

Introduction

There are about 6000 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons, between them 42 women and 164 children. In February 163 of them were children and 22 of them were women.¹ Since 1967, the Israeli military has arrested 805 thousands Palestinians.

PWWSD

Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development (PWWSD) is a nongovernmental organization in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The vision of the organization is a free and democratic Palestinian society based on gender equality, respect of human rights and social justice. PWWSD works to empower and mobilize women's participation in the struggle against the Israeli occupation. The organization also works for women's contribution to the development process, their political, economic and civil rights, as well as their access to justice through the improved psychological wellbeing and through combating gender based violence.

Purpose of this report

The majority of Palestinian political prisoners are male, only 41 are female today. For a female prisoner or detainee, the situation within the prison might differ compared to the males, as well as how they are being treated throughout the arrest. Though, being a minority group, the situation for these women is less reported on and therefore not as well known. Just like in the rest of the society women's situation is marginalized and PWWSD therefore has a certain interest to examine the specific situation of Palestinian female political prisoners and detainees. The organization hopes to shed light upon these women's stories and on the fact that how they are being treated is in many ways breaking international laws. A specific consideration must be taken upon gender even in a situation of political imprisonment. This report therefore examines female Palestinian detainees and political prisoners' specific situation.

Contextual background

The Palestinian territory of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank were occupied by Israeli military forces in the war 1967. The next year the United Nations Security Council called for a withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from these OPT within the resolution 242, but it has so far

¹Addameer monthly detention report, February 1, 2015, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=750> on May 5th 2015.

not been implemented.²Today, the people of Palestine are exposed to the occupation daily through economic, political and social factors as well as through military presence. Since the second Palestinian intifada started in September 2000, more than 82000 Palestinians have been arrested and the construction of a wall separating the West Bank from Israel has been carried out. Last year there was another outbreak of disturbance after three young Israelis living in a settlement in the West Bank had been kidnapped. Nightly raids and arrests of Palestinians were carried out by the Israeli military forces. Thousands of Palestinians were detained and a 50-day military offensive in Gaza Strip leads to the death of over 1500 civilians.

Female detainees

More than ten thousand Palestinian women have been arrested by Israeli forces since 1967.³Lena Jarbouni is now the longest held female Palestinian political prisoner since she was arrested 2002.⁴

Even though the basic needs of a man and a woman can be very similar, there are some needs that might differ. Palestinian women are of disadvantage because of the depriving situation living within an occupied territory, but also because of their gender in a patriarchal society. Because of women's powerless situation in prisons, there are difficulties for them to file complaints about violations of their gender or their situation as a prisoner. This might result in a difficulty getting to know the whole situation within the prisons. PWWSD can therefore not be sure that all the needed information has come to our knowledge, but we send our support and admiration to the women who dared to step forward.⁵

During the arrest and transfer

According to the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), number 2, "[n]ewly arrived women prisoners shall be provided with facilities to contact their relatives; access to legal advice; information about prison rules and regulations, the prison regime and where to seek help when in need in a language that they understand; and, in the case of foreign nationals,

²United Nation Resolution 242 (1967), November 22, 1967, found at <http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/0/7D35E1F729DF491C85256EE700686136> on May 4, 2015.

³"Violations continues against Palestinian women and girls on International Women's Day" March 8, 2015, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=747> on April 21, 2015.

⁴"Lina Khattab and fellow women Palestinian political prisoners report abuse and mistreatment" January 24, 2015, found at <http://samidoun.net/2015/01/lina-khattab-and-fellow-women-palestinian-political-prisoners-report-abuse-and-mistreatment/> on May 3, 2015.

⁵"From the Testimony of a Palestinian Woman Prisoner", The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, researched and written by Hadeel Badarni, July 2013.

access to consular representatives as well.”⁶ This article is although being violated in several ways in relation to the female detainees of Palestine.

