **distinction** between victims of terrorism and its perpetrators.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS TO:

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Amnesty International](#) (AI) has over 3 million members, making it a powerful force in the realm of human rights advocacy. [This NGO claims](#) to be “Independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion... it does not support or oppose any government or political system.” However, the record clearly demonstrates that AI [disproportionately singles out Israel](#) for condemnation, makes numerous false claims in its accusations, and misrepresents the complexity of the conflict, while giving far less attention to chronic human rights violations in the region.

On June 6, Amnesty issued a document headlined “Starved of Justice: Palestinians detained without trial by Israel.” The publication is part of the campaign focusing attention on the recent hunger strike of Palestinian prisoners, including those tried, convicted and serving sentences for involvement in mass terror attacks, including suicide bombings. This Amnesty publication and campaign, like many others, [targets Israel through false and unsubstantiated allegations](#), and ignores the victims of these brutal attacks. Many of the claims in this report repeat, without verification, the Palestinian political narrative.

The report omits the authors’ names. **Deborah Hyams and Saleh Hijazi** were listed in a prior media advisory as media contacts for the report and are described as **Israel and OPT researchers**. Both have backgrounds that reflect **flagrant and unprofessional bias**. **The reliance on biased personnel is clearly inconsistent with Amnesty’s [claimed core value](#)** of impartiality.

In 2001, Hyams volunteered as a “[human shield](#)” in Beit Jala (near Bethlehem), to deter Israeli military responses to recurrent gunfire and mortars targeting Jewish non-combatant civilians in Jerusalem. In 2008, Hyams was [signatory to a letter](#) claiming Israel is “a state founded on terrorism, massacres and the dispossession of another people from their land.” According to a 2002 [Washington Jewish Week](#) article, Hyams said “that while she does not condone suicide bombings, she personally believes they ‘are in response to the occupation.’” **Hyams has worked for a number of radical advocacy NGOs, including the [Alternative Information Center](#) (AIC), [Jews for Justice in Palestine and Israel](#) (JPPI), [Rachel Corrie Foundation](#), and [Ma’an Network](#).**

Hijazi, a Palestinian born in Jerusalem and raised in Ramallah, has also demonstrated a clear lack of objectivity in this regard. In 2005, [he worked](#) as a **Public Relations officer for the Palestinian Authority’s Office of the Ministry of Planning in Ramallah** and in 2007, he was [listed as contact](#) for the NGO “Another Voice” – under the group’s signature “Resist! Boycott! We Are Intifada!”

On March 9, 2011, Hijazi, while as a researcher for Human Rights Watch, spoke at a [UN conference](#) where he described how his father was supposedly arrested by the Israeli authorities “**when the Israeli military could not find an activist neighbor**.” His impartiality is questionable given that Hijazi **simultaneously claims to be a victim** of the very same country on which he is reporting.

- **This Urgent Action Item is a demand that Amnesty review the work of Hyams and Hijazi; ensure that researchers do not have clear, immediate, and pronounced conflicts of interest; and stop the policy of false allegations and discrimination against Israel.**