

Detention Centers and Transitional Prisons



When the occupying state took control of the Palestinian territory in 1948, it started establishing some detention centers and camps to detain Palestinians and other Arab nationalities. The idea of detention centers evolved year after year, and detention centers were divided into three types, including central prisons that are under the management of Israel Prison Service (IPS), army camps that are under the management of the Israeli army, and interrogation and detention centers. Some of these detention centers were built during the British Mandate, others were established in successive years, following Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

These prisons and detention centers are similar in the design of the cells and the poor living conditions, but they differ in their structures and objectives. Central prisons contain sections where Palestinian prisoners are detained for long periods, some of which may reach life sentences. As for the transitional prisons (also known as "transit sites"), although they are part of the central prisons, they are used as waiting stations where prisoners are detained for short periods while transitioning between prisons and/or between prisons and hospitals/clinics and/or between prisons and military and central courts.

Some of the central prisons contain transit sections, but not all of them. Among them is Ramleh Prison, which was established in 1934 during the British colonization of Palestine, and was converted into an Israeli army center in 1948. In 1958, it was converted into a central prison to incarcerate Palestinians and contains a "transit" section¹. Megiddo Prison, located in the meadow area of Ben Amer area en route to Haifa, became a detention center for Palestinian prisoners in March 1988 with the beginning of the First Intifada. It was affiliated with the Israeli army before its managerial authority was transferred to the Israel Prison Service in 2003². Ber Al Sabe' Prison consists of four prisons, each separated from one another: Ohli Kedar and Eshel for security prisoners, Dekel for criminal prisoners, and Ayala which was shut down and used for solitary confinement in specific cases, such as hunger strikes. Ohli Kedar was used only for isolating security prisoners, as they were all transferred to the rest of the prisons and detention centers in 1984, and the prison remained for criminals only³. It currently contains an isolation section in addition to a transit section.

¹ Institute for Palestine Studies. "Prisoners Without Bayonets: Palestinian Detainees and the First Israeli Detention Centers." pp. 99-101. 2014 <https://www.palestine-studies.org/sites/default/files/mdf-articles/097-105.pdf>

² *Ibid.*

³ Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association. "Ohli Kedar Prison." See: <https://www.addameer.org/ar/prisons/%D8%B3%D8%AC%D9%86-%D8%A3%D9%88%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A-%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1>

As for the detention centers under the management of the Israeli army, some of them are located within settlement complexes; including Gush Etzion Detention Center located in the southern occupied West Bank and built on lands north of Hebron within the Gush Etzion settlement bloc; Beit El Detention Center located southeast of Ramallah; Huwwara Detention Center located in the town of Huwwara near Nablus; Kedumim Detention Center located within Kfar Kedumim settlement next to Kafr Qaddum near Tulkarm and Qalqilya; Salem Detention Center located at Al-Jalameh junction on the main road separating Haifa from Nazareth⁴; and Al-Majnouna Detention Center established within an Israeli army camp in southern Hebron.

This paper will discuss Etzion Detention Center and Huwwara Detention Center as case studies, as they are the only two centers which are still operating systematically. This does not negate the existence of detention centers such as Ma'ale Adumim and sometimes police stations used for the same purpose.

Once the arrests are carried out by the Israeli occupation forces, which often take place at night in various Palestinian territories, the transfer of detainees begins. This is closely linked to the geographical distribution of the detainees' places of residence. Most of the detainees from Hebron and Bethlehem governorates are transferred to Etzion Detention Center. Detainees from Nablus are transferred to Huwwara Detention Center, and another part is transferred to waiting sections in Megiddo and Ofer Prisons until their legal status is determined, after which they are moved into sections of the same prison or transferred to another central prison⁵. It is worth noting that not all detainees are transferred to detention centers or transit sections, as some of them are transferred to interrogation centers, and others are transferred to prison immediately after arrest.

This paper aims to review and document the tragic reality inside Israeli detention centers and "transitional" prisons where Palestinians are held, shedding light on the degrading and inhumane treatment that detainees are subjected to during their detention; the deprivation of their basic living rights; and the absence of legal guarantees. The paper also aims to shape public awareness about the need to monitor and document violations and hold those responsible accountable to safeguard the rights of detainees. Furthermore, an emphasis will be put on the Israeli occupation's continued violation of human rights laws and international humanitarian law, which reflects a blatant violation of moral and humanitarian values. All procedures that prisoners go through and the conditions they live in these centers and transit sections will be covered, highlighting the periods between 2019 and mid-2024, and explaining the repressive policies that the Israeli occupation has escalated its use of with prisoners after October 7.

This paper focuses mainly on prison visits and interviews conducted by Addameer staff, due to the lack of legal information available on detention centers that the Israeli side withholds and does not publish. Additionally, only specific lawyers are allowed to visit these centers, which is part of the occupation's attempts to isolate the detainees in these centers from the outside world and to cover up the crimes committed against them.

Moving Cells

The arrest of Palestinians is closely linked to the *bosta* [prisoner vehicle transfer], which is a tool for torturing prisoners. *Bosta* is the means of transportation designated by Israel Prison Service to transport prisoners and detainees from detention centers and/or prisons to clinics/hospitals/other prisons/courts and vice versa. Prisoners are also transported during their release from prisons to the checkpoints that separate the cities and villages of the West Bank from the occupied territory. The release usually takes place at the checkpoint closest to the prison/detention center where the prisoner is being held.

The Israel Border Police took over the task of supervising the *bosta*, but after 2004, it was replaced by the "Security and Information Unit" which was established in 1973. Later, specifically in 1993, the Unit's name was changed to the "Nahshon Unit"⁶, which is the executive arm of Israel Prison Service. The Unit's main tasks include escorting prisoners during transfers as a security force, intervening in

⁴ Miftah. "Israeli Prisons and Detention Centers: The Most Unjust and Oppressive in the World." August 27, 2007 <http://miftah.org/arabic/Display.cfm?DocId=7719&CategoryId=3>

⁵ It should be noted that not all detainees are transferred to detention centers or transit sections. Some are transferred to interrogation centers and others are transferred directly to central prisons.

⁶ The word "*Nahshon*" in Hebrew means strength, firmness and sternness. The Nahshon Unit is considered one of the largest and most powerful Israeli military units. Its members receive special training to suppress prisoners and address all emergencies inside Israeli prisons and detention centers.

"emergency" events that occur inside all Israeli prisons, and participating in intensive search operations during raids of prisoners' cells⁷.

The vehicle exterior resembles that of a bus, but, in reality, it is divided into cells and metal seats from the inside and has an armored and tightly closed exterior. The vehicle is extremely hot in the summer and extremely cold in the winter, due to the steel metal it is made of, which increases the suffering of the prisoners who travel in it. Nahshon members, equipped with weaponry and police dogs, have a separate section in the front of the vehicle, while the prisoners are detained in the middle inside closed cells.



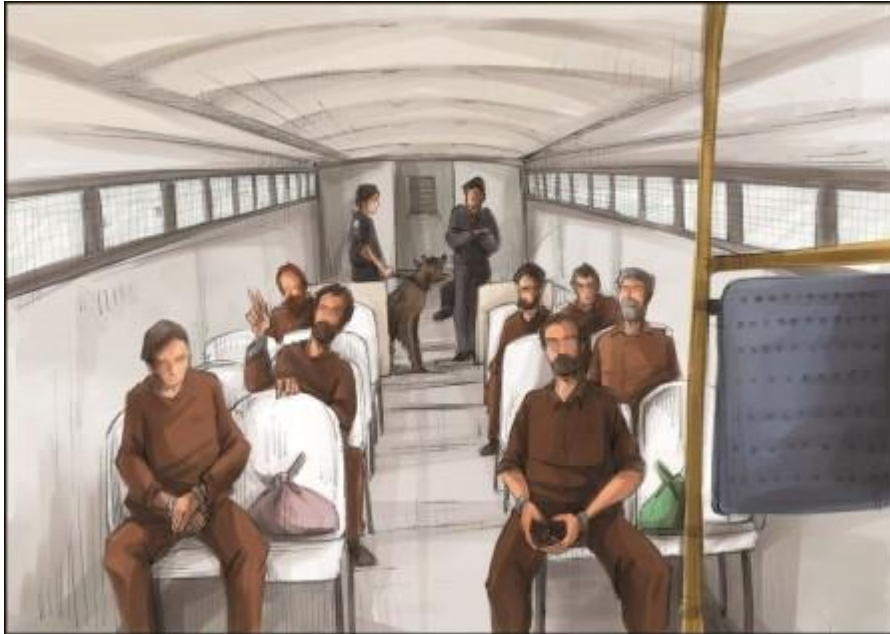
During the transfer, prisoners are shackled with metal cuffs that interlock between the hands and feet, and seated on metal seats for long hours that may reach 10 continuous hours or more, although these trips may not take more than two hours in normal conditions. This is due to the complexity of the procedures carried out by the Israeli occupation forces, including transferring prisoners to several prisons during the transfer and forcing them to sleep in transit sections within Ohli Kedar or Al-Ramleh Prisons, which lack fundamental human needs and are an integral part of the systematic abuse practiced by the occupation authorities on Palestinian detainees.

During the transfer, prisoners are deprived of their basic needs such as food, water and bathrooms, although IPS Instructions No. 3.10.00 stipulate that prisoners are entitled to three meals a day. There are no Israeli or international legal instructions exempting the prison administration from providing food to prisoners regularly just because they are being transferred.

International regulations for the treatment of prisoners stipulate that prisoners must be provided with adequate food at appropriate times, considering it a fundamental duty of prison administrations. However, it is noted that prisoners are subjected to a policy of deliberate starvation and thirst during

⁷ Al-Watan. "The Bosta: A Mobile Israeli Holocaust for Palestinian Prisoners." March 21, 2020. <https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/4659379>

transfer. Such a policy has been implemented systematically by the IPS, and Palestinian prisoners have suffered from this policy for years. This policy is not limited to adult prisoners but is also implemented against child and women prisoners. Prisoners are not only deprived of their basic rights during transfer but their right to worship is also violated. Despite the prisoners' attempts to ask Nahshon Unit to stop the vehicle to perform prayers, their requests are denied and they are forced to pray while on seats inside the *bosta*.



In addition to the suffering that prisoners endure, including the structure of the *bosta* and the long hours of transport, the Nahshon Unit exploits the van's brakes by suddenly pressing them while the van is moving, causing prisoners to hit the walls of the metal cell they are in. This practice results in injuries among prisoners and difficulty in getting up due to the shackling and the van continuing to move despite the prisoners falling. In addition to that, prisoners are abused and humiliated during transfer, as they are insulted by the Nahshon members or [Israeli] criminal prisoners who are sometimes transported with Palestinian prisoners in the same truck. Moreover, Palestinian prisoners are surrounded by police dogs throughout the transfer, spreading discomfort and terror among the prisoners.

Because of these punitive policies and the exhaustion inflicted on prisoners as a result of the torture of transport by the *bosta* and the humiliation at the hands of the Nahshon members, dozens of prisoners are forced to cancel their visits to the Ramleh Prison clinic or civilian hospitals and give up their right to treatment. Prisoners also refuse to go to court and prefer to have trial sessions held via video conferencing to avoid being transported in the *bosta*, which deprives them of their right to appear in court before a judge and defend themselves.

Due to the physical and psychological hardship and difficulty that the *bosta* brings to detainees, namely child and women prisoners, human rights organizations concerned with prisoners have submitted a number of petitions to the Israeli courts, demanding improvement in the conditions of transporting prisoners by the *bosta*. Among them is a petition submitted by a group of human rights organizations in April 2017, on behalf of four Palestinian prisoners from different prisons. The petition was later joined by Adalah, the Public Committee Against Torture, and Physicians for Human Rights, to change and improve the harsh and inhumane conditions of transport by the *bosta*.

The petition stated that the human rights organizations submitted a similar petition in 2008 detailing serious flaws in the conditions of prisoner transport. The IPS stated at the time that some changes had been made and that it intended to make further changes in the future. However, the prisoners' testimonies continued to confirm that these changes had not been implemented at all and that prisoners were still being transported under dangerous conditions that violated their constitutional rights. On 26 February 2018, the court held a hearing to examine the petition and decided to give Israel Prison Service

and the Ministry of Internal Security three months to submit a report detailing the changes that had been made and the changes needed to improve the conditions of prisoner transport⁸.

Palestinian Prisoners' Affairs Authority filed a petition to the Israeli Supreme Court on 8 January 2019, concerning the poor conditions in which women prisoners were transported in the *bosta* vehicles and the abuse and insults they were subjected to by the Nahshon members and Israeli prisoners alike.

In the petition, the women prisoners demanded to be separated from Israeli prisoners during transfer and to improve the transportation conditions. Although the court began to examine the petition, no change was made to transportation conditions of women prisoners. Despite all these petitions, testimonies obtained from prisoners by human rights organizations prove that transportation conditions are still the same, and even getting worse day after day, as the rights of male and female prisoners are violated during the transfers in various ways, and their basic needs are not met to this day. This confirms that the IPS has no real intention to change the reality of transportation conditions. This also shows the formality of the Israeli courts' rulings, which are nothing but executive tools in the hands of the occupation army and the IPS administration, and that their role is formal and serves only the Israeli side, which continues its policy of oppression and abuse of the Palestinian prisoners.

Etzion Detention Center

Etzion Detention Center is run and managed by the Israeli army and hosts Palestinian detainees from Bethlehem and Hebron areas due to their geographical proximity to the detention center, but this does not preclude the possibility of transferring Palestinian prisoners to this detention center from different areas of the West Bank.

Etzion Detention Center consists of 12 adjacent cells, six of which are on the right side of the detention center and six are on the left side of the detention center, with a courtyard in the middle covered with a metal net that does not protect from the cold of winter or the heat of summer. All the detention cells are moldy, filled with humidity, of poor physical conditions, and lack all the basic human essentials for detainees.

The cells in Etzion Detention Center are designed to accommodate a maximum of 5-6 prisoners per room, with the room size not exceeding 3×6 square meters. Despite the small size of these cells, the facility has historically witnessed severe overcrowding, with many detainees forced to sleep on the floor due to the Israeli military officer in charge of the facility admitting more prisoners than its capacity allows. In many cases, over 10 detainees were crammed into a single cell, significantly reducing living space to less than one square meter per prisoner, while they remained detained in unsanitary conditions.

The United Nations Committee against Torture (CAT) found that overcrowding and unhealthy conditions in prisons violate the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights due to its serious consequences on the health and safety of prisoners. The United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT) considered that subjecting detainees to severe overcrowding amounts to ill-treatment and even torture when prolonged and combined with unacceptable physical conditions. Due to the conditions of the cells and severe overcrowding in various Israeli detention centers, a group of human rights organizations filed a petition with the Israeli Supreme Court regarding the living space per prisoner. The court responded in 2019 and ordered the expansion of the living space allocated to each prisoner to 4.5 meters. Despite the court's ruling, Etzion Detention Center has not complied with these standards set by the court and violates them periodically, mostly in "emergencies" such as popular uprisings, during which the number of detainees increases⁹.

However, these circumstances did not prevent the occupying state from turning the detention center into a quarantine center after the spread of COVID-19, as detainees were held there for at least 14 days under the pretext that it was a quarantine period, although the prison administration did not take any preventive measures against the pandemic, the most important of which was reducing the number of detainees, sterilization, social distancing, and the use of masks and gloves to limit the transmission of infection, which led to doubling the suffering of the detainees due to the poor conditions, which worsened after the center was used as a quarantine center.

⁸ Adalah. "Human rights organizations join the petition to improve the brutal conditions on Palestinian prisoners' transport vehicles." March 6, 2018. <https://www.adalah.org/ar/content/view/9420>

⁹ For more on the Israeli Supreme Court's ruling regarding the living space allocated to each prisoner, see "2019 Violations of Prisoners' Rights in Israeli Prisons," pp. 30-31. Addameer. <https://tinyurl.com/4exbp72v>

Palestinian detainees at Etzion Center are subjected to many violations because the detention center is under the management of the Israeli army, not Israel Prison Service. The management of the detention center and all matters related to the detainees and the living conditions are managed by an Israeli army officer. Thus, there is no law to be adhered to regarding the treatment of detainees or their guarantees and rights. The occupying state is content with posting its instructions and guidelines on the walls of the detention center, which are often posted in Hebrew, depriving detainees of being informed of their rights in a language they understand due to the lack of Arabic translation of such instructions. These instructions are constantly amended by the army officers managing the detention center, but such amendments are not disclosed even to the lawyers themselves. In some cases, lawyers are only informed verbally, leaving detainees in a state of legal uncertainty and vulnerability.

When detainees arrive at Etzion Detention Center, they are stripped of all their rights and guarantees and held in cells that lack the basic essentials of human life. The cells do not contain any electrical appliances, books, magazines, or even the Quran, which turns detention into a period of collective isolation. The cells have three to four metal bunk beds, on top of which are thin mattresses; about three centimeters thick, which may be leather called "*Al-Jumi*" or sponge of the same thickness. The beds have no blankets or pillows.

Released prisoner R. F.¹⁰ spoke to Addameer about the conditions in which he was held after his arrest in 2021. "The cell I was held in at Etzion had a metal bunk bed with no mattress on it. There was a pit toilet and a sink, but there was no lighting in the cell, as the only source of lighting came from a spotlight outside the cell."¹¹ When a prisoner asks for blankets, the prisoner – if the prison guards respond, is given three blankets in the winter because the blankets provided by the prison administration are light and do not keep a prisoner warm. In the same context, prisoner Imad Shibly told his defense lawyer in 2021 that "In Etzion, the cold was bitter, as the room window is an open net that cannot be closed, forcing the prisoners to use towels as makeshift screens to protect themselves from the cold."¹²

Although blankets are provided to prisoners upon request, they are dirty and rough, not washed by the prison administration, and used by all prisoners held in Etzion. In addition, there is no washing machine in the detention center so that prisoners can wash blankets. As a result, some prisoners have suffered from skin diseases and allergies caused by these blankets. Moreover, there are no pillows whatsoever in this detention center, so prisoners sleep without any pillows throughout their detention period, even if their detention continues for more than 14 days. In an attempt to find an alternative, prisoners roll up one of the blankets and place it under their heads while sleeping.

Cell cleanliness is not the only problem in Etzion Detention Center. Prisoners' hygiene is also at stake in this detention center. Prisoners are not provided with clothes and remain in the same outdoor and underwear clothes throughout their detention. "They [prison administration] used to delay the underclothing for a long time before giving them to us. We only got them once, but there was no way to wash them," explained prisoner Basil Abu Alia to his defense lawyer during a visit in 2023¹³. In an attempt by prisoners to alleviate the problem of clothing shortage, prisoners transferred to other prisons sometimes leave some of their clothes so that those detained in Etzion can use them. If there are no additional clothes left by the transferred prisoners, prisoners in Etzion try to wash their clothes by hand and wait for them to dry before wearing them, as they have no access to a washing machine as in central prisons.

The only break for detainees during their detention in "Etzion" is during the fura (yard time). At 7:00 AM, they go out for 15 minutes, during which breakfast is served, consisting of labneh [strained yogurt], three slices of white bread per detainee, and a tomato. Breakfast is provided on a single tray for all detainees, and due to the small portions, the food is sometimes insufficient for all prisoners. Detainees can drink tea, but only in limited reinforced plastic cups, which they take turns using. Due to the short duration of the break, some detainees may not be able to drink tea.

At around one in the afternoon, detainees go out again for half an hour, during which lunch is served, consisting of potatoes or chicken and rice, and sometimes cucumbers or tomatoes. At around six at night, they go out for the third time for a 15-minute break, during which dinner is served, which is often

¹⁰ All names are documented by Addameer but initials are used instead of the real names to maintain the privacy of some prisoners.

¹¹ Interview conducted by Addameer's staffer with prisoner R. F. on 10 September 2023.

¹² Interview conducted by Addameer's defense lawyer with prisoner Imad Shibly in Ofer Prison on 14 November 2021.

¹³ Interview conducted by Addameer's defense lawyer with prisoner Basil Abu Alia in Ofer Prison on 14 February 2023.

the same as breakfast. The food provided by the prison administration is the only food available to the prisoners as they do not have access to the canteen from which they can buy.

The detainees have often taken protest steps due to the food provided to them. The small quantities provided, poor quality, or expiration have prompted the detainees to go on hunger strike or return meals several times. However, the prison administration claims that the food provided to the detainees is the same as that provided to the army¹⁴. The detainees are given five cigarettes a day, and they are only allowed to smoke during the break when a prison guard hands over a lighter to the detainees, as they are prohibited from buying lighters for reasons that the prison administration claims are "security", which takes time from the break.

Although the "fura" is the only break for detainees during their detention, they cannot spend this time comfortably or consider it a real break. Due to the lack of showers inside the cells, detainees are forced to shower during the break period. There are seven showers in the detention center, and due to overcrowding, detainees divide themselves into groups to ensure everyone has a chance to shower—if they are able to at all, as the number of showers is insufficient compared to the number of detainees and the limited break time. A small piece of soap is provided for each detainee to wash their bodies and hair. "We have half an hour to shower. This is only during the yard time. If a prisoner is late to shower, they [prison administration] threaten to cut off the water. The showers are inside a caravan, with partitions between them but no curtains," said prisoner Salem Dardasawi¹⁵.

