

Paris slams Israel's expulsion of French-Palestinian rights lawyer



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Prominent French-Palestinian human rights lawyer Salah Hamouri (by AFP)??

Paris, December 19 (RHC)-- France has condemned Israel's decision to expel prominent French-Palestinian human rights lawyer Salah Hamouri, saying Paris has taken numerous steps to express its opposition to the move, which it said was "against the law."

"We condemn today the Israeli authorities' decision, against the law, to expel Salah Hamouri to France," the French Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Sunday.

The ministry said Paris had been "fully mobilized, including at the highest level of the state," to enable Hamouri to defend his rights, benefit from all possible assistance and lead a normal life in his native city of the occupied al-Quds. "France also took several steps to communicate to the Israeli authorities in the clearest way its opposition to this expulsion of a Palestinian resident of East al-Quds, an occupied territory under the Fourth Geneva Convention," it added.

Israeli authorities announced the expulsion of Hamouri despite objections from the French government, citing "breach of allegiance" to Israel as justification for his deportation. Israel's Interior Ministry said in a statement that "Hamouri was deported this morning to France following interior minister Ayelet Shaked's decision to withdraw his residency status."

Hamouri was arrested on March 7th at his home in the Kufr Aqab neighborhood in occupied East al-Quds, where Israeli forces entered his bedroom, and grabbed him from his bed while still sleeping at dawn. He has since been held in prison under the so-called Israeli policy of "administrative detention." The 37-year old rights lawyer has been on strike against his detention without charge or trial since September 25, along with 29 other administrative detainees.

According to sources, Israel has extended Hamouri's detention twice, the first time in June over alleged links to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and the second time on September 5. Hamouri has denied any links to PFLP.

Earlier in October 2021, Israeli authorities revoked Hamouri's East al-Quds residency, denying him the right to live in his home town, which Israel captured in 1967. The Palestinian lawyer arrived in Paris on Sunday morning, where he was welcomed by his wife Elsa Lefor, politicians, representatives of rights groups and supporters at the Charles de Gaulle airport.

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