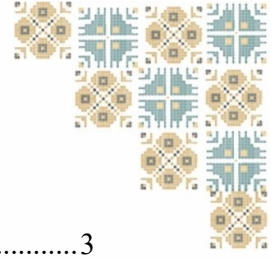
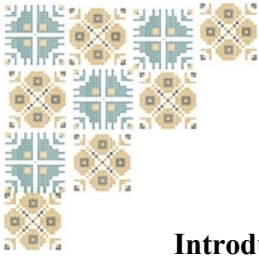


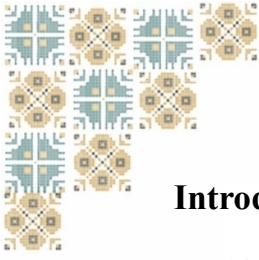
**Ministry of Women's Affairs**

# **Palestinian Female Detainees: Ongoing Human Suffering and Escalating Retaliatory Measures.**



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## Introduction

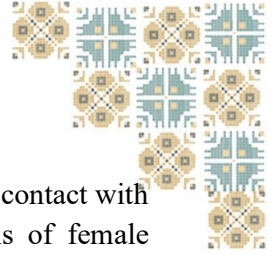
A wide range of Israeli crimes and violations committed against Palestinian women and girls across all areas of their presence, in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and Jerusalem, reflects the occupation's longstanding policy of using gender-based violence against Palestinians as a tool of intimidation and as a means to sustain a system of repression that undermines their right to self-determination, freedom, and the realization of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

The Israeli occupation forces have adopted widespread arrest campaigns targeting Palestinian women and girls, reinforcing the crime of enforced disappearance and the policy of house arrest. In line with its role, the Ministry of Women's Affairs has documented, since October 7, 2023, new patterns of gender-based practices and crimes committed by the Israeli occupation forces. These aim to violate the human dignity of Palestinian women and girls and threaten their rights to life, physical, psychological, and sexual safety.

On Palestinian Prisoners' Day, this important global, humanitarian, and solidarity occasion, the Ministry is launching this evidence-based report to serve as a complement to other national reports issued by state institutions and local human rights organizations, as well as international reports issued by United Nations bodies and special procedures, [including the report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem](#). That report affirmed that the Israeli occupation deliberately uses sexual violence and targets Palestinian women and girls through a wide range of multidimensional crimes and violations, often carried out under opaque circumstances, as a tool and strategy of war to dominate and destroy the Palestinian people.

The report concluded that Israeli occupation forces deliberately reinforce policies, practices, crimes, and violations against Palestinian women and girls, placing them in harsh detention and arrest conditions that are degrading to human dignity and pose serious threats to their lives. This comes amid a noticeable rise in cases of enforced disappearance and detention in secret field camps. Women and girls are referred to military courts, which aim to provide a legal façade to legitimize the ongoing political and military violations of the rights of this protected group, rights guaranteed under the Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilians, the treatment of prisoners of war, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, along with other rules of international humanitarian law and the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda.

Administrative detention, without charge or trial, alongside house arrest, extrajudicial executions, strip searches, beatings and abuse, threats and intimidation, torture, degrading and humiliating treatment, blackmail, starvation and denial of water, deprivation of sleep or bedding, solitary confinement, denial of personal hygiene needs or bathing, bullying, sexual



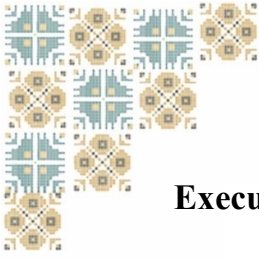
harassment or assault, threats of rape or actual rape, denial of family visits and contact with lawyers (thus denying access to legal assistance), prison raids on the cells of female detainees by prison authorities, denial of education and religious practices, confiscation of personal belongings, imposition of fines, and banning of clothing—all create life-threatening and extremely difficult conditions for Palestinian women and girls to survive.

These conditions also extend to formerly detained women and girls, whose suffering is compounded by long-term physical, psychological, sexual, and social effects resulting from extended periods of detention, including the difficulty of reintegration into their communities.

On this occasion, the Ministry of Women's Affairs reaffirms its unwavering commitment, based on the government's work program and its cross-sectoral strategies, to amplifying the voices of Palestinian female detainees and victims of ongoing Israeli crimes and violations. The Ministry is dedicated to coordinating national and transnational efforts to provide comprehensive social, economic, legal, and health support and empowerment for these women and girls. It also seeks to mobilize regional and international actors by sharing these tragic, harsh, and shocking realities with all concerned parties, in pursuit of the immediate and unconditional release of all our detainees, male and female, and the disclosure of the fate of thousands of forcibly disappeared women and girls.

The Ministry emphasizes the need to achieve criminal justice for the victims in accordance with international humanitarian law and its available mechanisms, by holding the Israeli occupation accountable for its crimes and violations and ensuring that impunity is not allowed to persist. This includes the deployment of specialized international investigative and fact-finding missions, and persistent pursuit of legal action before the International Criminal Court and competent national jurisdictions worldwide.

**Mona Al-Khalili**  
**Minister of Women's Affairs**



## Executive Summary

The first section of the report addresses the situation of Palestinian female detainees in Israeli occupation prisons. Between October 7, 2023, and April 2025, there has been a dangerous escalation in the rate of arrests targeting Palestinian women, with over 510 women detained as part of a systematic policy specifically targeting them. As of April 13, 2025, 29 women remain in detention under harsh humanitarian conditions and severe human rights violations, including administrative detention and medical neglect.

The report also highlights the difficulties faced by human rights organizations in documenting the number of female detainees from the Gaza Strip due to the policy of enforced disappearance, as an unknown number of them are held under inhumane conditions without charges or access to court proceedings.

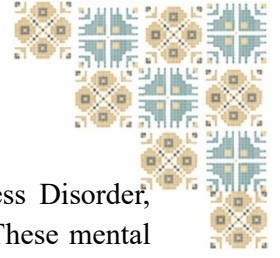
The second section of the report sheds light on the grave violations endured by Palestinian female detainees, which begin at the moment of arrest and often continue even after their release. The detainees face harsh conditions of imprisonment, including overcrowding, lack of ventilation, poor-quality food, and the absence of privacy, as well as deprivation of hygiene supplies and proper medical care.

Female detainees are subjected to both physical and psychological torture, enduring some of the most brutal forms of violence, including beatings, insults, strip searches, and electric shocks. They are also humiliated during transport via the "Bosta," enduring hours of travel under degrading and painful conditions without being allowed to eat or use the bathroom. The report documents numerous cases of sexual harassment, threats of rape, and the use of sexually explicit insults as a form of psychological intimidation, constituting blatant violations of international conventions.

The report also reveals another facet of the suffering endured by Palestinian female detainees: the denial of their fundamental right to healthcare. The Israeli prison authorities deliberately withhold access to specialized medical care, including qualified medical staff, diagnostic equipment, and medications for chronic and other illnesses. Serious health conditions are often met with willful neglect, putting the lives of many sick and elderly detainees at grave risk, and in some cases, leading to death.

Solitary confinement is identified as one of the systematic methods of psychological torture employed to break the will of female detainees. Detainees are placed in small, dark, isolated cells, cut off entirely from the outside world. Pregnant detainees are among the most severely affected, as their specific health needs are intentionally neglected by the occupying forces, posing serious threats to both their lives and the lives of their unborn children.

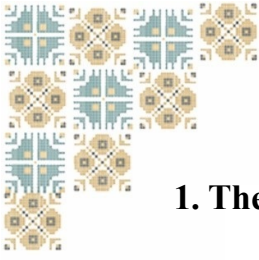
The suffering of Palestinian female detainees does not end with their release; instead, it takes on new and equally painful forms. The report highlights the long-term psychological



toll on released detainees, many of whom suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, resulting in depression, isolation, and difficulties reintegrating into society. These mental health consequences are deeply felt, especially by mothers who were separated from their children during imprisonment, trauma that also extends to their children and families.

The report also brings attention to a particularly egregious crime practiced by the Israeli occupation since October 2023: the enforced disappearance of female detainees from Gaza. These women are held under extremely harsh conditions, deprived of the most basic necessities of life, subjected to inhumane treatment, and exposed to brutal torture. This constitutes a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

In conclusion, the Ministry of Women's Affairs calls on the international community to take a firm and urgent stance to protect Palestinian female detainees. This includes opening Israeli prisons to international monitoring bodies, securing the release of all detained women, ensuring their safety, enforcing UN Security Council resolutions on the protection of women in armed conflict, and holding the Israeli occupation accountable for its systematic and grave violations against Palestinian women.



## 1. The Reality of Palestinian Female Detainees in Occupation Prisons

### 1.1 Statistics on Palestinian Female Detainees in Occupation Prisons

Since October 7, 2023, Palestinian territories have witnessed a dangerous escalation in Israeli arrest policies, specifically targeting women in a systematic and widespread manner. Approximately 510 Palestinian women have been arrested during this period, as part of arbitrary campaigns that make no distinction between activists or civilians, minors or the elderly. These arrests are part of a strategy aimed at terrorizing Palestinian society and breaking the will of Palestinian women, who are an integral part of the social fabric.

As of April 13, 2025, 29 female detainees remain in Israeli detention centers. Among them, two women who were previously released in November 2023 were re-arrested, in clear violation of legal norms. Additionally, two of the detainees have been sentenced, while four are held under administrative detention without specific charges or a fair trial. The remaining 22 female detainees are awaiting trial. These detainees are spread across different geographical areas: 25 from the West Bank, one from Jerusalem, two from occupied Palestinian territories, and one from Gaza, according to the latest reports from the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society.

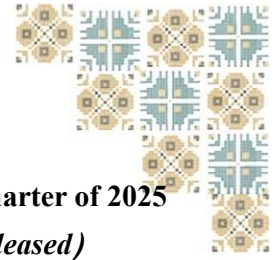
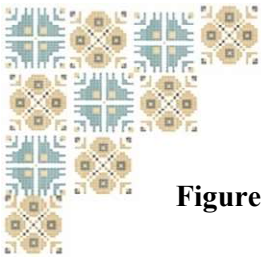
It is important to note that among these detainees, there are two particularly severe humanitarian cases. One of them is suffering from cancer, while the other has second-degree burns and requires urgent medical treatment, yet the Israeli authorities are refusing to provide them with the necessary care. Additionally, 18 other female detainees are under house arrest and facing trial, including four women from the West Bank and 14 from Jerusalem, with threats of re-arrest at any moment.

Furthermore, of the 18 women under house arrest, three were previously released as part of recent prisoner exchange deals, only to be re-arrested and placed under house arrest again.

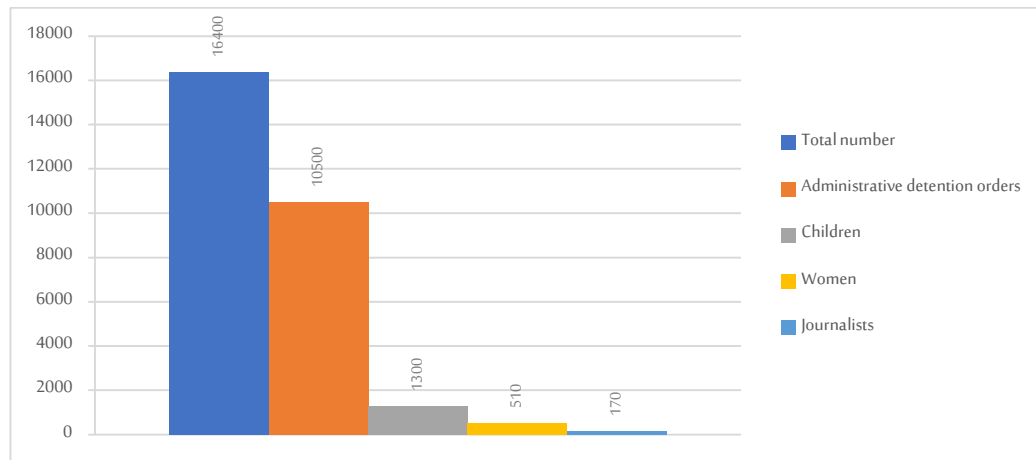
This situation reflects the ongoing nature of the occupation's repressive practices against Palestinian women, disregarding all international laws and agreements that guarantee the protection of women in times of conflict. It underscores the fact that the occupation does not hesitate to use tools of oppression and humiliation against those whose dignity and rights should be safeguarded according to international conventions<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society



**Figure 1: Arrest Cases in the West Bank Since October 7, 2023 – First Quarter of 2025**  
*(Includes those who remain in detention and those who were later released)*



Source: Report issued by the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society, 2025

It is important to note that the statistics provided in Figure 1 do not include women detained from the Gaza Strip, although their number is estimated to be in the dozens. The statistics do include women detained from the occupied territories of 1948, as well as others from Gaza who were arrested while in the West Bank. Prisoner organizations face significant challenges in determining the exact number of women detained from Gaza, as the true number is believed to be in the thousands. This is due to the Israeli authorities' policy of enforced disappearance, which complicates documentation efforts and prevents access to accurate information about their conditions and the circumstances of their detention<sup>2</sup>.

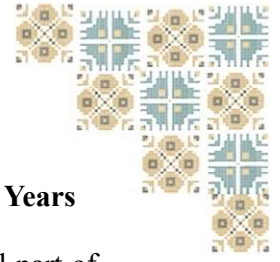
Israeli occupation forces arrest dozens of unarmed civilians in Gaza, including women and the elderly, holding them under extremely harsh conditions. Detainees, both male and female, are kept handcuffed and blindfolded at all times in open spaces resembling cages, without food or water for extended periods. This constitutes a blatant violation of the provisions of the Geneva Conventions, particularly the Third Geneva Convention regarding the treatment of prisoners of war (1949), the Fourth Geneva Convention concerning the protection of civilians, and their additional protocols of 1977.

More than 2,000 individuals from the Gaza Strip have been detained and classified as "illegal combatants," with estimates suggesting that the actual number of detainees is much higher, potentially exceeding 3,000, including women and children<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> A recent statistical report dated 13-04-2025 issued by the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society

<sup>3</sup> A report titled 'Occupation Releases Nearly 80 Detainees from the Gaza Strip' issued by Al-Ghad Newspaper, dated April 10, 2025





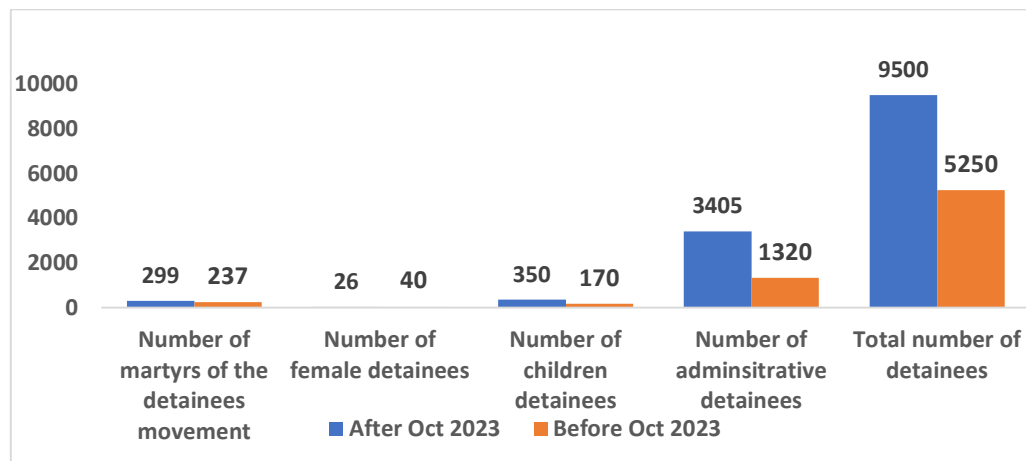
## 1.2 Developments in the Number of Male and Female Detainees in Recent Years

Over the years of Israeli occupation, Palestinian women have been an integral part of the Palestinian struggle, enduring various forms of repression, including arrest. More than 16,000 Palestinian women have been detained, among them minors and the elderly. The First Intifada in 1987 witnessed the largest wave of arrests targeting women, with about 3,000 women detained. In the Second Intifada of 2000, around 900 women were arrested. From 2009 to 2012, arrests decreased, but escalated once again with the onset of the popular uprising in late 2015, intensifying after the closure of the Al-Aqsa gates in 2017. During this period, about 370 cases were documented, according to a report issued by WAFA in early 2025<sup>4</sup>.

The same report notes that the arrests increased further following Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of the occupation, continuing throughout 2018 and 2019 (with 110 women detained in 2019), and extending into 2020 (with 128 detained), 2021 (184 detained), and 2022 (172 detained) (WAFA, 2025).

However, the most dangerous turning point occurred following the outbreak of the large-scale Israeli war on Gaza and the West Bank on October 7, 2023, when Israeli forces launched a random and aggressive arrest campaign, described as the largest in history targeting Palestinian women. These arrests reached unprecedented levels in terms of numbers and violations, with no distinction made between civilians or resistance fighters, men or women (WAFA, 2025).

**Figure 2: Comparison between the numbers of prisoners and administrative detainees before and after October 7, 2023.**



Source: Report issued by the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society, 2025

<sup>4</sup> WAFA News Agency: 'Palestinian Female Detainees in Israeli Occupation Prisons, First Quarter 2025



## **2. Serious Violations against Palestinian Women in Israeli Occupation Prisons**

The policy of arresting Palestinian women is one of the most prominent systematic policies implemented by the Israeli occupation against the Palestinian people for many years, and even minors have not been excluded from this policy. According to reports issued by the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society, about 490 cases of arrest have been recorded among women, including minors, in the West Bank and Jerusalem since October 7, 2023. However, there are no accurate statistics or information regarding the female detainees from the Gaza Strip who were arrested and forcibly disappeared after October 7, 2023, despite several batches of releases for some of them (Solidarity Foundation Report, March 8, 2025)<sup>5</sup>.

Female detainees face systematic and organized crimes inside the occupation prisons and interrogation centers, and these crimes have escalated even more and become more dangerous following the genocide war, which marked a new bloody phase in the history of the Palestinian people. This report sheds light on aspects of these sufferings.

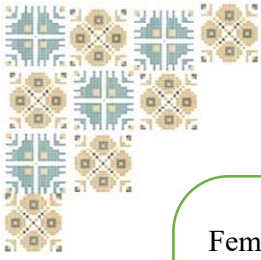
### **2.1 The Harsh Conditions of Detention of Palestinian Female Detainees**

Palestinian female detainees suffer from harsh and degrading detention conditions, which have worsened since October 7, 2023. The Israeli prison authorities deliberately implemented measures that would intensify the pressure on the female detainees and further humiliate them. These conditions include severe overcrowding, which has led to a lack of privacy and a deterioration in the general health of the detainees, increasing the likelihood of the spread of infectious diseases, especially amid poor healthcare and sanitation. According to testimonies from many released detainees, there is no longer sufficient space for them to sleep or move comfortably, which has increased the psychological and physical burdens on these detainees.

The Israeli occupation also intentionally keeps prisons closed or poorly ventilated, leading to the spread of foul odors and humidity, posing a risk to the lives of the detainees, especially those suffering from chronic diseases or injuries resulting from torture or harsh treatment.

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<sup>5</sup> A comprehensive report on female detainees on the occasion of International Women's Day, issued by 'Tadamon,' March 8, 2025.