Due to the poor overall conditions of the detention center, the defense attorney filed a complaint with the military prosecution, the legal advisor to the government, and the military commander on May 25, 2023, on behalf of three prisoners who were held for 10-14 days at the "Etzion" detention center. The complaint was submitted in light of the harsh conditions in which they were detained. The complaint highlighted several issues, including the absence of window coverings, which led to extreme cold in the rooms during winter, and the insufficient supply of blankets. Each detainee was given only two blankets, and since they were not provided with pillows, they had to use one of the blankets as a pillow, leaving them with only one blanket that was insufficient to cover their bodies. Additionally, the complaint addressed the issue of water leakage, which caused the detention cells to flood. Despite this, the soldiers refused to provide the detainees with mops or plastic ties that could help them manage the water accumulating in their cells.

The complaint also referred to the issue of personal hygiene, as the failure to provide detainees with shampoo or soap constitutes an obstacle to bathing, mostly as only one towel is given to nearly 25-35 detainees who are forced to use it one after the other. Moreover, one roll of toilet paper was given to 5-7 rooms, each of which contained approximately six detainees, in addition to depriving them of underwear, as they were provided with clothes only once throughout their detention. Also, there are only four hard plastic cups for tea, and these cups are used by all detainees, as well as cigarettes, as a soldier lights one cigarette for only one detainee and in turn the detainee lights up the rest of the cigarettes for the other detainees. Because these actions constitute violations and crimes of violence, the complaint demanded an investigation into the facts included therein.

The response came on 1 August 2023, rejecting the complaint and rejecting to change the conditions of the detention center or the cells, while denying the violation of the rights of the detainees, such as not providing food in the appropriate quantity and quality and not giving them underwear and other violations that were detailed in the complaint. The detainees continue to suffer from poor living conditions in the detention center to this day, in addition to being subjected to inhumane and degrading treatment by the prison guards, as confirmed by the testimonies collected by human rights organizations in the previous years.

The punishments practiced against prisoners in this detention center are limited to isolating prisoners in the isolation cell for a limited period that can reach up to three days – or more – since prisoners are held in this detention center for a temporary period, or depriving them of cigarettes or yard time for a certain period, thus affecting the most basic human rights of prisoners because they are detained in extremely harsh conditions. However, the detention center administration deliberately abuses prisoners

¹⁴ Interview conducted by Addameer's defense lawyer with prisoner Salem Dardasawi in Ofer Prison on 24 March 2021.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

through the most basic rights granted to them in this detention center, thus making the detention period unbearable even though it is a short period.

All the basic rights of prisoners held at Etzion Detention Center are taken away, the most important of which is the right to treatment, to which the prisoners have no access whatsoever. There is no doctor or nurse in this detention center; this does not mean that sick or injured prisoners are not detained in this detention center. On the contrary, the Israeli army receives sick and injured prisoners alike and detains them in inhumane conditions despite their need for precise medical care due to their health conditions.

Since October 7, conditions in Etzion Detention Center have been getting worse day by day, as lawyers have been prevented from visiting the prisoners there for a very long time, which has led the Israeli army administration to isolate the prisoners and escalate its oppressive and abusive policies against them. Commission of Detainees' Affairs Authority issued a statement on 26 May 2024 following a visit by the Authority's lawyer to the prisoners held in Etzion Center. The statement confirmed that the conditions of the detention center have worsened in terms of food and water, as the food was delivered cold with an unpleasant odor and insufficient compared to the number of prisoners, in addition to depriving the prisoners of mineral water, forcing them to drink contaminated tap water, which has led to the spread of digestive system diseases among the prisoners and their constant feeling of stomach pain. As for the general conditions at the detention center, prisoners still suffer from overcrowding and constant assaults. After the prisoners protested the food provided to them, which was full of dirt, the soldiers beat them severely¹⁶.

According to testimonies collected from the detainees, soldiers have begun to deliberately break into the rooms on Saturdays and Wednesdays, and the assault is accompanied by yelling and insults, in addition to stripping the detainees on the pretext of searching them. These scenes are not limited to detention centers, but various Israeli prisons have witnessed similar, very harsh conditions since October 7¹⁷.

Prisoners punished into oblivion



Prisoner A. Sh. was arrested from his home in Deir Jarir village, near Ramallah, on 18 May 2024 around 4:00 a.m., after Israeli forces stormed his home. After taking him out of the house, soldiers tied his hands behind his back with plastic cuffs and blindfolded him. During the transfer, he was assaulted and beaten several times. On one occasion, the soldiers placed a bag of pepper on his head over the

¹⁶ Commission of Detainees' Affairs. "Torture parties on Saturdays and Wednesdays against detainees held in Etzion Detention Center." 26 May 2024. <https://rb.gy/0vi5gk>

¹⁷ Addameer. "Israeli Occupation Policies Against Palestinian Prisoners Report 2023." 18 April 2024. <https://www.addameer.org/ar/media/5326>

blindfold. He was transferred to Etzion Detention Center, and upon arrival, his cuffs and blindfold were removed, and a soldier instructed him to take off his clothes. When he refused, the soldier hit him on the chest with a rifle and ordered him to take off his underwear as well.

Then, the soldier tied A. Sh., blindfolded him, tied his handcuffs with a small rope, and started dragging him while he was naked. A. Sh. was dragged about 500 meters, after which he was searched in a room, his underwear was returned, and he was led to a detention wing, specifically room 11. Minutes later, A. Sh. was taken to a solitary confinement cell, which was 1.5x2 meters, and had nothing inside; not even a window or light. "I slept that night on the concrete floor and stayed in such conditions for three nights. I did not know day from night, and I was not given any food at all," recalled A. Sh.¹⁸

The Israeli occupation forces did not stop at arresting A. Sh. and abusing him during arrest and transfer to the detention centers. They also punished him with solitary confinement and deprivation of food throughout his time in solitary confinement. This policy demonstrates the Israeli occupation's latent intent to take revenge on Palestinian detainees even before they reach Israeli prisons, which indicates the clear intention to implement the policy of collective punishment on all Palestinian prisoners. Such policies with Palestinian prisoners show the intention to humiliate and terrorize them.

Huwwara Detention Center

Huwwara Detention Center is located in Huwwara village near Nablus. It consists of two buildings facing each other, each of which has two floors and each floor contains six cells, in addition to an isolation cell separated from the collective detention cells. A courtyard is located in the middle between the two rows of cells. On the northern side of the detention center, there is the control and monitoring room, which is connected to the detention center's surveillance cameras located in all corners, except inside the cells.

The Huwwara cells are smaller than those of Etzion cells, as the area of the cells is about 2.5x3 meters, with the toilet included. On the wall opposite the cell door, there is a small window but detainees cannot reach or look outside through. Part of the cells is covered from the inside with pieces similar to reinforced plastic, but some cells do not contain this piece or it is broken, which causes a real problem for the detainees in the summer, as the humidity and the entry of insects and mosquitoes create an unclean environment inside the cell, adding psychological pressure on the detainees and further complicating their detention period. The situation is no different during the winter, as the temperature of the cells becomes very low due to the lack of protection from the bitter cold. The window is covered from the outside with a metal panel for protection.

