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France/Lebanon

Georges Ibrahim Abdallah must be freed!

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The demand that Georges Ibrahim Abdallah, one of the longest-serving prisoners in France, be freed is supported by a number of French and international personalities, as well as Palestine solidarity campaigns and French political parties including the Parti De Gauche, the French Communist Party, the NPA and Lutte Ouvrière.

Georges Ibrahim Abdallah (GIA) was born in 1951, in the north of Lebanon, a country facing a structural crisis of Lebanese identity, leading to very strong repression from the Lebanese confessional bourgeoisie. The latter sought to curb the popular movement which challenged this system and "rapidly radicalized". In the early 1970s, the affirmation of Palestinian revolutionary reality became part of the regional scene in the Middle East. In Lebanon, it broadened the scope of social struggles. The towns and villages of southern Lebanon, the refugee camps, formed a "belt of misery" around towns such as Beirut. These belts of misery were the focal point of the local, regional and international issues of the revolutionary movement.

Georges Ibrahim Abdallah first joined the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, a pan-Arab organisation, then joined the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, thus joining the Palestinian resistance. In 1978 the Israeli army invaded Lebanon destroying many villages, massacring people, throwing thousands of refugees onto the roads. He was injured in combat. In 1979 GIA created the Revolutionary Armed Factions of Lebanon (FARL). Ordered to withdraw by the United Nations, Israel handed over the part of Lebanon it had occupied to a Christian militia in its pay which was responsible for terror, exactions and massacres. In 1982 the Israeli army again penetrated into a Lebanon ravaged by civil war. Under the watchful eye of the Israeli army and Ariel Sharon, an unspeakable massacre followed in the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Chattila. Thousands of dead, wounded, refugees, the Palestinian resistance scattered, Beirut destroyed, a Lebanon drained of blood, were the results of operation "Peace in Galilee".

The complicity of the Western powers allowed this invasion and these massacres, forever traumatizing the Palestinian refugees and the Lebanese population. The FARL in response to these horrors, "relocated" the war against Zionism and carried out targeted attacks against US representatives and Mossad agents over the period from 1981 to 1984. GIA was arrested in Lyon in 1984 in possession of a "true/false" passport issued by the Algerian authorities. The French authorities undertook to release him in exchange for a French diplomat kidnapped in Lebanon, but did not keep their word.

Tried for the first time, he was initially sentenced to four years in prison for possession of weapons and false papers, although his release had been promised under a prisoner exchange agreement. He was tried a second time by the Special Assize Court for complicity in murder on 28 February 1987. The US government, up to Reagan himself, pressured the French authorities, even constituting a civil party. The two trials take place in an atmosphere of anguish and fear linked to indiscriminate attacks on French territory. In these circumstances, even if there was no real charge other than the possession of false papers, he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

GIA does not recognize the court's right to judge him, because the French state was perjured during his arrest. He did not condemn the attacks, and never renounced his political convictions and his internationalist commitment. These are the aggravating circumstances - the argument is the risk of recidivism! Imprisoned since 1984, he continues to support oppressed peoples (going on hunger strike in support of Tunisian political prisoners, for example) He has been eligible for release since 1999.

All his requests for release have been refused, yet there have been two court rulings in favour of his release, in 2003 and 2013. All were overruled by the summit of the state. Of course, international pressure from the United States and

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Israel contributes to this, but we should not forget to what extent all French governments have supported and supported Zionism. Lebanon is ready to welcome him. Even Yves Bonnet - head of the French intelligence agency, the DST, when he was arrested in 1984 - admitted that the U.S.A and Israel had done everything to keep him in prison. He believed in 2011 that the DST and the French government had behaved like criminals, because he all he had done was to resist the invasion of his country.

In 2013, when the court ruled in favour of his release, the then French Prime Minister Valls refused to sign his deportation order. [1] This is harassment and revenge from the French State against a man who has kept his dignity and his political compass. He joins the sad record for length of time spent in prison by those who have paid for their commitment to the damned of the earth: we do not forget Leonard Pelletier and Mumia Abu-Jamal who are rotting in US jails. Georges Ibrahim Abdallah must be freed!

Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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[1] Abdallah was at that time granted parole on appeal on condition of deportation from France to Lebanon.