

Monthly Newsletter — May 2020



In May 2020, Addameer has documented systematic **human rights violations against Palestinian prisoners and detainees, including torture and ill-treatment.**

Detention in Numbers

Since January 2020, **1861** Palestinians from the occupied territory were arrested including **253** children and **33** women. For the month of April, the number of new arrests was **340**.

As of the end of May 2020, there were:

4600 Palestinian political prisoners

373 of them administrative detainees

170 child detainees

39 female prisoners

7 Palestinian Legislative Council members.

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Mais Abu Gush Sentenced to 16 Months

On Sunday, 3 May 2020, the Israeli military court at Ofer sentenced Mais Abu Gush to 16 months in prison starting from the day of her arrest, 29 August 2019. The sentence also included a suspended sentence which begins from the day of her release, and is 12 months in prison for the coming five years. Furthermore, Mais sentence included a 2000 NIS fine as well.



The military court sentenced Mais on two different charges, the first was affiliation to an ill-legal organization which is the Progressive Democratic Student Group at Birzeit University and her activities with the Journalism department at the university. The second charge was communication with an enemy party and that she has met activists from Hizbullah during a conference on the right to return in Beirut which was held in 2018 and agreed to right for al-Noor newspaper.

Moreover, the defense lawyer assured that Mais's injuries and severe pain in the back are result of the torture she was subjected to during her interrogation. The judge at the military court mention her decision the torture Mais was subjected to and the existing evidence for it. Addameer's lawyer confirmed Mais's right to hold the perpetrators accountable for the crime of torture which was committed against her.

Addameer and al-Haq sends an Urgent Appeal of UN Special Procedures

On 1 April 2020, Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association and Al-Haq sent a joint urgent appeal to the United Nations (UN) Special Procedures regarding the rapidly deteriorating condition of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli prisons in light of the continued spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Palestine and around the world. Addressed to five Special Procedures mandates, including the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory, the organisations urgently requested intervention to uphold the right to health, safety, and well-being of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention, particularly as many are minors, chronically ill, vulnerable groups, or held under administrative detention in contravention of international law. Addameer and Al-Haq urged the UN Special Procedures to intervene to guarantee the health and safety of Palestinian prisoners during the pandemic, and to:

- Call on Israel, the occupying power, to release all Palestinian political prisoners from Israeli prisons to ensure their safety from an uncontrolled COVID-19 spread, particularly those who are more vulnerable and more susceptible to the disease, including children, women, older persons, prisoners with underlying health conditions, and injured prisoners;
- Further demand the release of all Palestinian political prisoners under administrative detention, who are detained indefinitely without charge or trial, in contravention of international law, and urge the release of all Palestinian political prisoners who are nearing the end of their sentences and/or should be released on probation, to reduce overcrowding in Israeli prisons;
- Call on IPS to ensure the protection of all prisoners and uphold their right to the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination, by adopting the latest WHO guidance on preventing COVID-19 outbreak in prisons, and taking the necessary measures to prevent the spread of the pandemic in Israeli prisons; and
- Urge IPS to install landlines in Israeli prisons and ensure the maintenance of family contacts for Palestinian prisoners through unmonitored phone or video calls between the prisoners and their families, especially while family visits continue to be suspended.

Palestinian Human Rights Defenders

In the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), Human Rights Defenders face various types of harassments and human rights violations by the occupying state, irrespective of the protection afforded to them in international conventions. One of the main techniques used by the occupying state to silence and frighten Palestinian human rights workers is arbitrary detention.

Administrative detention is the main form of arbitrary detention used by the occupation state. **It is one of the key tools used by the occupation to silence and frighten Palestinian Human Rights Defenders.** This procedure allows the Israeli military to hold Palestinian prisoners indefinitely, on **secret information, without charging them or allowing them to stand trial.** In most cases, detainees are not informed of the suspicions against them. Moreover, both the detainee and his/her attorney are not allowed to see the evidence, on security grounds, and have no effective means to challenge the administrative detention order. Administrative detention orders are legal in Israel under the state of Emergency and under military order 1651 in the oPt. The duration of an administrative detention is 6 months and can be renewed indefinitely, allowing for indefinite arbitrary detention.

Through the use of administrative detention, Israel criminalizes practices of human rights defenders, and thus weakens their ability to promote and to strive for the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as enshrined in article 1 of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

The frequency of the use of administrative detention has fluctuated throughout Israel's occupation. Over the last months of 2019, attacks against civil society organizations and their staff have been steadily increasing, including through the issuing of administrative detention orders. Three cases highlight the widespread use of administrative detention against Palestinian human rights defenders over the last year: Ayman Nasser, Ashraf Abu Iram, and Ubai Aboudi.

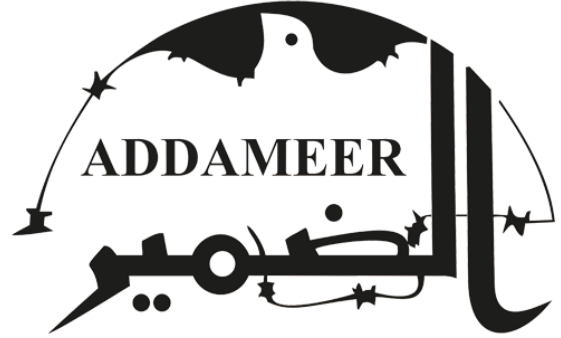
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Addameer's actions in numbers

11 international groups (190 people) were briefed by the Advocacy office since January.

5 visits to military courts were coordinated and organized since January.

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