

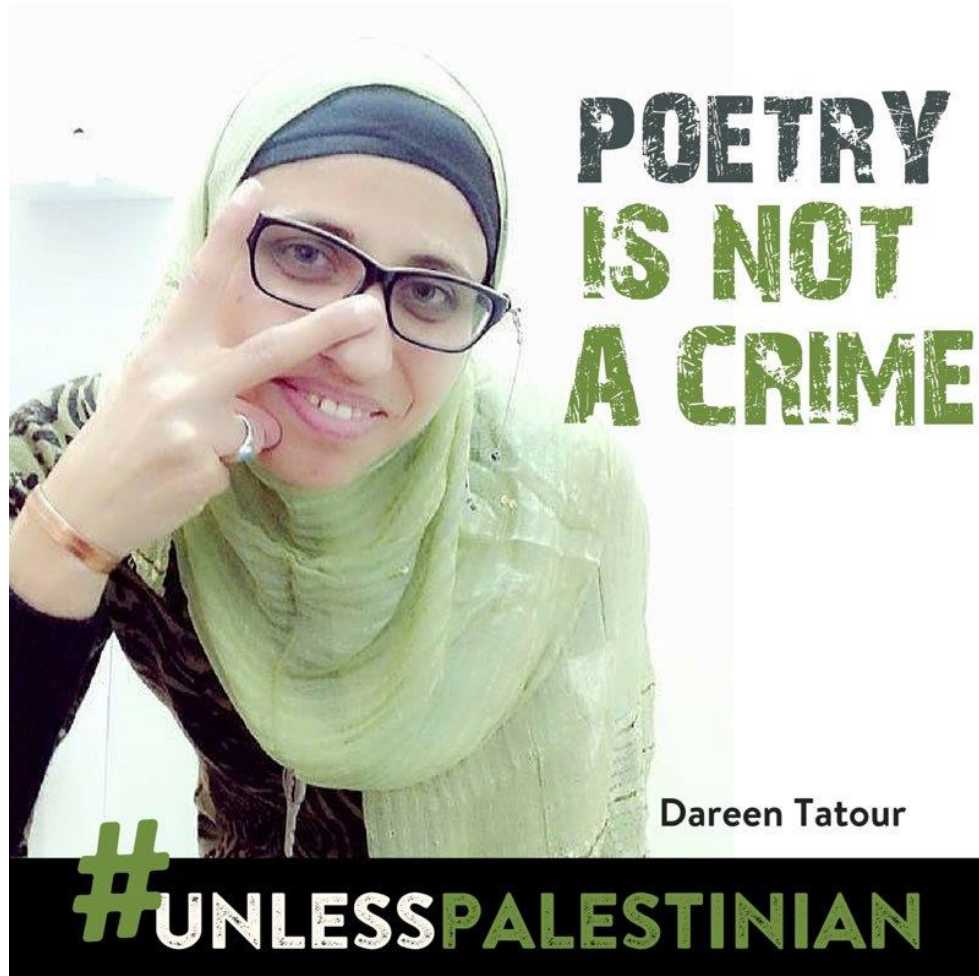


**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORTING  
FAIR TRIAL & HUMAN RIGHTS**

Registration No. 2795/2012

OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

**ISRAEL SENTENCED DAREEN TATOUR TO FIVE MONTHS IN PRISON OVER A  
POEM**



After having already served nearly three years under house arrest, on Tuesday, an Israeli court has sentenced Palestinian poetess and writer Daren Tatour, 36, to five months in prison for "inciting terrorism" in a poem she posted on social media in 2015.

Tatour's poem "[Resist, My People, Resist Them](#)" tells a story of three Palestinian victims of the Israeli occupation: Mohammed Abu Khdeir, a teen who was kidnapped and burned to death by three Israeli settlers in Jerusalem in 2014; Hadeel al-Hashlamoun, 18, who was shot by Israeli



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troops in Hebron city; and 18-month-old Ali Dawabsheh, who was burned alive in the fire with his parents in an arson attack by Israeli settlers in July 2015, in Duma, in the West Bank.

A few days after posting on Facebook and Youtube a video of herself reading the poem, as the soundtrack to images of Palestinians in violent confrontations with Israeli troops, Tatour was arrested during an Israeli police raid in October 2015.

Prosecutors argued that the poem incited violence, and that Tatour had also shared and commented on a post by Islamic Jihad declaring its commitment to a new *intifada* ("uprising"), according to the charges, that she supported "terrorism".

She spent the following months under house arrest, during which time she was barred from publishing her work and accessing the internet.

In May 2018, Nazareth magistrates' court found Tatour, a Palestinian citizen of Israel, guilty over the poem, as well as separate posts dealing with Palestinian resistance.

## **An Israel law that divides and discriminates**

Tatour's case highlights how Palestinian citizens of Israel also face imprisonment and persecution just like Palestinians living in the [occupied West Bank](#).

As a resident of the Galilee village of Reineh near Nazareth, Tatour is a member of Israel's Palestinian or Arab minority, who form nearly 20 percent of Israel's population.

"I don't think that writing a poem, even if it's against the government is a crime," said Gaby Lasky, Tatour's lawyer.

"It's regretful that in a country that believes in a democracy, will sentence to jail a poet because of a poem that she wrote. The prosecution wanted to send her to jail between 15 and 26 months [but] the judge decided to send her for five months which is still a long time in prison," said Lasky. "We will appeal the ruling and sentence."

"After the Jewish nation-state law was passed, everything is expected. I don't believe there is justice in Israel and I will keep writing poetry with the language I want and with the words I choose to write. I will not accept any law to tell me what to write and which words to pick up," Tatour said.



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"I wasn't expecting justice to be done. The case was political from the start, because I am Palestinian and support freedom of speech," she told reporters at the Nazareth Magistrate's Court in northern Israel.

## 'Only Arabs go to jail'

Following her conviction in May, Tatour told Israeli newspaper [Haaretz](#) that her trial "ripped off the masks".

"The whole world will hear my story. The whole world will hear what Israel's democracy is. A democracy for Jews only. Only Arabs go to jail. The court said I am convicted of terrorism. If that's my terrorism, I give the world a terrorism of love."

More than 150 American literary figures, including nine Pulitzer Prize winners, [called on Israel](#) to free Tatour.

International writers group PEN defended Tatour in a statement following her conviction in May.

"Dareen Tatour has been convicted for doing what writers do every day – we use our words to peacefully challenge injustice," it said.

Indictments for online incitement have tripled in Israel since 2014. Prosecutions by the Israeli military have also increased in the occupied West Bank – most of those charged are young Palestinians.

ICSFT condemns Israel's violation of the right of speech and freedom of expression of the Palestinian people, intending to lead to self-censorship and self-criminalisation of opinion.

The case of Dareen Tatour captures what it means to be Palestinian under the Israeli settler colonial regime.

The Israeli government has been implementing systematic oppression since 2016 including through the militarization of the Palestinian virtual space with the heavy use of surveillance technologies and series of legislations that aim to silence and criminalize activists. As well it is a well-documented fact that the occupying Israeli forces terrorize Palestinians in order to suppress their freedom of expression against the policy of apartheid and occupation.



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As a Palestinian and a human being with an inalienable human rights, Dareen Tatour has the right to denounce the Israeli occupation.

**#Free Dareen Tatour**

**#Opinion is not a crime**