

THE CASE OF AHMAD SA'ADAT

Ahmad Sa'adat is a Palestinian political leader, an elected member of the Palestinian Legislative Council and the General Secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a Palestinian leftist political party and the second-largest organization in the Palestine Liberation Organization. He is currently serving a 30-year life sentence in an Israeli prison, convicted on political charges related to his public advocacy and political activity. He was held in isolation for three years, from March 2009 - May 2012, and was released from the isolation cell only as part of the agreement that ended the hunger strike of over 2,500 Palestinian prisoners.

Sa'adat was abducted with four of his comrades in an Israeli military raid on the Palestinian Authority prison in Jericho on March 14, 2006. Born in 1953, Sa'adat is the child of refugees expelled from their home in the village of Deir Tarif, near Ramleh, in 1948. A math teacher by training, he is married to Abla Sa'adat, herself a noted activist, and is the father of four children. Abla Sa'adat was herself arrested and detained for four months, and prevented from leaving Palestine to speak about Palestinian rights at an international conference. He has been involved in the Palestinian national movement since 1967, when he became active in the student movement.

Prior to his abduction from Jericho in 2006, he had been held at various times as a political prisoner in Israeli jails, for a total of ten years. Sa'adat was elected General Secretary of the PFLP in 2001, following the Israeli assassination of then-General Secretary Abu Ali Mustafa in his office in Ramallah on August 27, 2001. (He was re-elected in November 2013.) He was kidnapped by the Palestinian Authority on January 15, 2002.

For the entire period of Sa'adat's imprisonment in the PA jails, he had been convicted of no crime; his sentencing - in an illegitimate military court of occupation - came nearly seven years into his detention, after a trial that began after five years of PA/US/British, then Israeli, imprisonment.

Sa'adat has become a national Palestinian symbol of prisoner steadfastness, through his rejection of Israeli military courts and leadership in the prisoners' movement.



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff

A CALL FROM PRISON

"It is critical to besiege the racist, settler-colonial Zionist project, and indeed, to delegitimize this project, and to support the struggle of our people for liberation, self-determination and return as the pathway to a democratic political solution for Palestine...

I call on all forces of progress, freedom and democracy to stand by the struggle of the Palestinian people through all forms of boycott - political, economic, academic and cultural - of the occupation state and the creation of a real economic cost for its industries of colonization and settlement and escalating the global campaigns for boycott of all corporations that support and invest in the occupation militarily and economically." - Ahmad Sa'adat

"In defense of the justice of our cause and in defense of the legitimate struggle of our people against the occupation, I refuse to recognize the legitimacy of your court or to legitimize your occupation or to stand before either of these. Because what you call a list of accusations and 'security infractions' are in reality my patriotic duties...the general duty of resistance against occupation...I would like to reaffirm my pride in belonging to the Palestinian Revolutionary Movement and to the extensions of this movement in the regional, national and international planes that form the components of the international movement against the imperialist system of globalization." - Ahmad Sa'adat

The Campaign to Free Ahmad Sa'adat + Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network

Learn More: freeahmadsaadat.org samidoun.net

PALESTINIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS:

WHO ARE THE PALESTINIAN PRISONERS?

There are, today, approximately **5580** Palestinian political prisoners. Palestinians, living under occupation and oppression for 70 years, have been targeted relentlessly for imprisonment and detention by the Israeli occupation. Nearly every Palestinian family has been touched by political imprisonment. Since the extension of the occupation of Palestine to the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, **over 800,000 Palestinians have been taken prisoner** - one out of every four Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza. **Forty percent of male Palestinians** in the West Bank and Gaza have spent time in occupation jails. Palestinians' arrest and detention are covered by Israeli military regulations; there are **over 1500 of these regulations**, which can be **altered at any time** by the regional Israeli military commander. **At least half of these prisoners have never been tried.** Those who have been tried face a military trial, in which three military judges - two of which are not required to be trained in law - pass judgment on Palestinians' right to live, to organize and to resist military occupation. **The military courts have a 99.74% conviction rate against Palestinians.**



ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION

The Israeli military can **imprison Palestinians for up to six months without charge or trial under "administrative detention."** **This detention can be extended indefinitely.**

Administrative detention is often used against Palestinian legislators, writers or community organizers who are difficult to charge in military court. Administrative detention orders are based on secret evidence. **Neither the detainee, nor the detainee's lawyers are given access to the secret evidence.** There are approximately 500 Palestinians in administrative detention currently, including elected parliamentarians of the Palestinian Legislative Council.

ABUSE AND TORTURE

- A Palestinian detainee may go through an initial 180-day period of interrogation; for the first 60 days of that period, he or she may be denied access to a lawyer. The use of "moderate physical pressure" in Israeli interrogations is accepted, legal and common. Legalized torture in Israeli jails includes the use of shortshackling, "stress positions," beatings and squeezing of handcuffs, as well as sleep deprivation, humiliation and threats, and many other documented tactics of abuse.

TAKE ACTION: Demand freedom

1. **Copy and share this leaflet with your colleagues, comrades and friends.** Download more information about Palestinian political prisoners to educate your community at freeahmadsaadat.org or samidoun.net.

2. **Rally or protest outside Israeli consulates or embassies,** calling for freedom for Palestine - and Palestinian political prisoners. **Also, take part in on-line actions and protests!** Visit samidoun.net to write to Israeli officials and demand an end to the mass imprisonment of Palestinians and the denial of family visits.

3. **Boycott, Divest and Sanction.** Palestinians have called for an international boycott of Israel until it ends its apartheid policies and violation of Palestinian rights. The Palestinian prisoners' movement is part of this boycott campaign. You can take action by refusing to buy products from complicit corporations like Hewlett-Packard. Learn more at bdsmovement.net.

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT AND ISOLATION

Isolation and solitary confinement are frequently used against Palestinian political prisoners, including hunger strikers, political leaders, and other influential prisoners.

Detainees and prisoners held in solitary confinement are completely cut off from the world 24 hours a day. They are held in an empty cell containing only a mattress and a blanket. Prisoners held in isolation are held in a cell alone or with one other prisoner for 23 hours a day. They are allowed to leave their cell for a daily one hour solitary walk; on the way to their walk, the prisoners' hands and feet are typically shackled.

Isolation cells in the various Israeli prisons are similar in size - typically from 1.5 by 2 meters to 3 by 3.5 meters. Each cell usually has one small window which in most cases does not allow in sufficient light or air from the outside. The cell usually has an iron door, which includes an opening at its lower part, through which guards insert food trays. Solitary confinement and isolation have been deemed to be forms of torture by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture.

THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM