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ICRS must form an urgent committee to investigate conditions of Palestinian prisoners

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK) sent letters to the International Committee of the Red Cross, demanding the opening of investigations into the heinous violations committed against Palestinian prisoners inside Israeli detention centers, as a recent CNN report revealed the brutal practices against prisoners inside the Sde Timan Camp in the Negev Desert.

The Sda Timan camp was originally used as a military base, but following October 7, 2023, the occupation authorities turned it into a detention centre, with hundreds of Palestinians illegally held inside it, the identity of most of whom is unknown, and they are subjected to all kinds of physical and psychological torture, according to the testimonies of former camp workers.

The eyewitness workers stated that the prisoners are subjected to degrading and inhuman treatment, and are forced to sit on the floor or on thin mattresses, surrounded with wires, while being blindfolded and monitored the whole time.

They pointed out to special cells where extremely tight handcuffs are used, causing severe injuries to the hands and feet that often amputated as a result. There is also a deadly field hospital, where the injured suffer severe medical negligence or treated incorrectly on purpose, thus worsening their injuries and health condition.

In their testimonies, they confirmed that the prisoners are not only prevented from moving and speaking, but they are also subjected to punitive measures as a form of revenge, include physical beatings and medical practices that might be illegal, such as the amputation of limbs due to injuries caused by constant tight handcuffing.



This detention camp operates under the Israeli Unlawful Combatants Law, which has been criticised due to the powers it gives the occupation forces to detain individuals without applying due legal procedures.

According to the law amended on July 30, 2008, the Chief of General Staff of the occupation forces has the right to imprison any person under “reasonable cause” as “an illegal combatant, whose release would harm national security.”

AOHR UK pointed out that this law defines a an illegal combatant as a person who has directly or indirectly participated in hostilities against the State of Israel, or involved in a force that commits hostile acts against the State of Israel.

The recent report of the CNN is not revealing violations that are taking place for the first time, but rather a disturbing pattern of violations that have been monitored and documented over the past decades by various organisations and media outlets, including Israeli newspapers like Haaretz which has been reporting serious human rights violations inside Israeli prisons. These reports include detailed investigative reports on subjecting Palestinian prisoners to physical torture, sexual assaults, and medical negligence.

Moreover, Palestinian prisoner associations recently revealed that 18 Palestinians, including Dr. Adnan Al-Barsh, a prominent surgeon from Gaza, have died inside Israeli prisons since the beginning of the current war due to torture, medical negligence, and detention in horrific conditions that violate all international detention standards.

AOHR UK stressed that the accumulated evidence of harsh treatment in the Sde Timan military detention center itself, in addition to similar violations reported in the Gilboa and Megiddo prisons, where Palestinians accused of security crimes are detained, require opening an urgent investigation and taking immediate measures to put an end to these violations and hold those involved accountable.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK