

WOMEN POLITICAL PRISONERS IN PALESTINE

Over 6000 Palestinian political prisoners are currently being held in Israeli jails, including 76 Palestinian women and 350 children. The number of Palestinian women political prisoners has increased dramatically since the beginning of the second uprising, or Intifada, in September 2000.

Torture and Abuse:

Palestinian women prisoners report severe abuse during interrogation including various forms of torture. Methods of torture include beatings, being handcuffed in painful, contorted positions for long periods of time, threats of sexual abuse and rape.

On 20 February 2003, 15-year old Palestinian girl Riham Musa was shot three times at an Israeli checkpoint near Tulkarem. She was taken to an Israeli hospital where she was operated on and part of her large intestine removed. She had both her hands and legs shackled to a hospital bed for two weeks, prevented from seeing any visitors and guarded 24 hours a day by Israeli soldiers. She was to spend 7 months in prison.

Source: Addameer Prisoner and Human Rights Support Organization www.addameer.org

Attacks by Prison Guards:

Israeli prison guards regularly burst into the prisoners' rooms, cut the electricity, shoot tear gas, shut the windows and attack the prisoners. Papers, books and other belongings are confiscated. On March 16, 2002 prison guards entered the women's cells while they were sleeping and took 13 to isolation. They put two in each cell and told them to undress. The women refused, and the prison guards handcuffed them and took off all their clothes. They left the cell doors open as male wardens stood outside.

"On 13 September 2001, prison guards stormed the cells of the three girl prisoners in Ramle and demanded their belongings for no reason. They took all of the prisoners except adult female prisoner Amne Muna from the room. According to Amne's affidavit, she heard the other girls screaming as they were subject to severe beating. Amne herself was placed in an isolation cell and beaten so severely that the prison nurse described her situation as very dangerous and requiring immediate treatment. Her face was also sprayed with tear gas." *Source: DCI/PS Prisoner Briefing no.3, 22 September 2001.*

Denial of Medical Treatment:

All Palestinian prisoners, including women, are denied adequate medical treatment. This denial is often used as punishment against prisoners who protest the conditions in which they are being held. Some examples of women prisoners who are in urgent need of medical attention include:

`Amneh Muna: (27 years old): suffers from ulcer and backache. Souna ar-Ra'y: (34 years old): sentenced to 12 years of imprisonment and suffers from a severe case of psychological illness. Asma' Abu el-Hayja: (40 years old); an administrative detainee (held without trial or charge) who suffers from brain cancer. Abeer Amr: (22 years old) suffers from painful backache and has not received medication for the past two years. Manal Ghanem: (28 years old)

suffers from Thalassimya and is five-months pregnant. Ilham Mughraby: has cancer. Family Visits: Since September 2000, most Palestinian prisoners have been denied visits from their families in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Palestinian prisoners are also forbidden from making phone calls and lawyer visits are often restricted. Consequently, there is a severe shortage of clothing and other necessities inside the prison as the Israeli prison administration does not provide this to Palestinian prisoners. Resistance Inside Prisons: Women prisoners are amongst the most active of the Palestinian political prisoner population. They have regularly organized hunger strikes and demonstrations in protest against their living conditions and continued abuse from prison guards. Palestinian women political prisoners are demanding improvement in their living conditions inside jails; adequate medical treatment; allowing books and newspapers; receiving letters from their families; allowing their families to bring clothes to the jails and the end to invasive body searches. The ultimate goal is the freedom of all Palestinian political prisoners.

**Stop Violent Abuse towards
Palestinian Women Political
Prisoners!**

**Free All Palestinian Political
Prisoners!**

This fact-sheet provided by:

SUMOUD

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