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Outcome UA: 78/23 Index: MDE 15/8027/2024 Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territories of May 7, 2024

ISRAEL/ OPT TERMINALLY ILL PALESTINIAN PRISONER DIES IN ISRAELI CUSTODY

On April 7, Walid Daqqah, a Palestinian prisoner, died in an Israeli jail after spending 38 years imprisoned. Daqqah was terminally ill and succumbed to what has been described as systematic medical neglect, torture, and other abuses, including physical attacks. His body is still being held by Israeli authorities. On April 16, Adalah, the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, filed a petition to the Israeli Supreme Court on behalf of Daqqah's family, demanding the immediate release of his body for burial. The case is still pending a court decision.

Walid Daqqah, a writer and father, was arrested by Israeli forces on March 25, 1986, at the age of 24. In March 1987, an Israeli military court sentenced him to life imprisonment for leading a group affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) that abducted and killed Israeli soldier Moshe Tamam in 1984. Although Daqqah was not convicted of the murder itself, his leadership role led to his conviction under British emergency regulations from 1945, which have a lower standard of proof than Israeli criminal law. The Israeli military courts have been criticized for not ensuring fair trials. Furthermore, Daqqah faced torture and other ill-treatment during his interrogation.

In 2012, his life sentence was capped at 37 years after then-President Shimon Peres granted his request. However, in early 2018, five years before the end of his sentence, he received an additional two-year sentence for attempting to smuggle mobile phones into prison. On November 22, 2023, the Israeli Supreme Court denied his appeal for parole, closing his last judicial avenue for early release.

Adding to the tragic news of his death, Israeli authorities are still refusing to release Daqqah's body for burial. On April 16, Adalah filed another petition to the Israeli Supreme Court demanding the release of his body, citing the continued abusive treatment of Daqqah's family by withholding his body. Amnesty International continues to monitor the case and support the family's right to a dignified burial.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.