

Freed Jordanian who gunned down seven Israeli girls in 1997 unrepentant toward 'garbage' victims

I took the headline from the [Washington Post](#)

IBDIR, JORDAN – A Jordanian soldier who killed seven Israeli schoolgirls in a 1997 shooting rampage was unrepentant after his release from prison Sunday, lashing out at Israelis with harshly derogatory remarks.

Ahmed Daqamseh, who had spent 20 years in prison, was given a rousing welcome in his home village in northern Jordan after his release. He was greeted by chanting supporters who kissed him on the cheek and raised a photo of him with the caption, "Welcome to the hero Daqamseh."

Daqamseh was released from prison before dawn Sunday. By Sunday afternoon, he was receiving well-wishers in his clan's meeting hall in the village of Ibdir, about 120 km (75 miles) north of Amman.

Daqamseh opened fire on a group of Israeli students at the scenic "Island of Peace" border post in March 1997, killing seven and wounding seven.

A Jordanian military court deemed Daqamseh mentally unstable and sentenced him to life in prison, rather than imposing the death penalty. Jordan had announced several days ago that Daqamseh would be released this week, after completing his term. In Jordan, life terms are not open-ended, and prisoners can be released after 20 years.

Upon arriving in his hometown, Daqamseh expressed no regrets,

telling a reporter that Israelis are “human garbage.” Standing in a street dressed in a suit and tie, he said, “Palestine needs every single Arab and Muslim.” In comments broadcast on the Al Jazeera satellite TV channel, Daqamseh appeared to be unrepentant. He said that those who criticized him for killing young girls were “hired pens” and admonished them to “fear God.”

Asked by the Al Jazeera reporter about a purported Israeli plot to kill him, Daqamseh said: “They (Israelis) are human garbage that other peoples got rid of by dumping them in Palestine, the most sacred place after Mecca.”

“This garbage should be burned or buried,” he added. “This will happen, if not in our generation, then in other generations.”

“I entered prison a soldier of the armed forces and today I consider myself a member of the armed forces. Don’t believe the lie of normalization with the Zionist entity. Don’t believe the lie of the two-state solution; Palestine united is from the ocean to the river ... there is no state called ‘Israel,’”

In a videotaped statement posted online, Daqamseh urged Jordanians not to believe what he called “the lie of normalization with Israel” and the idea of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

“We expected Daqamseh to be released after the murder of Mohammed Abu Khdeir. We expected him to be released after the killing of Judge Raed al-Zaytar. We expected him to be released after each Israeli violation of human rights,” said Naim Khasawneh, a spokesman for the Islamic Action Front, the Muslim Brotherhood’s political party in Jordan.

Daqamseh’s appeal is also partly because of his background. He belongs to an East Bank tribe, the backbone of the Jordanian regime, and is a member of the army – the most popular

institution in the country. His supporters believe he opened fire in "the line of duty" and was "provoked" because he was mocked while he was praying.

Keren Ofri Mizrachi, one of the girls Daqamseh shot and wounded in the attack, said his release from prison is a difficult day for her.

Israel's government had no comment Sunday.