Female detainees suffer from extremely harsh detention conditions, including overcrowding, lack of ventilation, poor quality of food, absence of medical care, and lack of personal hygiene supplies. Some are also deprived of adequate clothing and blankets, especially during the winter months. They also endure the absence of privacy, with some being held in cells equipped with surveillance cameras.

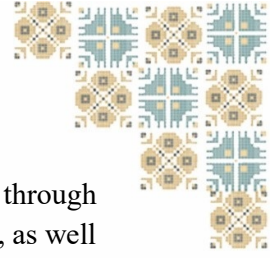
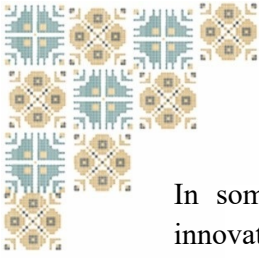
One of the major hardships faced by female detainees is the deprivation of adequate and nutritious meals since October 7, 2023. They are given poor-quality food, both in terms of taste and quantity, lacking essential nutrients, and it is often served cold and unfit for consumption. The Israeli prison authorities also deny them visits and the ability to receive food from outside the prison. This has caused exhaustion and fatigue among the detainees, especially those who suffer from illnesses or are pregnant.

Providing comfortable clothing suitable for the weather conditions and the detainees' needs is one of their basic rights. However, the Israeli occupation denies them this right, providing worn-out and uncomfortable clothes that do not suit the weather, further exacerbating their suffering. The suffering of the detainees intensifies in winter, as they are deprived of warm blankets amid the extreme cold, and there is no heating available, exposing them to health risks.

## **2.2 Torture and Ill-Treatment during Investigation or Detention**

According to reports from the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society, and based on testimonies from some of the released detainees, Palestinian female detainees in Israeli prisons suffer from severe violations, including various forms of physical and psychological torture. These harsh practices begin from the moment of arrest, where many of them are subjected to violent beatings by Israeli soldiers in various locations of detention, leading to injuries in different parts of their bodies. In some cases, rifles are used to strike the detainees, resulting in the tearing of their clothes and exposing parts of their bodies in a humiliating manner. Their hands and eyes are bound, and their heads are blindfolded, further intensifying the violation of their human rights.

Despite the injuries resulting from these assaults, the Israeli occupation continues to torture the female detainees, subjecting them to harsh detention conditions, such as being held in filthy, cramped cells without food or water, or being served food that is unfit for consumption. For instance, after their arrest, some female detainees are held in solitary confinement cells.



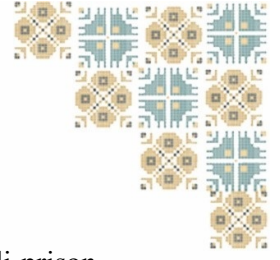
In some cases, female detainees are subjected to psychological torture through innovative methods, such as playing loud music to prevent them from sleeping, as well as verbal abuse, insults, and ongoing mockery by soldiers who provoke the detainees with sarcastic remarks. They are also subjected to verbal assaults, death threats, physical beatings, humiliation, coercion, starvation, dehydration, denial of sleep or bedding, and deprivation of basic hygiene, personal care, or the opportunity to bathe. They endure bullying, harassment, threats of sexual assault or actual sexual violence, denial of visitation rights, lack of communication with their lawyer, and the subsequent inability to receive legal assistance. Additionally, their cells are raided by male prison officers and police dogs, their educational opportunities are denied, and they are prevented from performing religious rituals. Personal belongings are confiscated, and financial fines are imposed on them. Female detainees are also denied the right to receive clothing. Further methods of torture include electric shock during strip searches, one of the most degrading forms of mistreatment, where they are forced to undergo humiliating physical examinations without regard for their basic human rights. Some detainees experience what is described as an "extrajudicial execution."

Numerous testimonies from released detainees confirm that they were subjected to strip searches repeatedly. One detainee recounted such an experience in the Hasharon prison before being transferred to the Damon prison. In some instances, detainees are transferred to filthy cells where they are forced to sit on the ground without bedding or mattresses, left in extremely poor sanitary conditions, with continuous threats and instances of medical neglect that expose them to severe health risks. (Report issued by the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society on March 8, 2025).

These practices clearly reflect the Israeli policy of systematically torturing Palestinian female detainees, with the aim of breaking their will and subjecting them to the harshest forms of oppression, intensifying their psychological suffering. This constitutes a blatant violation of international laws prohibiting torture and human rights abuses, including Article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949), which states: "The occupying power shall not treat individuals in occupied territories in a manner that is incompatible with human dignity, including torture and humiliation." This also constitutes a violation of the Convention Against Torture (CAT 1984), which urges state parties to adopt legal and security measures to ensure that individuals are not subjected to torture or cruel treatment during their detention or interrogation<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#)



### **2.3 Women's Suffering during Transportation by "Bosta"**

In an effort to further intensify the suffering of Palestinian women, the Israeli prison authorities deliberately transfer detainees using special vehicles known as "Bosta." This method is considered one of the harshest practices, particularly against female detainees, especially minors and those with illnesses. The journey in these vehicles lasts for eight hours, during which the detainee is handcuffed to a metal chair and is not allowed to eat, drink, or relieve herself. Additionally, women are prohibited from wearing warm clothing during winter. Dozens of detainees have experienced sexual harassment, threats, mistreatment, and assault during these transfers. This traumatic experience leaves deep psychological scars, even long after the detainees are released from captivity.

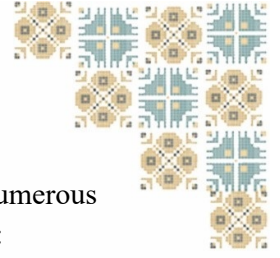
### **2.4 Sexual Harassment, Rape Threats, and Rape**

A joint report released by the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society (March 2025) exposed one of the most horrific crimes committed by the Israeli occupation against Palestinian female detainees, which involves sexual assault. This includes harassment, strip searches, threats of rape, and threats to rape their family members. The report also shared testimonies from released detainees who had endured these crimes, including degrading language, continuous threats, physical abuse causing pain and suffering without any medical treatment. The same report also referenced an official statement by the United Nations confirming "credible reports of the rape of detainees from Gaza."

These practices represent a gross violation of numerous international agreements and laws that prohibit such acts, such as the Convention Against Torture previously mentioned, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993), and the Fourth Geneva Convention for the Protection of Civilians.

### **2.5 Denial of Health Care**

Palestinian female detainees, especially those who are injured or suffering from chronic diseases, endure deliberate medical neglect in Israeli prisons, particularly in Damon Prison, adding another crime to the long list of violations committed by the Israeli occupation against Palestinian women detainees. This neglect of their health needs is part of a policy of humiliation, slow death, and execution. These health violations against detainees, both male and female, have been ongoing and were practiced even before the current aggression. The report released by the Commission of Detainees'



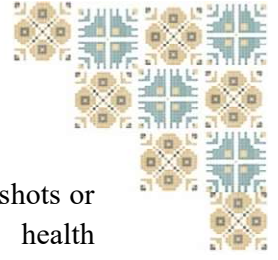
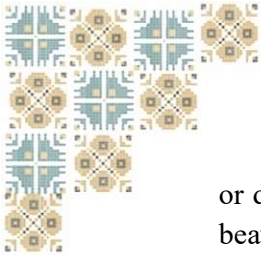
Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society (2018)<sup>7</sup> confirms this, detailing numerous violations that have intensified since October 7, 2023, including the following:

- Repeated medical neglect and delays in surgeries and emergency treatment.
- Denial of necessary medication for detainees, with only painkillers being provided, which endangers their lives, particularly those with chronic illnesses. Sometimes, expired medications are given, putting their lives at risk and worsening their health conditions.
- There are no specialized doctors in many areas in Israeli prisons, such as ophthalmology, dentistry, ENT, gynecology, and obstetrics. This negatively impacts the health of female detainees who require special care, particularly pregnant women, the elderly, and those with chronic illnesses. Prison clinics also lack 24-hour medical staff, preventing immediate treatment in emergency situations.
- There is a shortage of medical devices for detainees with special needs, such as prosthetics, glasses, and respiratory devices for asthma and chronic respiratory illnesses.
- Female detainees are deprived of receiving proper meals that match their health conditions, especially those with chronic diseases like hypertension, diabetes, and pregnant women.
- Prison authorities do not isolate female detainees who may be infected with contagious diseases like scabies or gastrointestinal infections, exposing other detainees to the risk of infection due to overcrowding in detention centers.
- Prison authorities deliberately deal more harshly with injured and sick female detainees, exacerbating their suffering. There is no provision of equipped ambulances, and instead, they are subjected to chaining, beating, and gas spraying, among other criminal practices.
- Sick female detainees suffer from extremely poor detention conditions, such as lack of ventilation, excessive humidity in the cells, overcrowding, and lack of cleaning tools and insecticides, which pose a danger to their health and lives.

A report by the Addameer (2024)<sup>8</sup> documented that prison authorities intentionally delay the medical examination of injured female detainees, despite visible injuries or repeated complaints. Only painkillers are provided, with no proper examinations

<sup>7</sup> A report titled 'The Nature of Health Violations Faced by Sick Prisoners,' issued by the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society, March 2018.

<sup>8</sup> [Addameer, Torture and Cruel Treatment](#)



or diagnoses. Some detainees who were injured during their arrest by gunshots or beatings have not received proper treatment, leading to serious health complications. For example, detainee Rajaa Karsoua, who was arrested in February 2024, suffered from mobility impairments and complex health issues, yet she was denied medical care and the necessary mobility aids. Medical neglect poses a serious threat to the lives of female detainees, as some have died due to the lack of appropriate care, such as the martyrdom of detainee Saadia Farajallah from Hebron, who was deprived of necessary treatment by the Israeli occupation, leading to her death.

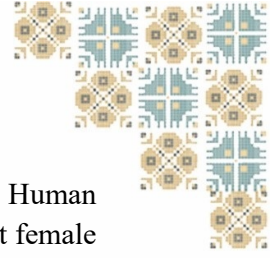
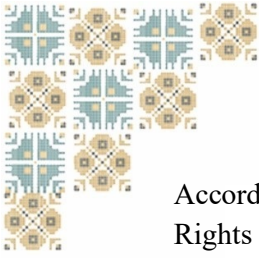
Furthermore, the medical neglect of female detainees constitutes a severe violation of the most basic human rights standards outlined in the Nelson Mandela Rules<sup>9</sup>, which emphasize the provision of comprehensive medical care for detainees (Addameer, 2024).

Documented testimonies show that many Palestinian female detainees are arrested despite having serious injuries. They are transferred to hospitals under guard, interrogated while lying in hospital beds, and often remain handcuffed even during medical treatment. After leaving the hospital, the detainees are transferred to detention centers under harsh conditions that lack the most basic human standards, where they are held in cold, filthy rooms, subjected to strip searches upon arrival, and then transferred to central prisons like "Damon," without any consideration for their health or humanitarian situation.

## 2.6 Solitary Confinement as a Systematic Repressive Method

According to documented data in a report by the Independent Commission and the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, solitary confinement has been used against many Palestinian female detainees during the Gaza war as a tool of intimidation and to break their will inside interrogation centers and prisons. In many cases, the detained is transferred directly to a solitary confinement cell after arrest or interrogation, under harsh conditions that lack the most basic human standards. The detained is held in a small, dark space without ventilation or light, and is prevented from communicating with other detainees or her family. This results in deep psychological effects ranging from anxiety and depression, and can lead to cases of nervous breakdown or suicidal thoughts.

<sup>9</sup> [The Nelson Mandela Rules: Protecting the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty](#)



According to a research paper published by the Independent Commission for Human Rights (2023), "The Israeli occupation increasingly adopted this policy against female prisoners and detainees during the genocidal war on Gaza after October 2023," where some female detainees were isolated for long hours after strip searches, deprived of food and sleep, and subjected to stressful methods such as continuous lighting or loud noises to prevent them from achieving psychological stability. Testimonies were also reported from female detainees who were forced to strip under threat and later held in complete isolation without even the most basic human rights, such as water or access to a bathroom<sup>10</sup>.

The policy of solitary confinement constitutes a blatant violation of international humanitarian law and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), which stipulate that "prolonged or involuntary solitary confinement shall be completely prohibited, and shall be considered as a form of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment." This calls for international accountability for the occupying state and the need to pursue legal action against it before the relevant international courts (Independent Commission Report, 2023).

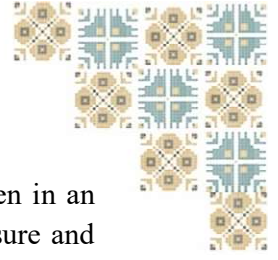
## **2.7 Women on trial and house arrest**

The tools of repression used by the Israeli occupation authorities against Palestinian women are not limited to imprisonment within the prisons but extend to other forms of restrictions. One of the most prominent of these is the imposition of house arrest, which has affected 18 Palestinian women, including one who suffers from severe psychological conditions and is being treated in a psychiatric hospital. House arrest has become an additional means of punishing women detainees and controlling their daily lives even outside the walls of the detention centers. Israeli courts have issued a series of house arrest orders for several Palestinian women, while others continue to face long and unjust trials in both security and civil cases, within a legal process dominated by double standards and compromised justice. In light of the imposition of high fines and bail amounts, Palestinian women detainees suffer from severe psychological conditions due to the repression, torture, and inhumane detention circumstances they endure. Isolation, in many cases, leads to anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorders. These harsh conditions are used systematically by the occupation as a tool to break the will of the women detainees and shatter their resilience.

