

Palestinian teenager Ahed Tamimi has no regrets after release from Israeli jail



Ramallah, July 31 (RHC)-- Ahed Tamimi, a Palestinian teenage girl who gained international fame for slapping Israeli soldiers, says she was deeply changed by her eight-month sentence in an Israeli jail but regrets none of her actions.

The 17-year-old was arrested last December after a video went viral showing her slapping and shoving two Israeli soldiers during a raid on the occupied West Bank village of Nabi Saleh, northwest of the city of Ramallah. Ahed was charged with a total of 12 counts, including assault, incitement and obstructing Israeli soldiers as well as stone-throwing.

In March, the Palestinian teenager reached a plea bargain with Israeli military prosecution, according to which she was sentenced to eight months in prison and fined \$1,500. Ahed Tamimi, released from prison on July 29, has been hailed as a heroine by many Palestinians for bravely standing up to the Israeli military aggression and recognized as a "symbol" of the Palestinian resistance against the Israeli occupation.

"Of course my life has been changed a lot. I changed a lot in prison," said Tamimi. "I became more

focused, more aware also. Prison ages a person. In one day you age 100 years," she said in an interview with AFP in the backyard of her home in Nabi Saleh village on Monday.

Asked if she would have done the same thing if she had known it would land her behind bars for months, Tamimi answered "yes." She said: "I didn't do anything wrong that I should regret. If I had known I would be in jail eight months, of course I would have done it because it was a natural reaction to a soldier being in my house shooting at people, people from my village."

The Palestinian activist also stated that she had decided to study law in order to defend the rights of the Palestinian people in international courts and expose the issue of Israel's occupation to the rest of the world.

According to latest figures provided by the Palestinian prisoners' rights group Addameer, some 5,900 Palestinians are currently being held in Israeli jails, many of them in administrative detention. The detention is a form of imprisonment without charge or trial that allows the regime to incarcerate Palestinians for up to six months – and subject to indefinite extensions.

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