

Date: March 18, 2020

To Brig. Gen. Ghassan Alian
Head of the Civil Administration

In response please cite: 31490
Via fax: 02-9977341



Dear Sir,

Re: Request for the publication of a notice regarding the non-removal from Israel, during the Corona crisis, of Palestinians whose requests pursuant to family unification procedures and humanitarian procedures were approved by the Ministry of Interior but to whom the military has not yet issued permits

1. On behalf of HaMoked: Center for the Defence of the Individual (hereinafter: **HaMoked**), a human rights organization, which works, among other things, for the rights of East Jerusalem residents and their family members who are residents of the oPt, vis-à-vis the authorities in Israel, I hereby appeal to you to demand the publication of an urgent public notice regarding the Corona crisis and the legal status of Palestinians living in Israel lawfully pursuant to various procedures in which they take part. We shall explain.
2. In the framework of the “Corona crisis” and its response, all state authorities are acting, each within its jurisdiction and sphere of responsibility, in order to protect the public’s safety and health in the best possible way.
3. The Population and Immigration Authority (hereinafter: **the Authority**) is among these authorities. And therefore yesterday evening we sent the Minister of Interior and the Population Authority an urgent request to publish a notice whereby, given the complex situation which developed with the beginning of the corona crisis, the status of any person whose residency status expired as of March 12, 2020, be automatically extended until June 30, 2020.
4. The request sent to the Minister of Interior was based on an identical notice the Authority published the day before, on March 16, 2020, regarding all foreign nationals staying in Israel with various visas and permits, who are not residents of the oPt.
5. However, the Minister of Interior’s approval of our request for the publication of a notice is not sufficient, as the actual stay permits issued to Palestinians whose requests were approved, must be collected, as you

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know, from the various military District Coordination Offices (DCO). And given that, to our knowledge, the various DCOs are not currently holding reception hours to date, the collection of the permits has become effectively impossible. Moreover, the matter is also becoming a threat to public health and safety with each passing day. Therefore we are asking you as follows.

6. We request that given the situation which developed, an immediate and clear notice be issued on your behalf to all the bodies and especially the security officials and the Israel Police, whereby Palestinians living in Israel whose requests were approved by the Ministry of Interior but do not hold valid stay permits, will not be removed at the present time and so long as the crisis has abated in Israel.
7. It is important to remember that this concerns many individuals who have children and spouses who are Israeli residents and citizens living with them and dependent on them. All authorities, including the civil administration, must do all that is possible to maintain public health and safety, in general and particularly during this difficult time.
8. All this so as not to harm the basic rights of many Israeli families and in order to prevent dangerous situations whereby a person cannot move about reasonably within their legal place of residence, and in order to take care of the welfare and health of their family members, and also to prevent a situation where they could be mistakenly removed to locations where they might be exposed to the virus.
9. We would appreciate your immediate handling of this urgent and exceptional demand.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Agsteribbe, Att.

CC: Major General Kamil Abu-Rukun, Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, via email