

Systemic Israeli Practices of Torture Against Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

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I. Introduction

This submission details Israel's extensive use of torture and ill-treatment against Palestinians following October 7, 2023. This abuse – including, but not limited to, beatings to the point of broken bones and permanent injury, gang rape and rape by foreign objects, nonconsensual amputations, starvation, and extreme deprivation – are systematic policies and practices of the State of Israel and its actors. Torture, the infliction of pain as a means of punishment or coercion, is embedded in every stage of a Palestinian's arrest and detention by Israel. Israel's systemic and pervasive torture practices target Palestinians of all ages, including members of particularly vulnerable groups – women, children, the elderly, pregnant people, and the disabled.

Alongside physical, psychological, and other forms of torture, this submission specifically highlights cases of sexual torture, including sexual torture of Palestinian children. Sexual torture practices employed by Israeli forces are indicative of widespread dehumanization and cruelty against Palestinians as individuals and as a group. To demonstrate the extreme character of Israel's torture methods against Palestinians, this report describes a number of individual accounts of torture. The authors recognize that these case studies are neither exhaustive nor exceptional, but rather illustrate the depth of human suffering Israel has inflicted en masse on Palestinians. In a majority of the cases reviewed here, Palestinians detained by Israel were subjected to multiple forms of torture, including physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

Acts of torture by Israeli forces against Palestinians have been thoroughly documented by journalists, Palestinian and Israeli civil society organizations, academic researchers, international human rights groups, and United Nations (UN) bodies and experts. Survivors have publicly testified – before UN mechanisms, traditional media, and online – to abuses they experienced and witnessed during their detention. Additionally, Israeli soldiers themselves have become primary sources of evidence, documenting and sharing their own participation in and use of torture on their social media accounts. These sources have been comprehensively archived in the genocide.live database, which holds over 15,000 pieces of evidence of the ongoing genocide in Gaza, and 664 published prisoner abuse-related videos documenting torture and ill-treatment of Palestinians following October 7, 2023.¹ Together, this evidence shows the dehumanization, violence, and other abuse by Israeli forces against Palestinians in detention of all kinds.²

Finally, this submission demonstrates that torture and ill-treatment of Palestinians are widespread, systematic, and state-sanctioned. The cases delineated are not aberrations or the responsibility of rogue actors. Israeli military, occupation, police, and prison forces have perpetrated extreme forms of torture and ill-treatment – physical, psychological, sexual, and

¹ <https://genocide.live>, accessed October 10, 2024.

² Several authors of this report, who were captured by Israeli forces in international waters and imprisoned in Israel in October 2025, can independently corroborate many of the conditions and abuses in Israeli detention enumerated here.

otherwise – in all sites of detention and against every kind of Palestinian. This reality predates October 7, 2023, but has heightened in the two years since through the use of government edicts and official policies expanding detention and the mistreatment of Palestinians therein. No leader in the Israeli government or military can claim ignorance of this state of affairs. In fact, many Israeli officials have openly acknowledged, condoned, celebrated, or participated in torture against Palestinians in detention. Despite Palestinian, Israeli, and international parties – including within the Israeli government – sounding the alarm about widespread torture, there has been no attempt to improve conditions, end torture, or hold perpetrators to account. Israel’s policy and practice of torture and ill-treatment, and its failure to stop and properly punish it, are clear violations of the Convention against Torture (CAT).³

Note that most of the sources for the following analysis predate the release of nearly 2,000 Palestinian prisoners as part of the October 2025 ceasefire agreement, which introduced an enormous amount of new evidence of torture and ill-treatment in Israeli detention. This new testimony elevates the urgency of this issue for the Committee against Torture’s review and intervention.

II. Israel’s Systematic Practices of Torture and Ill-Treatment

Palestinian, Israeli, and international human rights organizations have documented the systemic torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees that Israel holds in prisons and military-run detention centers long before October 7, 2023, since at least the Israeli occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) began in 1967, as evidenced by a myriad of past submissions to this Committee.⁴ The systemic practice of torture in Israeli prisons has intensified

³ At least one high-ranking Israeli official has even expressed awareness of the illegality of the present policies and practices of torture under CAT. Remarkably, in his 2024 letter warning Ben Gvir about the repercussions of allowing such a policy and practice of torture to continue, Shin Bet Chief Ronen Bar wrote: “The treatment of conditions of imprisonment in international law is relatively well developed, and these are regulated in detail in the laws of war and human rights law. Israel has difficulty refuting the claims against it, at least some of which are well-founded, such that its conduct may be considered an international crime (“inhumane treatment”) and a violation of an international treaty (the Convention Against Torture). Beyond the serious harm to Israel’s ability to achieve its goals in war, this conduct also creates personal criminal exposure in international tribunals (ICC) and national courts.” Yoav Zeiton, *The full warning document from the head of the Shin Bet: All the dangers of the incarceration crisis*, YNet (July 2, 2024), <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/hj2hgezv0#!replace>. (See full letter attached from Ronen Bar here, linked in article:

https://ynet-pic1.yit.co.il/picsserver5/wcm_upload_files/2024/07/02/Hkp111DZPC/Binder123.pdf).

⁴ See, e.g., *Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories: Submission to the United Nations Committee against Torture – 57th Session*, Amnesty International (March 25, 2016),

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/3688/2016/en/>; *Joint Alternative Report on Israel to the Committee against Torture*, OMCT (April 13, 2016),

<https://www.omct.org/en/resources/reports/joint-alternative-report-on-israel-to-the-committee-against-torture>; *United Against Torture (UAT) Coalition – Alternative Report for Consideration Regarding Israel’s Fourth Periodic Report to the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT)*, United Against Torture (September 1, 2008),

https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cat/docs/ngos/UAT_Israel42_1.pdf; *Submission to the United Nations Committee Against Torture in relation to Israel’s One-Year Follow-up Response to the Committee’s Concluding Observations from May 2016*, Adalah (August 2017),

in recent years. Since his appointment in December 2022, National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir has led efforts to escalate abuse of Palestinian detainees and aggravate the conditions of their detention in Israeli prison.⁵ It is within the context of this background of escalating abuses that prison conditions, torture, and ill-treatment of Palestinian detainees have dramatically worsened since the Hamas attacks of October 7, 2023. Israeli forces have since captured and detained thousands more Palestinians across the OPT and expanded its network of detention centers beyond the formal prison system. The attendant increase in torture has been widely documented.⁶

Upon arrest and throughout the period of detention, both in Israeli Prison Service (IPS) custody and in military custody, Palestinians have reported being subjected to various forms of torture and ill-treatment, including beatings, invasive body searches, stress positions, denial of medication, chemical burns, physical abuse causing permanent damage to sight and hearing, and forms of psychological abuse, such as threats of family arrest and harassment. Notably, Israeli authorities have subjected Palestinians to radical, traumatizing medical procedures, with

https://www.adalah.org/uploads/uploads/Full_CAT_Submission_August_2017.pdf; *ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES (OPT) BRIEFING TO THE COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE*, Amnesty International (September 2008), https://www.amnesty.be/IMG/pdf/briefing_to_the_committee_against_torture.pdf.

⁵ Daniel Estrin, *Israel appoints far-right politician with a history of inciting racism as national security minister*, NPR (November 26, 2022),

<https://www.npr.org/2022/11/26/1139266678/israel-appoints-far-right-politician-with-a-history-of-inciting-racism-as-nation>; Ashraf Bader, *Ben-Gvir's Policies Directed against Prisoners and the Transformation That Occurred after October 7*, (March 4, 2024), <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1655279>.

⁶ See, e.g., *Unlawfully Detained, Tortured, and Starved: The Plight of Gaza's Medical Workers in Israeli Custody*, Physicians for Human Rights Israel (February 2025),

https://www.phr.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/6265_DetentionReport_Eng.pdf; *Welcome to Hell: The Israeli Prison System as a Network of Torture Camps*, B'tselem (August 1 2024),

https://www.btselem.org/sites/default/files/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell_eng.pdf; *Israeli authorities, Palestinian armed groups are responsible for war crimes, other grave violations of international law*, UN Inquiry finds, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (June 12, 2024),

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/06/israeli-authorities-palestinian-armed-groups-are-responsible-war-crimes>; *Israel's escalating use of torture against Palestinians in custody a preventable crime against humanity: UN experts*, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (August 5, 2024),

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/08/israels-escalating-use-torture-against-palestinians-custody-preventable>; *Detention Fact Sheet 2025*, The Committee Against Torture (June 2025),

<https://stoptorture.org.il/en/detention-fact-sheet-2025/>; Daniel J N Wieishut & Bettina Steiner-Birmanns, *Violence Toward Palestinians in Israeli Prisons During the "Iron Swords" War*, Bioethics (September 15, 2025),

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40947966/>; *Israel must end mass incommunicado detention and torture of Palestinians from Gaza*, Amnesty International (July 18, 2024),

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/07/israel-must-end-mass-incommunicado-detention-and-torture-of-palestinians-from-gaza/>; Milena Ansari & Bill Van Esveld, *Israeli Lawmakers Try to Block Torture Prosecutions*,

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/31/israeli-lawmakers-try-block-torture-prosecutions>; *In Israeli army camps, Gazan detainees subjected to torture and degrading treatment*, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor (January 7, 2024),

<https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6082/In-Israeli-army-camps,-Gazan-detainees-subjected-to-torture-and-degrading-treatment>; Wasem Sa, *(ICSPR) Issues a Comprehensive Position Paper: Thousands of Palestinian Detainees Subjected to Torture and Enforced Disappearance in Israeli Prisons Since October 7 – Systematic Crimes Amounting to Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, International Commission to Support Palestinians Rights

(July 3, 2025),

<https://en.icspr.ps/icspr-issues-a-comprehensive-position-paper-thousands-of-palestinian-detainees-subjected-to-torture-and-enforced-disappearance-in-israeli-prisons-since-october-7-systematic-crimes-amounting-to-genocide/>.

