

# TAYSIDE FOR JUSTICE IN PALESTINE

## **1600 Palestinian political prisoners join mass hunger strike for civil rights**

17<sup>th</sup> April is Palestinian Prisoners' Day. Detention is used as a weapon of mass punishment by the Israeli military, who want to suppress every sign of resistance to Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian territories. But this cruel practice only strengthens Palestinian resolve - and brutalises those who perpetrate it.

Since 1967 around 700,000 Palestinians have been detained by the occupying Israeli military. That means 2 out of every 5 males. There have been around 10,000 women arrested or detained, and each year there are around 700 prosecutions of people who are under 18.



After arrest, in which Israeli soldiers may deliberately destroy the family home, Palestinians are handcuffed and blindfolded. Humiliation and beatings are routine, and systematic abuse includes long periods of solitary confinement, and prisoners constrained in uncomfortable positions. In this way, many are coerced into signing 'confessions' - frequently written in Hebrew, which they can't understand. Trials are in military courts, which ignore international law. Contrary to International law, these courts treat Palestinians as adults from the age of 16. Even those classified as children are not treated very differently and there are no provisions for them to have a lawyer or family member present when they make a 'confession'. The majority of Palestinian detainees can be held for 6 months without charge, and once court proceedings start, these can be extended indefinitely. Hundreds more Palestinians are held under indefinite administrative detention for never-specified 'security' reasons.

Prisons are overcrowded, airless and suffer extremes of temperature and humidity. Cells are Spartan, food is poor and there is a lack of basics like soap and toothpaste. Medical neglect is systemic, and former prisoners are often left with chronic health problems. Newspapers, learning materials and many TV channels are outlawed. Family visits are severely restricted and often impossible. Gazan prisoners have had no family visits at all since 2007.

Israel has frequently gone back on agreements to release prisoners, and last year's much publicised release of prisoners in exchange for one captured Israeli soldier, was not all it seemed. Many released prisoners remained under severe constraints, and the prisons were soon refilled with new prisoners.



**As of 1 March 2012, there were 4,637 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons and detention centres, including 320 in indefinite administrative detention, 5 women and 183 children.**

For more information see:  
<http://www.addameer.org>  
<http://weareallhanashalabi.wordpress.com>

***Join the Campaign for Justice in Palestine***

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**Check out our website on <http://taysideforjusticeinpalestine.org>**

**And remember not to buy Israeli goods!**