

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 21, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Mike Huckabee
U.S. Ambassador to Israel
U.S. Embassy Jerusalem
14 David Flusser
Jerusalem 9378322, Israel

Dear Secretary Rubio and Ambassador Huckabee,

We write with grave concern regarding the detention without trial of Mohammed Zaher Ibrahim. Mohammed is a U.S. citizen from Florida who was reportedly blindfolded, handcuffed, and arrested on February 16th, 2025 when Israeli forces reportedly entered his family home in al-Mazra'a ash-Sharqiya at 3 a.m. He was detained when he was 15 years old and turned 16 in prison. He has been accused of throwing rocks at Israeli settlers, but no evidence has been publicly provided to support this allegation. As you know, Palestinians are subject to military law in the West Bank and are tried in military courts where there have been well-documented concerns about Palestinians not receiving fair due process. Mohammed is also the first cousin of Saifullah Kamel Musallet, the 20-year-old U.S. citizen who was reportedly beaten to death by Israeli settlers in July 2025. To date, no one has been arrested concerning his killing.

While U.S. embassy officials have been able to conduct visits, Mohammed has been denied all other contact with the outside world and his family has not been able to contact him since his detention. Senators Van Hollen and Merkley met with Mohammed's family in the West Bank, and Rep. Castor, Rep. Frost, and other members also met with his family separately. His family has received updates from U.S. embassy staff and former detainees who described his alarming weight loss, deteriorating health, and signs of torture as his court hearings continue to be routinely postponed. His family reports that Mohammed has lost nearly a quarter of his body weight and contracted scabies after being detained in Megiddo Prison and now in Ofer Prison.

We are concerned about reports of the mistreatment of Palestinians in Israeli detention facilities and prisons, including both of the prisons that have held Mohammed. The mistreatment of Palestinians in Israeli prisons was recently corroborated in Israel's September 7th Supreme Court ruling, which stated the Israeli government has deprived Palestinian detainees of even a minimum subsistence diet and ordered authorities to increase the amount and quality of food served to inmates.

In a disturbingly similar case, and underscoring our urgency concerning Mohammed's continued pre-trial detention, 17-year-old Palestinian Walid Ahmad collapsed and died in Megiddo Prison on March 22nd, 2025 after also being detained for six months without charges or trial for allegedly throwing rocks. Walid's post-mortem examination indicates that he died from a combination of abuse and mistreatment that led to him collapsing and hitting his head, including extreme malnutrition, torture, scabies, and the denial of medical intervention. It is the responsibility of the U.S. government to ensure that this recent tragedy does not repeat itself with Mohammed.

As we have been told repeatedly, "the Department of State has no higher priority than the safety and security of U.S. citizens abroad." We share that view and urge you to fulfill this responsibility by engaging the Israeli government directly to secure the swift release of this American boy.

We request a response to this letter by November 3rd, including what efforts you have made on Mohammed's case.

Sincerely,



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



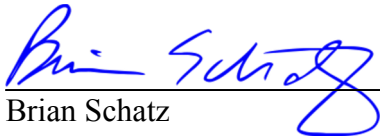
Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



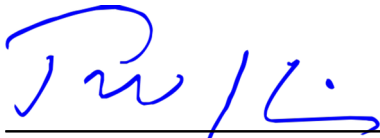
Maxwell Alejandro Frost
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Member of Congress



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



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Adam B. Schiff
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United States Senator



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Member of Congress



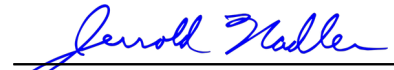
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



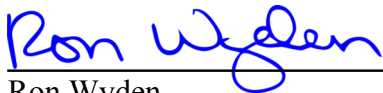
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
United States Senator



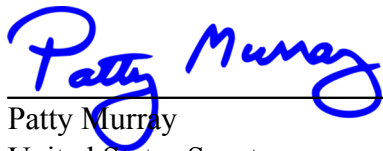
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



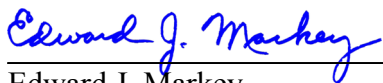
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



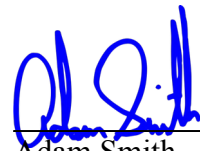
Patty Murray
United States Senator



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



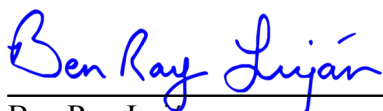
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



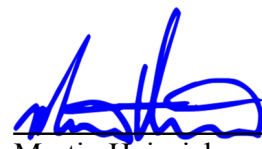
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Delia C. Ramirez
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Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator