



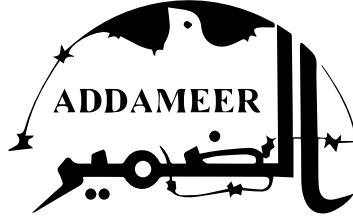
Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association

Light at the end of the tunnel

The reality of solitary confinement and its effects
on prisoners in Israeli occupation prisons



2024



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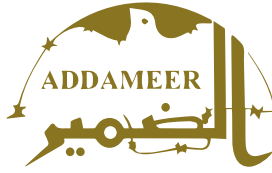
**The reality of solitary confinement and its effects on
prisoners in Israeli occupation prisons**



Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association

Ramallah - occupied Palestine

2024



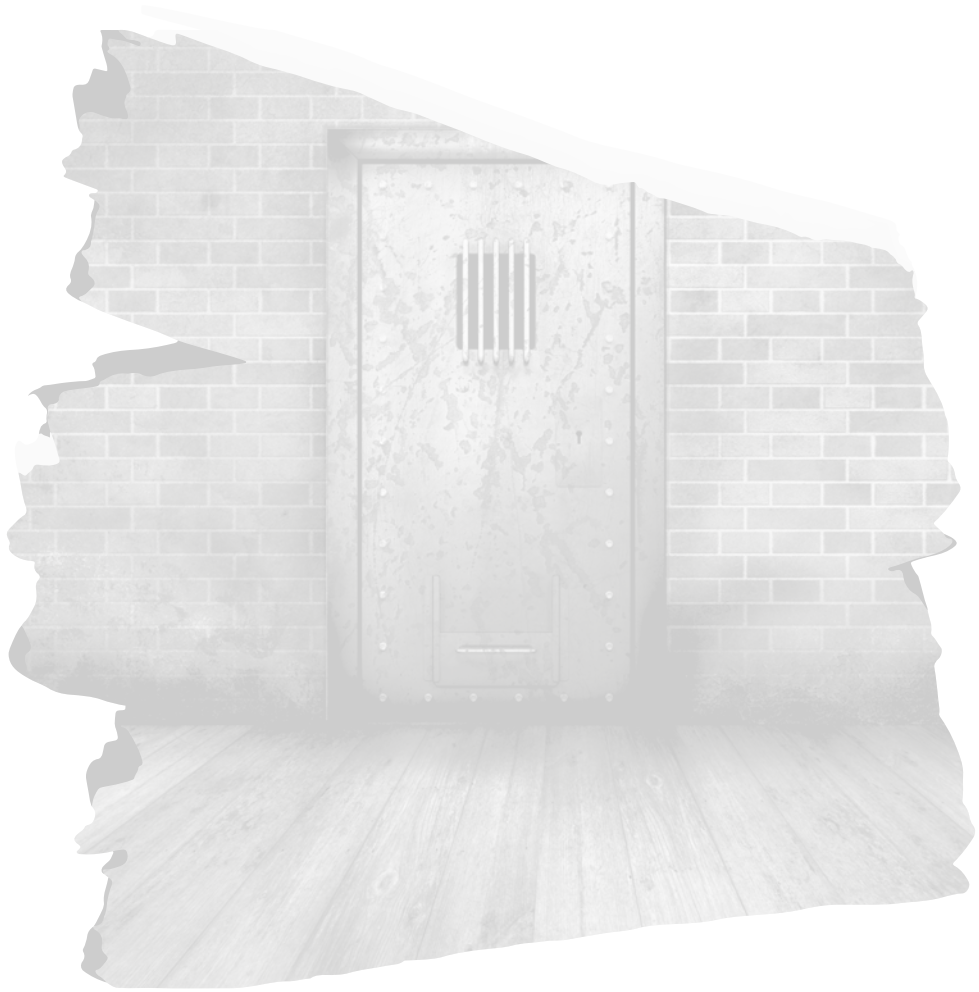
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“Prison has shifted from targeting the body to targeting the mind which is intended to be transformed into an actual cell, and thus turning the prisoner’s own senses into tools of torture...”

– Ghost Hunting

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Introduction



In prisons where the prison guard controls all the details of life, there are currently more than 5,000 Palestinian prisoners languishing in Israeli prisons, including 35 female prisoners and more than 170 children.¹ The majority of Palestinian prisoners are subjected to isolation, whether perceptual isolation employed immediately following arrest, or physical isolation inside prisons.

Perceptual isolation is practiced on the vast majority of Palestinian detainees from the first moment of arrest. The use of handcuffs behind the back and blindfolds that sometimes cover the ears impose a state of complete sensory isolation, as the detainee is no longer able to perceive time or directions. This policy aims to control detainees from the first moments of arrest, to impose a state of imbalance and lack of concentration, and to disconnect them from the surrounding environment.

In parallel with the escalation in arrests, the frequency of implementing the isolation policy against the Palestinians is increasing, disregarding all considerations, as it has affected female prisoners, child prisoners, elderly prisoners, in addition to prisoners suffering from illnesses (particularly mental illnesses). During the previous years, the policy of isolating representatives of the Palestinian Legislative Council and leaders of the prisoner movement emerged, with the aim of separating them from the rest of the prisoners and harassing them. Such a policy is one of the oldest methods implemented against prisoners to break their spirit and control them, which the prisoners called the “slow death” policy because of the suffering and cruel and inhuman treatment it entailed. During the past two years, Israeli Prison Service (IPS) has detained more than 100 Palestinian prisoners in solitary confinement cells. This policy is an integral part of the penalties imposed by the IPS on prisoners, in addition to their arbitrary detention.

To increase the severity of the punishment of isolation, the IPS imposes a number of penalties on isolated prisoners, including the prohibition of family visits; denial access to the canteen; and restriction on the

¹ Addameer updated figures as of the end of the first week of September 2023.

receipt of books. Such penalties compound the pain of the experience. The occupation system has designed the solitary confinement to make it a very cruel experience, aiming to abuse the prisoners by restricting their minds, besieging their souls, and isolating them from their families and the outside world in cells that resemble graves.

Israeli occupation authorities allocate specific sections for isolation in seven prisons distributed across the lands of historic Palestine, and the isolated prisoners are distributed among these sections.² However, the practice of the isolation policy is not limited to prisons only, as detainees are also isolated while they are in interrogation centers during the first stage of detention. The main goal of this practice is to impose a state of complete temporal and spatial disconnection between the detainee and his surrounding environment. At this stage, the detainee loses sense of the most basic possibilities of control in an artificial occupation environment represented by the prison guard, making it easier for the Shabak [Israeli Security Agency] to apply pressure tools legalized by the Israeli military courts to break the silence of detainees and obtain the largest amount of information amidst prohibition of meeting with a lawyer and obtaining legal advice.

During the interrogation phase, detainees are held in several interrogation centers, including Petah Tikva, Ofer, Al-Mascobiya, Al-Jalame, and Asqalan. Children are one of the groups most vulnerable to this type of isolation. In a report published by Military Court Watch (MCW) in 2021, the evidence indicated that 4 percent of child detainees were being subjected to this practice. However, over the past few years there has been a surge in the use of solitary confinement in cases involving children with the evidence disclosing a rate of 20 percent. Of the 45 solitary confinement testimonies collected between 2019 and 2021, isolation was used in 42 cases (93 percent) as part of the interrogation process.³ Furthermore, Defense for Children International – Palestine (DCIP) docu-

2 Israeli prisons that contain sections designated for solitary confinement are Eshel, Ayalon, Rimon, Rimonim, Megiddo, Ohalei Keidar, and Asqalan. However, this does not mean that the rest of the Israeli prisons do not contain isolation cells. For example, Damon prison designated cell No. (1) for solitary confinement.

3 Military Court Watch. "Solitary Confinement". 7 December 2021.

<https://www.militarycourtwatch.org/category.php?id=tpuChwpaj3a972873AkCvd7li8vr>

mented 108 cases in which Palestinian arrested by the Israeli military between 2016 and 2019 were held in solitary confinement. The longest documented period of isolation was 30 days, while the shortest was three days.⁴

Over the years, prisoners have devised various methods to confront the unfair isolation policy, and the hunger strike policy has been one of the successful methods. In 2012, prisoners went on an open hunger strike to protest the solitary confinement policy and the ban on family visits, in addition to some other penalties. Nearly 2,000 detainees and prisoners participated in the strike, including female prisoners and child prisoners. The IPS sought to thwart and abort the strike by isolating the striking prisoners and separating them from the rest of the prisoners. Some of the prisoners continued to be isolated for three consecutive years. However, the prisoners eventually won the strike and were able to remove 19 prisoners from solitary confinement.⁵

To this day, the Israeli occupation authorities continue to practice isolation against Palestinian prisoners, disregarding international agreements that consider solitary confinement a prohibited form of torture, in accordance with Article 1 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1984. Moreover, isolation is considered a method of inhuman and degrading treatment prohibited under Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In addition, the conditions of isolation in which prisoners are held in Israeli prisons do not comply with the minimum health standards for prisons and detention centers required by Articles 91 and 92 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

This paper is an update to a joint report issued by Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association and Physicians for Human Rights – Israel in 2008⁶, which aims to understand the legal aspects sur-

4 Defense for Children Palestine. "Isolated & Alone". December 2020. https://www.dci-palestine.org/isolated_and_alone

5 For more information on the 2012 strike, see Addameer's Annual Violations Report for 2012, pp. 34-35. <https://rb.gy/h1a0f>

6 Addameer. "Isolation and Solitary Confinement of Palestinians in Israeli Detention." 22 July 2008. <https://tinyurl.com/2wddr4ua>

rounding the policy of solitary confinement practiced against Palestinians in Israeli prisons, while shedding light on the effects that this policy has on prisoners, mainly in terms of the prisoner's psychological and physical health while in isolation and after leaving it. To this end, relevant international laws and human rights instruments were studied and employed, in addition to the Israeli laws that Israel Prison Service relies on when imposing this punishment. Furthermore, this paper relied mainly on the information obtained by Addameer's lawyers during prison visits carried out during the past five years with prisoners who lived this experience, in addition to information obtained through office documentation with released prisoners who lived this experience.

Isolation under International Law

Due its gravity and the negative effects it has on the detainee's physical and mental health, isolation and its use has been prohibited or restricted under specific conditions by the international law and numerous international agreements. According to the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), solitary confinement refers to "the confinement of prisoners for 22 hours or more a day without meaningful human contact," while regarding "prolonged solitary confinement for a time period in excess of 15 consecutive days," as a form of torture.⁷ Additionally, the Standard Minimum Rules indicate that solitary confinement should be used only in exceptional cases as a last resort, for as short a time as possible and subject to independent review, and only pursuant to the authorization by a competent authority. This reinforces the law's trend that it is prohibited to impose solitary confinement arbitrarily or as a routine measure, but only when absolutely necessary and justified by compelling reasons.

The aforementioned Standard Minimum Rules emphasize that the imposition of solitary confinement should be prohibited in the case of prisoners with mental or physical disabilities when their conditions would be exacerbated by such measures, even if authorized by domes-

⁷ United Nations General Assembly. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015. United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules). https://www.un.org/ar/events/mandeladay/mandela_rules.shtml

tic laws.⁸ The Rules stipulate that disciplinary measures or punishments may not amount to torture, cruel or inhuman treatment in any form, and therefore indefinite solitary confinement and solitary confinement for long periods – more than 15 days must be prohibited.⁹ Additionally, these Rules set minimum standards for conditions of solitary confinement. Prisoners held in solitary confinement must be provided with adequate personal space, access to natural light, ventilation, and adequate heating and cooling, as well as adequate food, physical exercise, and medical care to ensure the physical well-being of the individual. These Rules reveal a clear commitment to upholding the fundamental rights and dignity of prisoners, highlight the need for proportionality, individual assessments and safeguards to prevent violations, and ensure that any use of solitary confinement is consistent with international human rights standards.