Palestinian detainees having limbs amputated and others serving as practice subjects for medical staff trainees.⁷

Alongside direct violence, ill-treatment of Palestinian detainees has included extreme overcrowding, with Shin Bet Chief Ronen Bar writing in a July 2024 letter on prison conditions that “due to the dramatic increase in the number of prisoners following the war . . . [t]he number of prisoners exceeds 21,000 and the standard is 14,000.”⁸ Similarly, the Israeli Public Defender’s Office reported in July 2025 that Israeli prisons were over 160 percent capacity.⁹ In addition to severe overcrowding, the Israeli Public Defender’s Office also documented that Palestinian detainees experience “poor sanitary conditions, poor hygienic conditions and pest problems; inadequate ventilation conditions; lack of basic equipment for prisoners; . . . a significant shortage of food to the point of reports of extreme hunger among detainees; denial of continuous access to drinking water in certain places; lack of basic medical care and an acute outbreak of scabies in security detention wings, and more.”¹⁰ Palestinian detainees have also been denied the right to religious worship,¹¹ deprived entirely of sunlight or lighting in their cells,¹² subjected to audio torture and intentionally deprived of sleep,¹³ and subjected to extreme temperatures.¹⁴

Case Studies: Physical, Psychological, and Other Torture of Palestinian Detainees

The following incidents highlight the breadth of torture endured by Palestinians in Israeli detention. In all these cases, Palestinian detainees were subjected to more than one kind of ill-treatment.

⁷ One Israeli whistleblower referred to the Sde Teiman prison camp as “a paradise for interns” and admitted he was not qualified to administer some of the treatments he was ordered to give to detainees. CNN’s International Investigations and Visuals teams, *Strapped down, blindfolded, held in diapers: Israeli whistleblowers detail abuse of Palestinians in shadowy detention center*, CNN (May 11, 2024), <https://www.cnn.com/2024/05/10/middleeast/israel-sde-teiman-detention-whistleblowers-intl-cmd>.

⁸ *The Shin Bet chief’s threatening letter revealed: “In the absence of a solution - early release of prisoners,”* JDN (July 1, 2024), <https://www.jdn.co.il/news/2227434/>.

⁹ The same report illustrates the consequences of this overcrowding - about 20% of prisoners are without beds, and 61% of all prisoners are allocated less than 3 square meters each. The 2015 European CPT’s minimum recommended space allowance for prisoners in multi-person cells is 4 square meters. (*Living space per prisoner in prison establishments: CPT standards*, European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) (December 15, 2015), <https://rm.coe.int/16806cc449>) In a 2017 ruling, Israel’s own Supreme Court mandated 4 square meters per prisoner exclusive of showers and lavatories[#] as minimum living conditions for prisoners. This has been circumvented by amendments declaring a state of emergency which have been renewed multiple times since it was first enacted. *Law to Amend the Prisons Ordinance (No. 64 – Temporary Order – Iron Swords)*, Israeli Knesset (October 16, 2023 - July 23, 2025), <https://main.knesset.gov.il/activity/legislation/laws/pages/lawbill.aspx?t=lawreshumot&lawitemid=2210585/>.

¹⁰ *Public Defender’s Office Annual Activity Report 2024* pp. 73, Israeli Public Defender’s Office (2025), <https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/dynamiccollectorresultitem/sanegorya-annual-report-2025/he/Sanegorya-Annual-report-2025.pdf>.

¹¹ *Id.*, pp. 39-41.

¹² *Id.*, pp. 28-29; 42-43.

¹³ *Id.*, pp. 53-54.

¹⁴ *Id.*, pp. 81-82.

Case Study 1: M. A. T., Subjected to Beatings, Chemical Baths, Stress Positions

M. A. T., a mechanic from Gaza, was detained by Israeli forces on suspicion of involvement with Hamas, according to the *British Broadcasting Company (BBC)* in April 2025.¹⁵ He and other men who were captured reported to the *BBC* that the torture had “begun at the moment of their arrest.” The Israeli military extensively tortured M. A. T. in cruel and unusual ways: in addition to beatings with fists, sticks, and rifles, M. A. T. was threatened with brutalization by dogs, forced into stress positions for hours at a time, bathed in acid, and subjected to compound chemical burns.

The *BBC* reported that “soldiers mixed chemicals used for cleaning into a pot . . . and dunked his head in them.” The soldiers also used an air freshener can and a lighter as a weapon, burning him so severely that M. A. T. “thrashed around like an animal in an attempt to put the fire out.” M. A. T. was eventually given medical treatment for his injuries in Israel, where he needed skin grafts.

M. A. T. said treatment for wounds sustained during his detainment mainly occurred at Sde Teiman, where he was cuffed naked to a bed and given a diaper instead of access to a toilet, as is a routine practice at that facility.¹⁶ He also reported being forced into a stress position on his knees from 5 a.m. until 10 p.m.

A photograph published by the *BBC* showed large red welts covering much of the skin of M. A. T.’s back.

Case Study 2: A. A. S., Routinely Attacked by Tear Gas, Fingernails Removed

A. A. S. was a 17-year-old Palestinian who was detained in Megiddo prison, according to the *BBC* in April 2025.¹⁷ A. A. S. described being regularly tear-gassed by Israeli prison guards in his cell within the youth wing of the prison: “We would feel suffocated and unable to breathe well for four days after each tear gas attack.” Child detainees such as himself were not spared any abuse, A. A. S. said. “There was no consideration of us being children, they treated us like the militants of 7 October.” During interrogations, A. A. S. also said that his nails were forcefully pulled off, showing his injuries to the *BBC*.

Case Study 3: N. M., Publicly Strip Searched, Separated from Children, Beaten

N. M., a 39-year-old mother of five from Gaza City, was forced to evacuate her home after the Israeli military began bombing Gaza after the October 7th attacks, according to testimony

¹⁵ Alice Cuddy, *Chemical burns, assaults, electric shocks - Gazans tell BBC of torture in Israeli detention*, BBC (April 7, 2025), <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn7vje365mo>.

¹⁶ Lucy Williamson & BBC Eye Investigations, *Gazans ‘shackled and blindfolded’ at Israel hospital*, BBC (May 20, 2024), <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/crgygdr7vezo>.

¹⁷ *Chemical burns, assaults, electric shocks - Gazans tell BBC of torture in Israeli detention*, BBC (April 7, 2025), <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn7vje365mo>.

collected by B'tselem in March 2024.¹⁸ After fleeing Israeli advances into Gaza for months, N. M. was sheltering at a school with her family when Israeli forces detained everyone taking refuge there. Men were separated from women and children, and all were forced to publicly strip down to their underwear. N. M. was separated from her youngest child and subsequently strip searched and scanned with a metal detector before being interrogated. During the interrogation N. M. was told that if she did not help her captors find out if Hamas members were also at the school, she would never see her child again.

N. M. was then zip tied and taken to a jeep, driven to Zikim in southern Israel, and then forced to sit on the ground with her hands tied for hours, before being put back into the jeep again. When taken out of the vehicle again, N. M. was pushed by her captors and fell to the ground, causing her face to bleed. She was then taken to an outside cage with a few other women, with a single mattress and blanket provided for all of them. During this time, N. M. and her fellow detainees were handcuffed and blindfolded.

Eventually, N. M. was taken from the cage and onto a bus, where she was photographed and forced to kiss the Israeli flag. During this time, she had her head “bashed” against the side of the bus. She was transported to Damun Prison. She was then placed inside a cell with four other women, which she believes was meant to hold at most one or two people. She spent 20 days at Damun, before being released back into Gaza.¹⁹

Case Study 4: M. A., Severely Beaten Resulting in Broken Bones, Mock Execution, Unknown Chemical Agent

M. A., who was detained by Israeli forces in his home in Gaza and accused of murder, was severely beaten, stripped, shackled with chains on his hands and feet, and blindfolded while in detention at Gush Etzion, according to *Middle East Eye* in July 2024.²⁰ M.A. said in video testimony that his legs were broken and burned while in Israeli custody. Soldiers also wrapped him in a large rug and beat him with metal rods. At one point, his Israeli captors threatened to execute him, and even went through the motions of a mock execution. Afterwards, he was severely beaten inside a vehicle, and his captors sprayed him with an unknown chemical, which made him unable to breathe until he fell unconscious. He then woke inside what he refers to as the “Ofer clinic.”

M. A. was transferred to what he referred to as the Negev prison, likely referring to K'tziot Prison, in December 2023. There, M. A. was stripped naked and beaten with metal rods and metal detector devices. His brother, who had been in detention for many years prior to October

¹⁸ Nabilah Miqdad (39), mother of five from Gaza City (Testimony given to B'Tselem field researchers Olfat al-Kurd and Muhammad Sabah on 15 March 2024), B'tselem (August 1, 2024), https://www.btselem.org/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell/testimony_of_nabilah_miqdad.

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ Middle East Eye (@MiddleEastEye), X (July 13, 2024, 8:10 AM), <https://x.com/MiddleEastEye/status/1812142642810994821>.

7th, 2023, was killed during an hour-long beating. Of the 3,000 prisoners held at this prison, M. A. estimated 2,000 were suffering from scabies, which he said Israeli officials purposefully left untreated so as to decrease the quality of life of the prisoners. M. A. was also reportedly denied adequate water and was fed rotten food. He estimated he lost nearly half his body weight during imprisonment.

Case Study 5: A. A., Denied Medication, Beaten, Imprisoned in Inhuman Conditions, and Permanent Hearing Loss

A. A., a 53-year-old man from Hebron, was detained by the Israeli military in the early morning of October 8, 2023, fewer than 24 hours after the October 7th Hamas attacks, according to testimony collected by B'tselem in April 2024.²¹ A. A. was zip-tied and dragged to a military vehicle, where he reported seeing other Palestinian detainees being beaten. A. A. was not given his diabetes or asthma medication until he was put in a prison cell in Gush Etzion detention facility.

While in captivity, A. A. said he was beaten multiple times. He also watched Israeli guards brutalize others, including one he believed would die from his injuries. After the severe beatings, two of the men were placed in A. A.'s cell and denied medical treatment. According to A. A.'s testimony, "the second detainee they put in the cell was so badly beaten that he couldn't move. His whole body was bruised and his wrists were swollen, with open wounds, from the zip ties." Dogs were also used to attack a young detainee.

A. A. described severe overcrowding and deprivation of basic needs inside Ofer Prison, with 11 people forced into a cell with only five beds and no windows. He described cold temperatures and insufficient food and showers. The second facility he was transferred to, K'tziot, was even worse, with the cell "lack[ing] the most basic items for subsistence," including no blankets, mattresses, food, or medicine. "I didn't even dare ask for my medicine, because I was afraid they would beat me or other inmates if I did. In the following days, they brought us one meal a day, at night. It consisted of some rice, half a tomato, half a cucumber, and three slices of bread for each inmate."

Living conditions only worsened during his imprisonment. A. A. remained in captivity for five more months, during which the beatings continued frequently, he was given only a fraction of his necessary medication; food and water were limited with one water bottle split between him and his cell mates daily, water in the sink and toilet only running for an hour per day; the lights were on for three minutes a day; and prayer was forbidden.

²¹ *Ashraf al-Muhtaseb (53), a father of five from Hebron (Testimony given to B'Tselem field researcher Manal al-Ja'bari on 15 April 2024)*, B'tselem (August 1, 2024), https://www.btselem.org/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell/testimony_ashraf_al_muhtaseb.

A. A. was left with permanent injuries. In one beating, he was kicked in the head repeatedly, resulting in permanent hearing damage. He was also beaten during his release in April 2024. Upon reaching home, he was rushed to the hospital where doctors found he had broken bones and lost 31 kilograms of weight.

Notably, A. A. observed his treatment was better than that inflicted by the Israelis on detainees from Gaza:

I saw how they were held entirely naked, with their hands and feet tied, out in the cold yard. When they were given food, they weren't untied. They had to eat kneeling on the ground like animals, while male and female prison guards beat them, swore at them and abused them. Every prisoner in the world is entitled to rights – but since 7 October, there have been no rights here. The people who did all these things are civil servants.

Case Study 6: M. A. F., Blinded by Torture with Electrified Iron Rods

M. A. F., a man from Gaza whose leg was amputated after an Israeli bombing attack in 2015, was detained at Kamal Adwan Hospital in 2024, according to journalist Osama Kahlout, who interviewed him after his release as part of the October 2025 Gaza ceasefire agreement.²² M. A. F. experienced severe torture during his eight months in Israeli custody. This included “torture with iron bars and electric shocks, which led to him losing his sight after waking up from a coma for two hours.” In the video testimony, M. A. F. can be seen with visible damage to both of his eyes. M. A. F. currently lives in a tent, as his home was destroyed during Israeli attacks on Gaza.

Case Study 7: Z. A., Humiliated, Beaten, Imprisoned in Inhuman Conditions, and Denied Right to Freely Practice Religion

Z. A., a man from Jerusalem, was detained on October 12, 2023 by Israeli forces in an unmarked vehicle, who Z.A. suspects were part of the Special Police Unit, or YAMAM, according to testimony collected by B'tselem in April 2024.²³ Z. A. had previously spent seven years in Israeli detention and recounted that during this most recent detention, the conditions were unlike anything he had experienced before. The mistreatment began immediately upon arrest. His captors mocked his weight, denied him water, accused him of connections to Hamas and ISIS, and forced him to kneel for hours in severe pain. During this time, he heard screams and cries from other detainees.

At the first detention facility, guards threw away Z. A.'s wedding ring, strip searched and beat him, and sat him on a concrete bench with his hands and feet tied for an hour. He was eventually transferred to a cell with a total of 14 detainees, meant only for 10. Everyone in his cell was

²² @osamakahlout, Instagram (October 15, 2025, 4:17 PM), <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DP1hVk8CsIA/>.

²³ Z.A., from East Jerusalem (Testimony given to B'Tselem field researcher 'Amer 'Aruri on 7 April 2024), B'tselem (August 1, 2024), https://www.btselem.org/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell/testimony_of_z_a.

beaten three times a day – slapped, kicked, or hit with “iron batons and wooden clubs.” The lights were left on in Z. A.'s cell overnight. There was no hot water in the showers.

In K'tziot, alongside initial beatings and stress positions, Z. A. described abysmal, inhumane conditions he and the other prisoners endured there. When he was taken to his cell, he said other detainees were forced to stand against the wall facing away from the guards as they entered and that some were shaking with fear. All prisoners were forced to kneel with their heads on the ground and their hands above their heads in one corner of the room during roll call. For much of his time, lights were not turned on except during roll call. He was only permitted a shower once every two weeks, without soap or towels. The toilets in the cell only had running water for one hour each day, and if detainees used the toilet outside that hour, they would have to wait to flush their waste. Two 1.5 liter bottles were shared by Z. A. and his 10 cellmates each day. Religious worship was also severely restricted, with Qurans, prayer mats, and prayer beads confiscated and praying out loud prohibited. Detainees were allowed no time outside. Due to lack of water and poor food, his fellow detainees were suffering from skin conditions and hemorrhoids, which were not treated by the prison medic. Physical violence and degradation also persisted. During daily searches, everyone in his cell was beaten, with their clothes and mattresses purposefully wet.

Z.A. was released in March 2024, after having his detention arbitrarily extended twice. Before being released, his captors put him into the same kneeling stress position one last time for four hours, while his family waited for him outside.

Case Study 8: S. J. F., Beaten, Restrained For an Entire Week, Detained Outside in an Open Shed, and Denied Basic Necessities and Medical Care

S. J. F., a 32-year-old woman from Gaza, was detained by the Israeli military in February 2024 at Al-Amal Hospital in February 2024, according to testimony collected by B'tselem in April 2024.²⁴ From the moment she was detained, she was subjected to multiple rounds of physical assault. S. J. F. recounted that men at the facility were strip searched, followed by a nurse. When she told the Israeli soldiers she volunteered for the Red Crescent, she was detained, put into an armored personnel carrier, and told she was being taken to Israel. During transit, she was blindfolded and beaten with a rifle on her neck and head. While being transferred to another personnel carrier, she was hit again and held at gunpoint by one of her captors before being picked up and thrown inside the vehicle. She was then taken to a tent, searched again, and put onto a bus headed for an unknown location. Once off the bus, she was forced into a stress position and pinned to the ground, during which she felt she was “becoming paralyzed.” Her pain caused her to cry.