Inside the cells, there are two to three bunk beds on top of each other (equivalent to four or six beds), depending on the size of the cell, and each bed has a very thin and worn sponge mattress. In Huwwara, as in other Israeli detention centers, the number of beds is not proportional to the number of prisoners in the rooms. The prison administration does not comply with the living space allocated to each prisoner, which is estimated at 4.5 meters, and the number of detainees held there exceeds the capacity of the detention center, forcing the detainees to sleep on the floor. As for the toilet inside the cells, it is more like a small sink raised to reach the detainee's waist, and is used while standing. It has no lid, which leads to the emission of bad odors throughout the cell. What makes matters worse is the administration's failure to provide water and soap to wash after use, and there is no door separating the toilet from the rest of the cell. All of these conditions, in addition to the broken windows mentioned earlier, lead to the gathering of mosquitoes and insects on the toilet and turn the entire cell into a health hazard.

The detention cells have no electrical or entertainment devices. There is no radio or television, and no books, newspapers, or even paper and pens are provided so that the detainees can make use of their time. The detainees are surrounded from all sides and deprived of any distraction and space to practice any kind of stress release.

Detainees have access to yard time twice a day, for half an hour each time, during which meals are provided by the prison administration. Breakfast is served at around six in the morning and consists of a can of *labneh* [strained yogurt] and slices of bread. As for dinner, it is sometimes like breakfast and other times sausages and a glass of yogurt are provided. The detainees suffer from the poor quality and insufficient quantity of food provided to them. It is not limited to that only, as the detainees have noticed that in many cases the food is expired or about to expire, which makes them unable to eat it.

¹⁸ Interview conducted by Addameer's staffer with released prisoner A. Sh. on 12 June 2024.

These practices violate the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, which stipulate in Article 20 that "Every prisoner shall be provided by the prison administration at the usual hours with food of nutritional value adequate for health and strength, of wholesome quality and well prepared and served". This is the opposite of what the occupying state does, as providing expired and undercooked food may lead to food poisoning, which in turn may cause symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, fever, etc. In cases of severe poisoning that are not examined and treated properly, it may lead to death.

After finishing the meal, detainees are only allowed to smoke during the yard time and in the outside yard as they are prohibited from purchasing lighters. A prison guard hands over a lighter and provides detainees with five cigarettes per day from the prison administration. However, smokers are separated from non-smokers upon entering the detention center. If a detainee does not declare that he is a smoker upon arrival at the detention center, he is not given cigarettes later on.

Detainees must take advantage of the break time, although it is very short. They cannot shower except during the yard time because the showers are located outside the detention cells and not inside as is the case in some central prisons. There are only two showers for all detainees, and because the daily shower hour is not enough for all of them to shower, they divide themselves into groups; each group takes a day to shower.

For bathing, the prison administration provides a piece of soap to wash the body and hair, but no toothpaste or brushes are provided. Detainees are not provided with clean towels or washcloths, so they use the same ones throughout their detention, but they are not dried or washed. After bathing, detainees are forced to put on the same clothes again because the prison administration does not provide them with new clothes. Some of the detainees are arrested while wearing their pajamas in the winter or torn clothes due to assault during arrest. However, the prison administration does not consider these practices, and detainees remain in the same clothes they arrived in, regardless of their condition, in addition to not providing socks or shoes. Furthermore, the prison administration does not allow families to bring in clothes or personal hygiene items for their loved ones through a lawyer while they are in Huwwara Detention Center.

Despite the lack of hygiene imposed on the detainees, being held in an unclean environment, and wearing filthy clothes, the prison administration provides hot water for bathing during the winter via a water heater. However, the water heater does not function most of the time, and the army administration deliberately delays repairing it, forcing the detainees to shower with cold water to wash away the dirt while they are held in an unclean and unhealthy environment and wearing dirty clothes.

Since October 7, detention conditions at Huwwara Detention Center have worsened, as the all-out genocide on the Gaza Strip was reflected in the Israeli central prisons and detention centers. Huwwara Detention Center suffered from severe overcrowding, a policy of starving and thirsting, deprivation of yard time, and detention in very poor cell conditions. However, human rights organizations were unable to obtain detailed information because the prison administration barred lawyers from visiting the detainees in this detention center since the beginning of the Israeli aggression.

Ramleh Transit Section

Transit Sections are different from detention centers, as they are sections within Israeli central prisons and are not an independent facility. Ramleh Transit Section is one of the key stations that prisoners are aware of during transfer operations. During transfer from prisons to any location outside, procedures usually begin in the early morning hours; the exact time for the start of these procedures varies depending on the location of the prison from which the prisoner is being transferred and the destination to which the prisoner is being transferred.

In cases where prisoners are detained in prisons located in the south of occupied Palestine, such as Rimon, Nafha or the Naqab, the prisoner is taken out of the section in which he is being held after being handcuffed, and is transferred to a waiting room inside the prison itself. It is a relatively small room in terms of area and contains only a dirty toilet that emits foul odors. While security prisoners are not allowed to clean this room, civilian prisoners are responsible for its cleanliness. Once they are brought into the waiting room, their handcuffs are removed, and they wait inside for up to four hours until the arrival of the Nahshon Unit. After that, a small window in the door of the room, known as *ashnav*¹⁹, is

¹⁹ Ashnav: A small opening in the doors of prison rooms, used to cuff prisoners or to bring in meals.

opened, and the prisoners extend their hands through it to be cuffed again. After that, the door of the waiting room is opened, their feet are shackled, and they are led to the *bosta*, where the actual transfer phase begins.

Before the prisoners reach their destination, they are placed in Ramleh transit section, which is a large metal barrack, divided from the inside into cages made of steel bars with a tangible thermal effect. A set of these cages is allocated in advance for security prisoners according to the number of prisoners brought to the transit section, as the number of transportation vans leaving from the various prisons is proportional to the overcrowding in the cages and the transit section alike.

These cages contain only metal seats fixed lengthwise to one of the cage bars and have no backrest, and can accommodate five to seven prisoners. The cage also contains a pit toilet, covered with a half-door about 50 centimeter long, and emits foul odors due to the lack of cleaning materials to clean it up after its use by the prisoners held in the cage. Child prisoners are separated from the adult prisoners, but they are held in the same conditions. This violates Article 17 of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, which stipulates that "All parts of a prison regularly used by prisoners shall be properly maintained and kept scrupulously clean at all times".

After the waiting in the cages, which may last for long hours and is the first station of the transit section, a process known as "unloading" begins, as prisoners are divided into two groups. The first group waits only in the cages before completing the journey by the *bosta* to return to the prisons or the specified destination, while the second group is transferred to the cells inside the transit section to spend the night. The transit section consists of two floors and 10 cells. Each cell is approximately 6x4 meter, including a pit toilet and a bathing space covered by a half-door approximately 50 centimeter long. There is a window for the cell with an area of 1x1.5 meter, but it is covered with a metal net about 60 centimeter away, which makes ventilation non-existent in the room, especially in the summer, since the Ramleh area is a coastal area with very high humidity in the summer²⁰.