Conversely, when looking at the number of Palestinian prisoners in isolation, it becomes clear that the Israeli occupation authorities fail to comply with the international limits that set conditions to restrict the use of isolation, but rather employ all its policies to impose further sanctions on prisoners. This is clearly evident in the significant expansion of offenses that are considered disciplinary violations punishable by solitary confinement by Israel Prison Service. Thus, solitary confinement is not considered a last resort, but is used arbitrarily and as a tool for retaliation against prisoners.

A number of international conventions prohibit cruel and degrading punishments. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”¹⁰ The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also stipulates that “No one shall be subjected to tor-

8 See Article 43 of the Standard Minimum Rules.
https://www.un.org/ar/events/mandeladay/mandela_rules.shtml

9 See Article 44 of the Standard Minimum Rules.
https://www.un.org/ar/events/mandeladay/mandela_rules.shtml

10 Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
<https://www.un.org/ar/universal-declaration-human-rights/>



ture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.”¹¹ Numerous treaties and international agreements that address prisoners’ rights prohibit the use of solitary confinement as a punitive measure or attempt to limit its use significantly, considering that such a punishment constitutes a form of torture and inhuman treatment.¹² The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment indicated that solitary confinement can, in certain circumstances, amount to inhuman and degrading treatment, and in any event, all forms of solitary confinement should be as short as possible.¹³ Similarly, in its general comment on Article 7 of the ICCPR – Prohibition of torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment – the Human Rights Committee stated that, “even such a measure as solitary confinement may, according to circumstances and especially when the person is kept incommunicado, be contrary to this article.”¹⁴

In the same vein, the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty state that all disciplinary measures constituting cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment shall be strictly prohibited, including solitary confinement or any other punishment that may compromise the physical or mental health of the juvenile concerned.¹⁵ In accordance with the Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners of 1990, issued by the United Nations General Assembly, efforts addressed to the abolition of solitary confinement as a punishment, or to the

11 Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

<https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>

12 Mary Howells, “A Study of the Effects and Uses of Solitary Confinement in a Human Rights Perspective”, (August 1994), p.4 (available at: <http://www.hamoked.org.il/items/3614.pdf>)

13 See, Nigel S. Rodley, *The Treatment of Prisoners under International Law* (Second Edition), Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 295-296.

14 CCPR General Comment No. 7: Article 7.

Refworld | CCPR General Comment No. 7: Article 7 (Prohibition of Torture or Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment)

15 Article 67 of the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty.

<https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/united-nations-rules-protection-juveniles-deprived-their-liberty>

restriction of its use, should be undertaken and encouraged.¹⁶ Furthermore, Norway and Switzerland supported the respective proposals of the Special Rapporteur on Torture, i.e. to expand the prohibition to encompass indefinite solitary confinement, and prolonged solitary confinement, including through frequently renewed imposition; the imposition of solitary confinement in general should further be subject to independent review.¹⁷

Isolation under the IPS Regulations

Israeli occupation authorities hold Palestinian prisoners in individual separation, dual separation, or collective separation based on three main determinants: for security reasons; as a disciplinary measure for so-called disciplinary offenses in prison; or due to mental disorders that some prisoners may suffer from. Israel Prison Service (IPS) deliberately shirks its responsibilities toward prisoners who suffer from any mental disorders, and instead of providing them with appropriate medical care and placing them in specialized treatment centers, the occupation authorities tend to isolate them within its precautionary measures, which only serve its interests at the expense of aggravating and deteriorating the ill prisoner's health and mental condition.

Article 4B of the Commission Ordinance No. 04.03.00 "Holding Prisoners in Separation"¹⁸ clarifies the forms of isolation that may be imposed and stipulates that a prisoner may be held in individual or dual isolation. Article 5 of the Ordinance provides five general categories that warrant the isolation of a prisoner, including state security; prison and staff security; protecting the well-being and health of the prisoner or other prisoners; preventing significant harm to discipline and the proper

16 Basic Principles for the treatment of prisoners, adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 45/111 of 14 December 1990.

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/basicprinciples.pdf>

17 UNODC. Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Group on the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. March 2014.

https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/IEGM_Brazil_Jan_2014/

18 Commission Ordinance No. 04.03.00 "Holding Prisoners in Separation". <https://rb.gy/syl83>

prison routine; and preventing violent offenses.¹⁹ In this context, these regulations do not exclude children from the punishment of isolation, providing that anyone who has not yet reached the age of 18 may be held in isolation in cases required by his interest.

Under Article 7 of the Ordinance, the isolation order must be issued by a legally authorized body, after examining the possibility of holding a prisoner in dual isolation, or whether there is a need for individual isolation, depending on the circumstances of the case. Article 8A of the Ordinance states that extending individual or dual isolation beyond the initial 96 hours requires holding an oral hearing before the person who made the decision.²⁰

The Israeli occupation authorities deliberately rotate isolated prisoners permanently, and this comes in pursuant to Article 12 of the Ordinance which stipulates that every eight months, prisoners held in individual isolation are transferred from one prison to another, based on a decision of the prisoners' affairs district committee. The Ordinance also sets a table of the confinement periods and establishes who among the prison officials may order such measures. According to the Ordinance, the Commissioner, the Prison Director, and prison officers of the rank of Captain or higher who have been so authorized by the Commissioner each has the power to take disciplinary action against a prisoner by imposing a punishment of up to seven days in solitary confinement. The Prison Director is authorized to sentence a prisoner to a maximum of 14 days in solitary confinement; each successive confinement period may not exceed 7 days.²¹

19 It is noteworthy that there are special rules regulating the issue of isolating prisoners on a disciplinary basis.

20 Article 8/b clarifies that the proceedings of the session must be recorded in the minutes of the session, and signed by the prisoner himself and the competent person who conducted the hearing. A copy of this minutes must be maintained within the prisoner's record and other digital records. In cases where the session falls on a holiday, the session will be conducted on the day before the holiday.

21 See Appendix 1 for more details on isolation periods, the person authorized to issue isolation orders, and the type of isolation.

Article 22 of the Ordinance stipulates the conditions for informing the prisoner of the isolation order, extending it, or terminating it. It stipulates that notification of the isolation order must be written and detailed, and a copy of the order must be delivered to the prisoner himself, and the details of the order must be explained to the prisoner, except in cases of suspicion that disclosing such details; i.e. the reason for isolation, would affect other matters, and thus such details should remain undisclosed. Article 26 states that, in general, a prisoner may not be held in individual isolation for a period of more than six months, or in dual isolation for a period of more than 12 months without a court order.

Isolation for Security Reasons

Israel Prison Service (IPS) deals with Palestinian prisoners defined as security prisoners in accordance with the Commission Ordinance No. 03.02.00 "Rules on the Operation of Prisons for Security Prisoners"²², which defined in its introduction a security prisoner as "any prisoner who was convicted and sentenced for committing a crime, or who is imprisoned on suspicions of committing a crime, which due to its nature or circumstances was defined as a security offense or whose motive was nationalistic."

These directives clarify a number of issues related to the isolation of security prisoners, stating that isolation must be a measure of last resort, and its use should be limited only to cases in which the desired goal cannot be achieved except through isolation. This means that isolation is an exceptional measure that may only be resorted to when there is an absolute necessity to maintain security and safety. Among the procedural conditions that must be met is obtaining written approval for the isolation order from the person granted the authority to approve, prior to holding the prisoner in isolation, in addition to having valid grounds for the isolation measure. Such restrictions are put forward to prohibit the use of isolation arbitrarily, and for the isolation orders to be taken following substantive review of the condition of the detainee to be isolated.

22 Commission Ordinance No. 03.02.00 "Rules on the Operation of Prisons for Security Prisoners". 15 March 2002. Updated on 15 November 2020. <https://rb.gy/huhyr>

Isolation as a Disciplinary Punishment

Isolation of prisoners is employed as a disciplinary punishment in accordance with Article 56 of the Israeli Prisons Ordinance of 1971, as the Article lists more than 40 disciplinary offenses for which solitary confinement may be imposed on prisoners, and such offenses are also listed in Commission Order No. 04.13.00 “Prisoners Disciplinary Rules”.²³ These offenses are vague and have no clear definitions. If a prisoner “disrupts order and discipline in prison,” for example, the IPS has the right to impose isolation as such an act is considered a disciplinary offense²⁴. Broad definitions of these offenses leave considerable liberty for the IPS to adapt them in a way that serves its interests, and demonstrate the injustice toward Palestinian prisoners and the IPS constant attempts to exploit any opportunity to harass them.²⁵ According to the Ordinance, the Commissioner, the Prison Director, and prison officers of the rank of Captain or higher who have been so authorized by the Commissioner each has the power to take disciplinary action against a prisoner by imposing a punishment of up to seven days in solitary confinement. The Prison Director is authorized to sentence a prisoner to a maximum of 14 days in solitary confinement; each successive confinement period may not exceed 7 days. In addition to this, individual separation for a period exceeding six months requires a court’s decision, as does dual separation for a period exceeding one year. However, Israeli courts have the power to extend the isolation order for indefinite periods of time.

Also in this context, the IPS may punish prisoners for breaking the prison space and communicating with the outside world, whether through completing their studies or smuggling sperm out of prison due to being deprived of meeting with their wives. By way of illustration, prisoner Walid Daqqa²⁶ submitted numerous petitions to meet his wife

23 Commission Ordinance No 04.13.00. “Disciplinary Offenses for Prisoners “. 12 June 2002. Last updated on 25 May 2022. <https://rb.gy/i814j>

24 See Appendix 2 for more details on disciplinary offenses in prisons and the punishment for each in accordance with Prisons Ordinance No. 04.13.00

25 See Prison Ordinance. https://hamoked.org/files/2013/1855_eng.pdf

26 62-year-old Walid Daqqa, a resident of Baqa Al-Gharbiya, is sentenced to 37-year in prison, and two more years were added to his sentence making it 39 years.

Sanaa Daqqa, all of which were rejected by the Israeli courts. As a result, Daqqa smuggled his sperm out of prison that was used to conceive his wife Sanaa Salameh, who gave birth to their daughter Milad. Upon birth, Daqqa was isolated in order to prevent the news from spreading to him. Daqqa was also isolated after publishing the book “The Secret of Oil” in 2018, which features a child seeking help from his friends and an olive tree so that he could visit his father in prison. It cannot be said that Daqqa is the only Palestinian prisoner who had been isolated in the same context, as Addameer has documented dozens of cases of prisoners held in individual isolation on grounds of sending messages out of prison, publishing books, or completing their education.

In similar events, on 27 July 2022, the IPS designated lawyer and human rights defender Salah Al-Hamouri as a ‘high-risk’ prisoner and Al-Hamouri was transferred to a high security facility in Hadarim Prison, following his recent letter to French President, Emmanuel Macron, on 14 July 2022. In the letter, Al-Hamouri asked France to intervene to release him, expressly because he was held in administrative detention without charge or fair trial.

Al-Hamouri’s case illustrates a true embodiment of the occupation’s policy of constantly punishing prisoners for any act, particularly if it involves communication with the outside world. Such creates a wide space and considerable liberty for the occupation authorities to decide what acts should fall within this framework.

Isolated Prisoners’ Rights under the IPS Regulations

Commission Ordinance No. 04.03.00 “Holding Prisoners in Separation” lists some rights for the isolated prisoners. Article 29 of the Ordinance stipulates that prisoners held in isolation are entitled to educational activity, but such right is restricted in cases where it is required to obtain approval from the area commander, or the competent person. Nevertheless, the occupation authorities deliberately cut off the isolated prisoners’ complete communication with the outside world, and in most cases – if not all – do not allow them to bring in any cultural or educational books or newspapers, with the exception of holy books such as the Qur’an which is also sometimes withdrawn only to increase their suffering in isolation.

Article 30 of the Ordinance stipulates that an isolated prisoner may receive visits from first-degree family members,²⁷ provided that there are no security bans. However, families are faced with multiple obstacles and restrictions at Israeli checkpoints while attempting to visit the prisoners and are denied visitation under the guise of a “security ban.” When looking at the penalties imposed by the IPS on the prisoners themselves, including denial of family visits for certain periods which are included in the collective punishments imposed on the prisoner and his family, this Article has no application whatsoever on the ground. All of these abusive practices come amidst the fact that family visits are conducted only once a month across a reinforced, soundproof, and unbreakable glass barrier separating the prisoner from his family and depriving them of physical contact with each other, and via an internal phone system for a total of 45 minutes.

As for the telephone calls stipulated in Article 32, the instructions of the Commission Ordinance No. 04.36.00 “Prisoner Telephone Communication”²⁸ should be applied in this regard. In the event that this Ordinance lacks certain details, reference should be made to the Commission Ordinance No. 03.02.00 “Rules on the Operation of Prisons for Security Prisoners.” Concerning security prisoners. Call hours are limited to specific periods of the day, and call minutes are also specified.

Under Article 33 of the Commission Ordinance No. 04.44.00 “Medical Treatment of Prisoners,”²⁹ a medical examination must be conducted for a prisoner who is likely to be held in isolation. According to Article 40 of the Prisons Ordinance, prisoners are entitled to healthcare, and a physician must visit the isolated prisoner periodically. However, isolated prisoners are denied such rights.

27 First degree relatives include parents, grandparents, sons/daughters, siblings, and spouses.

28 Commission Ordinance No 04.03.00 “Holding Prisoners in Separation” 15 March 2002. Updated on 14 October 2021 pp. 16. 14 October 2021. <https://rb.gy/syl83>

29 All Right. “Medical Treatment for a Prisoner”. 14 July 2022
https://www.kolzhut.org.il/ar/%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AC_%D8%B7%D8%A8%D9%8A_%D9%84

Article 6 of the Commission Ordinance No. 04.14.00 grants the prison commander the authority to terminate the solitary confinement order in some cases, mostly when there is a medical report from a physician clarifying that the conditions of isolation are not commensurate with the prisoner's health condition; when declaring a state of emergency in the prison which requires evacuating the isolation cells; and when there are exceptional circumstances specific to the prisoner.

In spite of the Israeli Prisons Ordinance and international law that regulate solitary confinement and set limits for it so that it is not abused due to its grave impact on the isolated prisoners, the punishment of isolation employed by the Israeli occupation authorities is accompanied by a number of legal and moral defects alike. It sweepingly violates international human rights laws and the legitimate rights of detainees, including the right to freedom, the right to human dignity, and the right to treatment. The role of the moot courts also contributes to the continued misuse of isolation and its application for political purposes, and this becomes clear when looking at the noticeable increase in the number of isolated detainees over the past years.

The farcical role of the Israeli military courts also contributes to the continued misuse of isolation and its application for political purposes, as it is evident in the sharp increase in the number of isolated prisoners over the past years.

Characteristics of Isolation Cells in Israeli Prisons

Isolation cells in the various Israeli prisons are designed purposefully to isolate prisoners from the outside world and impose strict restrictions on their daily lives and personal freedoms. They are almost identical and are distinguished by their small size. According to Addameer documentations over the course of 30 years, the area of the cells ranges from 1 by 1.5 metres to 2 by 3 metres, providing limited space for prisoners' movement and activity. The walls are often made of solid concrete, which reduces external stimuluses to a minimum, and prevents external sounds from reaching the cell. The windows – if there is any – are usually very small and high, making it almost impossible for natural sunlight to get through during daylight hours, and the prisoner

cannot see the outside world through them, in addition to the fact that these windows allow a minimum of natural ventilation as they are covered with a piece of metal.

As for the contents of isolation cells, they are very few, and usually include a bed, a mattress, a blanket, a toilet (either squat or western style) and a sink, in addition to some electronics, which usually include a television³⁰, a radio, a hotplate³¹, and an electric kettle for heating water, which are either provided by the prison administration, or purchased by the prisoner at his personal expense – if the prisoner has not been deprived of them. In some cases, additional security measures are applied, such as placing prisoners in cells containing surveillance cameras to monitor all their movements.

When transferred to isolation cells, prisoners are sometimes allowed to take their own clothes and some of their personal belongings with them, and sometimes the clothes arrive long after the prisoner is held in isolation. This is a policy widely implemented by the IPS when transferring prisoners to isolation, and its primary goal is to abuse and torture them, but it is covered up by the occupation authorities under the guise of security measures. In this context, a number of isolated prisoners pointed out the length of time that the IPS takes to respond to any of their requests. Prisoner Ali Abu Baker indicated that during his isolation, prison administration was taking a long time to respond to his requests, and that his belongings took long periods of time to arrive when transferred from one prison to another. This makes isolation more difficult for the prisoner.

Section 12 in Megiddo Prison

Section 12 is the section designated for isolation in Megiddo Prison. It contains eight individual isolation cells, in addition to cell 5 which is a dual isolation cell measuring 3 by 2 meters, including a toilet and a shower, leaving the prisoner with a tiny space to spend his time, almost the size of a prayer rug. As for the rest of the isolation cells, they are

30 TV channels are determined by the Prison Service administration.

31 An electrical piece that resembles a small stove used by prisoners to prepare hot drinks or cook some foods.

smaller in size and contain only one bed. During a visit by Addameer in 2020³², prisoner Wael Al-Jaghoub pointed out that the food provided in Megiddo Prison was of poor quality and insufficient. As for security measures, isolation cells are checked three times a week, and windows twice a day. Isolation cells contain some electronics, such as a TV set that broadcasts 10 satellite channels, including Palestine and LBC – this is in cases where the prisoner is not being punished or deprived of electronics. There is a refrigerator. As for the washing machine and dryer, they can be accessed during yard break because they are in the yard.



الإسم: وائل الجاغوب

السجن: مجدّو

مكان السكن: بيتا - نابلس

الوضع القانوني: محكوم

بالسجن مدى الحياة.



الإسم: إبراهيم العروج

السجن: مجدّو

بداية العزل: 31 كانون

الثاني. 2018

مكان السكن: العروج -

بيت لحم

الوضع القانوني: اعتقال

إداري.

“The mattress in the cell is so thin that the prisoner feels as if he is sleeping on metal,” explained prisoner Ibrahim Al-Arouj during a visit in 2018.³³ Al-Arouj also pointed out that the room contained a toilet and a shower, but lacked natural ventilation because the window was covered with a piece of metal with holes in it, which is covered with a grid and a metal panel; which prevents natural air or sunlight from entering the room. Poor ventilation is reflected in the conditions of the cell. Furthermore, with the humidity and lack of ventilation, the wall paint always falls off. Al-Arouj added that the IPS constantly obstructed the entry of clothes, and most of them were returned by the IPS even after being granted a permission to bring in the clothes following the intervention of the Red Cross.

32 A visit conducted by Addameer’s lawyer to isolated prisoner Wael Al-Jaghoub in Megiddo Prison on 23 September 2020.

33 A visit conducted by Addameer’s lawyer to isolated prisoner Ibrahim Al-Arouj in Megiddo Prison on 3 December 2018.

In the same context, prisoner Imad Al-Batran³⁴ indicated that all isolation cells in Megiddo Prison contained one mattress, or more – for dual isolation, hotplate, a water heater, a small refrigerator, and a television, while the rest of the supplies are bought at the expense of the prisoner himself. Al-Batran pointed out that every month the prison administration provided isolated prisoners with soap, paper tissues, and garbage bags, but they were insufficient, forcing the prisoners to use his canteen account to buy cleaning materials and other supplies.

Life in a 1.5 by 3 Metre Cell in Ohalei Keidar Prison



الإسم: عماد البطران
السجن: مجدو
بداية العزل: 3 آذار 2020
مكان السكن: الخليل
الوضع القانوني: اعتقال إداري.



الإسم: محمود العارضة
السجن: أوهلي كدار
بداية العزل: 10 أيلول 2021
مكان السكن: عرابة - جنين
الوضع القانوني: مؤبد،
وأضيف للحكم 5 سنوات
على خلفيّة الهرب من سجن
جلبوع.

Prisoner Mahmoud Al-Arda is held in one of the smallest isolation cells in Ohalei Keidar Prison which has seven isolation cells. The cell has an area of 1.5 by 3 metres and contains a western-style toilet, a shower, a hotplate, a kettle, a radio and a television with 10 channels.³⁵ Every day at around 12:00 p.m., Al-Arda is handcuffed and led out to a yard that measures about 7 by 10 metres and is covered with a metal grid. Once he reaches the yard, his handcuffs are removed and an hour later, he is put back in handcuffs and is returned to the cell to complete the rest of the day. He is left between the four walls of the cell without any human interaction, books or novels; even the ones provided are available in Hebrew. He has a refrigerator in his cell that he fills twice a month with products he buys from the prison canteen. The cell does not have a food warmer.

34 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Imad Al-Batran in Megiddo Prison on 26 October 2020.

35 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Mahmoud Al-Arda in Ohalei Keidar Prison on 23 November 2022.

Al-Arda's isolation is extended every six months, which must be done by a court order, but his isolation was renewed twice by the prison director under the pretext of "prison escape risk". Such a measure demonstrates the occupation regime's arbitrariness in its use of power, and the collusion of all its agencies together to abuse prisoners. In order for this measure to be compatible with the laws of the Prison Service, it must be authorized by a court order.

Al-Arda's isolation cell is searched by special units from outside the prison once every two weeks, but the search is conducted at dawn hours as part of many punishments that the Prison Service indirectly imposes on prisoners. As for the inspection carried out by the Prison Service, it is conducted on a weekly basis.

Al-Arda receives visits from the Red Cross at spaced periods, the last of which was a year ago in Ayalon Prison – Al-Ramla. Al-Arda requested to be brought books in Arabic because all the books available to him are in Hebrew, but the Red Cross failed to meet such request. With regard to family visits, he is allowed to receive family visits, but due to the fact that many times he is transferred from one prison to another, his family has not been able to visit him.

Isolation Cells in Ayalon Prison

Prisoner Mahmoud Abu Shraim, who is held in isolation for helping six prisoners escape from Gilboa Prison, said that he was placed in isolation at Ayalon Prison in an empty cell that contained nothing but a mattress and a squat toilet. "Even though the cell was very cold, I was provided with a blanket only a week later, but it was so small it covered only half of my body. I remained in the cell for nearly 50 days without being provided with any of my personal belongings, and I only had the clothes that I was wearing. My lawyer was not allowed to visit me until about 40 days later."



الإسم: محمود أبو شرايم
السجن: مجدو
بداية العزل: 13 تشرين أول
.2021
مكان السكن: مخيم جنين

Shraim explained to the defense lawyer that although more than a year has passed since he was held in solitary confinement, no hearing was held in his presence, and he did not have access to the relevant

Prison Service orders. Furthermore, his isolation is renewed every two months without providing him with any information or updates regarding his legal status.³⁶

What is happening to Shraim establishes the formality of the legal procedures followed by the Israeli judicial system, and sheds light on the type of violations of the Prisons Service Ordinance and international agreements through the complicity of the Israeli courts and the Prison Service, amidst breaching procedures and disregarding the most basic rights of Palestinian prisoners.

Aspects of Life in Isolation in Israeli Prisons

Prison Yard Time

While depriving Palestinian prisoners of various aspects of social life that reach below normal levels, Israeli authorities do not hesitate abusing the prisoners in various ways and means. Isolated prisoners are held in individual or dual cells for 23 hours a day, and are allowed into the yard for one hour³⁷, and at other times for two hours. However, a prisoner may be punished by the IPS by denying him access to the yard, and thus spending the entire day alone in the isolation cell.