²⁴ Shaimaa Abu Jiab-Abu Foul (32) from Jabalya Refugee Camp (Testimony given over the phone to B'Tselem field researcher Olfat al-Kurd on 15 April 2024), B'tselem (August 1, 2024), https://www.btselem.org/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell/testimony_of_shaimaa_abu_jiab_abu_foul.

S. J. F. was then strip searched once more and taken to a medical clinic before being put in a vehicle again and taken to Anatot Prison. Once there, S. J. F. was forced to sit, blindfolded and with hands and feet tied, inside an “open shed surrounded by a barbed wire fence” with men from Gaza. She remained with her hands and feet tied for a whole week. The toilet provided to her and the other detainees had no running water and was not cleaned. Repeated beatings continued. S. J. F. and the other detainees were forced to stand next to the barbed wire fence daily and were passed their food through it.

S. J. F. reported she and the other detainees were also deprived of sleep. They were allowed only three hours of sleep per night, music was used to keep detainees awake, and S. J. F. was not permitted to sleep at all in her last three days at Anatot. She was eventually transferred again to Damun Prison, where she was held for 41 days and lived in “filthy,” cold, and damp conditions. Paracetamol was the only medical treatment provided, and the food was poor quality, or even rotten or full of insects during Ramadan. After 48 days of detention in total, she was told she was being released, before being taken back to Anatot Prison, forced to sign a document in Hebrew (which she could not read), strip searched, and interrogated about Hamas once again. Finally, in April 2024, S. J. F. was put on a bus and released at the Karem Shalom crossing into Gaza, where she was reunited with her husband.

Case Study 9: O. A., Dropped From a Five-Story Building, Beat, Placed in Stress Positions, Subjected to Audio Torture, and Subjected to Inhumane Living Conditions

O. A., 16, was held for 26 days between June and July 2024 after the Israeli military detained him and 34 other Palestinians receiving food aid at gunpoint, according to Defense for Children International Palestine.²⁵ O. A. was reportedly hung upside down from the roof of the building where he was detained and allowed to free-fall for five stories before being restrained by the rope. He was taken to Sde Teiman where he endured beatings, electric shocks, stress positions and sleep deprivation. He reported that during interrogations, he was forced to view explicit pictures of his family members. He also reported extreme temperatures, unsanitary conditions, and being kept in the “Disco Room” – “a cage-like room that played extremely loud and chaotic music, where Omar endured constant headaches every morning and evening.” Prisoners that refused to eat the “spoiled peas and rotten eggs” they were served, O. A. said, would be beaten, as would detainees trying to pray.

Case Study 10: Severely Inhumane Conditions, Repeated Amputations, and Medical Abuse at Sde Teiman

An Israeli doctor working at a field hospital at the Sde Teiman detention facility wrote a letter to in a letter sent last week to Israel's defense minister, health minister, and attorney general

²⁵ *Palestinian child seeking aid tortured in Israeli military detention camp*, Defense for Children International Palestine (August 13, 2025), https://www.dci-palestine.org/palestinian_child_seeking_aid_tortured_in_israeli_military_detention_camp.

describing “conditions that he said could compromise the inmates' health and put the government at risk of violating the law,” according to *Haaretz* in April 2024.²⁶ The doctor wrote that detainees “are fed through straws, defecate in diapers, and are held [in] constant restraints . . . handcuffed by all four limbs, regardless of how dangerous they are deemed.”

As a result of these conditions, the doctor recounted that two detainees had to undergo amputations as a result of injuries from their restraints the same week he wrote the letter. The doctor further stressed that:

From the first days of the medical facility's operation until today, I have faced serious ethical dilemmas. More than that, I am writing [this letter] to warn you that the facilities' operations do not comply with a single section among those dealing with health in the Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law.

The doctor noted that injuries resulting from the restraints put on detainees at Sde Teiman “require repeated surgical interventions.” In addition to the two cases mentioned in the doctor’s letter, another detainee had one hand amputated because of injuries from plastic restraints, according to two other sources.

Besides highlighting the abusive treatment he witnessed, the doctor reported that medical staffing at Sde Teiman was so insufficient that it had been fatal, and that the conditions violated the law. Detainees hospitalized for major operations such as abdominal surgeries were returned to Sde Teiman “about an hour of post-op observation during recovery to the Sde Teiman medical facility, which is staffed most of the day by a single doctor, accompanied by a nursing team, some with no more than medic training.” This caused “complications and sometimes even in the patient's death.”

The doctor expressed awareness that these conditions were in violation of Israeli law:

This makes all of us – the medical teams and you, those in charge of us in the health and defense ministries – complicit in the violation of Israeli law, and perhaps worse for me as a doctor, in the violation of my basic commitment to patients, wherever they are, as I swore when I graduated 20 years ago.

III. Sexual Torture of Palestinian Adults and Children

²⁶ Hagar Shezaf & Michael Hauser Tov, *Doctor at Israeli Field Hospital for Detained Gazans: 'We Are All Complicit in Breaking the Law'*, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-04-04/ty-article/.premium/doctor-at-idf-field-hospital-for-detained-gazan-s-we-are-all-complicit-in-breaking-law/0000018e-a59c-dfed-ad9f-afdfb5ce0000> (Archived at: <https://archive.is/OcP3K>).

In addition to beatings, deprivation of basic needs, inhuman conditions, psychological abuse, and other torture documented within Israeli prisons and detention facilities, Israeli authorities use sexual torture pervasively and indiscriminately against Palestinian men, women, and children in detention. Sexual torture of Palestinian has included, but has not been limited to, gang rape, rape with foreign objects, targeted beating and dog attacks of genitals, frequent and purposefully humiliating strip searches, and forced sexual acts. On multiple occasions, survivors said these acts were filmed by the perpetrators.

Sexual torture can leave “enduring scars that impact victims and future generations emotionally, physiologically, reproductively and socioeconomically” and have “consequences for families, communities, and ethnic or religious groups, aiming to break their spirit and will.”²⁷ Above and beyond other forms of torture, the widespread use of sexual torture is indicative of Israel’s total dehumanization of Palestinians as a people. The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel in September 2024 determined, “[a]cts of sexual violence documented by the Commission were motivated by extreme hatred towards and a desire to dehumanize the Palestinian people.”²⁸ The UN Human Rights Council likewise found in March 2024 that “[i]ncidents of arbitrary arrest and sexual violence amounting to torture and others forms of ill treatment form a part of a broader pattern of targeting and persecution of Palestinian men and boys as means of humiliation and subjugation.”²⁹

Case Studies: Sexual Torture of Palestinian Detainees

Below are numerous examples of individual cases of sexual torture that demonstrate the range and extremity of Israel’s acts against Palestinian detainees. These case studies span all ages and genders, and all suffered elements the inhumane conditions, torture, and ill-treatment described in the previous section of this report in addition to the sexualized torture described here. It is important to note that even though evidence of Israel’s sexual torture of Palestinians is extensive

²⁷ United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, *Fact Sheet Sexual Torture*, A/79/181 Factsheet, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/sexual-torture-fact-sheet-july-2025-fin.pdf>.

²⁸ *Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel (Seventy-ninth session, Item 71 of the provisional agenda)*, United Nations General Assembly (September 11, 2024), <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n24/262/79/pdf/n2426279.pdf>.

²⁹ “*More than a human can bear*”: *Israel’s systematic use of sexual, reproductive and other forms of gender-based violence since 7 October 2023 (Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel)*, United Nations Human Rights Council (March 13, 2025), <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session58/a-hrc-58-crp-6.pdf>.

and well-documented,³⁰ it may nonetheless be incomplete, as survivors are discouraged from reporting their experiences due to social stigma and fear of retribution by Israeli forces.³¹

Case Study 1: Gang Rape at Sde Teiman

According to multiple reports from July and August 2024, nine Israeli soldiers stationed at Sde Teiman prison camp severely beat and raped a Palestinian man detained in Gaza. The soldiers inserted a foreign object into his rectum, puncturing and tearing it, as well as causing damage to other internal organs.³²

Case Study 2: Rape with Foreign Objects at Sde Teiman

According to a UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) report from 2024, an unnamed 41-year-old Palestinian man detained at Sde Teiman reported he was forced to “sit on something like a hot metal stick,” leaving burns on his anus. He also reported that he witnessed a fellow detainee get raped with an “electric stick,” which resulted in the man's death.³³

Case Study 3: I. A., Repeatedly Strip Searched, Denied Menstrual Care, and Other Humiliating Treatment

I. A., a 20-year-old Palestinian woman with Israeli citizenship, was subjected to repeated humiliating strip searches while in Israeli custody at Hasharon Prison, according to testimony

³⁰ See, e.g., “In testimonies to Euro-Med Monitor, women from Gaza report being subjected to sexual violence, torture by Israeli forces,” Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor (February 27, 2024), <https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6188/In-testimonies-to-Euro-Med-Monitor,-women-from-Gaza-report-being-subjected-to-sexual-violence,-torture-by-Israeli-forces>.

³¹ The Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling and other activists have previously described these conditions in written and verbal submissions to the United Nations and in media. See, e.g., *Written statement* submitted by Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status (Human Rights Council, Fifty-fifth session)*, United Nations Human Rights Council (March 19, 2024), <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g24/046/29/pdf/g2404629.pdf>; United Nations Human Rights Council, *Kifeya Khraim & Witness #3 | Public Hearings, COI Palestine, East Jerusalem & Israel, 11/03/2025*, YouTube (March 3, 2025), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XwjBbeUapxo>; France 24 English, *We have documented cases of sexual violence in Israeli prisons, Palestinian activist says*, YouTube (October 24, 2024), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcERYIITYZM>.

³² Bar Peleg, *Israeli Army Prosecutor: Sde Teiman Soldiers Beat, Electrified, Sodomized Gaza Detainee*, Haaretz (August 22, 2024), <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-08-22/ty-article/.premium/idf-prosecutor-sde-teiman-soldiers-beat-electrified-sodomized-gaza-detainee/00000191-796d-de08-a3f9-796f17e00000> (Archived at: <https://archive.fo/w0vgs>); Emma Graham-Harrison & Quique Kierszenbaum, *IDF charges reservist with aggravated abuse of Palestinian prisoners*, The Guardian (July 30, 2024), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/jul/30/idf-charges-reservist-with-aggravated-abuse-of-palestinian-prisoners>.

³³ *Detention and alleged ill-treatment of detainees from Gaza during Israel-Hamas War*, UNRWA (April 16, 2024), <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/detention-and-alleged-ill-treatment-detainees-gaza-during-israel-hamas-war>.

collected by B'tselem in June 2024.³⁴ She told B'tselem: “They made me kneel, naked, so they could see I wasn't hiding anything. It was so humiliating. . . . The female guard made fun of my clothes, the shape of my body, and my body hair. She made it clear that I disgusted her. As if I was tainted with something.” She recounted she was strip searched daily and that the female guards would beat the women prisoners.

I. A. described other forms of sexualized humiliation. The female guards at the prison threw another woman inmate's underwear into the toilet. When another detainee needed menstrual pads, she banged on her cell for hours before guards finally supplied two pads for a room of 12 women. Because of this shortage, “another inmate ripped off a piece of cloth from the lining of the hoodie she was wearing and used it as a pad when she got her period.” Another woman in the same cell who got her period also had to bang on the cell door for menstrual supplies and was only given toilet paper. Guards later singled her out for “banging on the door at night,” strip searched her naked, and beat her, before throwing her clothes into the toilet.³⁵

Case Study 4: Elderly Detainee Raped at Sde Teiman, Rape of Prisoners by Female Guards, Rape with Chemicals, Rape as Punishment

After two months of legal battles, an attorney from the Palestinian Prisoner's Affairs Commission was allowed to visit Sde Tieman and characterized the conditions as “beyond description.” In one instance, a detainee described the treatment of an elderly detainee at Sde Teiman, saying they were “stripped naked by young male and female soldiers, shackled, raped, and laughed at during the assault,” according to testimony collected by Quds News Network in April 2025.³⁶ Other testimony revealed that detainees were raped by female Israeli soldiers, a particularly humiliating form of violation for Palestinian men. The attorney also reported that Israeli forces “rape detainees by forcefully inserting hoses into their bodies and pumping chemicals inside.” Rape was further used as punishment for “repeated offenses” within the detention center.

Case Study 5: A. H., Filmed During Rape and Humiliation, Beaten in Genitals

A. H. reported to B'tselem that Israeli guards stripped him and other detainees, threw him on top of the others, and then attempted to force a carrot into his anus while filming the abuse on their

³⁴ I.A., in her twenties, a Palestinian citizen of Israel studying at an Israeli university (Testimony given over the phone to B'Tselem field researcher Salma a-Deb'i on 19 June 2024), B'tselem (August 1, 2024), https://www.btselem.org/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell/testimony_of_i_a.

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ Editing Team, *New Horrific Testimonies Reveal Systematic Torture and Rape of Gaza Detainees in Israeli Detention Centres*, Quds News Network (April 26, 2025), <https://qudsnen.co/new-horrific-testimonies-reveal-systematic-torture-and-rape-of-gaza-detainees-in-israeli-detention-centers/>.

cell phones: “I screamed in pain and terror. It went on like that for about three minutes.”³⁷ Additionally, he said, “[o]ne of them slapped me, and the other spat in my face and said to me in Arabic: “Yihya [sic] Sinwar will die.” They ordered me to repeat what he said.” A.H. also reported targeted beating of his genitals in the presence of other detainees, in addition to forced nudity and humiliation by female guards while unable to cover himself. During one of many subsequent strip searches, Israeli forces used a metal detector on his naked body to suggest he was hiding something in his testicles and then used pliers to seize his testicles as part of their ‘search.’

Case Study 6: M. A. S., Attacked in Genitals by Dogs

M. A. S., who was imprisoned by Israeli forces in January 2024 at the age of 16 near Khan Younis, was subjected to a range of sexualized torture, according to Drop Site News.³⁸ In addition to being stripped down to his underwear in front of his family, M. A. S. also reported that guards “frequently attacked us by unleashing large dogs on us. The dogs seemed trained to scratch our skin and attack our sensitive organs.” M. A. S. also reported targeted beating of his genitals and being denied bathroom access to the point that he was forced to urinate and defecate in the open in front of others.

Case Study 7: I. A. S., Repeatedly Strip Searched, Beaten in Genitals with Equipment, Witness to Rape with Foreign Objects and Sexual Abuse of Teenage Detainees

I. A. S., 29, reported he was subjected to and witnessed a wide range of sexual abuse in Israeli detention, according to *Sahat*, a Palestinian digital media platform. Detainees were strip searched every time they went to shower, and the guards would force them to spread their legs in order to hit their genitals with metal detectors, I. A. S. reported. Additionally, he heard that a fellow prisoner was strip searched and raped with a stick. He reported he was told by teenaged detainees that Israeli guards would grab and lift them by their genitals as a form of torture and humiliation.³⁹

Case Study 8: L. A., Denied Menstrual Supplies, Threatened With Gang Rape, Strip Searched

L. A., a 47-year-old mother of five, author, and political analyst from near Hebron in the West Bank, was detained by the Israeli military on October 26, 2023, according to testimony collected

³⁷ A.H., in his twenties, a father of one from Hebron District (Testimony given to B’Tselem field researcher Manal al-Ja’bani on 18 April 2024), B’tselem (August 1, 2024),

https://www.btselem.org/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell/testimony_of_a_h.

³⁸ Abubaker Abed, *Freed Palestinian Teen Recounts Over a Year of Abuse in Israeli Custody*, Drop Site News (March 14, 2025), <https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/palestinian-captive-gaza-abuse-minor>.

³⁹ Sahat English (@sahatenglish), X (October 30, 2024, 12:55 PM), <https://x.com/sahatenglish/status/1851714520647110938>.

by B'tselem in December 2023.⁴⁰ In detention in Ofer Prison, she started her period and was denied menstrual supplies. Soon after, she was interrogated, called a “whore” repeatedly, and told that “there were 20 soldiers in the room and that they would rape [her] like Hamas-ISIS raped Jewish women in southern Israel.” She was eventually transferred to Hasharon Prison, where she was denied basic necessities, including, once again, menstrual supplies. L. A. reported that she went so long without changing her menstrual pad that she “started having terrible headaches and dizzy spells.” Additionally, L. A. and her cell mates were stripped naked after they were accused of hiding cell phones.

L. A. was transferred to Damun Prison and placed in Unit 3, a closed block with 55 female prisoners. This was the first time she was allowed to shower and given menstrual supplies. She was transferred to Damun Prison, then to Ofer Prison, and finally to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on October 30, 2023, after being searched while fully naked one last time.

Case Study 9: 12-Year-Old Urinated on by Israeli Forces in Gaza

N. A., 12, who was detained by Israeli forces within Gaza, reported that his captors would bring “their children and adult settlers to pee on the prisoners,” according to *Middle East Eye*.⁴¹

Case Study 10: F. B., Forced to Wear a Diaper, Witness to Fellow Detainee Being Raped by Dogs

F. B., a lawyer in Israeli custody for 45 days from January to February 2024, was forced to wear a diaper for two days straight, according to Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor.⁴² F. B. also reported being forced to watch a fellow detainee be raped by dogs and said that he was made to fear he would be the next victim.

