

19 Palestinian Prisoners Held in Solitary Confinement under Unprecedented, Extreme, and Inhuman Living Conditions in Naqab Prison

Date: 9 October 2021

Following Addameer's visit to Palestinian prisoner Nabeel Mughayer, one of the 14 prisoners held in solitary confinement in Naqab prison, Addameer lawyer Samer Sam'an confirmed the extreme, inhumane living conditions rising to the level of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment that the prisoners face amid the most recent series of [gross collective penalties](#).

In Naqab prison, prisoners set fires to their cells in some sections in protest of the institution of greater collective penalties, among them the forced separation of Islamic Jihad prisoners in the prisons of [Ayala](#) and [Ashkelon](#), following the escape of the six Palestinian political prisoners from Gilboa prison. Israeli Prison Services (IPS) returned the prisoners to burnt cells in Section 6, completely stripped of personal needs under extremely dire and inhuman living conditions in retaliatory and punitive measures. The 14 prisoners, alongside five other prisoners in different cells, are held in complete isolation and were prevented from visits by the International Committee of the Red Cross or any other party prior to the visit of Addameer's lawyer.

Palestinian prisoner Nabeel Mughayer described the cells as "caves," where prisoners are held in dark rooms with no light or electricity, with the walls, floors, and iron bars still burned. The smell of the fires remains and is extremely harmful to the prisoners, who are not provided with clothes, mattresses, or blankets. IPS only bring one mattress and blanket per prisoner each night at around 12:30 and pull them out before sunrise at 6 in the morning, stating that "whoever wants to sleep after can lay on the decrepit iron sheet."

The prisoners, who are refused sweaters or blankets, suffer from the bitter cold at night, which exacerbates existing medical conditions among the prisoners, such as hemorrhoids, infections, and kidney pains. Nevertheless, IPS refuses to transfer any of the prisoners to the clinic. Moreover, the windows of the cells lack any glass, "which allows the entry of reptiles and insects." In addition, Nabeel Mughayer noted the poor quality of food given to them and their prohibition from accessing the canteen for any supplies, including cigarettes and hygienic items, and ignoring their request for toothpaste and toothbrushes. He mentioned that "the prisoners returned the food on more than one occasion in protest, but to no avail."

The prisoners' cells contain only a toilet and a sink from which to drink. As for showers, they are outside the section. The guards in handcuffs take out those who need to shower to shower and return. Still, IPS only provided one spare shampoo to each isolated prisoner five days ago after rationing the shampoo from Section 7 of Naqab prison. Mughayer added that they are not allowed out into the prison yard for their usual break and that every two prisoners are taken out separately, handcuffed, for only one hour in an area of 3x6 meters, surrounded by a fence like a cage.

The prisoners are facing "unprecedented" conditions of solitary confinement, in violation of all aspects of prisoners' rights. Mughayer confirmed that there were no hearings held for them, as per Israeli prison administration regulations, to determine the charges against them or hear their statements. The prisoners are held indefinitely under solitary

confinement, as they were not given any indication of the length of time of their confinement. No IPS administrator has yet to contact them, which Mughayer points out is "the administration indirectly accusing them of being the main ones responsible for burning the section," and that "any step can be faced with extreme ferocity." During their isolation, two prisoners were subjected to stress positions in the waiting rooms after being tied "in a provocative manner" and transferred to the section, which lasted about a week. Some of the 19 prisoners currently in solitary confinement were taken there after being isolated from the rest, while some of the isolated prisoners were replaced by others who were taken to their place.

In addition to the prisoners confined in Section 6, 5 other prisoners are confined in solitary confinement in Naqab Prison, where they were isolated for a week following the escape of the six Palestinian political prisoners from Gilboa prison on accusations that they were "involved" with the escape. Their solitary confinement was extended twice, the latest on 20 October 2021, "under unprecedented and unlawful conditions," as confirmed by one of the prisoners, Tamim Salem, during his meeting with Addameer's lawyer.

The five prisoners live in abhorrent conditions, where they are handcuffed by their hands and feet any time they leave the cell to the yard, "which resembles an iron box of 3x3 meters" The prisoners suffer from the desert conditions of Naqab prison, which are extremely high temperatures during the day and low temperatures at night. Three of the prisoners began a hunger strike for four days, which they ended following improvements in their access to the canteen and to avoid conflicting with the prisoners' collective steps.

Prisoners affiliated with the Islamic Jihad are subjected to severe repressive measures following the escape of the six Palestinian political prisoners. Collectively, they faced the forced separation and were transferred to various prisons, among them Section 6 of Naqab prison, which prompted them to burn their cells in protest of their eviction as collective punishment. This was followed by the transfer of the prisoners from Section 6 and the return of 12 of them to it, while all of the prisoners who had previously resided in Section 6 were punished by a fine of 4,000 shekels along with their prohibition from outside visits and from accessing the canteen. In the remaining sections, the prisoners were punished with a fine of 564 shekels and a month-long ban on outside visits and access to the canteens.

Addameer condemns the penalties and conditions the prisoners have been subjected to as unlawful collective punishment and a brazen violation of their rights. Addameer calls on human rights and international institutions to ensure the protection of Palestinian prisoners' rights. Specifically, Addameer calls upon the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit the prisoners, note their conditions, and advocate by all possible means to lift the collective punishments that degrade their rights, dignity, and humanity.