Despite the unfairness in implementing the isolation policy itself, isolated prisoners are banned from communicating or meeting with other prisoners held in the same prison, even during daily walks in the yard, as isolated prisoners are allowed out into the yard at specified hours to avoid communicating with other prisoners. During transfer from the isolation cell to the yard, prison or hospital and vice versa, isolated prisoners' hands are cuffed, and sometimes their feet are shackled as well. The occupation authorities deliberately increase the suffering of the iso-

36 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Mahmoud Abu Shraim in Megiddo Prison on 13 September 2022.

37 The prison yard is often rectangular in shape, with a floor made of concrete. The yard is surrounded by the prisoners' rooms on one side and by high concrete walls measuring 5-8 metres in length. The roof is either partially or completely covered with small-square shaped metal panels. Prisoners share the yard during the daily walks ranging from four to seven hours, while isolated prisoners are allowed out into the yard for one to two hours per day.

lated prisoners, even during the one or two hours they spend in the yard by keeping their hands and feet cuffed.

During a visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer in 2019, prisoner Iyad Bzei³⁸, who was held in dual isolation in Eshel prison, said that he was allowed out into a 4 by 4 metre yard along with prisoner Anas Awad, with his hands and feet cuffed throughout the walk. Prisoner Abdullah Al-Arouj also mentioned that the prison administration deliberately cuffed his hands and feet before being led out to the yard during his isolation period, and his cuffs were only removed upon reaching the yard due to the fact that the one-hour break was the only time he was allowed to carry out certain tasks, such as washing clothes or utilizing the limited facilities that prisoners have access to.

International law urges that detainees should be treated in a way that preserves their human dignity and maintains their basic rights during detention, with texts explicitly prohibiting the unjustified use of restraints against prisoners and restricting their use only to cases of extreme necessity and actual threat. Moreover, Rule 33 of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners prohibits the use of restraints, such as handcuffs, chains, irons and straitjackets as punitive means, restricting their use for medical reasons and by order of the prison director in order to prevent prisoners from harming themselves or others.³⁹ Nonetheless, the exceptions do not apply to Palestinian prisoners, as the occupation authorities continue to violate these treaties by deliberately punishing prisoners even more while they are in solitary confinement.



الإسم: إياد بزيع

السجن: إيشل

بداية العزل: شهر نيسان
2019

مكان السكن: مخيم قلنديا
- القدس

الوضع القانوني: اعتقال
إداري.

38 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Iyad Bzei in Eshel Prison on 11 July 2019.

39 United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Human Rights and Prisons. Manual on Human Rights Training for Prison Officials". 2004.

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/training11ar.pdf>

Prison Canteen

The Israeli occupation authorities not only exhaust prisoners mentally and physically, but also seek in numerous ways to make their detention period as difficult as possible for them. In addition to the total violations committed against prisoners, the Israeli authorities have rather developed policies to burden them economically, turning their money into an additional source of income for the occupation authorities. The prison administration uses the canteen as a double-edged sword against the prisoners, and although it is employed as a tool to burden the prisoners financially, the IPS also uses it as a punishment by imposing a ban on visits to the prison canteen for various periods of time. Isolated prisoners are exponentially affected by such a ban because in their case they already have less than the minimum basic needs that they require.

Due to the poor quality and insufficient food provided, and due to the Prison Service's failure to fulfill its duties toward the prisoners in terms of providing them with their basic needs, whether food; cleaning supplies; access to showers; or electronics such as fans in the summer, Palestinian prisoners are forced to buy the bulk of their daily needs from the prison canteen amidst the prison administration's renunciation of its primary responsibility to provide their basic needs.

For that reason and under these circumstances, the prison canteen often becomes the prisoners' only way to access and secure their needs. Additionally, the occupation authorities seek to further increase its seizure of the prisoners' funds by imposing very high prices on the products available at the prison canteen and, at the same time, only allowing the prisoners to bring in no more than 1,200 shekels per month (for each prisoner) to spend and buy their essential items. In cases where the prisoners are punished, families are prohibited from depositing any amount, and the funds in their accounts are frozen.

Prison Food

Like other prisoners in regular sections, Isolated prisoners are provided with three meals a day, but of poor quality and quantity. In many cases, the food is not cooked well, or lacks additives, such as salt and other spices and condiments, forcing the prisoners to re-cook it by using a hotplate or adding some sweeteners to it. However, the suffering of isolated prisoners differs, as it is almost double because they are often forced to have the food provided by the prison service as they are denied access to a hotplate or banned from purchasing any other supplies from the prison canteen due to the penalties imposed by the prison administration on isolated prisoners, including a ban on electrical appliances or on purchasing them from the canteen.

Despite the violation of the right to adequate food that the law guarantees to prisoners, and despite the fact that it is not acceptable to punish prisoners by reducing the amount of food provided to them, the IPS fails to provide prisoners with the sufficient amount of food that guarantees their nutrition in a manner appropriate to their age. Moreover, the lack of supervision over the cleanliness of the food and proper cooking affects the general health of isolated prisoners.

Isolation as a Collective Punishment Following the Escape of Six Prisoners from Gilboa Prison

On 6 September 2021, six Palestinian prisoners were able to free themselves and escape from Gilboa Prison, including Mahmoud Al-Arda, Mohammad Al-Arda, Ayham Kamamji, Munadel Nfaiat, Zakaria Zubaidi, and Yaqoub Qadri, after which the name of the operation was dubbed 'Freedom Tunnel'. As a result, the Israeli occupation authorities escalated its collective punishments against prisoners, including isolation as a noticeable policy, particularly in the last third of 2021, and continues to this day.

The Israeli occupation forces launched a manhunt for the six prisoners, who were recaptured shortly after their escape and thrown in solitary confinement, following a series of court sessions to try them, and each of them was sentenced to five additional years of imprisonment and fined 1,500 dollars. Such penalties were not limited to the escap-

ees, but also affected five other prisoners, whom the occupation forces accused of assisting their fellow prisoners; namely Mahmoud Shraim, Qusai Mar'i, Ali Abu Baker, Mohammad Abu Baker, and Iyad Jaradat. The five prisoners were faced with solitary confinement, isolation, and further penalties including four additional years of imprisonment and a fine of 650 dollars for each.



الإسم: عبدالله العارضة
السجن: ريمون
بداية العزل: بعد تحرير 6
أسرى أنفسهم من سجن
جليوع.
مكان السكن: عرابة - جنين
الوضع القانوني: محكوم
26 عاماً.

The 11 prisoners suffer from harsh and difficult isolation conditions in Israeli prisons to this day, and the IPS transfers them from one prison to another every three months. This constitutes additional abuse against them, and undermines any state of stability they seek to achieve in prison. During a visit conducted by Addameer, prisoner Abdullah Al-Arda spoke of the conditions of his solitary confinement.⁴⁰ For months, Al-Arda was deliberately cuffed behind his back whenever he was led out of the isolation cell, constantly causing him back and shoulder pain. Each time Al-Arda was taken out to the prison clinic or yard, or even for security checkups that are often conducted more than once a day, he would be cuffed behind his back by forcing him to put his hands behind his back and slip them through a slot on the cell door, so that he is cuffed and then taken outside.

Al-Arda also pointed out to the defense lawyers that the penalties imposed on the isolated prisoners do not only include restrictions pertaining to restraints and movement, but also include subjecting them to periodic inspections almost every week by special units, which spend hours in their cells, during which they destroy any of their property and scatter their personal belongings.

In this context, Al-Arda also spoke of the effects of their continuous transfers, which blocks family visits. Despite the end of the ban on family visits, their ongoing transfers from one prison to another – par-

40 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Abdullah Al-Arda in Rimoni Prison on 18 May 2022.

ticularly before a scheduled family visit – deprive them of the monthly meeting with their families and relatives. Family visits are often conducted behind reinforced, sound-proof, non-isolable plastic partitions, and all Palestinian families from the occupied territory who wish to visit a family member detained in Israel – with the exception of Jerusalem ID holders – must receive an entry permit into Israel.

Following Operation Freedom Tunnel, Israel Prison Service escalated its collective punishments against all prisoners, employing a policy of mass isolation against Islamic Jihad prisoners in particular, under the guise that five out of the six prisoners who managed to escape are part of the Islamic Jihad movement. During a visit to prisoner Nabil Al-Mughayer in 2021⁴¹, Addameer’s defense lawyer documented what the prisoners were exposed to at that time, as the IPS isolated 19 prisoners in Naqab Prison in very harsh conditions. On 8 September 2021, the prisoners in Naqab Prison set fire to a number of rooms as part of their attempt to confront and protest the arbitrary occupation policies taken against them, and thus a number of them were thrown in isolation in these burned cells.

In the same visit, Mughayer talked about these burned cells, describing them as “caves and underground dungeons. They were burned down, so everything inside was charred. They were no lights or power, and the smell of fire was everywhere.” Al-Mughayer confirmed that the isolated prisoners held in such circumstances did not have any clothes, mattresses, or blankets, as the IPS deliberately gave each prisoner a mattress and a blanket after midnight, but only to be retrieved early in the morning at around 6:00. Should any prisoner wanted to sleep after these hours, he must lie down on the worn-out concrete bed. The prisoners were denied access to the canteen permanently, which included cigarettes and cleaning materials, and were forced to shower while cuffed after the prison administration refused to untie them. During their isolation, they were provided with food of poor quality, and the break hours were reduced to two hours a day, during which they were cuffed and

41 A visit conducted by Addameer’s lawyer to prisoner Nabeel Mughayer in Naqab Prison on 7 October 2021.

led out into the yard in pairs. Additionally, further procedural penalties were imposed, including the fact that no hearings were held to hear the statements of the prisoners or to be informed of the charges levelled against them.⁴²



الإسم: زكريا الزبيدي

السجن: إيشل

بداية العزل: 11 أيلول
.2021

مكان السكن: جنين

الوضع القانوني: مؤبّد،

وأضيف للحكم 5 سنوات

على خلفية نفي الحرية

Prisoner Zakaria Al-Zubaidi⁴³ was subjected to numerous abusive policies while in isolation in Eshel Prison in a cell that had an area of 2 b 3.3 metres. Al-Zubaidi's hands were constantly and deliberately cuffed behind his back before being led out into the 2x7 metre prison yard. The IPS sought to establish the case for keeping him cuffed during the yard time, but Al-Zubaidi refused to go out without removing his cuffs, and even filed a petition against it, accompanied by a valid medical report by the orthopedic doctor at Eshel prison clinic stating his inability to bend his left hand backward, forcing the prison administration to give in to his demands and remove his restraints during the yard time.

Al-Zubaidi suffers from various health problems, including a chronic problem in the cornea that requires surgery, but undergoing surgery in prison is impossible. He also suffers from leg and back severe pain, and thus has a problem sleeping because the mattress in the isolation cell is a fireproof mattress which is about one to two-centimetre-thick and is "so painful to sleep on it as it is placed on top of a metal bed." Al-Zubaidi has repeatedly requested for the mattress to be replaced, but the prison administration constantly refuses. This highlights the policy of deliberate medical negligence practiced by the IPS against isolated prisoners to further increase their physical pain and suffering.

42 For further detail on the penalties imposed against the Islamic Jihad prisoners, see Addameer's 2021 report. <https://www.addameer.org/ar/media/4940>

43 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Zakaria Al-Zubaidi in Eshel Prison on 7 February 2023.



Photo 1: Isolated prisoner Zakaria during the break in the prison yard⁴⁴

For more about the suffering of the Freedom Tunnel prisoners, we review the case of prisoner Yaqoub Qadri currently held in isolation in Asqalan Prison.

Name: Yaqoub Mahmoud Ahmad Qadri

Place of residence: Bir Al-Basha, Jenin

Date of birth: 22 December 1979

Date of arrest: 18 October 2003 – rearrested on 10 September 2021

Sentence: Two life sentences and 35 years – five additional added to his sentence as a punishment for escaping prison

On 6 September 2021, six prisoners from Gilboa Prison were able to free themselves and escape, including Mahmoud Al-Ardah, Mohammad Al-Ardah, Ayham Kamamji, Munadel Nfaiat, Zakaria Zubaidi, and Yaqoub Qadri.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Published on the refugees website on 28 February 2023 <https://rb.gy/ihtml3>

⁴⁵ For more on the history of the Palestinian prisoner escapes, see: The Escape of Palestinian Prisoners

Following the escape, Israeli occupation authorities through its numerous apparatuses, namely the Prison Service, doubled its abusive measures against the Palestinian prisoners. The IPS sought to abuse the prisoners and undermine everything they were able to accomplish historically and organizationally. The penalties included locking the sections, reducing the yard time, banning access to the cantina, blocking family visits, increasing raids on prisoners' rooms, and escalating attacks on prisoners.

During the past year, Addameer conducted frequent visits to Israeli prisons to document what the freedom tunnel prisoners went through. For example, all freedom tunnel prisoners were isolated from the day of their re-capture until the date of issuance this paper, and they were systematically transferred between the various isolation sections, including prisoner Yaqoub Qadri who was transferred to Eshel, Asqalan, Rimonim, Ohalei Keidar, and Ayalon prisons.

Conditions of isolation

Prisoner Qadri describes life in isolation in Asqalan prison, saying that he was placed in a cell approximately 2 by 3 metres in size, with a window measuring about 50 by 30 centimetres. The cell had a sink, a western-style toilet, a shower, a hotplate, a television, a kettle, a refrigerator, and two wardrobes for clothes and other belongings. With respect to this area, it is primarily in violation of the Israeli Supreme Court's set the living space per prisoner to 4.5 square metres including the toilets and bathrooms.⁴⁶

Qadri is allowed to leave the cell for one hour per day and go out to a small yard measuring 4 x 6 metres, part of which is covered with grids, and the other part is closed. During his isolation in Asqalan, Qadri suffered from abuse at the hands of the guards by refusing to re-

from Israeli Prisons: A History of the Pursuit of Freedom, Abdel Nasser Farwaneh. Palestine Studies Institution. Published on 8 September 2021. <https://www.palestine-studies.org/ar/node/1651574>

46 For more information about the occupation court's decision regarding the living space per prisoner, see the Report on Violations of Prisoners' Rights in Israeli Prisons 2018.

https://www.addameer.org/sites/default/files/publications/tqryr_lnthkt_d12_2-9-2019.pdf

spond to any of his requests, as well as procrastinating in responding to him, under the pretext of taking his requests to higher authorities and the public administration to obtain approval for any of his requests. With the void that isolation creates for prisoners, as they are left with their thoughts and memories, prisoners need to get themselves busy by reading or writing, as this helps them keep their brains active so that isolation does not overwhelm them. However, the IPS prevented Qadri from receiving newspapers, permitting him to keep the Holy Quran only.⁴⁷

As for isolation in Eshel Prison, Qadri was detained in a cell measuring 2 by 2.5 metres, containing a western-style toilet, a shower, and a floor bed. The yard time lasted from one and a half to two hours a day and was spent inside a yard of about 8 by 10 meters covered with a metal grille, where Qadri was alone. Qadri's hands and feet were chained to each other each time he was led out into the yard, and his handcuffs were removed during the break time. Earlier, the prison administration deliberately tied Qadri's hands behind his back permanently, which caused him shoulder pain. Qadri told Addameer that the guards treated him very badly; "I feel that they are directed by higher authorities to treat me this way. Whenever I ask them to come for any purpose, they deliberately show up late."

As for the food in Eshel Prison, Qadri told Addameer that "The food here is very bad. It is often brought with a very bad smell. The rice they bring me is hard like concrete, and they often bring me pieces of chicken that are not cooked well, so I throw it away mostly since I do not have any electrical tools to recook it, and I cannot buy from the prison canteen to get better food. So, I am often forced to sleep on an empty stomach."⁴⁸

47 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Yaqoub Qadri in Asqalan Prison on 12 September 2022.

48 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Yaqoub Qadri in Eshel Prison on 5 April 2022.

Health conditions

Qadri suffers from pain in the right shoulder, and the pain extends to the left shoulder as well. He suffers from problems with blood pressure, cholesterol, and a back-slip disc, in addition to sleeping problems and shortness of breath. Recently, an enlargement of the thyroid gland was discovered, and it turned out to be a benign cancerous mass, but when he underwent a medical checkup a short time ago, it became clear that the mass was growing larger over time. Due to the very poor prison conditions, Qadri was infected with schistosomiasis, exhibiting certain symptoms including chest pain and blisters on the chest and back. When he was diagnosed with schistosomiasis by the prison doctor in Rimonim, he was given pain-relieving treatments for only five days, but he still feels some pain to this day. Furthermore, Qadri pointed out that he rarely receives regular checkups, and that he suffers from bleeding gums. When he saw the prison doctor, he was advised to change his toothbrush.

The pain that Qadri suffered while in isolation was not limited to physical pain only, as Qadri indicated that after isolation, he began to suffer sudden sweating and a severe rise in body temperature which lasted for approximately 10 minutes, in addition to having nightmares and suffering from shortness of breath.

The issue of isolation causes numerous problems to prisoners, as it leads to further deterioration in the prisoner's health conditions, particularly in light of the constant delays in transferring prisoners to hospitals and specialist doctors. On the other hand, the occupation authorities are often quick to abuse the prisoner during transfer to any health center, clinic or hospital. The patient is usually chained during the transfer, and in many case during the provision of treatment. These practices reflect the nature of the negligence experienced by isolated prisoners in Israeli prisons, and the violation of all their rights guaranteed in international laws, including the right to treatment.

Hunger Strike as a Means to Protest Isolation

For many years, prisoners have used hunger strikes as one of the means to protest the various occupation policies toward Palestinian prisoners. Prisoners went on strike to take away their right to obtain paper and pen, to receive books, to improve prison conditions, and to protest administrative detention, isolation, or medical neglect, and for other reasons that prompted the prisoner movement, whether collectively or individually, to go on hunger strike to achieve certain demands.

There is almost no year without a prisoner going on strike in protest against his isolation. As previously mentioned, the prisoners went on a mass strike in rejection of the isolation policy in 2012. That was the last of the mass strikes aimed at ending isolation. However, individual strikes continued. During the year 2022, prisoner Mohammad Nawara⁴⁹ went on strike in protest against his isolation, and in 2020 more than 10 prisoners went on strike in support for isolated prisoners Omar Khurwat and Hatem Al-Qawasmeh, with the aim of putting pressure on the Prison Service and trying to get them out of isolation. There are many other cases of individual or support strikes for isolated prisoners.

In this context, it is necessary to point out another aspect related to this issue, which is the isolation of hunger-striking prisoners, as a penalty for initiating a strike. As part of its persecution of the hunger-striking prisoner, the occupation authorities intend to isolate them from their surrounding environment by placing them in very bad, dirty isolation cells that are not suitable for human life, and deliberately conduct frequent inspections of them and their cells. Isolated prisoners are stripped of all their possessions, which would make isolation more difficult for the striking prisoner.



الإسم: محمد نَوَّارة

السجن: نفحة

بداية العزل: 22 تموز

2021

مكان السكن: رام الله

الوضع القانوني: محكوم

مؤبدان.

49 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Mohammad Nawara in Nafha Prison on 6 December 2022.

In 2022, more than 50 detainees went on an open mass hunger strike as part of their efforts to protest and reject administrative detention. Among these prisoners was lawyer and human rights defender Salah Al-Hamouri, who was arrested on 7 March 2022 after the Israeli occupation forces stormed his house in Kafr Aqab near Jerusalem, and he was issued a three-month administrative detention order, ending on 6 June 2022. On 6 June 2022 – the morning of his expected release, his administrative detention order was extended for another three months, to end on 5 September 2022. Once again, his administrative detention was renewed for the third time for another three months, ending on 4 December 2022.



الإسم: صلاح الحموري

السجن: هداريم

بداية العزل: 28 أيلول

.2022

مكان السكن: القدس

الوضع القانوني: اعتقال

إداري.

During his detention, Al-Hamouri participated in a mass hunger strike and was thrown into isolation only three days after launching his strike as part of the occupation's policies to punish prisoners on hunger strike. During a visit by Addameer lawyer, Al-Hamouri said that "Three days after I went on a hunger strike, the prison administration informed me that I had to leave the section with only my clothes on, and without taking anything with me. I was then transferred to the isolation section in Hadarim Prison. The section has nine cells, five of which are small in size, and the other four accommodate two or three persons. I myself was placed in a cell with an area of approximately 2 by 3 metres, in the middle of which there was a partition separating the bed, the toilet, and the sink. The cell had no windows, and was closed with an armored door that contained a slot measuring around 21 by 30 centimetres and covered with a grid.⁵⁰

"The cell contained a surveillance camera. The bed was five to ten centimeters off the ground, and the mattress I was sleeping on was about three to four centimeters thick. I stayed in the cell for 18 days, during which the sewage water overflowed twice, and the cell was filled

50 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Salah Al-Hamouri in Hadarim Prison on 16 October 2022.

with insects and bugs, and I suffered a lot because of this. Not only did the prison administration put me in isolation, but they also deliberately searched the cell late at night; midnight and at 1:00 a.m. The cell was searched more than five times. And despite the fact that I was on hunger strike, taking water and salt only, the guards refused to replace the water bottle that I used for 15 days, and to provide me with salt for 14 days.”

Within the ongoing policies to control hunger-striking prisoners, the cell in which Al-Hamouri was held did not have a shower area, which made going out to shower limited to the jailers’ approval. “The shower was outside the cell and I was led out chained. Due to my exhaustion from the hunger strike, I used to shower day after day, but I was not supplied with spare clothes until after three days of being in the cell. The situation in the cell was very difficult. The constant presence of a camera, in addition to the harsh living conditions, and being in a section full of criminal prisoners made it even more difficulty. My average sleep in the cell was between four and five hours, and sometimes I was not able to sleep at all because the criminals kept knocking on the doors and screaming.” It is noteworthy that during the isolation period, Al-Hamouri was prevented from going out to the prison yard.⁵¹

During isolation, the occupation authorities oppress and bully the isolated prisoners, as in the case of Al-Hamouri who is a living example of such policies. Despite the difficulty of the hunger strike experience for the prisoner, the occupation authorities increase the bitterness of this experience by deliberately putting the prisoners in harsh conditions, as is the case of Al-Hamouri. It should be noted that the cell in which Al-Hamouri was detained was very cold, and Al-Hamouri was unable to control the temperature in it, as the air conditioning was the only source of air.

51 For more information on Al-Hamouri’s case, see <https://www.addameer.org/ar/prisoner/2987>



الإسم: علاء الأعرج
مكان السكن: طولكرم
السجن: عزل الجلمة

Al-Hamouri was not the only prisoner held in isolation, as isolation is a policy Israel Prison Service often resort to in order to punish hunger-striking prisoners. For example, the IPS abused a number of prisoners on hunger strike in 2021, including engineer Alaa Al-Araj, who went on strike to protest his administrative detention. Prisoners' organizations documented what Al-Araj was exposed to during his hunger strike, as the IPS isolated him in a cell that was poorly lit and ventilated, and infested with insects. In addition, Al-Araj was stripped of all his personal belongings.⁵² Hence, these various examples reveal that the use of isolation and torture against prisoners on hunger strike is not individual practices, but rather a deep-rooted policy of the Israeli occupation authorities.