Case Study 11: O. Witness to Forced Sexual Acts with Other Detainees, Threatened with Castration

O. told the *BBC* that while at K'tziot Prison, he witnessed Israeli prison guards force other detainees to perform oral sex on one another: “I saw it with my own eyes. It wasn't penetrative

⁴⁰ Lama al-Fakhuri (47), a mother of five who is an author and political analyst from Khallet Sharif [M2], west of Hebron (Testimony given to B'tselem field researcher Manal al-Ja'bari on 5 December 2023), B'tselem (August 1, 2024), https://www.btsalem.org/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell/testimony_of_lama_al_fakhur.

⁴¹ Middle East Eye (@MiddleEastEye), X (April 20, 2024, 10:45 AM), <https://x.com/MiddleEastEye/status/1781740866157040048>.

⁴² Gaza: Israeli army systematically uses police dogs to brutally attack Palestinian civilians, with at least one reported rape, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor (June 27, 2024), <https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6383/Gaza:-Israeli-army-systematically-uses-police-dogs-to-brutally-attack-Palestinian-civilians,-with-at-least-one-reported-rape>.

sex. He would tell one guy to suck another guy. It was obligatory.” O. also reported his captors stripped him naked, hit him in “sensitive places,” and threatened him with castration.⁴³

Case Study 12: Raped with Sticks, Rape by a Police Dog

An unnamed man recounted in a televised interview with *Al Araby Network* how he was raped with sticks by Israeli guards.⁴⁴ He also watched a fellow detainee being raped by a police dog at the direction of its handlers:

I was raped in a brutal manner inside the Israeli occupation prisons. They dragged me out from inside the section where I lived to [a] place [that] was not known to me. They stripped me of my clothes and they began the act of rape. Rape with sticks. And this is a very, very, very small part. And I am ashamed to talk about it, compared to what Gaza Strip detainees were subjected to. They force the captive to prostrate on his knees, and they make the police dog rape him.

Case Study 13: Multiple Incidents of Sexual Abuse Against Palestinian Women, Documented by the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling (WCLAC)

In written and verbal testimony submitted to the UN in March 2024, WCLAC documented numerous instances of women being sexually abused while in Israeli custody. While individual women are mostly not named in this documentation, there is a clear pattern of abuse:

Many female prisoners testified that following October 7th, appalling incidents of torture and sexual violence within Israeli prisons have increased. These including threats of rape and sexual assault, degrading strip searches of the prisoners, collective naked searches, verbal sexual harassment, and the use of menstruation as a means of physical and psychological pressure on the prisoners. This is achieved by depriving them of sanitary pads, hygiene items and necessary clothing for changing, restricting bathroom usage, violating privacy, forced unveiling of Hijabi women, capturing and circulating their images on personal phones of soldiers and investigators, violating religious beliefs by forcibly removing the hijab, insulting and cursing, depriving female prisoners of their basic needs, lack of personal hygiene items, and overcrowding in rooms.⁴⁵

The lawyer of one prisoner, A. A., told WCLAC that all women were strip searched in humiliating and degrading ways, being forced to “turn around, open their legs, sit down” while

⁴³ Alice Cuddy, *Chemical burns, assaults, electric shocks - Gazans tell BBC of torture in Israeli detention*, BBC (April 7, 2025), <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn7vje365rno>.

⁴⁴ Translating Falasteen (Palestine) (@translatingpal), X (October 15, 2025, 2:52 PM), <https://x.com/translatingpal/status/1978579838416953767>.

⁴⁵ *Written statement* submitted by Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status (Human Rights Council, Fifty-fifth session)* p. 3, United Nations Human Rights Council (March 19, 2024), <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g24/046/29/pdf/g2404629.pdf>.

they were naked.⁴⁶ A journalist, L. K., and another woman H. H., testified Israeli soldiers threatened them with rape and sexual assault after they were detained.⁴⁷

L. S., a 25-year-old woman, was “forcibly fully-undressed and subjected to severe beatings targeting her genitals” while she was in Israeli custody under suspicion of being affiliated with Hamas. WCLAC also documented videos showing Israeli officers “bodily searching and harassing school girls [on] their way to school.”⁴⁸

In March 2025, WCLAC and an unnamed partner organization gave verbal testimony to the UN that Palestinian women have reported they were sexually harassed at checkpoints and receiving beatings on breasts and genitals within detention centers.⁴⁹

In addition, WCLAC reported a woman had foreign objects inserted in her for “inspection” by female soldiers; another woman had been repeatedly strip searched on film before being gang raped twice; also on film, by sets of male soldiers at Sde Tieman. The testimony included repeated accounts of sexual humiliation including, but not limited to, being forced to strip naked in front of family members and forcing unrelated men, women, and children to undress one another.⁵⁰ WCLAC reported that Israeli forces have also taken compromising photos of women in custody, which could be later used for blackmail.⁵¹

WCLAC noted that similarities between sexual violations reported at checkpoints, prisons, and in home invasion scenarios suggests either coordination via policy or a widespread culture of sexual violence within the Israeli military and other Israeli forces against Palestinian women.⁵²

Notably, the UN testimony noted that on one occasion, a woman had given testimony of rape by an Israeli soldier but later asked the organization not to publish it out of fear of reprisal.⁵³

IV. Torture as Israeli Policy and Practice

Torture and ill-treatment of Palestinians by Israeli forces since October 7, 2023, is not incidental or anonymous. Rather, torture is widespread across all forms of Israeli detention of Palestinians, and endemic to all Israeli agencies with authority over detainees, as demonstrated in the cases described above. Additionally, torture has been explicitly codified into law and official agency policies and sanctioned – even celebrated – by Israeli officials up to the highest offices, including

⁴⁶ *Id.*

⁴⁷ *Id.*

⁴⁸ *Id.*

⁴⁹ United Nations Human Rights Council, *Kifeya Khraim & Witness #3 | Public Hearings, COI Palestine, East Jerusalem & Israel, 11/03/2025*, YouTube (March 12, 2025), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XwjBbeUapxo>.

⁵⁰ *Id.*

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ *Id.*

Prime Israeli Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, Israel has failed to meet its obligations under the CAT to ensure investigation into credible reports of torture and ill-treatment and appropriately punish proven offenses – further evidence that such acts are supported by the state.

1. Torture and Ill-Treatment Codified in Israeli Law and Policy

Numerous acts by the Israeli Knesset have widened the state's authority to detain and hold Palestinians, as well as strip them of their rights, increasing their vulnerability to torture and ill-treatment. In October 2023, the Israeli Knesset passed a series of amendments that allowed a state of “detention emergency” to be declared. Rules and safeguards around detention were drastically changed under this declaration: increasing the number of detainees, reducing living space and, if necessary, removing beds from detainees and making them sleep on mattresses on the floor. The order also prohibited visits from family or ICRC representatives and limited access to the judicial system, further isolating them.⁵⁵ Additionally, in December 2023, the Knesset expanded the designation of “unlawful combatants,” that is, detainees who Israel says are not considered prisoners of war and therefore are not subject to the Geneva Convention's prohibitions against torturing detainees.⁵⁶ Under this accusation, detainees are subject to military custody rather than the authority of the Israeli Prison Service (IPS). “Unlawful combatants” are often held incommunicado and indefinitely. Some of the worst abuses of Palestinian prisoners have occurred in military detention centers, either in prison camps such as Sde Teiman or in informal detention inside the Gaza Strip.⁵⁷

Other governmental policies also demonstrate support for torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian detainees. Israel's Ministry of Health published a protocol in December 2023 for detainees suspected of being “unlawful combatants,” which mandated that these patients generally remain blindfolded and handcuffed during medical treatment, unless a physician determines it is medically necessary to change these conditions.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ See, e.g., IsraeliPM, *Prime Minister Netanyahu pays a courtesy visit to Prison Services as a sign of appreciation for the activities of the fighters and commanders of the prisons*, YouTube (July 30, 2025), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4UDnWgjiM4>.

⁵⁵ Jenan Abdu, *Happening now in Israeli prisons: enforced disappearance, abuse, and death of Palestinian prisoners!*, Madar (January 29, 2024), <https://www.madarceneter.org/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A/%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%8C-%D9%88%D8%AB%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%82%D8%8C-%D8%AA%D8%BA%D8%B7%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%B5%D8%A9/11755-%D9%8A%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%AB-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A2%D9%86-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%B3%D8%AC%D9%88%D9%86-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A7%D8%AE%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%82%D8%B3%D8%B1%D9%8A-%D9%88%D8%AA%D9%86%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%88%D9%85%D9%88%D8%AA-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D8%B1%D9%89-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86?idU=1>.