Each cell contains three or four bunk beds (a total of six to eight beds), depending on the size of the cell. In the middle of the cell there is a large metal dining table, but it takes up a large space in the cell, so the detainees do not have enough space to move around.

The daily life of the detainees while they are in the transit section is limited to the cells only. Israel Prison Service strips the detainees of any rights they have access to in the regular prison sections, although the transit sections are parts of the prisons. However, the treatment by the prison guards in the transit sections is very bad and violates all the constitutional rights of the prisoners; since they consider that the presence of the detainees in these sections is for short periods and for the purpose of transfer.

The most basic rights that are being denied to detainees in Ramleh transit section are the right to food, the right to yard time, and the right to contact and communicate with family members through phone calls or family visits, which are limited to one visit per month. Although detainees are held inside the cells 24 hours a day, they are not provided with any life essentials. There is no television, radio, plate to heat food, heater or fans to create a more flexible environment for living in light of the inhumane conditions that detainees live in at the transit section.

In order for detainees to survive at the transit section, they take food with them before leaving the prisons, but the IPS imposes restrictions on the type of food that prisoners are allowed to take out, citing "security" reasons. They are forbidden from taking out canned food such as tuna cans, which forces the prisoners to empty them into plastic containers, or bread, oil and thyme to meet their food needs, because the food at the transit sections is of poor quality, insufficient and inedible. The biggest problem is the prisoners arriving at the transit section in the late hours of the night due to the complexity of the transportation procedures and passing through several prisons during the transfer to unload or load the prisoners, which prolongs the transfer time.

In this case, if the prisoners arrive at the transit section after the specified time for distributing food, they are denied access to food that day. This falls within the arbitrary procedures followed by the IPS in the transit sections. This is also a form of food deprivation which is a direct threaten to a prisoner's life since a diet that repeatedly lacks adequate nutrition leads to malnutrition and eventually starvation. The symptoms vary depending on the nutrient deficit and conditions of prisoners. Malnutrition of prisoners can affect all body organs. This includes the heart and blood vessels, liver problems, difficulty

²⁰ Interview conducted by Addameer's with released prisoner Saleh Zahran on 7 September 2023.

swallowing, etc., which, in practice, can cause fatigue and weakness and affect memory and concentration²¹.

Ofer Waiting Station



Section 14 is the designated transit section in Ofer Prison. However, the systematic arrests carried out by the Israeli occupation forces during popular uprisings, protests, or even global pandemics force the occupying state to convert other sections in the prison into transit sections, or open new sections to temporarily detain Palestinians due to the severe overcrowding as a result of the arrests.

Prisoners suffer from difficult living conditions in the transit section, where they are detained for a few days until they are transferred to the prison sections or another prison. Dirt and insects spread in the cells of the transit section, and the rooms contain the minimum living conditions suitable for human life. "The general conditions are extremely poor as it is a temporary residence section and hosts civilian prisoners. The cleanliness inside the rooms is almost non-existent and there are bed bugs, which cause insomnia throughout the night," said prisoner Salim Abed about Section 14 in Ofer Prison²².

With the spread of the Corona pandemic, Ofer transit section was converted into a quarantine section, and Section 17 was turned into a transit section in addition to Section 14, where prisoners were held for 14 days, which is the quarantine period stipulated by the World Health Organization to ensure that the infection does not spread. However, the IPS did not take into account any of the preventive measures such as distancing and wearing masks and gloves. More than six prisoners were detained in the same room, which increases the possibility of their infection, particularly since they were deprived of their freedom and, in normal circumstances, lived near each other. This led to an increased risk of transmission of the infection from one person to another because they were detained in a small space without ventilation and for long periods inside the room.

The occupying state and the IPS are the parties responsible for limiting the spread of the disease inside prisons and following preventive methods that protect prisoners, namely the sick. However, the occupying state exploited the pandemic by using it as a weapon against the prisoners. The World Health Organization urges states to respect the human rights of people deprived of their liberty, and that restrictions that may be imposed must be necessary, evidence-informed, proportionate, and non-arbitrary. It is advised to be guided by WHO guidance and recommendations and never amount to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment²³.

The conditions were extremely harsh in the transit section during the quarantine period. The prison administration sometimes claimed that there were prisoners infected [with COVID-19] and closed the section for a day or two. The prison administration sterilized the cells by spraying materials inside every two days and provided the prisoners with chlorine for sterilization. However, the constant transfer of prisoners to and from the section did not reduce the transmission of infection. In this context, prisoner Mohammad Farayja said, "The conditions here are extremely harsh. This section has been turned into a quarantine section and is closed when the administration enters for inspection. There is constant transfer of prisoners to and from the transit section."²⁴

²¹ DIGNITY. "Fact Sheet Collection Health: Deprivation of Food". August 2022. <https://dignity.dk/en/fact-sheets-health/>

²² A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to prisoner Salim Abed in Ofer Prison on 26 August 2020.

²³ World Health Organization. "Joint statement by UNODC, WHO, UNAIDS and OHCHR on COVID-19 in prisons and other closed settings." 13 May 2023. <https://www.who.int/news/item/20-09-1441-unodc-who-unaid-and-ohchr-joint-statement-on-covid-19-in-prisons-and-other-closed-settings>

²⁴ A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to prisoner Mohammad Farayja in Ofer Prison on 28 July 2021.

Although the transit sections are sections of prisons where prisoners wait for short periods until transfers are completed, the punitive measures made in prisons are also made at the transit sections. On 7 October 2023, the Israeli occupation army launched a military aggression on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. As a result of this aggression, Israel Prison Service initiated punitive measures against prisoners, including Ofer Prison's transit section. Since the beginning of the events, an Israeli force broke into the transit section and removed electrical appliances and prisoners' belongings, including pots, water heaters, *kumkum*²⁵, and coffee pots. They cut off water and electricity to the section every day for one to two hours, although it is considered one of the basic rights of prisoners. The prisoners were prevented from going out to the yard during the first two days, after which they were allowed to go out for half an hour, each room alone. During yard time, they could shower because the showers are located outside the rooms. "It is difficult to shower in a short time. The yard time is sometimes at six in the morning, and it is difficult to shower because of the cold," explained prisoner Anas Satouf during an interview with the lawyer²⁶.

Ofer's Section 24 was also converted into a transit section. Prisoners in this section have been facing harsh living conditions and continuous abuse since October 7. From the first days of the aggression, the rooms were turned into cells by confiscating all belongings, including mattresses and blankets, leaving each prisoner with one mattress and a thin blanket. The pillows were also confiscated. The mattresses are not provided by the prison administration, so the prisoners buy them at their own expense from the prison canteen.

The prison administration did not stop at restricting the prisoners and detaining them in empty cells lacked the minimum essentials of human life. It also removed the window covers to keep the cells cold, even though it was winter. The IPS refuses to provide the prisoners with additional blankets or socks to protect them to some extent from the bitter cold. All of these procedures are practiced even though around two to four prisoners sleeping on the floor due to the severe overcrowding in the rooms.

Electricity is cut off from the rooms all day long and is provided only from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. As for water, the prisoners are deprived of clean mineral water and are forced to drink contaminated tap water. As for food, it is provided twice a day by the prison administration, but it is insufficient and of poor quality.