The Isolation Cell as A Witness to the Assassination of Prisoner Khader Adnan

Khader Adnan was arrested on 5 February 2023 from his home in the town of Arraba near Jenin. Following his arrest, Adnan went on a hunger strike as one of the peaceful means guaranteed by international law for detainees to express their rejection of their arbitrary detention. The Israeli Military Prosecution filed an indictment against Adnan, which included two items related to his membership in the Islamic Jihad as "a terrorist organization" and incitement.

Although international law protects the right of detainees to hunger strike, the Israel Prison Service considers it a disciplinary offense, punishable by isolation. After Adnan announced that he was going on strike, the IPS placed him in a solitary confinement cell in Section A, designated for civilian detainees in Al-Jalame



الإسم: خضر عدنان
السجن: عزل الجلمة
بداية العزل: 5 شباط
2023

مكان السكن: عرابة - جنين
الوضع القانوني: موقوف
للمحاكمة. (استشهد)

52 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Alaa Al-Araj in Al-Jalame Prison on 1 September 2021.

Prison, which contains three cells. Adnan was detained in a cell measuring 1.8 by 1.8 metres, containing a concrete bed and a squat toilet, but lacked any pillows, blankets or electrical tools. During his isolation, Adnan was never allowed out into the prison yard for the usual breaks.⁵³

After nearly 30 days of hunger strike, the danger to Adnan's life began to gradually increase, forcing the IPS to transfer him to solitary confinement cells, in what the Israeli occupation authorities call the "Ramleh Prison Clinic."

Adnan began to suffer from constant vomiting, general weakness in the body, inability to walk, and difficulty speaking, prompting his defense lawyer and Physicians for Human Rights – Israel to seek to save his life, so the defense lawyer submitted a request to the Israeli courts to release Adnan on bail. A hearing was held on 23 April 2023, with Adnan reaching the stage of sudden death risk, but the Israeli courts refused to release him despite the fact that the indictment filed against him stated that he did not pose any danger to the State of Israel, and that prisoners against whom similar indictments were filed were released early. Such refusal demonstrates the maliciousness of the procedures against Adnan.

Adnan's lawyer did not submit to the court's decision, and he filed an appeal with the Israeli court, but it delayed the procedures and deliberately adjourned the sessions continuously. Despite the danger facing Adnan, the court adjourned the session until May 10.

On the other hand, all attempts by the Physicians for Human Rights to transfer Adnan to a specialized civilian hospital failed. In her diagnosis, Dr. Lina Qasem Hassan stated that Adnan insisted on his refusal to undergo follow-up surgeries and medical checkups and tests, including blood pressure and blood oxygen saturation. Dr. Hassan stated that the director of the IPS Medical Center told her that Adnan refused to undergo laboratory follow-up, biometric measurements, or be connected to a monitor during the two times Adnan was urgently sent to the Kaplan Hospital emergency room during the past weeks, but such is in an at-

53 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Adnan Khader in Al-Jalame Prison on 8 March 2023.

tempt to cover up the crime of medical negligence exercised against Adnan, by claiming that Adnan refused to undergo medical observation.

However, Adnan expressed his desire to be admitted to the hospital, but set conditions for agreeing to undergo medical checkups, including receiving family visits – as he was punished by being banned from family visits – and be accompanied by a doctor from Physicians for Human Rights. The Israeli District Court rejected two petitions submitted by PHRI, demanding that the hunger striker be transferred to the hospital and that his family be allowed to visit him. Despite the tireless efforts made by the defense lawyer and PHRI, the Israeli courts and the IPS joined forces and deliberately neglected Adnan medically, not releasing him or transferring him to a civilian hospital, but rather keeping him in isolation until he was found unconscious inside the isolation cell on 2 May 2023, after which he passed away.

The Israeli occupation authorities uses isolation for a number of practices that they consider to be in violation of the rules of the Prison Service, and call them disciplinary offenses. violations. However, in reality, isolation is used against prisoners who are on hunger strike as a method to push them to end their strike and as a means to take revenge on them, undermine their will, and not meet their demands. The Israeli authorities violate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees the right to adequate food to maintain health and well-being, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which guarantees detainees their human dignity and appropriate medical treatment. In Adnan's case, all of these agreements were overlooked and violated, and in this way the Israeli forces and apparatuses conspired together to kill Adnan while he was in solitary confinement cells.

Double Penalties during Isolation

1.1 Ban on Visits

The right to meet and maintain continuous communication with family is one of the rights guaranteed to individuals, whether adults or children, and protected under international law. Article 8 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms the right to found a family, and Article 37 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child guar-

antees the child's right to maintain family relationships. Contact with the family is an important part of social life, mainly for prisoners whose social relationships and contact with the outside world are reduced to a minimum. Meeting the family may contribute to supporting the mental and emotional health of the detainee. However, placing prisoners in isolation is usually accompanied by depriving the isolated prisoner of family visits for a period of time, and this policy aims to cut off any physical contact the prisoners have with the people closest to them in order to increase the burden of isolation on them. Sometimes the ban on visits is set at a month, for example, but other times the ban order is indefinite and is constantly renewed to reach months, or even years, as in the case of isolated prisoner Wael Al-Jaghoub, who was banned from receiving any family visits.

Amidst such a ban and deprivation, the prisoner has no choice but to communicate with his family via phone calls controlled by Israel Prison Service. Additionally, and in its attempts to completely separate the prisoner from his family, the IPS imposes a ban on phone calls. This policy comes as part of the collective punishments that do not affect the prisoner alone, but also affect his family.

Blocking prisoners from meeting with a lawyer is yet another means of cutting off prisoners' contact with the outside world, which is a blatant violation of human rights, and an infringement on the rights of prisoners that are established and guaranteed in international laws. Prisoners should enjoy their right to confidentially communicate with and consult a lawyer without interference or obstacles from Israel Prison Service, as the prisoner's regular meeting with the lawyer provides an opportunity for him to defend himself on the one hand, and guarantees the prisoner access to appropriate legal advice on the other hand.

However, the entire occupation system, starting from the prison administration all the way to the military courts, is complicit in banning prisoners from accessing legal advice in an explicit violation of Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which stipulates that everyone is entitled to defend himself through legal assistance of his own choosing, and meeting with his lawyer must be confidential and available without unjustified restrictions.

Although it is a must to comply with and honor the articles of international law, and protect the rights of prisoners guaranteed by law, the Israeli occupation authorities continue to violate these rights, as prisoners are denied access to a legal counsel as an additional punishment accompanying the isolation procedure. This ban restriction is not temporary or specific, as in many cases prisoners are now aware of the reason why they are banned from meeting with a lawyer, or when the ban will be lifted.

Thus, Palestinian prisoners' access to a lawyer continues to be faced with unjustified obstacles. Isolated prisoners are unable to know the reasons surrounding their isolation – if the isolation is not malicious to begin with, as in the case of many prisoners. Prohibiting prisoners from meeting with a lawyer while they are in isolation is just another form of isolation.

1.2 Cell Inspection and Incursion during Isolation

Despite all the pressures exerted upon the prisoners while in isolation, and all the unfairness that this punishment carries against the prisoners, the Israeli occupation authorities are constantly seeking new methods to increase their suffering on a daily basis by conducting periodic inspections of the cells, which are sometimes carried out during the day, and become more intense, stressful, and noisy at night. The prisoner is awakened and terrorized during the late hours of the night and early dawn, and all of his possessions are searched and tampered with, forcing the prisoner to rearrange all the belongings after the search ends.

Prisoner Imad Al-Batran told Addameer that during his isolation, the prison administration searched his room two to three times per week, some during the day and others during the night, and the prison guard conducted the security check (knocking on the windows) twice a day. During these searches, Al-Batran would be handcuffed and taken out of the room. In a monthly scene similar to the daily security inspection, the cell was searched once a month by special inspection units from outside the prison, as this unit deliberately vandalized Al-Batran's property and broke things found in the cell.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Imad Al-Batran in Megiddo Prison on 26 October 2023.

The matter does not stop only at the details of the daily abuse to which the prisoners are exposed. Rather, the occupation forces search for any act to punish the prisoners, even if the act is not committed by the prisoner himself. Sometimes the occupation authorities punish the prisoners with isolation for simply being reported on media or social media. For instance, Israel Prison Service intentionally punished isolated prisoners who escaped from Gilboa Prison when there was any news about them on television or any social media. Prisoner Ayham Kamamji told Addameer⁵⁵ that during the last week of May 2022, an Israeli channel reported that two of the prisoners who managed to escape from Gilboa Prison were able to communicate with their families, even though they were held in isolation. The following day, Al-Yamaz Unit raided and searched Kamamji's cell, and broke his belongings. Kamamji was later transferred to another, yet smaller isolation cell, and was subsequently punished by being banned of receiving family visits, accessing the canteen, or having electrical appliances. The prison administration justified its actions by claiming that Kamamji was able to communicate with his family, and accordingly he was punished. Such practices demonstrate the ongoing targeting of and abusing isolated prisoners, despite the difficulty of the sentence they are already serving, and using any news or rumor, such as communication with the outside world, as an additional excuse to increase the punishments against them.



الإسم: أيهم كمامجي

السجن: ريمونيم

بداية العزل: 19 أيلول

2021.

مكان السكن: كفر دان - جنين

الوضع القانوني: محكوم

مؤبد، وأضيف للحكم 5

سنوات على خلفية نفق

الحرية.

55 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner Ayham Kamamji in Rimonim Prison on 1 June 2022.

Physical and Mental Effects of Isolation on Prisoners



“The experience of solitary confinement is used to psychologically harm the prisoner, and its effects are significant, and can lead to psychotic symptoms.”

– Dr. Samah Jabr⁵⁶

Israel Prison Service and Shin Bet collude in placing many Palestinian prisoners in isolation or solitary confinement for many years, making them live the experience of “prison within prison.” Signs of isolation exhibit in ways and levels that vary from one prisoner to another. It is possible that isolation becomes an incubating environment that generates mental diseases/disorders, or creates an environment conducive to the exacerbation of diseases that were already present. In both cases, the policy of isolation leaves traces and scars that may accompany the prisoners throughout their lives.

While solitary confinement is difficult for people who do not suffer from physical illnesses or mental disorders, it can be unbearable for the mentally ill. Solitary confinement is liable to exacerbate psychotic states, or to arouse dormant mental problems. The World Health Organization defines mental health as “a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in.”⁵⁷

Mental health is a series that varies from one person to another, and is characterized by varying degrees of difficulty and distress, which are affected by some external determinants, such as psychological and biological factors, in addition to exposure to unfavorable social, econom-

56 A visit conducted by Addameer to Dr. Samah Jabr, head of the Mental Health Unit at the Palestinian Ministry of Health on 4 June 2023.

57 World Health Organisation. “Mental Health”. 17 June 2022 <https://rb.gy/us6h0>

ic, geopolitical, and environmental conditions. In the words of Dr. Zeev Weiner, an expert in psychiatry, "The conditions of solitary confinement cause severe psychological stress and may destabilize the mental state of prisoners who did not have a prior mental disorder or whose illness is under control, causing the disorders to erupt and be manifested in a variety of symptoms. Prisoners in confinement suffer twice as much from mental illness as those who are not in confinement; the common disorders are adjustment disorders and depressive syndromes, but severe dissociative and psychotic disorders may also occur among prisoners in confinement without prior illness."⁵⁸

While some of the mental damage caused by solitary confinement might dissipate once the period ends, some prisoners suffer permanent damage and are left unable to function in society following their release. According to the research, solitary confinement may also cause physiological manifestations as a result of the stress caused.⁵⁹

In an interview regarding the severe psychological effects of solitary confinement, Palestinian psychiatrist Samah Jabr emphasized the harshness and gravity of this punishment on prisoners who are subjected to solitary confinement (particularly on those who have been subjected to for long periods), stressing the grave psychological effects that haunt prisoners due to isolation, which include psychosis.⁶⁰ "Prisoners enter into psychotic episodes as part of the human brain's attempts to break the state of isolation, and thus the brain invents sounds to break the state of isolation that it is experiencing." However, Dr. Jabr referred to an interesting point which is a condition of psychosis that afflicts prisoners only during their presence in solitary confinement and ends with the end of solitary confinement, as a number of patients explained that

58 Dr. Zeev Weiner, an expert in psychiatry and family medicine, from an expert opinion submitted to the Israeli Supreme Court on the psychological repercussions of solitary confinement, dated 19 December 2004. On this subject, see also, Ruchama Marton "Psychological Effects of Solitary Confinement," Voices for Vanunu, published by the UK Campaign to Free Vanunu, 1998, pp. 35-42

59 "Solitary Confinement of Prisoners and Detainees in Israeli Prisons," a joint paper by Physicians for Human Rights – Israel, Adalah, and Al Mezan Center for Human Rights. June 2011. https://www.adalah.org/uploads/oldfiles/upfiles/2011/Solitary_confinement_position_paper_English.pdf.