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ *Id.*

⁵⁸ *The Ministry of Health has published a new procedure, signed by Dr. Hagar Mizrahi, head of the Medical Division at the Ministry of Health, which determines how detainees suspected of being terrorists - illegal fighters,*

2. Torture Acknowledged, Condoned, Celebrated, and Perpetrated by Israeli Leadership

Members of Israeli political leadership have publicly expressed full knowledge of and endorsed torture against Palestinians, and in some cases, have even admitted to participating in it themselves. In September 2025, following an order by the Israeli High Court to “halt the violations against Palestinian prisoners,” Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared “we will not change the detention conditions of terrorists.”⁵⁹ Among the highest-ranking Israeli officials expressing vocal support of torture policies has been current Minister of National Security Itamar Ben Gvir, who exercises significant control over many aspects of the Israeli security and military detention system,⁶⁰ and has played a key role in the worsening treatment of Palestinian detainees.⁶¹

Ben Gvir has made numerous statements explicitly supporting deteriorating conditions in Israeli detention, as well as direct physical abuse, and has explicitly stated them to be a result of his policies. He has expressed not only full awareness of but pride in this treatment of Palestinians, emphasizing his communication directly with those overseeing it. Meanwhile, others’ policy decisions have been likewise influenced by Ben Gvir’s campaign. On his first day, acting Israel Prison Service Commissioner Yaakobi declared his intention to worsen conditions within Israeli

according to the language of the document - should be treated during medical treatment in Israel, e-Med Israel (December 25, 2023), <https://www.e-med.co.il/news/2023/12/25/575734/>.

⁵⁹ Qassam Muaddi, *The 9,100 Palestinians left behind in Israeli prisons after the ‘peace’ deal*, Mondoweiss (October 15, 2025),

<https://mondoweiss.net/2025/10/the-9100-palestinians-left-behind-in-israeli-prisons-after-the-peace-deal/#:~:text=Standing%20beside%20Ben%20Gvir%20was,the%20detention%20conditions%20of%20terrorists.%E2%80%9D>.

⁶⁰ While the operations of the IPS are intended to be independent from Minister Ben Gvir’s direct control, he exercises authority over the entity and has undermined its independence. In December 2023, Minister Ben-Gvir allowed the term of veteran IPS Commissioner Katy Perry to expire without renewal, violating the terms of the coalition government’s wartime agreement which stated “no changes are to be made to senior civil service positions during the war, and their terms will be extended.” Former Commissioner Perry said of the move, “Minister [Ben Gvir] wanted his own foothold in the organization.” In her place, Minister Ben Gvir installed Kobi Yaakobi, formerly an official serving under Ben Gvir in the Ministry of National Security. *Former Head of Israel Prison Service Says Far-right Minister Ben-Gvir Wanted Foothold in Agency*, Haaretz (February 3, 2024), <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-02-03/ty-article/former-head-of-israel-prison-service-says-ben-gvir-wanted-foothold-in-agency/0000018d-6f87-dd6e-a98d-ffa774c70000> (Archived at: <https://archive.fo/T5iIN>) Though administered by the military and not the Israeli Prison Service, Minister Ben Gvir is known to have exerted some control over detention centers such as Sde Teiman, which has been the site of 75 percent of the deaths of Palestinians from Gaza in Israeli custody. (Jonah Valdez, *Video of sexual abuse at israeli prison is just latest evidence Sde Tieman is a torture site*, The Intercept (August 9, 2024),

<https://theintercept.com/2024/08/09/israel-prison-sde-teiman-palestinian-abuse-torture/>.) On July 5th, 2024, an Israel Channel 14 News article was published in which Israeli security officials were reportedly “furious” with Itamar Ben-Gvir, accusing him of preventing upgrades to the Sde Teiman detention center. In July 2024, Ben Gvir admitted that he had prevented upgrades to Sde Teiman, saying, “I am responsible and I am not ready to close Sde Tiemen. In the decisive debate, they demanded that the army, the Shin Bet, and Mell improve the conditions of the terrorists. I asked to see international law, and as far as I’m concerned, the prison facility meets the conditions. As long as the abductees live in substandard conditions, there is no room to improve the incarceration conditions of the terrorists.”

⁶¹ *Fact Sheet: Meet Israel’s New Government (December 2022)*, Institute for Middle East Understanding (December 16, 2022), <https://imeu.org/resources/resources/fact-sheet-meet-israels-new-government-december-2022/165>.

prisons for security prisoners, “in keeping with the policy of the national security minister,” Ben Gvir.⁶²

Table 1. Statements by Minister Ben Gvir endorsing and directing the deliberate deterioration of living conditions for detainees

Date	Statement	Source
14 Nov 2023	“In accordance with our directive, the terrorists receive the most stringent conditions: eight terrorists handcuffed in a dark cell, iron beds, a toilet in a hole in the floor, and the anthem of hope playing constantly in the background.”	איתמר בן גביר (@itamarbengvir), X (Nov. 14, 2023, 12:18 PM), https://x.com/itamarbengvir/status/1724522158683013549
7 Dec 2023	“I instructed the IPS commissioner to re-open the underground wing for the Nuhba detainees. The Nazis don't deserve a drop of sunshine while our hostages sit in the tunnels of hell.”	איתמר בן גביר (@itamarbengvir), X (Dec. 7, 2023, 12:49 PM), https://x.com/itamarbengvir/status/1732864950165483592
4 Jul 2024	“A Fatah terrorist tells the camera about the change in the conditions for terrorists in prison and warns his friends: Don't enter Ben Gvir's hell. The camp is over.”	איתמר בן גביר (@itamarbengvir), X (July 4, 2024, 10:43 AM), https://x.com/itamarbengvir/status/1808919630070841474
28 Jul 2024	“The conditions for terrorists in prisons have indeed been made worse and the summer camps have stopped, and I am proud of that.”	איתמר בן גביר (@itamarbengvir), X (July 28, 2024, 7:55 AM), https://x.com/itamarbengvir/status/1817574620431560721

⁶² John Breiner, *Israel's Acting Prison Service Chief's First Steps: Harsher Conditions for Palestinian Terrorists*, Haaretz (January 25, 2024), <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-01-25/ty-article/.premium/acting-prison-service-chiefs-first-steps-harsher-conditions-for-palestinian-terrorists/0000018d-3d1c-d02c-a79f-7f9f17a50000> (Archived at: <https://archive.fo/LPML0>).

28 Jul 2024	“During a tour I conducted last week at Damon Prison, prison fighters thanked me for the support they receive, and for the worsening conditions of imprisoned terrorists.”	איתמר בן גביר (@itamarbengvir), X (July 28, 2024, 9:11 AM), https://x.com/itamarbengvir/status/1817593727008829869
3 Dec 2024	Minister Ben-Gvir posts a 43 second long video on his X account establishing that at his direction, Commissioner Yaakobi worsened conditions in Israeli prisons for Palestinian prisoners by severely restricting their access to showers and hygienic goods via the prison commissary.	איתמר בן גביר (@itamarbengvir), X (Dec. 3, 2024, 8:38 AM), https://x.com/itamarbengvir/status/1863986215055163842

Other members of the Israeli government have likewise expressed knowledge and support of torture and ill-treatment of Palestinians, sometimes witnessing or participating in it themselves. This has been true even in the most highly publicized instances of abuse in Israeli detention. In one of the most infamous cases of prison abuse during the ongoing genocide, in July 2024, nine reservists at the Sde Teiman detention facility were detained by Israeli Military Police on suspicion of having gang raped a Palestinian detainee (See Part III. Sexual Torture of Palestinians, Case Study 1). In response, members of the Knesset joined a mob and broke into Sde Teiman and Beit Lid, the headquarters of the investigative military police.⁶³

Israeli government officials explicitly argued that the soldiers were not in the wrong for raping the detainee, or denied the incident happened entirely. In one example, Member of Knesset (MK) Hanoch Milwisky from the Likud Party explicitly stated that any action against a “terrorist” is legitimate. When asked by MK Ahmad Tibi, “To insert a stick in a person's rectum, is that legitimate?” Milwisky responded, “Yes! If he is a Nukhba [special forces unit of Hamas], everything is legitimate to do [to] him!”⁶⁴ In another instance, MK Tally Gotliv dismissed the accusations against the soldiers, saying: “You need to understand, the Nukhba terrorists who

⁶³ Chen Ma’anit; Yaniv Kubowitz; Noa Spiegel; Bar Peleg; & Eden Solomon, *MPI detained soldiers in Yemeni field on suspicion of abusing a Palestinian detainee, protesters and MKs broke into the base*, Haaretz (July 29, 2024), <https://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/2024-07-29/ty-article/00000190-fe22-da8a-a79f-feb66e5d0000> (Archived at: <https://archive.is/Lob4W>).