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<sup>10</sup> Jarrar, Khalida (2023): A research paper titled 'Violations Against Female and Male Prisoners During the Genocidal War on Gaza,' The Independent Commission for Human Rights, Ramallah, Palestine.





These policies are part of a systematic campaign targeting Palestinian women in an attempt to subdue them, break their will, and create an environment of pressure and intimidation that affects them, their families, and their communities<sup>11</sup>.

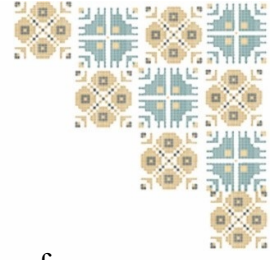
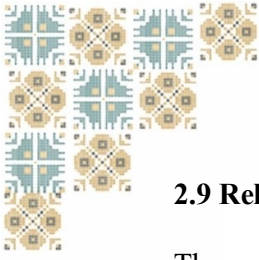
## 2.8 The Suffering of Pregnant Female Detainees in Israeli Occupation Prisons

Pregnant female detainees face particularly dangerous health conditions due to medical neglect, poor nutrition, and extreme psychological pressure, all while lacking any special maternity care. Reports from institutions concerned with detainees' affairs, such as the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society, and the Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association (2024), have pointed out that pregnant detainees do not receive regular medical follow-ups and are left in cells without proper health supervision. Some are even transferred for interrogation during advanced stages of pregnancy, being forced to sit for hours in painful positions without regard for their condition. Furthermore, the prison authorities do not provide appropriate food or necessary vitamins for pregnant women, and there are no dedicated facilities for childbirth or post-birth care. Essential medical tests for pregnant women, such as those needed to monitor the pregnancy, are also not conducted. These practices put both the lives of the fetus and the mother at serious risk.

Pregnant female detainees are deprived of adequate healthcare and are sometimes detained in conditions that do not meet the requirements of pregnancy. They are only transferred to hospitals in critical cases, and even then, they are often restrained during medical examinations.

A joint statement by the Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights and Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association (2024) stated that a female detainee who gives birth while incarcerated is not allowed to hold her child except for a limited time, after which the child is taken away after a few days or weeks. This causes deep psychological harm to both the mother and the infant, leading to compounded trauma within the prison. Childbirth is often carried out under armed guard in hospital rooms, with the women handcuffed and shackled, without consideration for their physical and psychological conditions. This is considered one of the most severe forms of inhumane and degrading treatment, leaving long-lasting psychological impacts.

<sup>11</sup> A report titled 'The Occupation Detains 21 Palestinian Female Detainees in Its Jails,' issued by Addameer Foundation, dated March 7, 2025



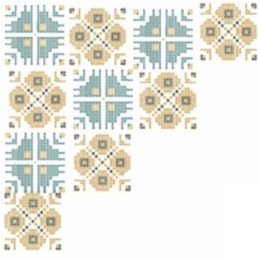
## 2.9 Released Female Detainees: Ongoing Suffering

The suffering of Palestinian female detainees does not end with their release from captivity; rather, the experience of detention and the cruel practices they endure continue to affect their dignity and cause both psychological and physical harm, leaving deep psychological scars. This impacts their ability to reintegrate into society and regain their lives in a normal way. In a study by Draghma (2017)<sup>12</sup> on the effects of captivity, several challenges faced by the released detainee and their families were highlighted, in addition to reports from relevant authorities:

- Worsening psychological distress: This study, supported by numerous recent reports from human rights organizations dealing with detainees and former detainees, confirms that many released female detainees experience Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. They relive memories of the violence they faced, including physical and psychological abuse, humiliation, and deprivation of basic rights inside the detention centers. This trauma significantly affects their family and social interactions. Many released detainees suffer from psychological disorders such as anxiety, insomnia, and depression.
- Physical effects and chronic pain: Many female detainees suffer severe torture during their detention and interrogation, and the effects of this torture remain with them, continuing their physical suffering. This is exacerbated by the lack of healthcare in prisons, the deliberate denial of necessary treatment and medications, and the absence of specialized doctors, which worsens their condition. Some female detainees have died shortly after their release due to the medical neglect they experienced during their detention<sup>13</sup>.
- Living in a state of alienation: Released female detainees often face numerous challenges related to rehabilitation, reintegration, and empowerment within their communities. The emotional and social toll of imprisonment continues to affect their ability to resume a normal life.
- The policy of re-arrest and the constant threat of re-arrest: The Israeli authorities' policy of re-arresting Palestinian female detainees and the ongoing threat of re-imprisonment represents a form of psychological and political repression. A female detainee suffering does not end with her release; she remains under constant surveillance and the fear of being detained again at any moment. This policy serves as a tool for continuous pressure, keeping the

<sup>12</sup> Draghma, Basma, supervised by Fayez Mahamid and others (2017): 'The Social and Psychological Effects of the Detention Experience on the Families of Released Palestinian Female Prisoners in the Northern West Bank Governorates,' Master's Thesis, An-Najah National University

<sup>13</sup> The released prisoner Wafa Jarrar was one of these detainees, as she suffered from medical neglect. She had sustained serious injuries during her detention by the Israeli army, resulting in the amputation of her legs. She was released in poor health, which worsened after her release until she martyred in May 2024.



detainees in a state of constant anxiety and fear, thus hindering their ability to rebuild their lives.

- Restriction of travel and movement: Female detainees are often prevented from traveling, whether for educational purposes or medical treatment, turning their lives into a form of open-ended imprisonment. This restriction not only affects the women themselves but also extends to their families and loved ones, representing a form of collective punishment. Despite the fact that freedom of movement is a fundamental right guaranteed by international conventions, this policy continues to be enforced<sup>14</sup>.

