

# Palestinian Political Prisoners: APARTHEID Behind Bars

Life in Palestine under Israeli occupation and apartheid means that Palestinians are subject to a constant threat of mass imprisonment. For Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, 40% of Palestinian men have spent time in Israeli prisons. For Palestinian families, everyone has a son, daughter, father, mother, brother or sister who has spent time or is currently held in an Israeli jail. Checkpoints pose a constant and daily threat of arrest as do night raids, attacks on demonstrations, and home invasions. Every Palestinian, at any time, is vulnerable to arrest and administrative detention - imprisonment without charge or trial for renewable six month periods - or the military court system, in which 99.74 percent of its Palestinian defendants are convicted. There are over 4,800 Palestinian prisoners currently held in Israeli jails. Some have launched hunger strikes to demand their freedom. *Learn more about some of the Palestinians currently held in Israeli jails - and what you can do to support them.*

## SAMER ISSAWI - over 200 days of hunger strike

Samer Issawi was released from Israeli prison in the October 2011 prisoner exchange. A Jerusalemite - a Palestinian who carries Jerusalem ID - Issawi was re-arrested on July 7, 2012, launching his open hunger strike on August 1.



Samer Issawi is trapped within the geographies of occupation. He is accused of nothing more than entering the West Bank and leaving Jerusalem - however, according to Israel's own maps, the place where he was arrested is part of Israel's definition of the Jerusalem municipality, to which Israel claims Issawi was restricted under the terms of his release.

Samer Issawi is now under threat of spending 20 years in Israeli prison, ruled on by a military committee and at the mercy of secret evidence. Issawi's six brothers and sisters have all spent time in Israeli prisons. His health condition is progressively more severe after over 200 days of partial and open hunger strike.

## AYMAN NASSER - prisoners' advocate imprisoned



Ayman Nasser is a researcher at Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, a human rights defender and an active member of the community who regularly advocates for the freedom of prisoners. On 15 October 2012, Ayman was arrested by the Israeli military from his home and detained in several different prisons where he was held in painful stress positions during interrogation sessions which lasted over twenty continuous hours.

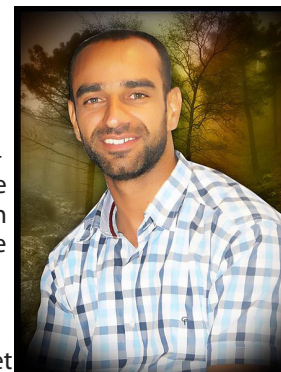
Ayman stands charged with being an advocate for prisoners - accused of participating in the annual Prisoner's Day on 17 April and solidarity activities during hunger strikes, and attending a festival for the anniversary of Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa. Ayman's unwarranted charges are evidence of Israeli attempts to threaten the work of human rights defenders, and specifically those who advocate for prisoners rights.

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# APARTHEID in Israeli Prisons

Palestinian political prisoners arrested by Israel are subject to different legal systems based on their residency - and an entirely different legal system than that of Israeli criminal prisoners.

## *In the West Bank...*

- Palestinians are arrested and detained under a system of military regulations and orders - over 2500 military orders have been issued since the West Bank was occupied in 1967.
- Military Order 101 criminalizes a range of activities, including participating in protests and assemblies, waving flags or political symbols, or distributing political material - deemed incitement
- Palestinian political parties, mass organizations and student union blocs are classified as "illegal organizations" or "hostile organizations," and membership or support for them is criminalized
- Israeli settlers in the West Bank are not sent to military courts nor are they subject to these military orders, instead, they are subject to Israeli criminal law.
- Those arrested under criminal law are afforded due process protections, and the charges against them must be detailed and specific. This is not true for military prisoners.
- The same charges are assigned widely different sentences under military law and Israeli criminal law, including murder, manslaughter, and incitement.
- Minors under the age of 18 may be imprisoned with adults, which is not allowed under Israeli criminal law.

## *In Gaza...*

- Palestinians from Gaza may be placed under indefinite arbitrary detention as "unlawful combatants," with no set renewal period for their detention
- Palestinians from Gaza are regularly denied family visits and deposits to their canteen accounts from family members, as their family members are denied access

## *In Occupied Palestine '48...*

- In Israel, Palestinians holding Israeli citizenship accused of "security" offenses are denied many of the protections of those accused of criminal offenses. In recent statistics, only 16 of 7,740 total "security" prisoners were Jewish Israelis - the rest were Palestinians.

### TORTURE

Palestinian security prisoners are interrogated by the Shin Bet, which often uses sleep deprivation, stress positions, and other methods that amount to torture. On February 23, 2013, **Palestinian detainee Arafat Jaradat was killed** while under interrogation in Megiddo prison. His autopsy has shown severe physical injuries, and no sign of stroke or heart disease, indicating he was killed under torture.

### ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION

Palestinian security prisoners can be held without charge or trial for up to six month renewable periods, under administrative detention. Administrative detainees are held under secret evidence to which even their lawyers are denied access. Palestinian prisoners have been held for up to six and one half years at a time with no charge, no trial, and no contestable evidence, under administrative detention.

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