

Palestinian Prisoner's Day 2020

Occupation authorities arrested more than (1300) Palestinian people since the beginning of 2020

On the occasion of the Palestinian Prisoner's Day: Fact sheet issued by: the Commission of Detainees' Affairs, the Palestinian Society Prisoner's Club, Al-Dameer Association for Human Rights and Hurreyat Center for Defending Human and Civilian Rights.

The 17th of April marks the national and international day for supporting Palestinian detainees in the Israeli prisons. It was approved by the Palestinian National Council in 1974, being the supreme authority of the Palestine Liberation Organization. This day represents faithfulness for the souls of the martyrs of Captive Movement and for detainees in Israeli prisons.

The Palestinian Prisoner's Day comes this year with the anniversary of the martyrdom OF Khalil Al-Wazeer, and the 19th memorial of arresting the leader Marwan Barghouthi, and with difficult circumstances for detainees, due to the fear of Coronavirus pandemic. It is accompanied by a carelessness of the prisons' administration and the lack of necessary preventive measures for stopping the spread-out of Coronavirus.

With this real danger that threatens the lives of detainees and the concerns of their families, our leadership and its organizations and political powers took serious attitude which holds the Israeli government responsible for detainees' lives, and called on the International Community to fulfill its legal and moral obligations towards detainees, and intervene and practice pressure against the government of the occupation to release all detainees especially sick ones, elderly, females, minors and administrative detainees.

However, the occupation authorities practice a systematic policy for targeting detainees and keep ignoring all its obligations as an occupying power. It also challenges the rules of International Humanitarian Law, refuses to release any detainee and arrest Palestinian people on a daily basis.

- Detainees' institutions confirmed that the Israeli authorities arrested (1324) Palestinians since the beginning of 2020, including (210) minors and (31) females, and issued (295) new administrative detention orders.
- The Israeli authorities arrested (357) Palestinians since the spread-out of Coronavirus pandemic, including (48) minors and (4) women.

Data on detainees in Israeli prisons

- (5000) detainees are currently held in Israeli prisons.
- (41) Females imprisoned at Damoun prison.
- (180) minors distributed to (Ofer, Megiddo, Damoun prisons).
- (26) Detainees are imprisoned before the Oslo Accord such as; Kareem Younis and Maher Younis who are detained since 1983.
- The detainee Nael Barghuothi spent the total of 40 years in jail; he was released in a bargain in 2011, bet he was rearrested in 2014.
- (51) Detainees spent more than 20 years in prison.
- (541) detainees are sentenced to life imprisonment.
- (222) martyrs from the Captive Movement since 1967.
- (67) Detainees have been killed due to the policy of medical negligence by the occupation authorities, which is part of the systematic torture policies.
- (5) Detainees have been killed due to medical negligence and torture in 2019; Fares Baroud, Omar Younis, Nassar Taqatqa, Bassam Sayeh and Sami Abu Dyak.
- (5) detainees whose bodies are retained by the Israeli occupation authorities; Anees Dolah who martyred at Ashkelon prison in 1980, Azeez Ewaisat, Fares Baroud, Nassar Taqatqa and Bassam Sayeh.
- (430) administrative detainees
- (13) Journalist detainees.
- (700) sick detainees, including (300) cases with chronic diseases, and there are tens of detainees who have cancer including the detainee Fuad Shobaki.

Systematic Policies practiced against detainees

Detainees are encountering the Coronavirus pandemic and the Israeli racist policies

Fear and concern increase on the conditions of detainees in Israeli prisons in light of the spread-out of Coronavirus pandemic, due to the policy of medical negligence, where 5 detainees have been martyred in 2019 due to this policy practiced by the prisons' administration.

In the light of Coronavirus pandemic the Israeli racist practices increased against the Palestinian people in general and detainees in particular. Despite of all International conventions, the Israeli authorities deal with Palestinians inhumanely and neglect the possibility of spreading the coronavirus inside prisons. It also neglects all national and international demands to take serious measure to protect detainees.

Instead of protecting detainees and take preventive measures, the Israeli authorities issued racist decisions such as; withdrawing 140 materials from the cantina including cleaning materials and sanitizers.

This decision comes at the same time of issuing decision on the favor Israeli criminal prisoners, where (500) criminal prisoners have been released, but the Israeli authorities refused all the international and national requests for releasing Palestinian detainees, especially sick ones and elderly who are at greater risk of catching the virus, in addition to females and minors, detainees whose sentence is about to end and the administrative detainees who are not charged yet.

One of the racist practices against detainees is preventing them from calling their families, unless in exceptional cases like the death of parents, while criminal prisoners have public land lines in all sections.

Despite the difficult conditions, Israeli authorities allowed minors and females to phone call their families, under inhumane conditions such as the jailor's right to hear the conversation between the detainee and his family and the right to end the call whenever he wants.

In 31/3/2020, the detainee Nour Al-Deen Sarsour has been released and the medical examinations confirmed his infection with coronavirus, which created a state of fear and concern among detainees at Ofer prison. Detainees asked for many demands to protect themselves, such as making checkups for all detainees in all sections, especially section (14) where the detainee Sarsour was held, in addition to section (13) where many detainees contacted with Sarsour.

The prisons' administration isolated detainees in section (14) without taking samples, and the only taken procedure was to measure their temperature. Later on, (9) detainees have been moved to other prisons and (2) minors got quarantined without taking samples from them.

The policy of physical and psychological torture

The Israel occupation authorities continued to practice physical and psychological torture against Palestinian detainees.

Interrogation is used by the occupation authorities against detainees to take revenge of detainees and steal their humanity. Moreover, it is used to get information from detainees, where 95% of them were subjected to torture since the first moment of arrest, during interrogation and after detaining them.

Torture takes many forms, such as; depriving detainees of sleep, due to the long sessions of interrogation, handcuffing them during interrogation sessions, beating, and humiliation and degrading treatment, in addition to threatening them to arrest family members or sexual harassment, demolishing their houses and preventing them from using restroom.

There are other procedures practiced against detainees under the so-called "military investigation" such as hanging them for long hours, under the pretext of "the need of defense".

Moreover, detainees got isolated in narrow cells, without windows and very cold. They are also deprived of sleep and deprived of the

right to have the basic cleaning materials. These kinds of torture have killed (73) detainees since 1967.

It is worthy to mention that the cruel and illegal practices against detainees in interrogation cells breach the rules of International Law, including article 2 (1) of the Anti-torture United Nations Convention, which is signed by Israel in October 3, 1991, that prevents any state party from using torture and related practices.

The policy of deliberate medical negligence

Detainees are facing the most dangerous risk in the light of coronavirus spread-out, however the prisons' administration did not stop its medical negligence toward detainees nor responded to the calls for releasing sick detainees.

The policy of medical negligence affected all detainees, and took advantage from the sick detainees' need for medical care to take revenge from them. All over the years, detainees' institutions monitored hundreds of cases for detainees, whose medical files have been closed under the pretext of "no available treatment". In many cases, many detainees die.

Medical negligence took many forms, such as; depriving detainees of having medical check-ups, and putting them on the waiting list that may take long months and years.

The sick detainees Muwafaq Erouq and Kamal Abu Waar who have cancer

Muwafaq Erouq:

Detainee Muwafaq Nayef Hasan Erouq, 75, from Yafa-Nasrah. He was arrested in 7/1/2003 with the charge of transporting persons who committed martyrdom operation in 2002. He is sentenced to 30 years and spent 17 years of the sentence.

Health condition: he has Anemia since 2014, he was diagnosed with iron deficiency anemia without making sure of his case. In June 2019, he suffered from many side effects, and then he was diagnosed with cancer. He had many treatment sessions and then doctors confirmed that he had finished his chemotherapy. He had many symptoms such as nose

bleeding, vomiting and weight loss. Later on, doctors decided to conduct surgical operation to him in the stomach and intestines.

Kamal Abu Waar:

Detainee Kamal Najeeb Ameen Abu Waaris 46 years old and he is from Qabatya\Jenin. He was arrested in 15/1/2003 and sentenced to 5 life sentences.

Health condition: He suffers from throat cancer and vocal cords, swelling in the left vocal cords and hoarseness voice. He needs a laryngologist consult.

The policy of women detention

More than 16.000 Palestinian women have been arrested since 1967

Documentation and monitoring studies showed that the Israeli authorities have arrested more than 16.000 Palestinian women since 1967. The first woman to be arrested is the detainee Fatima Bernawi from Jerusalem. She was arrested in 1967 and sentenced to a life sentence, and then she was released in 1977.

(41) women are currently held at Israeli prisons including, (26) with high sentences, such as the detainees Shuruoq Dwayat and Shatella Abu Ayyad who are sentenced to 16 years of imprisonment. There are (18) mothers in prison including Wafa Mahdawi, the mother of the martyr Ashraf Na'alweh.

There are (3) women detainees under the administrative detention and (7) wounded.

The two uprisings in 1987 and 2000 witnessed the high rate of women detention. In 2015, the rate increased unprecedentedly with Al-Aqsa popular uprising, where (200) women were arrested in 2015, (164) in 2016, (156) in 2018 and (128) in 2019.

They are subjected to all kinds of torture, starting from arresting them from their houses, moving them to detention and interrogation centers and detaining them in prisons.

The Israeli authorities get back to torture women in 2019 and 2020, such as torturing the detainees Mays Abu Ghosh, Samah Jaradat and Halemah Khandakji.

Torture against women is represented in shooting them during arrest, naked inspection, holding them in cells not suitable for human beings, interrogates them for long hours, hanging them for long hours, depriving them of sleep, isolation, threatening, beating and many other abusive treatments.

After putting them in prison, the prisons' administration implements a series of abusive policies and measures such as: medical negligence and depriving them of family visits. The Palestinian Society Prisoner's Club confirmed that women detainees are suffering from difficult life conditions at Damoun prison such as: installing surveillance cameras at the prison's yard, high moist in cells, no doors for restrooms. The prisons' administration intends to cut the power off; in addition, they procrastinate in providing the appropriate health care for them, especially the wounded ones.

The policy of children detention

(180) children are currently held at Israeli prisons, where (210) minors have been arrested since the beginning of 2020. The Israeli authorities try to steal their childhood and destroy their future. Children got tortured in the same way as adult detainees, where this abusive measure is taken since the first moment of arrest.

The Israeli authorities commit flagrant violations against Palestinian children, which contradict many agreements related to child protection. These violations are represented in storming their houses late at night, keeping them without water or food for long hours, threatening them, forcing them to sign papers written in Hebrew without providing translation in Arabic, depriving them of the right to have a lawyer and prevent their parents to attend interrogation sessions and many other violations.

Since the beginning of this year, the cause of children detainees witnessed dangerous changes imposed by prisons' administration, such as moving them from Ofer prison to Damoun prison without being accompanied by

adult detainee representatives. Children were subjected to attacks by Israeli forces, where they got beaten, isolated and held in cells inappropriate for human life and deprived of family visits.

The Israeli occupation passed many racist laws that allow high sentences against children, which reached to ten years and life sentence.

Military law is applied against children in the West Bank, while the Israeli civil law is applied on children from Jerusalem. This procedure is followed to divide the Palestinian society.

The highest rate of children detention occurs at Jerusalem, where children got arrested at a daily basis. Some children were unable to resume their education due to detention and house arrest.

Children are distributed to three prisons: Ofer, Megiddo and Damoun. Since 2015, (67000) children detention cases were recorded, and the highest rate was in the last three months of 2015 which witnessed the popular uprising.

The policy of administrative detention

The Israeli authorities use the policy of administrative detention against our people since 1967, where (295) administrative detention orders have been issued in 2020.

This detention is used to arrest civil Palestinians without charge and without trial. There are (430) administrative detainees in Israeli prisons including, (3) children and (3) women.

The Israeli occupation forces implement administrative detention through issuing orders by the military commander which ranges from one month to six months. These orders are issued based on confidential information, which could not be known to the detainee or his lawyer. It is also used when there is no evidence on the charges. This is considered a violation to the detainee's right to know his charge.

The administrative detainees before the second uprising was (12) detainees, but increased in 2003 to become (1000), which confirm that the Israeli occupation uses this detention as a collective punishment

against resisting the occupation which is guaranteed for Palestinian people according to international standards.

The administrative detention as used by the Israeli authorities is illegal and arbitrary, and according to International Law "administrative detention should not be used unless there is a real risk threatens the national peace of the state".

Solitary confinement policies

Solitary confinement is one of torture methods used by occupation authorities against Palestinian detainees to isolate them from the outside world. It is used under the pretext that those detainees "threatens the security of the state" and the existence of "a confidential file". The isolation process is done through keeping the detainee in cell all over the day except for one hour to go out to the prison's yard, and he is not allowed to contact anyone except for the jailor, and he is also deprived of family visits.

About the cell of isolation, it is a small cell with no sunlight. It has a toilet inside and one opening in the iron door to get the food in. there are many testimonies by detainees that insects spread in the cell. The cell also is very cold in winter and hot in summer. It is used for detainees who entered hunger strikes as a punitive measure.

The policy of solitary confinement increased after 2000, and constituted one of the most causes that detainees entered a hunger strike against it. The number of isolated detainees decreased in 2012, after the hunger strike which has been conducted to end this policy.

The policy of collective punishment

The Israeli authorities used the policy of collective punishment against the families of detainees. It is represented in summoning family members to practice pressure against the detainee. It included arresting fathers and mothers of detainees, storming their houses and demolishing their houses as part of revengeful procedures against their families.

Since the beginning of this year, the Israeli forces demolished three houses for detainees inside prisons: the detainee Ahmad Qunbo' from Jenin and Waleed Hanatsheh and Yazan Maghames from Ramallah. The family of the detainee Qassam Barghouthi is waiting the order of demolishing, after giving them an extension period.

Detainees encountering the policies of prisons' administration

The repressive policies and procedures practiced by the Israeli forces against Palestinian detainees pushed the detainees to encounter the administration of prisons with protesting steps such as hunger strike and closing sections.

Protests also were against withdrawing tens of material from the cantina including sanitizers and cleaning materials which are very important to stay safe from coronavirus.

Detainees' institutions demands:

- Oblige Israel to release all detainees, especially sick ones, elderly, women, children and administrative detainees to save their lives.
- Sending an international medical committee to supervise the health conditions of detainees inside the prisons to save them from coronavirus and provide them with all protection and safety requirements.