## 2.10 Mother Detainees

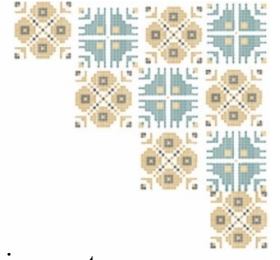
The Israeli occupation authorities continue to subject many Palestinian women to inhumane conditions as part of a systematic policy aimed at breaking the will of the Palestinian people and specifically targeting mothers due to their central role in the social fabric and resistance movements. Twelve Palestinian mothers have been deprived of their freedom and the right to embrace their children, reflecting yet another face of the suffering of detainees. The journey of pain for a Palestinian mother begins at the moment of arrest, often occurring in the late hours of the night, with a violent raid on the home accompanied by deliberate humiliation in front of their children, leaving deep psychological scars on the entire family<sup>15</sup>.

The suffering is not limited to the moment of arrest; it extends during the harsh transfer to detention and interrogation centers, and continues throughout the period of imprisonment in prisons. The arrest of Palestinian mothers is one of the most severe forms of human suffering caused by the occupation's policies, leading to a forced and cruel separation between mothers and their children for prolonged periods during critical stages of their children's growth and psychological development. In addition to depriving the children of the warmth and care of motherhood, the family loses its natural balance, while the mother suffers the pain of loss and the absence of her children, leaving deep psychological scars that are difficult to overcome. This forced separation not only affects the bond between the mother and her children but also creates an emotional gap that may never be repaired, constituting a blatant violation of humanitarian standards and international conventions that guarantee the protection of family ties, especially in times of conflict and occupation.

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<sup>14</sup> A report titled 'Prisoners and Travel Bans,' issued by Women for Palestine, dated September 19, 2019.

<sup>15</sup> A report titled '14 Mothers Detained by the Occupation in Its Jails and Deprived of Embracing Their Children,' issued by the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society, March 20, 2025.



## 2.11 The Increased Suffering of Released Minor Female Detainees.

The Israeli occupation forces have targeted Palestinian women of all ages in their arrest campaigns, including minors. According to the Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society, Israeli forces have arrested about 1,300 children over the years, with more than 350 Palestinian children, including a 12-year-old girl, still being detained in Israeli prisons and military camps. Among them, over 100 children are held under administrative detention. The detained children face systematic crimes targeting their futures, including torture, deprivation, medical crimes, and ongoing looting and deprivation. Recently, the first child martyr in Israeli prisons since the beginning of the ongoing genocide was martyred, Walid Ahmed, 17, from Silwad, Ramallah, who died in Megiddo prison on March 23, 2025<sup>16</sup>.

The arrest rate of Jerusalemite minors is particularly high, with dozens being arrested daily and held illegally. They also face house arrest, deportation from Jerusalem, and exorbitant fines<sup>17</sup>.

For these minors, the suffering is even more intense than for other female detainees. They are detained in degrading conditions, subjected to violent treatment during transport to interrogation centers, where they endure hours of restraint, beatings, threats, offensive language, solitary confinement, sleep deprivation, and denial of contact with family or lawyers, according to human rights reports and the study by Abu Hashish (2021)<sup>18</sup>. These reports also reveal that during their detention, girls are not classified by age group and are instead held with adult women, which exacerbates their sense of fear and creates constant anxiety. Additionally, the prison conditions fail to meet the special needs of children: the cells are unsanitary, detainees suffer from malnutrition, and there is a lack of medical and psychological care. The Israeli prison administration does not provide any formal educational programs for minors, leading to a disruption of their education and a decline in their academic performance upon release.

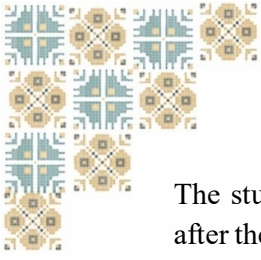
The study by Abu Hashish (2021) documented the psychological pressure tactics deliberately used by the Israeli occupation forces against female Palestinian minors, such as threatening to rape family members and employing coercive methods to obtain confessions. These tactics leave deep scars on the girls' memories, which are difficult to overcome even after their release from prison. These actions constitute serious violations of human dignity and childhood rights.

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<sup>16</sup> Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoners' Society

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Abu Hashish, Riham, supervised by Dr. Samah Saleh (2021): 'The Social Challenges Faced by Released Palestinian Female Juvenile Prisoners from Israeli Jails,' Master's Thesis, An-Najah National University



The study also revealed several psychological effects that female minors experience after their release from prison. Some develop continuous psychological trauma (PTSD), manifesting as sudden crying episodes, sleep disturbances, recurring nightmares, constant fear, and panic attacks linked to specific sounds or places that remind them of their imprisonment. Many of these minors also struggle to reintegrate into family life and society. Some experience social isolation, while others find it difficult to resume their education due to the long interruption and loss of motivation.

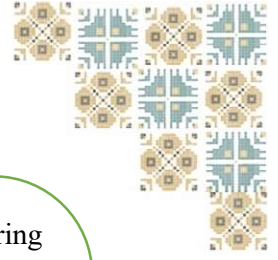
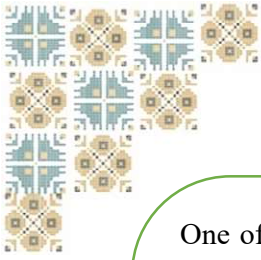
Released minors also suffer from a loss of security and trust, highlighting the urgent need for more care, support, and assistance from society and relevant institutions to help them overcome the psychological and physical trauma caused by their detention and facilitate their reintegration into society.

Despite the severity of the violations documented in previous studies and reports prior to October 7, 2023, the Israeli occupation's assaults on detainees, particularly female minors, have escalated significantly since October 2023. According to testimonies from released detainees and reports referenced in this study, the violations have become even more atrocious. The Israeli forces have intensified their use of starvation, torture, and humiliation against female detainees. As a result, the psychological and physical effects of these practices are expected to be even more damaging, potentially posing a greater threat to the detainees' mental health and even their lives.

Indeed, all of these practices are prohibited under international law and treaties, most notably the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989). Article 37 of the Convention obligates the parties to the treaty, including the Israeli occupying state, not to subject any child to torture or any form of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. It also categorically prohibits the imposition of the death penalty or life imprisonment without the possibility of release on children under the age of 18.

The Convention further requires that children deprived of their liberty be treated with dignity and humanity, taking into account their age and specific needs. Children must be separated from adults, unless their best interest dictates otherwise. They are also guaranteed the right to communicate with their families through visits and correspondence, except in exceptional circumstances that are properly justified. All of these provisions are flagrantly violated by the Israeli occupation.

Moreover, these practices also constitute a breach of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, which, in Articles 7, 14, and 24, calls for the protection of children from torture and inhuman treatment, and ensures their right to a fair trial appropriate to their age. These legal texts are explicitly violated by the Israeli authorities, which treat minors as if they were dangerous adults, employing repressive tools that are inappropriate for their age or psychological background. This harsh treatment further exacerbates the trauma and suffering faced by Palestinian female minors under detention.



