

Al-Haq
Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights (Al
Mezan)
Al Dameer Association for Human Rights
Palestinian Centre for Human Rights
(PCHR)
Muwatin Institute for Democracy and
Human Rights - Observer member

Defence for Children International – Palestine
Section
Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights
Center (JLAC)
Addameer Prisoner Support and Human
Rights Association (Addameer)
Centre for Defence of Liberties and Civil
Rights (Hurriyat)
Independent Commission for Human Rights
(ICHR)

Ms. Alessandra Menegon
Head of Delegation
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
Sheikh Jarrah, Jerusalem

24 October 2023

Re: Urgent Appeal to Fulfil Responsibilities towards Palestinian Prisoners and Detainees

Dear Ms. Menegon,

It is great alarm that we, the Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Council (PHROC), address this urgent letter to you in relation to the dire circumstances facing Palestinian prisoners and detainees, and call upon the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to promptly and effectively fulfil its responsibilities towards Palestinian prisoners and detainees. Indeed, the principles of humanity and impartiality, which the ICRC is renowned for upholding, are desperately needed to ensure the safety and well-being of Palestinians in Israeli detention.

Over the past 24 hours, the Israeli Prison Services (IPS) announced the deaths of two Palestinian prisoners: 58-year-old Omar Draghmeh, held under administrative detainee in Megiddo Prison, and 25-year-old Arafat Hamdan, held in Ofer prison. The circumstances surrounding their deaths remain unclear and shrouded in ambiguity, primarily due to the complete isolation of prisoners from the outside world.

In this critical situation, we believe that the ICRC has a significant role to play in ensuring that the rights and well-being of Palestinian prisoners and detainees are protected. Therefore, we urgently implore the ICRC to take immediate and decisive action. Specifically, **we request the ICRC to immediately conduct visits to the prisons, with particular emphasis on Megiddo and Ofer, to comprehensively assess the circumstances of the prisoners' deaths and inform their families of these circumstances.**

We must emphasise the urgency of this appeal. The current dire and deteriorating human rights situation across historic Palestine, including within Israeli prisons and detention facilities, needs to be addressed as a matter of grave concern. **As we warn of the consequences of inaction, we firmly call upon the ICRC to closely monitor the situation and to demand Israel, the Occupying Power, and the IPS to ensure and uphold Palestinian political prisoners' right to life and the highest attainable standard of health and mental health, and to avoid and end all forms of arbitrary, retaliatory, and collective punishment imposed against Palestinian political prisoners.**

ENDS