During a visit by his defense lawyer, prisoner Adnan Habiye said, "Breakfast consists of a small can of *labneh* for each prisoner, four tomatoes for everyone in the room, regardless of their number, and a loaf of bread. As for lunch, it is a piece of meat or chicken, but it is inedible because it is not cooked well enough."²⁷

Ohli Kedar Transit Section

Ohli Kedar Prison was built on the lands of Ber Al Sabe', and the transit section was located in the old prison building. In 2004, a new three-story building was built in the prison, to which some of the civilian prisoners were transferred. The prison consists of three sections; sections 7, 8, and 9. Section 8 is the one that was designated as a transit section for security and civilian prisoners alike. It is located on the second floor of the prison; and thus prisoners are forced to climb the stairs with their hands and feet cuffed while carrying their bags containing their personal belongings and food needed to meet their basic needs, in addition to some blankets.

When the prisoners leave the prisons in the south, specifically Rimon, Nafha and Naqab prisons, the Ohli Kedar's transit section becomes the transit and waiting station. Upon arrival at the two-story Ohli Kedar's transit section, prisoners are held for a number of hours in the waiting rooms on the first floor and then they are transferred to their destination the same day. The first floor consists of 7-8 rooms, ranging in size from 3x4 meters to 4x6 meters. These rooms have no beds because prisoners do not stay in them at night. They only contain a concrete seat and a window on one of the walls of the cell, but no light or air enters because it is covered with a metal panel.

On the second floor, there are the cells for prisoners who are forced to sleep in the transit section. There are 10 cells; the area of each is around 3.5x8 meters. These rooms contain a number of bunk beds, a

²⁵ An electric kettle used by prisoners to boil water.

²⁶ A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to prisoner Anas Satouf in Ofer Prison on 10 October 2023.

²⁷ A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to prisoner Adnan Habiye in Ofer Prison on 8 November 2023.

metal cupboard, and a plastic dining table. Breakfast is served at 7 a.m., which is a can of *labneh* and a few slices of bread. Lunch is served around 12:00-1:00 p.m., consisting of a piece of chicken. Dinner is served between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. and is similar to breakfast²⁸.

Like other transit sections, the conditions at Ohli Kedar transit section are no better than others, although this transit section should have good conditions because a large number of prisoners held there are sick in dire need of health care and clean environment. However, prisoners are detained in unhealthy physical conditions that affect their health, increasing the risk of contracting infectious diseases due to overcrowding, in addition to being exposed to direct medical neglect due to the lack of any medical staff or tools that qualify them to handle existing or emergency medical cases.

This is what happened with prisoner Sami Al-Amour from Deir al-Balah in the Gaza Strip, who was arrested in 2008 and suffered from a policy of medical neglect during his years of detention. Due to a congenital heart problem, which was exacerbated by the policy of medical neglect, Sami was transferred between prisons, clinics and hospitals by *bosta* regularly and repeatedly. In the last transfer, Sami left Nafha Prison to Asqalan Prison for medical tests and stayed inside the *bosta* until he arrived at Ramleh Prison's transit section, then Rimon Prison, and then Naqab Prison. The same *bosta* continued traveling to Ohli Kedar Prison's transit section. In the transit section, Sami met prisoner Jamil Ankoush, where they talked and prisoner Sami told him, "I was transferred in a *bosta* that had the air conditioning turned on all the time. I asked them to turn it off, but they did not respond, and this made me very tired."

While Sami was in the transit section, he suffered from severe fatigue, shortness of breath, and chest pain. The prisoners asked for a nurse, but the nurse refused to come, claiming that a doctor had examined him an hour earlier and given him 'glucose.' At around 6 p.m., a nurse distributed medicine to the prisoners, and prisoner Jamil Ankoush asked him to examine Sami, but the nurse refused again and confirmed that the doctor had seen him earlier.

The nurses refused to help Sami despite Commission Order No. 04.45.00, which stipulates that assistance must be provided to prisoners if they need it, and that jailers cannot assume on their own that the prisoner is pretending to be sick. Jailers informed of any medical condition of the prisoner must immediately call the doctor or transfer the prisoner to the clinic to receive the necessary medical care²⁹. With the rapid deterioration of Sami's condition, the prisoners started knocking on the doors and continued to request the presence of a nurse, but no one responded to their demands. At around 8:30 pm, following the count, the prisoners saw an [Israeli] officer named Thiab Mar'i with a force of soldiers coming to suppress the prisoners because of the knocking on the doors. After the prisoners pressured the officer to take Sami to the clinic, the officer wanted to take him out without a cart, but a jailer said that the prisoner was dying, so they brought a cart and took Sami out of the room. 20 minutes after taking Sami out of the room, the prisoners noticed that they had taken him out through the door of section 8³⁰.

The next morning, during the morning count, the prisoners in Ohli Kedar's transit section learned that Sami had been transferred to the hospital due to his critical health condition. At that time, the prison guards started problems with prisoner Jamil Ankoush, as they insulted him and severely beat him as part of revenge only because he insisted on getting Sami out of the section quickly because his condition was deteriorating. After Sami was transferred to Soroka Hospital, he underwent an unsuccessful surgery, which resulted in his martyrdom on 18 November 2021. This was a direct result of the ill-treatment and medical neglect he was subjected to while being transported in the *bosta* for long hours and being placed in the transit section that did not contain the minimum medical needs for prisoners, and the failure to provide medical treatment and first aid in a timely manner despite the prisoners' repeated requests for a doctor or nurse to intervene medically³¹.

Palestinian ailing prisoners are subjected to harsh conditions, such as long hours of transportation via the *bosta* and detention at transit sections with no minimum medical needs of sick prisoners, nor do they contain doctors or clinics to respond to the prisoners' emergency medical cases. The lack of a

²⁸ Interview conducted by Addameer's staffer with released prisoner Ahmad Obeid on 18 September 2023.

²⁹ Commission Order No. 04.45.00 "A prisoner's appeal to the warden for medical assistance". Effective on 1 May 2001. Last updated: 25 July 2005.

³⁰ A visit conducted by Addameer's lawyer to prisoner Jamil Ankoush in Rimon Prison on 23 November 2021.

³¹ For more information on the martyr prisoner Sami Al-Amour, see Addameer's "Annual Violations Report: Violations Palestinian Prisoners' Rights in Israeli Occupation Prisons in 2021", pp. 42-43.

<https://www.addameer.org/sites/default/files/publications/addameer%20report%202021-1-11-2022.pdf>

healthy and clean environment at such transit sections also plays a pivotal role in the deterioration of the prisoners' health conditions and constitutes an effective tool for assassinating prisoners. Thus, the occupying state violates the rights of prisoners guaranteed in international agreements and covenants, which stipulate the right of detainees to necessary treatment and medical care. Articles (76), (85), (91) and (92) of the Fourth Geneva Convention guaranteed the right of prisoners to periodic medical care and treatment for the diseases they suffer from, and health clinics and specialized doctors to examine prisoners.