⁶⁴ B.M. (@ireallyhateyou), X (July 29, 2024, 5:44 AM), <https://x.com/ireallyhateyou/status/1817904053462196523/>.

raped, slaughtered and abused our people have found a new method— they go and whine and snitch that some soldier touched them.”⁶⁵

Other examples of members of the Israeli government explicitly acknowledging and/or condoning torture include:

Date	Speaker	Statement	Source
9 Nov 2023	Firas Hassan	“I saw them grab some inmates by the testicles, and the inmates screamed and cried. The officers also pressed their batons against the genitals of some inmates. The stream of insults didn’t stop: ‘motherfuckers,’ ‘sons of bitches,’ ‘dogs,’ ‘ISIS.’ Some of the forces filmed us with cell phones and cameras. I heard the officer tell the others in Hebrew: ‘We’re livestreaming for Ben Gvir.’”	<i>Welcome to Hell: The Israeli Prison System as a Network of Torture Camps</i> p.p. 88, B’tselem (August 1 2024), https://www.btselem.org/sites/default/files/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell_eng.pdf Full Testimony: <i>Firas Hassan (50), a father of four from Hindaza, Bethlehem District (Testimony given to B’Tselem field researcher Basel al-Adrah on 24 April 2024), B’tselem (August 1, 2024),</i> https://www.btselem.org/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell/testimony_of_firas_hassan

⁶⁵ B.M. (@ireallyhateyou), X (Aug. 5, 2024, 12:07 PM), <https://x.com/ireallyhateyou/status/1820537236099908035>.

15 Nov 2023	Musa 'Aasi	“During the visits, they explained the suppression and torture methods being used against us. They brought them into the cells and forced us to keep our heads down, so we didn't actually see the visitors. Once they told us [Minister of National Security] Ben Gvir was there himself.”	<i>Welcome to Hell: The Israeli Prison System as a Network of Torture Camps</i> p.p. 25, B'tselem (August 1 2024), https://www.btselem.org/sites/default/files/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell_eng.pdf Full Testimony: <i>Musa 'Aasi (58), a father of five from Beit Liqya, Ramallah District (Testimony given to B'Tselem field researcher Iyad Hadad on 31 March 2024), B'tselem (August 1, 2024), https://www.btselem.org/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell/testimony_of_musa_aasi</i>
1 Jul 2024	Wael Diab Ahmed Mansour	Interviewer: “What was the hardest situation you faced in prison?” Monsour: “When they came and insulted us. Among those who came was Ben Gvir. [...] He came and he told them we are the Nukhba Hamas unit that kidnapped the hostages.”	Middle East Eye (@MiddleEastEye), X (July 1, 2024, 8:28 AM), https://x.com/MiddleEastEye/status/1807798479986524478
10 Jul 2024	Moazaz Obaiat (Case Study 4)	“On April 12 I was subjected to a murder attempt, and Ben Gvir stomped on my body”	Quds News Network (@QudsNen), X (July 10, 2024, 12:46 AM), https://x.com/QudsNen/status/1810943588341055942

9 Jan 2025	Itamar Ben Gvir	In a detention center, mocking several Palestinian detainees crouching, head down, mostly nude, on a small square of a prison cell: “I won’t forget the acts of murder and horror. And look now, how cowardly they are.”	Translating Falasteen (Palestine) (@translatingpal), X (Jan. 9, 2025, 1:14 PM), https://x.com/translatingpal/status/1877463993054343669
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3. Lack of Investigations into or Accountability for Reported Torture

Widespread and high-profile reporting, including by Israeli state agencies,⁶⁶ has put Israel on notice about its torture problem. However, in cases of alleged violations by soldiers, the military is tasked with investigating itself – and Israeli and Palestinian human rights experts have reported that Israeli authorities have “shown a lack of transparency and will” to do so.⁶⁷ Criminal investigations, as is required by the CAT in instances of torture, are incredibly rare, with fewer than 1 percent of complaints that Israeli soldiers harmed Palestinians or their property leading to indictments between 2017 and 2021.⁶⁸ Additionally, according to the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, “out of 1400 complaints of torture filed to the Israeli Ministry of Justice over the past 20 years, 0 indictments have been filed against perpetrators, and only in 3 cases has there even been a formal criminal investigation – while all other complaints have been dismissed

⁶⁶ The Israeli Public Defender’s Office published a report extensively detailing abuses in detention. Notably, this report was only published after a drawn-out legal battle within Israel, in which the Association for Civil Rights in Israel sued the government to publicly release the findings. Haaretz reporting from June 2025 notes that Israeli “government ministries are concerned that publishing [all of] the reports will damage the state’s image and negatively affect the situation of the kidnapped.” As of June 2025, the Israeli government is specifically preventing the release of reports “on visits to prisoners and security detainees in the K’tziot, Ramon, and Megiddo prisons.” Chen Maanit, *Despite court ruling, state refuses to disclose reports on security prisoners’ condition*, Haaretz (June 11, 2025), <https://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/2025-06-11/ty-article/.premium/00000197-5e93-deed-a9bf-5fffc50a0000> (Archived at: <https://archive.is/SWAjI>). This report came a year after a letter by Shin Bet Chief Ronen Bar to Ben Gvir warning against further worsening prison conditions (Yoav Zeiton, *The full warning document from the head of the Shin Bet: All the dangers of the incarceration crisis*, YNet (July 2, 2024), <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/hj2hgezv0#!/replace>. The full letter attached from Ronen Bar is available here, linked in article: https://ynet-pic1.yit.co.il/picsserver5/wcm_upload_files/2024/07/02/Hkp111DZPC/Binder123.pdf).

⁶⁷ Rob Schmitz, *How Israel’s military investigates itself in cases of possible wrongdoing*, NPR (May 15, 2024), <https://www.npr.org/2024/05/15/1250417719/israel-military-idf-investigations-icc>.

⁶⁸ *Id.*; Human Rights Watch, *Israeli Lawmakers Try to Block Torture Prosecutions. End Grave Abuses Against Palestinian Detainees, Impunity for Abuses* (July 31, 2024), <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/31/israeli-lawmakers-try-block-torture-prosecutions>.

after only a preliminary examination.”⁶⁹ While there is little to no exercise of accountability internally, there is also no international oversight, as Israel has denied the ICRC access to Palestinian detainees in both IPS and military detention.⁷⁰ These facts have led the UN special rapporteur on the OPT to decry “Israel’s widespread and systematic abuse of Palestinians in detention . . . enabled by absolute impunity.”⁷¹

V. Recommendations

We urge the Committee Against Torture to unequivocally condemn the State of Israel’s continued use of torture and ill-treatment, and reaffirm the absolute and non-derogable nature of the prohibition of torture under the Convention. It should call on the State Party to take immediate and concrete measures to eradicate such practices and ensure full accountability for all perpetrators, regardless of rank or position. Specifically, we recommend the Committee Against Torture call on the State of Israel to take the following measures:

1. Enforce the prohibition against torture and ill-treatment as outlined in the Convention Against Torture, and take immediate steps to promptly, thoroughly, and impartially investigate all allegations of torture and ill-treatment by its military and security forces.
2. Take immediate steps to improve conditions in all detention facilities to meet detainees’ basic needs, including adequate food, sanitation, medical care, and access to legal counsel and family visits.
3. Ensure that all detainees are promptly informed of the reasons for their detention, have access to legal counsel, and are guaranteed fair and timely judicial review, including for cases of administrative detention, in order to prevent torture and other ill-treatment.
4. Ensure that senior Israeli officials, including members of the political leadership, are held accountable for acts of torture or for encouraging or inciting such acts. Measures should include prompt investigation, suspension pending inquiry, and, where appropriate, prosecution and removal from office.
5. Ensure that perpetrators of torture are investigated and prosecuted, and guarantee victims’ right to full and effective reparation, including compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition.

⁶⁹ Public Committee against Torture in Israel (PCATI) - Statement, Israel UPR 2023, https://upr-info.org/sites/default/files/country-document/2023-04/PCATI_statement_UPR_presessions.pdf.

⁷⁰ Public Committee against Torture in Israel (PCATI), *Detention Fact Sheet 2025*, <https://stoptorture.org.il/en/detention-fact-sheet-2025>.

⁷¹ *Israel’s escalating use of torture against Palestinians in custody a preventable crime against humanity: UN experts*, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (August 5, 2024), <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/08/israels-escalating-use-torture-against-palestinians-custody-preventable>

6. Take steps to prevent and investigate torture against marginalized groups in particular, including women and the elderly; and ensure that minors are detained separately from adults and that gender-sensitive safeguards are in place for women detainees.
7. Support and fund specialized rehabilitation services for survivors of torture, including psychological and medical care.
8. Ensure that all members of Israeli security and military service who come in contact with Palestinian detainees receive regular training on the absolute prohibition of torture and ill-treatment.
9. Allow independent monitoring bodies and NGOs regular and unannounced access to all places of detention.
10. Fully cooperate with the Committee Against Torture and implement all previous concluding observations.