

Monthly Newsletter — October 2019

In October **2019**, Addameer has documented ongoing human rights violations against Palestinian prisoners and detainees, as well as Human Rights organizations.

Administrative detention continues as a policy which deprives detainees of the right to a fair trial, and the chance to defend themselves against any formal charges. Key issues persistently include the use of **torture and ill-treatment** of prisoners, and the ongoing **detention of journalists and human right defenders**.



Detention in Numbers

Since January 2019, **4 816** Palestinians from the occupied territories were arrested. For the sole month of October, the number of new arrests was **417**.

As of the end of October 2019, there were:

5 050 Palestinian political prisoners

460 of them administrative detainees

190 child detainees

43 female prisoners

8 Palestinian Legislative Council members.

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The targeting of Palestinian Human rights defenders and civil society organizations is still ongoing

Over the last month, the Israeli occupation repeatedly attacked both Palestinian human rights defenders and Palestinian civil society organizations. Such institutionalized campaign, led by the Israeli authorities and other lobbying groups, is an attempt to silence Palestinian and international human rights organizations and hinder their work in monitoring and documenting human rights violations.

The gag order, which has prevented Addameer from publishing any information on a number of detainees currently under interrogation, was renewed on the 7th of November for another month. It was firstly issued on September 10 2019, and has been renewed twice. The hearing was a one-sided court session, only held with one party, while the detainees' legal representatives were not present. It should be noted that the defense team was also excluded from the two previous court proceedings. However, despite the gag order, Israeli sources including press and organizations have continuously published information to the public about the cases. This inconsistent enforcement of the gag order can only be understood as a way to influence public opinion.



Addameer expresses serious concern for the well-being and health of the detainees mentioned in the gag order, some of whom have been detained since late August, and most of whom have been banned from meeting their lawyers. Addameer is definite that these detainees were tortured and ill-treated, and torture might still be happening today.

On October 11, less than one month after the occupation forces' raid on Addameer's office, **the Israeli occupying forces stormed the headquarters of the General Directorate of Health Work Committees in Al-Bireh.** They smashed the doors and locks of the office, damaged desks, threw files on the ground, leaving their marks all around the office. The Israeli occupying power has a long history of hindering the work of CSOs, including medical care to Palestinians, notably by blocking ambulances at checkpoints, harassing medics, and violating patients' privacy. Most recently Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem was raided by armed Israeli occupying forces and search dogs, terrorizing cancer patients.

On October 26, 2019, Laith Abu Zeyad, Amnesty International staff member and campaigner on Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, was prevented from travelling by the Israeli authorities for alleged "security reasons" while trying to attend a relative's funeral in Jordan. Earlier in September 2019, Israeli authorities denied Mr. Zeyad's request for a humanitarian permit to accompany his mother for medical treatment in Jerusalem. The Israeli authorities have not publicly provided evidence for Mr. Zeyad's travel ban. The case of Laith Abu Zeyad is illustrative to Israel's arbitrary policy of travel bans against human rights defenders and activists. Mr. Abdullatif Ghaith, former Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association Chairperson, has been banned from travelling abroad and from leaving Jerusalem. In 2006, Israel imposed a travel ban on Shawan Jabarin, the General Director of Al- Haq.

On Thursday the 31st of October, Khalida Jarrar was arrested in her house. According to her daughter the family members, the house was surrounded by more than 70 Israeli occupation soldiers who arrived in 12 military vehicles. Khalida Jarrar is a Palestinian civil society leader, an elected member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, the head of the prisoner commission of the PLC and was a member of Addameer's board of directors. Two years ago, in July 2017, she was arrested by the occupation forces and spent 20 months in administrative detention. This arrest is again an attempt to shrinking space for civil society leaders and is part of the occupation's campaign of harassment of human rights defenders.



Is there an attempt to kill the Palestinian prisoner Samer Arbeed?

On the 25th of October 2019, Maariv newspaper stated that, two weeks prior, **the Israeli prison guards guarding Samer in his hospital room, used tear gas against him despite the fact that Arbeed has pneumonia and eleven broken ribs, due to torture during interrogation.**

The judges' behavior, whether in the continuous renewal of Samer's lawyer ban; the extension of his detention for the purposes of interrogation; and the secrecy surrounding the details of his medical case, show their involvement in the torture of Samer Arbeed. Furthermore, the choice of the medical staff at Hadassah hospital, not to expose the crimes committed in their facility, shows their complicity in the crimes committed against Samer.

Addameer assures that the Israeli occupation authorities' bear full responsibility over Samer's safety and life.



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Addameer's advocacy trip to the EU

Addameer, represented by the general director Ms. Sarah Francis, carried out an advocacy trip to the European Parliament in Brussels, to shed the light on the struggle of Palestinian political prisoner in Israeli prisons, and the systematic violations they are subjected to, such as, torture and arbitrary detention. Addameer organized a four-day visit to the European Parliament in coordination with the European Coordination of Committees and Associations For Palestine (ECCP). The trip included meetings with members of the European Parliament from various committees, groups and parties. Addameer called for a serious and effective discussion of these issues in the EU Parliament, and called on member-states to adopt effective measures to insure Israel's compliance with its obligations under international law.

Addameer's participation to a conference on Collective punishments in the oPt at Al-Qds University

Addameer's legal unit Coordinator provided an oral brief on detention and collective punishment against Palestinians from the oPt.



Recreational time for families of Palestinian prisoners

In October 2019, Addameer and El Damaer, a group a youth human rights defenders trained by our organization, organized two open days in Hebron for the families of Palestinian political prisoners. On the 23rd of October 70 kids attended the event. Many recreational activities were organized: a puppet show, songs, face painting. All of the kids left with a gift from the organization. On October 28, we organized a similar event in Fawar Camp which 650 children attended. There was a theatre play, songs, games, and gifts for the children. Children are hugely impacted by the policy of mass incarceration of the occupation power, and these recreational times are extremely important for their well-being.



Addameer's speaking tour in the US

Addameer carried out a speaking tour in several states and cities in the US including New York, Chicago, and the Bay Area. The tour which was titled "Free Political Prisoners: from Palestine to the United States" started on October 16, 2019 and lasted for two weeks. Addameer's international advocacy officer attended several public events, meetings, and interviews. The tour's main goal was to raise awareness regarding the conditions of Palestinian political prisoners and the violations they suffer from, such as torture and arbitrary detention. Those activities shed light on the ongoing targeting of Palestinian human rights and civil society. Besides, the tour aimed at strengthening Addameer's relations with organizations and groups in the United States. The tour was organized by Addameer in collaboration with several communities and student bodies in the United States.



Addameer's advocacy actions in numbers

75 international groups (1 164 people) were briefed by the Advocacy office since January 2019 on the situation of Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli occupation jails.

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

11 Know your rights sessions were conducted by Addameer's training and awareness unit since January 2019. 3 were conducted in Jerusalem and 8 in the West Bank.

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