However, the occupying state does not comply with these standards at the transit sections, although such sections are governed by Israel Prison Service Law, which undeniably stipulates medical treatment for prisoners, and emphasizes the need to provide medical treatment to prisoners and the inadmissibility of preventing a prisoner from appearing for examination before the medical authorities of the detention facility. Conversely, the IPS's policy with prisoner Sami al-Amour is merely and utterly a violation of international and Israeli laws alike, and shows the negligence followed by the IPS in addressing medical cases among prisoners, which leads to the martyrdom of some of them.

Hasharon Transit Section

Palestinian women prisoners were previously held in Section 3 designated for them in Hasharon Prison. The section was later closed and Hasharon Prison was turned into a transit station for women prisoners before they were transferred to Damon Prison. Currently, Hasharon Prison is designated for civilian prisoners, however, women prisoners are held in a cell in Section 1 designated for civilian prisoners.

Hasharon transit section is the only one to which women prisoners are transferred. Part of the women prisoners are transferred directly after arrest to Hasharon and are held in cells similar to solitary confinement cells inside the section designated for civilian prisoners. Hasharon Prison also contains an isolation cell designated for women prisoners, and if the number of women prisoners is large, two cells are allocated to them in the same section.

The room is approximately 6x8 meters in area and contains four metal bunk beds with very thin sponge or leather mattresses, which cause back and neck pain. Although the room capacity can only accommodate four women prisoners, eight women prisoners may be detained together at the same time, half of whom are forced to sleep on the floor for days or weeks in filthy rooms with toilets that overflow with sewage and fill the cell floors.

During visits to women prisoners in Damon Prison, lawyers documented the practice of detaining women prisoners in cells monitored by surveillance cameras, located inside the cell and not on the outer walls of the prison or the watchtowers, which are intended for security purposes. Through these cameras, the prison guards and other prison workers can monitor all the movements of women prisoners confined between four walls, and despite the restriction of freedom, the cameras prevent the prisoners from moving inside the cells.

Detaining women prisoners in cells monitored by surveillance cameras is a flagrant violation of their privacy, and Israel Prison Service has gone beyond violating privacy by monitoring the movement of the prisoners. Sometimes these cameras are equipped with microphones, enabling the prison guards to monitor what is happening inside the cells audibly and visually. What proves that the main purpose of these cameras is to spy on women prisoners and that they are a tool for control and violation of privacy and not a tool for documenting violations, is that they do not exist in Israeli interrogation centers and do not document the crimes of interrogators, and the methods of physical and psychological torture practiced on Palestinian prisoners.

Despite the harsh living conditions of women prisoners during their detention in Hasharon Prison, this does not prevent the IPS from turning this section into a tool of torture used against women prisoners, especially during popular uprisings and intifadas; as is happening now and coinciding with the Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people.

The abuse and ill-treatment started by removing the cover from the room's window, while only giving women prisoners one very thin blanket that does not protect them from the cold of the cell. The lights are turned on from 7:00 until 10:00 p.m. and then turned off. On the other hand, the mattresses are removed every day at 7:00 a.m., as indicated by prisoner R. A. who said, "I entered the room in

Hasharon around 6:00 p.m., and around 7:00 p.m., they brought blue mattresses for each prisoner with a very light blanket and no pillow, but they were all removed the next day at 7:00 a.m.³²

All women prisoners are also thoroughly searched during the morning security check or count. Female prison guards forced the women prisoners to curse Palestine, and some of them were subjected to severe physical assault and beating. In this context, prisoner A. T. said, "Upon my arrival at Hasharon, they put me in the waiting room, and after a thorough search, female prison guards assaulted me with their hands and feet. The beating continued for about 10 minutes, and I was not given any treatment after the assault.³³" The prisoner went on to speak about the rest of the conditions of the prison, saying, "The rooms in Hasharon are not clean and cannot be lived in, and the toilet, although it is a western toilet, is not clean and they used to put sanitary pads on the bathroom floor."

Despite the difficult conditions experienced by women prisoners in Hasharon's transit section, after October 7, this transit section became a safe area for male and female prison guards to isolate and abuse women prisoners. The level of violations committed against women prisoners escalated in an unprecedented manner, and the policy of strip searches accompanied by severe beatings and insults became one of the key policies used with the majority of women prisoners who are transferred to this transit section after their arrest. Testimonies collected from current and released women prisoners confirmed that the female prison guards deliberately focus their blows on sensitive areas of the body such as the head and genitals, and they are also subjected to hair pulling, spitting and insults during the inspections.

After the inspections are completed, the series of violations that women prisoners are subjected to during the detention period continues, as they are held in dark, moldy, unclean cells, sometimes filled with water and containing metal bunk beds and a worn-out mattress that the women prisoners estimate to be three centimeters thick. However, the women prisoners confirmed that the prison guards confiscated these mattresses during the day, forcing the prisoners to sit on the floor or the metal beds. "In Hasharon, they confiscated the mattresses and blankets in the morning and returned them around 9:00 at night," explained prisoner Sh. R.³⁴

The toilet is located across the door of the cell, making it impossible to use the toilet. Prisoner H. B. described the general conditions in Hasharon, saying, "When I arrived at Hasharon, I was held in a cell with two other [women] prisoners. There were no mattresses or anything else to sit on. I stayed in Hasharon for four days, but we did not know day from night. The toilet was facing the door of the cell. The mattresses were taken away at 6:00 in the morning, placed in the corridor outside, and returned at night.³⁵" These policies are not new, but rather have been practiced by the prison guards since before October 7.

Conclusions

The Israeli occupation's arrest of thousands of Palestinians from different segments of society is nothing but a tool complementary to the crimes it commits against the Palestinian people and a colonization tool that relies on committing various forms of torture and other cruel and inhumane treatment against prisoners and detainees. The crimes of the Israeli occupation are not only evident in interrogation centers, but also extend to include prisoners in detention centers, even though guarantees for detainees deprived of their liberty apply to these detention centers, particularly the right to be held in conditions suitable for health and well-being and be provided with appropriate health care and basic needs such as adequate food, mineral water, and other basic living essentials.

However, the prisoners in these detention centers face difficult living conditions and continuous violations of their rights without any accountability or oversight of the conditions of these detention centers or those in charge of them. The administration of detention centers, headed by the Israeli army, obstructs preventive monitoring acts such as unannounced visits by the competent authorities to collect information about the detainees in the detention center, their conditions, and violations that lead to or prevent the occurrence of ill-treatment, torture, and other humiliations of detainees inside the detention centers.

³² Interview conducted by Addameer's staffer with released prisoner R. A. on 17 December 2023.

³³ Interview conducted by Addameer's staffer with prisoner A. T. on 12 December 2023.

³⁴ A visit conducted by the defense lawyer to prisoner Sh. R. on 30 May 2024.

³⁵ A visit conducted by the defense lawyer to prisoner H. B. on 30 May 2024.

The reality of the prisoners held in transit sections and waiting stations is no different. Such facilities are part of Israel's central prisons governed by the laws of Israel Prison Service, which contain clear determinants of prisoners' rights and regulate life matters inside the prison, unlike detention centers. However, the IPS ignores all the rights granted to prisoners, whether through Israeli laws or international laws and continues its various abusive practices of the laws to this day.

It is worth noting that this paper did not touch extensively on the events after October 7, as lawyers' visits to prisoners and detainees were restricted to prevent documentation of the violations and poor conditions to which prisoners are subjected, which violate all international standards.