

# PALESTINIAN PRISONERS: HUNGER STRIKE FOR DIGNITY

1,500 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails launched a hunger strike on April 17, 2017 - Palestinian Prisoners' Day. The demands of the Strike for Freedom and Dignity are straightforward: for their basic human rights – to no longer be denied family visits, to have the ability to contact their families via telephone, to receive appropriate medical care, to not be subject to isolation or to imprisonment without charge or trial under “administrative detention.” Palestinians across political lines have joined the strike, urging dedicated action for the prisoners’ victory.

Since they began their strike, these prisoners have been subject to a campaign of repression, including the denial of family visits, the denial of legal visits, prohibition

of group prayer on Fridays, confiscation of clothing and belongings and the transfer of many prisoners to isolation and solitary confinement. A series of strike leaders have been thrown in solitary confinement in Jalameh prison. Many prisoners have even reported having salt confiscated from their cells and sections.

The prisoners are consuming only salt and water and their lives and bodies are on the line for their demands for basic human rights. The prisoners have received support from people around the world and dozens of international cities, towns and campuses have been home to protests, demonstrations and solidarity actions calling for the implementation of their demands.

## WHO ARE THE PALESTINIAN PRISONERS?

There are approximately 6,500 Palestinian political prisoners inside Israeli jails. Nearly every Palestinian family has been touched by political imprisonment - a father, mother, son, daughter, sister, brother, cousin, uncle, aunt. Since the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967, over 800,000 Palestinians from those areas have been held as political prisoners - one out of every four Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza. Forty percent of Palestinian men in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, have spent some time in occupation jails.

Palestinian political prisoners are not only from the West Bank and Gaza. Palestinians from 1948 occupied Palestine (Palestinian citizens of Israel) are also held as political prisoners, subject to an apartheid legal system that allows the use of secret evidence, torture evidence and gag orders.

Palestinian political prisoners are men and women, elderly and children. There are hundreds of child prisoners, including over 100 under the age of 16. Child prisoners are regularly subject to torture, solitary confinement, and other harsh and inhumane conditions.

Palestinian political prisoners are also political leaders. 12 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, including Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Secretary Ahmad Sa'adat, prominent leader in al-Khalil Samira Halaiqa, and Fateh leader Marwan Barghouthi, are held in Israeli prisons.

Writers, scholars, journalists, students and artists are also Palestinian political prisoners. Palestinian students are frequently arrested and criminalized for participation in student politics.

Many Palestinian prisoners have engaged in hunger strikes over the past year, demanding freedom and justice. They continue to put their bodies, health, and lives on the line daily in direct confrontation with colonialism and apartheid.

**6500**  
**PALESTINIAN  
POLITICAL PRISONERS**



**500**

**Administrative  
Detainees**



**300**

**Child  
Prisoners**



**56**

**Women  
Prisoners**



**13**

**Palestinian Legislative  
Council Prisoners**

# HUNGER STRIKE DEMANDS

The hunger striking Palestinian prisoners have laid out a series of demands for their strike, highlighting their basic human rights. Many of the demands of the strike are for rights that were won through past struggles of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails before being gradually stripped away by Israeli prison administration. The demands are:

- 1) Installation of a public telephone in each prison and section for Palestinian prisoners to communicate with their loved ones.**
- 2) Access to Regular and Dignified Family Visits**
  - A) Resume the second monthly visit, which was cut by the International Committee of the Red Cross
  - B) Regular visits every two weeks without cancellation or interference
  - C) No prevention of visits by relatives of the "first and second class"
  - D) Increase the duration of visits from 45 minutes to 1 1/2 hours
  - E) Allow photography with parents every three months
  - F) Facilities for the comfort of prisoners' parents at the prison entrance
  - G) Children and grandchildren under the age of 16 allowed visitation at each visit
- 3) Appropriate Medical Care and Access to Treatment**
  - A) Close the so-called "Ramle prison hospital," as it is unfit for necessary treatment
  - B) End of the policy of medical neglect against prisoners
  - C) Regular, scheduled periodic medical examinations
  - D) Surgical procedures received quickly and without delay
  - E) Introduction of specialist doctors from outside the prison system
  - F) Release of sick prisoners, especially those with disabilities and terminal illnesses
  - G) No transfer of the cost of treatment to prisoners and their families
- 4) Respond to the needs and demands of the Palestinian women prisoners for private transportation and direct visits with their family members without barriers**
- 5) Ending Abusive Transfers and Transportation**
  - A) Secure the humane treatment of prisoners during transportation and movement
  - B) Prisoners must be returned to prisons, clinics and courts and not kept at crossing points for lengthy periods.
  - C) Rehabilitation of these crossing points to make them fit for human use, including providing meals
- 6) Access to satellite channels that meet the needs of prisoners**
- 7) Installation of a cooling system in prisons, especially Megiddo and Gilboa**
- 8) Reform kitchens for all prisons and put them entirely under the supervision of Palestinian prisoners**
- 9) Introduction of books, newspapers, clothing, food and other gifts for prisoners from their families**
- 10) Ending the policy of solitary confinement**
- 11) Ending the policy of administrative detention**
- 12) Re-introducing access to distance higher education via the Open University**
- 13) Allow the prisoners to provide high school (tawjihi) examinations under officially agreed-upon guidelines**

## TAKE ACTION TO SUPPORT THE #DIGNITYSTRIKE

**1. Contact government officials and demand that they stop supporting Israeli violations of Palestinian rights.**  
**In the United States,** call the White House at **1-202-456-1111** and demand the U.S. stop aid to apartheid Israel and pressure Israel to agree to the hunger strikers' demands. In Australia, call Minister of Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop: + 61 2 6277 7500. In Canada, call Foreign Minister Chrystia Free-land: +1-613-992-5234. In the UK, call Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson: +44 20 7008 1500.

Throughout the European Union, contact the office of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Federica Mogherini, at **federica.mogherini@ec.europa.eu**, and call on the EU to take a stand for dignity for Palestinian prisoners and end the EU/Israel Association Agreement.

**2. Boycott, Divest and Sanction. Palestinians have urged an international boycott of Israeli goods and institutions - and corporations that profit from occupation, like HP, the multinational computer and technology corporation. HP has contracts with the Israeli occupation to provide technology services for Israeli checkpoints, settlements and prisons. Boycott HP products and encourage institutions to choose alternative technology providers. Learn more: <https://bdsmovement.net/boycott-hp/>**

**3. Spread the word.** Distribute this flyer and others like it in your community, workplace, or school. Get active on social media, and post on Facebook and Twitter about the #DignityStrike. Get more information at **samidoun.net** or **addameer.org**.