



Dua'a Abboud (16)

Girl (16) used as a human shield while searching her house in the old city of Nablus

Dua'a Abboud (16) lives with her family in the old city of Nablus. On 18 February 2010, at around 3:30am, they woke up to the sound of banging on the door. As the door got stuck when trying to open it, the Israeli soldiers who were outside ordered them to step away, broke down the door, and stormed the house. Most of them were wearing masks on their faces. They had come to arrest Dua'a's brother, Mohammad (17). While searching the house, they beat Mohammad and Khaled, and ordered Dua'a to open the closets and lift the beds: "You lift the mattress, and we step away." They told her in Arabic. "They moved three metres backward towards the door while aiming their weapons at me... They ordered me to search the closets and other items in the room." Mohammad was taken in his pajama to a military jeep, hand-tied and blindfolded. He is currently detained at Megiddo prison. Since his arrest, Khaled (15) has been replacing him in

his job and is providing for the whole family, due to their father's disability.

Dua'a Abboud (16) lives with her family in the old city of Nablus. Her family has nine members: her father, Omar, who due to diabetes he had his legs amputated and requires dialysis three times a week, her mother, Waseefi, and her siblings Zubeida (19), Mohammad (17), Dua'a (16), Khaled (15), Ameen (6), Tamer (4), Haitham (3). Her brother Mohammad dropped out of school after completing 9th grade in order to support his family in view of his father's disability.

On 18 February 2010, at around 3:30am, Dua'a and her family woke up to the sound of banging on the door. The door got stuck when they were trying to open it. Thus, the soldiers ordered them to step away, broke down the door, and stormed the house. Most of them were wearing masks on their faces. They were looking for Dua'a's brother, Mohammad (17), who they had come to arrest. A soldier pointed a weapon at him and ordered him to raise his hands. "Are you Mohammad?" Yes, he responded. Immediately, several soldiers started to beat him and ask him about his weapon. They twisted his right arm, in which he had recently had surgery. Then they asked him about his friend 'Ala. When he denied having been with him, the soldiers went to his brother Khaled (15) and beat him, thinking he was 'Ala. After seeing Khaled's birth certificate, they let him go.

The soldiers ordered all the family members, except for Dua'a and Mohammad, to gather in the parent's room. Dua'a went to fetch Mohammad's ID from the room, and was followed by two soldiers who asked her: "Are you bringing Mohammad's weapon?" She replied: "Mohammad doesn't have a weapon; I'm just going to get his ID." One of the soldiers ordered her to stand in a corner while pointing his weapon at her. The other soldier told him to let her out, so she took the ID went back to the hall. Dua'a describes: "I was shivering in fear. I gave the ID to one of the soldiers and one of them ordered me to sit on the bed where Mohammad was sleeping. All my family members were in my parents' room and the soldiers didn't allow them to leave. They

pointed their weapons at me and one of them sat beside me. Some of them were taking pictures of the house with a digital camera.”

Then, the soldier sitting beside her stood up and ordered Dua’a to lift the mattress to see what was under it: *“You lift the mattress, and we step away,”* he said. *“I did so while I was quivering because I was very scared. They moved three metres backward towards the door while aiming their weapons at me.”* Dua’a’s father explains: *“They focused their search on the place where Mohammad was sleeping. They ordered her - Dua’a - to lift the bed but she couldn’t because it was heavy. At that moment, they moved about two metres away from her and pointed their weapons at her. ‘I can’t lift it, you want me to tear it apart?’ she asked them, and they ordered her to leave it. She was scared and kept crying and shivering the whole time. I saw the whole thing because the door of the room where I was is directly opposite the hall. The room and the hall are open to each other.”* Then, the soldiers took Dua’a to the room and ordered her to search the closets and other items in the room while still pointing their weapons at her.

When they finished the search and were about to take Mohammad, Dua’a’s father asked the soldiers to bring Mohammad to his room so he could say good bye. Dua’a remembers: *“My father asked the soldiers to bring Mohammad to him before they arrest him because is diabetic and both of his legs were amputated so he can’t walk, but the soldiers shouted at him.”* Then, reluctantly, they brought Mohammad to said goodbye to his parents and siblings. He is currently being held in Megiddo prison.

After Mohammad’s arrest, Khaled took over his job at the cafeteria of an-Najah University. Omar, Dua’a’s father, explains: *“Mohammad was the only provider for the family because I can’t work because of my health condition. Khaled had to do this to support the family. He earns NIS40 per day; NIS10 for him and NIS30 for us. He dropped out of school before Mohammad’s arrest. Mohammad also dropped out of school. They wanted to support the family because of my illness that I have been suffering for four years now.”*

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