

Palestinian Prisoners

BRIEFING CARD

- **4500+** political prisoners
- **900+** administrative detainees
- **150+** child prisoners
- **1 million** Palestinians arrested since 1967
- **550+** Palestinian prisoners serving life sentences
- **100+** Palestinians have been in administrative detention every month since 2002
- **12,000+** Palestinian children have been arrested by Israel since 2000

- Most of the 4,500 Palestinians in Israeli prisons are **political prisoners**.
- Hundreds of these Palestinians are **detained indefinitely, without charge or trial**.
- Palestinian prisoners endure **arbitrary beatings, solitary confinement, limited family visits and medical negligence** in Israeli prisons.
- Palestinian prisoners are occasionally **denied access to legal representation**.
- Communication from Israeli authorities is usually in Hebrew, with no Arabic translation available. The Israeli authorities frequently withhold evidence against Palestinian prisoners.

Human rights groups, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, report that Israel **tortures** Palestinian prisoners, despite having signed the UN Convention Against Torture in 1991.

This includes **physical beatings and inhumane and degrading treatment**.

Palestinian prisoners have reported being stripped of their clothes, hanged from the ceiling and beaten. Female prisoners have reported sexual abuse.

Palestinians are also **mentally and emotionally tortured**. Israeli guards occasionally falsely inform Palestinian prisoners that their children and other family members have died.

Medical negligence in Israeli prisons is a very serious problem. A Palestinian prisoners health clinic is nicknamed the '**slaughterhouse**' because of the conditions.

Palestinian human rights organisations Addameer and Al-Haq have appealed to the UN about Israel's inhumane treatment of Palestinian prisoners.



Child prisoners

Since 1967 Israel has operated **two separate legal systems** in the West Bank, reminiscent of **South African apartheid**. Israeli settlers are subject to civilian and criminal law, whereas Palestinians, including Palestinian children, live under military law. Palestinian children are the **only children in the world** who are prosecuted through military rather than civilian courts.

Children are usually arrested for throwing stones or attending 'unauthorised' protests. Under Israel's military law, **stone-throwing** is punishable by up to **20 years in prison**.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as anyone under 18. But Israel treats 16 and 17-year-old Palestinians as adults.

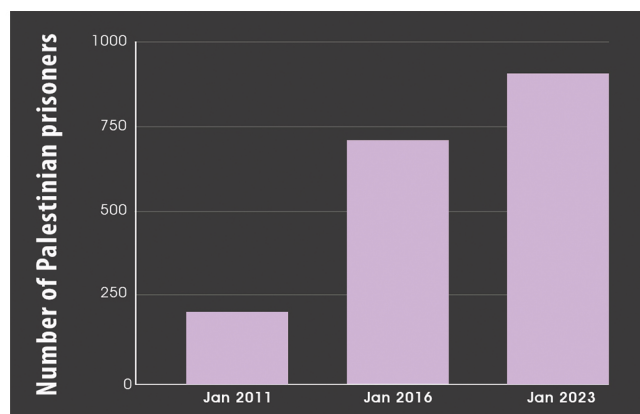
Palestinian children suffer **physical, psychological, and sexual abuse** from being kept in adult prisons.



In 2020 Save the Children spoke to nearly 500 Palestinian children about their experiences in Israeli prisons:

- 81% had been physically beaten
- 86% were subject to strip searches
- 52% were threatened with harm to their families
- 47% were denied access to a lawyer during interrogations

Administrative detention



Administrative detention is when Israel arrests Palestinians and holds them indefinitely **without charge or trial**. Under administrative detention Palestinians are not allowed legal representation or access to legal professionals.

Israel has a long history of using administrative detention to oppress Palestinians.

Since March 2002, more than **100 Palestinians have been in administrative detention every month**.

Many Palestinians being detained under administrative detention are parents, doctors and university students. Some have been held without charge or trial for years.

Israel's use of administrative detention is a form of collective punishment, violating Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Palestinian prisoner **Khalil Awawdeh** went on a hunger strike as a protest against Israel's use of administrative detention for 172 days in 2022.



The prison conditions faced by Palestinian adults and children are a blatant violation of basic moral standards and international law.

References:

- 1) Statistics on Palestinian prisoners, Addameer, <https://www.addameer.org/statistics>
- 2) 'Defenceless', Save the Children, 2020, https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/content/dam/gb/reports/defenceless_impact_of_detention_on_palestinian_children.pdf
- 3) 'A Threshold Crossed', Human Rights Watch, April 2021, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/04/27/threshold-crossed/israeli-authorities-and-crimes-apartheid-and-persecution>
- 4) Amnesty International report on human rights in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territories/report-israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territories>