60 Psychosis is a mental disorder that leads to a change in the mental ability of an individual, making him/her lose touch with reality in a way that he/she is unable to distinguish between what is real and the hallucinations he/she hears in his/her head, or the delusions he/she feels.

such a condition was limited to the period of solitary confinement and ended once they left isolation.

There is no doubt that isolated prisoners suffer from a series of physical and mental effects, which come as an inevitable result of isolation that is imposed on them. In 1898, psychiatrist Sigbert Ganser, a noted expert on the psychological effects of solitary confinement, confirmed that solitary confinement often results in a syndrome described as 'prison psychosis' after studying the behavior of a number of inmates in solitary confinement.⁶¹ During the study, Dr. Ganser monitored and identified a group of symptoms associated with solitary confinement, which include sensory distortions and hallucinations; panic attacks; difficulties with thinking, concentration, and memory; intrusive obsessional thoughts; paranoia; violence; and self-harm.⁶²

During Addameer's visits to prisoners in Israeli prisons over the past years, male and female prisoners often exhibited a number of effects associated with solitary confinement, which included, but were not limited to, sleep disorders; depression and anxiety; psychotic disorders such as auditory and visual hallucinations; disorientation in time and space;⁶³ panic attacks; hyper-responsivity to external stimuli; difficulties with concentration and memory;⁶⁴ problems in the digestive system, sexual or urinary system; shortness of breath; intestines and stomach disorders; abdominal pain; and many other physical and psychological repercussions.⁶⁵

61 Patient. "Ganser's Syndrome". 17 December 2022. Last reviewed on 17 May 2023.

<https://patient.info/doctor/gansers-syndrome-pseudodementia#nav-1>

62 Physicians for Human Rights. "Reassessing Solitary Confinement: The Human Rights, Fiscal, and Public Safety Consequences". 19 June 2012. Reviewed on 17 May 2023.

https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR_other/PHR-Senate-statement-Reassessing-Solitary-Confinement-June19-2012

63 "Solitary Confinement of Prisoners and Detainees in Israeli Prisons", joint paper by Physicians for Human Rights – Israel, Adalah, and Al Mezan Center for Human Rights. June 2011.

https://www.adalah.org/uploads/oldfiles/upfiles/2011/Solitary_confinement_position_paper_English.pdf.

64 "Psychiatric effects of solitary confinement," Stuart Grassian, Washington University Journal of Law & Policy, volume 22. Access to justice: the social responsibility of lawyers/prison reform: Commission on Safety and Abuse in America's Prison. January 2006, pp. 3350

65 Addameer. "Isolation and Solitary Confinement of Palestinians in Israeli Detention". Pp35. 22 July 2008.

<https://tinyurl.com/2wddr4ua>

Israel Prison Service has acknowledged the potentially severe mental consequences of solitary confinement and yet it continues to use the practice. A report prepared by the Israeli Ministry for Public Security and Israel Prison Service in 1996, following a petition filed by Physicians for Human Rights and the Center for the Defense of the Individual, concluded that “Research findings on the issue are unequivocal and show that imprisonment in isolation causes deep psychotic reactions... Clearly the duration of time a prisoner is held in solitary confinement has direct implications on its side effects, as holding an individual alone in a cell for one day is not the same as isolating him, as stated, for a period of three weeks, months, or years. There is no doubt that there exists a certain time limit after which most people will feel that solitary confinement is intolerable and will suffer, as a result, from long-term effects.”⁶⁶

Isolate the Body and Imprison the Mind

Health care in Israeli prisons is another facet of the problems of isolation, as Palestinian prisoners suffer from poor mental health care. The Israeli occupation authorities often deliberately neglect prisoners’ medical care, delay in diagnosing their illnesses, and procrastinate in providing them with the necessary treatment, and thus exacerbating their conditions. Over the past years, Addameer has repeatedly sought to monitor the type of practices in prisons and conditions of detention, and has concluded that Israeli prisons lack a special mental health care system, which would exacerbate the health condition of the isolated prisoners. If a psychiatrist is available, he or she often – if not always – does not speak Arabic, which makes the treatment process reliant on the presence of a prison service worker for translation purposes, and this inevitably increases the difficulty for the prisoner to speak freely, and makes it more difficult for the psychiatrist because the translator may overlook to translate part of the information, or it may be translated incorrectly as a result of the differences between languages.

⁶⁶ A report by the Israeli Attorney General entitled “The Separation of Prisoners”, dated 16 April 1996, p. 11. However, it is impossible to define a borderline period after which a person who is held in solitary confinement will suffer from psychological problems, due to differences from person to person.

Over the past years, Israel Prison Service has isolated dozens of prisoners who suffer from illnesses, some of whom were left with a mental illness, which continued with them even after their release from prison. Prisoner Mansour Al-Shahatit, for example, was released after spending 17 years behind bars, during which he was held in solitary confinement for long periods, which caused him a mental illness. Some prisoners were isolated due to their suffering from previous mental illnesses, such as prisoner A. N. who is still in solitary confinement to this day. The isolation policy also affected women prisoners who suffer from mental illnesses, some of whom have been isolated intermittently from 2019 until today, including F. H.

It should be noted in this context that the IPS constantly blocks any attempt to introduce an Arab psychiatrist, as Addameer has repeatedly sought to bring psychiatrists into Israeli prisons, but the IPS procedures and obstacles make it very difficult, mainly because such procedures do not allow a physical contact between a psychiatrist and a prisoner, but rather from behind a glass barrier. This would create difficulty in communicating with the prisoner.

In light of this, the isolation policy as practiced by the IPS, taking into account the mental and health effects on prisoners and detainees caused by isolation and the loss of contact with the outside world, constitutes a grave violation of the rules of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Isolation is a form of psychological torture, as part of the definition of torture in Article 1 of the 1984 Convention against Torture, and other Cruel, Inhuman, and Degrading Treatment. Accordingly, the practice of isolation in Israeli prisons can be considered a violation of Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Article 7 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which categorically prohibits the use of torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment.

Additionally, the conditions of the cells in which Palestinian prisoners are held do not meet the health standards stipulated in Articles 91 and 92 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, regarding the treatment of civilians in armed conflicts.

Ahmad Manasra: Facial Features Changed While Still in Isolation



الإسم: أحمد مناصرة
بداية العزل: بداية شهر
تشرين الثاني 2021.
مكان السكن: القدس
الوضع القانوني: محكوم
9 سنوات.

In 2015, 13-year-old Ahmad Manasra was arrested by the Israeli occupation forces after being allegedly accused of participating in a stabbing attack in Jerusalem, along with his cousin Hassan Manasra, who was shot and killed on the spot. Following Manasra's arrest, the Israeli authorities deliberately leaked video clips from the interrogation sessions, demonstrating the harshness of the interrogation of a 13-year-old boy, which included screaming and threats. This constitutes evidence that Manasra was subjected to psychological torture while he was still a child. Israeli courts sentenced Manasra to 12 years in prison, which was later reduced to nine years following an appeal filed by the defense lawyer. During his childhood years, Manasra was held in a juvenile institution for two years under harsh and difficult conditions, and after he reached the age of 14, he was transferred to Megiddo Prison.

Manasra was subjected to continuous harsh interrogation without the presence of a lawyer, and was placed in inhumane detention conditions beyond what any child of his age could bear. Manasra was continuously abused by Israel Prison Service during his years of detention, which exceeded seven years, until they ended up placing him in solitary confinement since early November 2021. Due to the severe psychological pressures he was exposed to during childhood, Manasra was diagnosed with schizophrenia⁶⁷ on 24 October 2021, suffering from psychotic fantasies, and severe depression accompanied by suicidal thoughts.

67 Schizophrenia is a serious mental disorder in which people interpret reality abnormally. Schizophrenia may result in some combination of hallucinations, delusions, and extremely disordered thinking and behavior that impairs daily functioning, and can be disabling. People with schizophrenia require lifelong treatment. Early treatment may help get symptoms under control before serious complications develop and may help improve the long-term outlook. For more information:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/ar/diseases-conditions/schizophrenia/symptoms-causes/syc-20354443>

Manasra was diagnosed by an independent Israeli psychiatrist working with Physicians for Human Rights – Israel with serious psychiatric conditions that he developed since his detention.”⁶⁸ Only 10 days after that diagnosis, the IPS placed Manasra in solitary confinement. On 24 November 2022, Beersheba court extended Manasra’s solitary confinement until 16 March 2023. The IPS requested the court to extend Manasra’s isolation for an additional six months, and the judge agreed to extend his isolation for four months under the guise of ‘secret evidence’.

Manasra is still held in solitary confinement despite the repeated life-threatening deterioration in his mental and physical health, which required his transfer more than once to the hospital or Al-Ramleh Prison Clinic. Manasra has now served more than two-thirds of his sentence; more than seven years of his nine-and-a-half-year sentence, which qualifies him to be considered for release on parole according to Israeli law. However, during 2022, court hearings rejected his appeals to be eligible for release on parole, on the grounds of ‘a terrorism file’.

Despite local, regional and international efforts and advocacy regarding Manasra’s case, and the legal attempts for his early release, the Israeli authorities, to this day, refuse to release him. On the contrary, the District Court in Eshel Prison in Beersheba extended Manasra’s solitary confinement for further six months on 13 March 2023 after he spent 16 continuous months in isolation. During the hearing session, the judges once again relied on the ‘secret file’ justification, the content of which cannot be disclosed despite the defense lawyer’s request. Manasra revealed in the session that he has been suffering from stomach pain for more than 45 days, and the IPS refuses to conduct the necessary check-ups and tests, in addition to banning him from accessing the canteen. This increases his suffering in solitary confinement and further worsens his mental and physical condition.

Amidst the serious deterioration in Manasra’s mental condition, his defense team submitted a petition to the Israeli Supreme Court, and a

68 Israel and occupied Palestinian Territories: Palestinian’s solitary confinement renewed: Ahmad Manasra, Amnesty International, Available through: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/6263/2022/en/>.

court session was held on 26 June 2023, and after deliberations that lasted for approximately an hour between the judge and the defense team, the court asked the Prison Service to submit an 'updated report' on Manasra's mental health status within 20 days of the session to decide whether to end or continue Manasra's isolation.

Women Prisoners Systematically Subjected to Isolation due to Mental Health Issues



Women prisoners, like other prisoners in Israeli prisons, are exposed to systematic abuse by Israel Prison Service, using solitary confinement and isolation, namely against prisoners F. H. and C. H. since 2019 due to their suffering from harsh mental health conditions. Due to the medical negligence that women prisoners suffer from in prisons, there has been a negative impact on their daily behavior, as their conditions worsened sharply while they were in prison.

In June 2020, the two women prisoners were transferred to Al-Jalame Prison and placed in dual isolation, as punishment for a skirmish that occurred between them and the prison administration. Prisoner F. H. described the cell as "a dirty and small cell, which had only two beds and a shower."⁶⁹ However, the shower was broken, so the two prisoners could not bathe, and were not provided with new clothes, so they remained in the same clothes they had worn since the first day of isolation. The two prisoners were not allowed into the prison yard for two weeks. "The cell in which we were held was monitored by cameras throughout the day, and this was very difficult for us because the toilet had a half a door," added F.H.

69 A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to isolated prisoner F. H. in Al-Jalame Prison on 22 June 2020.



الإسم: الأسيرة (ج، ح)
السجن: الجملة
بداية العزل: حزيران 2020.

To increase the psychological pressure on the two women during isolation, the prison administration did not supply them with any electrical appliances, nor did they provide them with blankets. Rather, they were only provided with a small, unclean sheet, despite their continuous requests to bring in blankets due to the coldness of the cell because of the air conditioner, but the prison administration did not respond to their demands.

Despite the harsh psychological conditions that the two female prisoners are suffering from, the Israeli authorities continue to exert systematic psychological pressure on them, and deliberately neglect them medically, making the pain of psychological pressure unbearable. As a result, the two women release these pressures on the jailers and fellow prisoners, causing a state of instability inside the section. The IPS responds by continuing to isolate them in inhumane conditions. F. H. continues to suffer from solitary confinement and a number of accompanying penalties, such as denial access to the canteen, and ban on family visits to this day. C. H. was released in 2020.

Conclusions



To this day, the Israeli occupation authorities still use the policy of solitary confinement and isolation, despite all the studies and research that have confirmed the grave damage resulting from solitary confinement and isolation. Studies have shown that isolation can cause a number of physical or psychological problems, including sleep disorders; depression and anxiety; psychotic disorders such as auditory and visual hallucinations; disorientation in time and space; panic attacks; hyper-responsivity to external stimuli; difficulties with concentration and memory; problems in the digestive system, sexual or urinary system; shortness of breath; intestines and stomach disorders; and abdominal pain.

- By using solitary confinement and isolation, the Israeli occupation authorities violate a number of international conventions and legal opinions which describe this penalty as inhumane and a form of torture.
- The Prison Service Ordinance lists a number of cases in which solitary confinement may be imposed on prisoners, for reasons of prison security or disciplinary measures. Such cases are very broad, and the terms used to describe them are broad and are open to many interpretations. Accordingly, it leaves the door open for the Israeli authorities to use isolation against a larger number of Palestinian prisoners.
- Isolated Palestinian prisoners are placed in worn-out cells filled with humidity and filth, and lack natural and sanitary ventilation. In addition to being isolated, prisoners are further punished by blocking family visits; a ban on accessing electrical tools; hefty fines; or denial access to the prison canteen.
- Israel Prison Service lacks a mental health care system, as the Israeli authorities shirk from its responsibility toward mentally-ill prisoners, and instead of fulfilling its obligation to provide them with the necessary health care, the Israeli authorities place them in isolation cells as a precautionary measure, which would exacerbate the mental illnesses they suffer from.

- Not only the Israeli authorities place Palestinian prisoner in isolation cells, but also constantly seek to abuse them by raiding and searching their cells on a daily basis; and destroying their belongings without any lawful or reasonable justification.
- Prisoners sometimes go on hunger strikes to protest and reject their solitary confinement, and hunger striking prisoners are often punished and abused.

Appendix 1: Persons Responsible for Issuing Isolation Orders and the Duration and Type of Isolation

Duration	Who	Type
1 – 12 hours	The prison director or his deputy of the rank of sergeant or higher, or a prison officer of the rank of lieutenant	Individual or dual isolation
48 hours	The prison director or his deputy of the rank of sergeant or higher, or a prison officer of the rank of lieutenant	Individual or dual isolation
From 48 hours to 14 consecutive days, or 14 non-consecutive days within a period of 30 days.	The prison director or his deputy of the rank of sergeant or higher	Individual or dual isolation
From 14 days to one month. In each extension session, a hearing must be held for the prisoner, and officials must consult with a number of parties, namely intelligence, security, and the medical section in cases of isolation on a medical basis	Deputy major general, or a prison officer of the rank of warrant officer in case of absence	Individual isolation

<p>From 14 days to two months. In each extension session, a hearing must be held for the prisoner, and officials must consult with a number of parties, namely intelligence, security, and the medical section in cases of isolation on a medical basis</p>	<p>Deputy major general, or a prison officer of the rank of warrant officer in case of absence</p>	<p>Dual isolation</p>
<p>From one month to six months (isolation must be renewed every month, so that the prisoner cannot be isolated continuously for a period of 6 months). In each extension session, a hearing must be held for the prisoner, and officials must consult with a number of parties, namely intelligence, security, and the medical section in cases of isolation on a medical basis</p>	<p>Deputy major general, or a prison officer of the rank of warrant officer in case of absence</p>	<p>Individual isolation</p>
<p>From two months to one year (isolation must be renewed every two months). In each extension session, a hearing must be held for the prisoner, and officials must consult with a number of parties, namely intelligence, security, and the medical section in cases of isolation on a medical basis</p>	<p>Deputy major general, or a prison officer of the rank of warrant officer in case of absence in the first half of the year</p> <p>Deputy major general with the commissioner's approval in the second half of the year</p>	<p>Dual isolation</p>

<p>More than six months and extended not more than six months</p>	<p>The extension must be via the District Court in the area where the prison is</p> <p>A recommendation from the deputy major general, or a prison officer of the rank of warrant officer in case of absence</p> <p>The prisoner or his lawyer must be present at the extension session</p>	<p>Individual isolation</p>
<p>12 months and extended not more than one year</p>	<p>The extension must be via the District Court in the area where the prison is</p> <p>A recommendation from the deputy major general, or a prison officer of the rank of warrant officer in case of absence</p> <p>The prisoner or his lawyer must be present at the extension session</p>	<p>Dual isolation</p>

Appendix 2: Disciplinary Offenses and the Punishment per each according to Prison Service Ordinance No. 04.13.00⁷⁰

Offense	Maximum penalty for committing the offense once	Maximum penalty for committing the offense more than once
Quarrel with a prisoner	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, or isolation for up to 7 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, or isolation for up to 14 days.
Lodge a baseless complaint	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 154 shekels, or isolation for up to 3 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.
Make false accusations against a prison officer	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, or isolation for up to 7 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation of up to 14 days.
Answer incorrectly to a question on the topics under Article 6 of the Prison Service Order (details of health condition)	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 123 shekels.	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels.

⁷⁰ Commission Ordinance No 04.13.00. "Disciplinary Offenses for Prisoners, Chapter Four". Ordinance No. 04.13.00. Last updated on 25 May 2022. <https://rb.gy/i814j>

Conduct written or verbal communication with people inside or outside the prison in violation of prison regulations	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, or isolation for up to 7 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 14 days, and/or reducing days of release (provided that the offense harms state security).
Terrorize fellow prisoners	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, or isolation for up to 7 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, or isolation for up to 14 days.
Refuse to walk in prison	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 185 shekels.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels.
Refuse to eat the food provided by the Prison Service	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 61 shekels, or isolation for up to two days.	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 185 shekels, or isolation for up to 7 days.
Eat other prisoners' food	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 247 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 3 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.
Violate an order related to food eating and distribution (remove food from the dining hall or kitchen)	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 247 shekels, or isolation for up to 5 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, or isolation for up to 10 days.
Spoil food on purpose, or throw it away without an order	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 247 shekels, or isolation for up to 5 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 10 days.

Introduce substances into food that spoil its quality or taste	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 247 shekels, or isolation for up to 5 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, or isolation for up to 10 days.
Refrain from wearing the IPS uniform; destroying; losing; or changing part of it	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, or isolation for up to 3 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.
Remove, damage, or change a mark or symbol on the IPS uniform	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, or isolation for up to 3 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.
Refrain from maintaining personal hygiene, or violate instructions regarding hairdressing and shaving	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 61 shekels.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels.
Refuse to maintain the cleanness of cloth and bedding	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 61 shekels.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels.
Tamper with locks, lamps, lighting or other prison property	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, or isolation for up to 3 days. n for up to 7 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation.
Steal prisoners' clothes or belongings	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, or isolation for up to 7 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 10 days.

Disturb the peace in any section of the prison	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 123 shekels.	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels.
Damage walls, furniture or other property	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 3 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, or isolation for up to 7 days.
Stain or spit on the floors or walls	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 123 shekels.	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 3 days.
Intentionally contaminate the toilet or washing/shower area	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 123 shekels.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 3 days.
Refuse to fix equipment, clothing, or other State property; damage, destroy or ransack such items	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, or isolation for up to 3 days	. A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.
Cause self-harm or illness	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, or isolation for up to 3 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 10 days.
Cause violence, or refuse to help suppress violence	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 14 days, and/or reducing days of release.

Involvement in assaulting a prison officer or fellow prisoner	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 14 days, and/or reducing days of release.
Refrain from or refuse to assist a prison jailer in the event of an escape, or an assault on a prison officer or a prisoner	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 3 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.
Violate rules or a prison officer's lawful order, or refrain from or refuse to comply with orders as specified	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 247 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 5 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.
Behave immorally toward a prison officer, worker, visitor or others	A warning and/or a fine of up to 185 shekels, or isolation for up to 2 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 5 days.
Refuse to, neglect work inside prison	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 185 shekels, or isolation for up to 2 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 5 days.
Leave the cell, or any other designated place without permission	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 5 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, or isolation for up to 7 days.

Come into possession of an item not entitled to possess	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 185 shekels, or isolation for up to 20 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 10 days.
Assault or use force in a manner that constitutes an offense inside prison	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 14 days, or reducing days of release.
Make noise or curse	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 247 shekels, or isolation for up to 3 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.
Cause violence, or behave inappropriately or immorally	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 3 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.
Use degrading or threatening language or slurs	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 5 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 10 days.
Fake illness	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 3 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 371 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 10 days.
Falsely accuse a prison officer or prisoner	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 278 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 14 days.

Escape from prison, make escape calls, or assist prisoners escape	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 14 days, and/or reducing days of release.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 14 days, or reducing days of release.
Attempt to or assist in committing the offenses herein	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 185 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 3 days.	A warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 14 days.
Any act, conduct, arrangement, or negligence that harms order or discipline, even if it is not listed herein	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 309 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 7 days.	A severe warning, and/or a fine of up to 564 shekels, and/or isolation for up to 14 days.



ADDAMEER Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association

is a Palestinian non-governmental, civil institution that works to support Palestinian political prisoners held in Israeli and Palestinian prisons. in Human Rights. Established in 1992 by a group of activists interested in human rights, the center offers free legal aid to political prisoners, advocates their rights at the national and international level, and works to end torture and other violations of prisoners' rights through monitoring, legal procedures and solidarity campaigns. Addameer enjoys the support of a volunteer body called "Addama'er", which believes in Addameer's goals and participates in the activities held by the association. They also work in supporting Addameer's message.

Addameer is an executive member of the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organization Network (PNGO), the Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Council (PHROC), the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT), the International Coalition against torture, and many other regional and international coalitions.

Addameer's Vision:

Addameer believes in the importance of building a free and democratic Palestinian society based on justice, equality, rule of law, and respect for human rights within the larger framework of the right to self-determination. Addameer's work is based on a belief in the universality of human rights as enshrined in international law.

Addameer's Goals:

- Put an end to torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment inflicted upon Palestinian prisoners and work on abolishing the death penalty.
- Put an end to arbitrary detentions and arrests and guarantee fair, impartial and public trials.
- Support political prisoners and their families by providing them with legal aid and social and moral assistance and undertaking advocacy on their behalf.
- Push for legislation that guarantee human rights and basic freedoms and ensure their implementation on the ground.
- Raise awareness of human rights and rule of law issues in the local community.
- Ensure respect for democratic values in the local community, based on political diversity and freedom of opinion and expression.
- Lobby for international support and solidarity for Palestinians' legitimate rights.

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