One of the detained minors provides her testimony about her experience during detention, where she was arrested in early 2025 and placed in Ofer camp during the first two days. She slept on the floor without a mattress or blanket, and there was a cold air conditioner running throughout the time.

On the third day, she was interrogated, and the interrogation lasted for hours, from 3:00 PM until 1:00 AM. After the interrogation, the soldiers took her to a military jeep, where one soldier sat on the right and another on the left. The soldiers threatened to beat her if she didn't speak, and she was beaten with books on her head and face during the 40-minute drive. Upon arrival at another camp, she was led into a room where soldiers and female soldiers gathered and beat her with their feet while she was unconscious. They then covered her head with a cloth and photographed her before transferring her, along with other detainees, to the Moscovia detention center. (Addameer, 2025)

## 2.12 The Crime of Enforced Disappearance of Female Detainees from the Gaza Strip and their Unknown Fate

Since October 7, 2023, Israeli occupation forces have arrested a large number of Palestinian women and taken them to unknown detention camps and centers, such as Atanot, Sde Teiman, Ashkelon, Jalama, and Damoun, without informing their families or lawyers about their whereabouts. This constitutes a crime of *enforced disappearance* under international law and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court<sup>19</sup>.

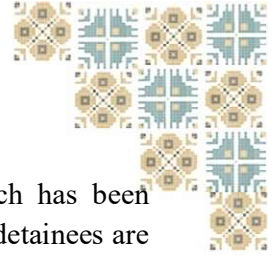
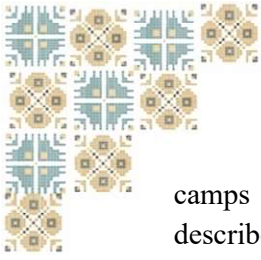
According to eyewitness testimonies and human rights reports, female detainees (including children, elderly women, the sick, the injured, and pregnant women)<sup>20</sup> are held in inhuman conditions inside metal sheds, blindfolded and handcuffed. They are prohibited from speaking or moving, deprived of personal necessities, especially during their menstrual cycle. Strip searches, verbal and physical abuse are used as systematic means of humiliation. Additionally, they are denied showers except for very short periods, and their detention places are raided daily. They are also provided with inadequate food<sup>21</sup>.

It is important to note that these women are detained without charges and without judicial review for up to 45 days instead of the required 14 days. They are also denied access to their lawyers for up to 90 days. Reports also indicated that after being detained in temporary

<sup>19</sup> [Enforced Disappearance of Gaza Detainees](#)

<sup>20</sup> There are no precise or final data regarding these female detainees; there are many reports, each containing different data

<sup>21</sup> report titled: '[The Crime of Enforced Disappearance... What Is the Fate of Gaza Detainees?](#)' Al-Mayadeen.net conducts interviews with detainees from Gaza who were subjected to physical and psychological torture by Israeli occupation forces in the context of the crime of enforced disappearance, by journalist Mays Abu Ghosh, April 24, 2024.



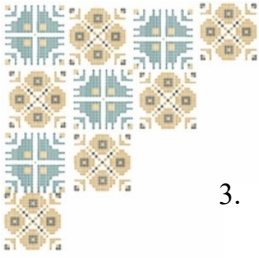
camps in the Gaza Strip, many were transferred to Damoun Prison, which has been described as an additional station for systematic isolation and exclusion. The detainees are prevented from communicating with any lawyers or contacting their families, which is a clear violation of all international treaties and agreements that call for the protection and preservation of detainees' rights, as previously mentioned.

In the testimony of a female detainee released from the Al-Bureij camp, she was one of 10 women arrested on December 28, 2023, after fleeing Gaza. She was blindfolded and handcuffed, then transferred to the Atanot camp, where she was placed in a "cage resembling animal cages" in the open air and freezing cold for 11 days without any medical or healthcare attention. She was subjected to physical abuse and humiliation by Israeli female soldiers. This testimony serves as an example of the nature of the violations faced by female detainees from Gaza (Al-Mayadeen Net, 2024).

### 3. Recommendations

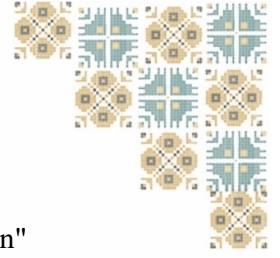
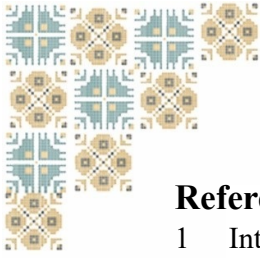
At the Ministry of Women's Affairs, we are deeply concerned about the dire conditions and inhumane treatment faced by Palestinian female detainees in Israeli detention centers, which violate their dignity and humanity, and pose a real threat to their lives and futures. These practices flagrantly violate all international laws and conventions. We join the voices of all local and international human rights organizations in urgently calling for immediate international protection for Palestinian female detainees, especially the sick and elderly, through the following actions:

1. Holding Israel, the occupying power, accountable for its responsibilities towards the occupied Palestinian people. Ending the occupation of Palestinian land in accordance with international legitimacy, the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion, and the United Nations General Assembly resolution. This should enable the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination and establish an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, as a precondition for Palestinian women and girls to enjoy their human rights, primarily the right to live in freedom and dignity.
2. Preventing Israel, the occupying power, from evading accountability. Holding perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and torture accountable through international justice mechanisms, including the International Criminal Court and national courts.



3. Compelling Israel to release all female prisoners and detainees without condition or delay, and to disclose the fate of the forcibly disappeared women and girls.
4. Obliging Israel to open its prisons, detention centers, and places of detention to international medical and human rights committees, including the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Special Rapporteur on sexual violence.
5. Calling upon special rapporteurs to exercise their thematic mandates and investigate the serious violations faced by Palestinian female detainees and the gender-based violence they endure. Preparing relevant reports and submitting them to the UN Secretary-General and the Human Rights Council.
6. Mobilizing regional and global efforts through organizations and parliaments to raise the voice of Palestinian female detainees and victims of enforced disappearances, and to provide all forms of support for them.
7. Urging the international community to assume its responsibility in implementing Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace, and Security, as well as General Recommendation No. 30 on the situation of women in conflict prevention, conflict situations, and post-conflict periods, issued by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.
8. Calling on the States parties to the Geneva Conventions to obligate Israel, the occupying power, to respect its commitments under the Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions regarding the protection of detainees and civilians.





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