Women who have been arrested indicate that they have been victims of physical and verbal assault on the arrest, as well as during the transfer to interrogation, detention or prison centers.⁷ Upon the arrest detainees are usually not told where they will be taken or explained their legal rights.⁸ Testimonies also show that conditions during interrogation are very harsh, exhausting and humiliating.⁹

Addameer has reported on women being kicked and beaten all over their body upon their arrest, sometimes by using different tools such as the back of a gun. They experienced pain from the soldiers twisting their arms or pinching them. Their hands and feet have been shackled so tight it hurt, forced to stay in the same position during long transportation inside of a military jeep. The Israeli soldiers blindfolded and forced the arrested to walk barefoot. Insults and cursing have also been common during the arrests.¹⁰

When the arrested person is supposed to attend court hearing she has to suffer through a long and tiring day. She is picked up from the prison around 4 a.m. and brought back late at night. She is transferred by a prison service wagon with her hands and feet shackled. Then, she has to wait in the cold wagon for a long time or she will be put in another very cold prison cell. Harsh treatments are also common during the transportation.¹¹

According to the Fourth Geneva Convention, article 49, can individuals from an occupied area never be transferred or deported by the occupying forces to the territory of the occupier or any other region for that matter. Any forcible transfer is therefore prohibited, which means that detention and imprisonment of such must be served within the occupied territories. Most of the female political prisoners and detainees are thus being transferred to the HaSharon prison, which is located within Israeli territory. The Fourth Geneva Convention is thereby violated by Israel when Palestinians are being arrested in the Occupied Palestinian Territories to be

⁶ United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), Resolution 2010/16.

⁷ “Violations continues against Palestinian women and girls on International Women’s Day” March 8, 2015, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=747> on April 21, 2015.

⁸ “Palestinian women political prisoners – systematic forms of political and gender-based state violence”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, 2010.

⁹ “From the Testimony of a Palestinian Woman Prisoner”, The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, researched and written by Hadeel Badarni, July 2013.

¹⁰ “Violations continues against Palestinian women and girls on International Women’s Day” March 8, 2015, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=747> on April 21, 2015.

¹¹ Newsletter February 2015, Women’s Organization for Political Prisoners, found at <http://wofpp.org/english/home.html> on April, 2015.

transferred to Israeli territory for detention or imprisonment.¹² This also result in that many prisoners have problems meeting with their Palestinian defense counsel, since they are not allowed visits within Israeli territory because of “security reasons”.¹³

Administrative detention

Amnesty International reported 2015 that around 500 Palestinians from the Occupied Palestinian Territories were being held as administrative detainees in Israeli prisons during the last year. They were detained on the basis of secret information, which they or their lawyer did not have the access to or a chance to challenge. Therefore there was no trial and they did not get charged, yet they were being kept in detention.

It is within the Israeli military order 1651, which applies to everyone within the occupied West Bank, that administrative detention is ordered. The order is taken by a military commander when there are reasons to believe that the person of matter is presenting a risk to “the security of the area” or to “the public security”. The detention can be taken for up to six months at a time, but can be extended for an unlimited number of times before the expiry of the detention order.¹⁴

The military judge can withhold information about the detainee’s case if there are beliefs that it could harm the security of the region. In such circumstances will the detainee, as well as its lawyer, not be informed about the evidence against her and therefore dismiss any attempts of defense.¹⁵

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 9, states that “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.” Article 10 and article 11 argues how everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing as well as that they shall be presumed innocent until they have not been proved to be guilty according to law.¹⁶ Although, the Fourth Geneva Convention, article 78, acknowledge the right of an occupying power to take safety measures against inhabitants of the occupied territories when there are imperative reasons of security. The occupying force may at the most put these persons in assigned residence or internment. Within the procedure of this, Israel should include the right to appeal and within the least possible delay. If there is delay, a periodical review should be held every six months. Israel is hereby not following the

¹²The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, IV Geneva Convention.

¹³ “Women”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=295> on May 6, 2015.

¹⁴“Starved of justice – Palestinians detained without trial by Israel”, Amnesty International, 2012.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations.

instructions of this kind of errand, but seems to read the international laws in a way that would favor their purpose. Instead, Israel has put administrative detention into regularity of action.

Conditions within prisons

Within the Fourth Geneva Convention, article 76, detainees shall live under such conditions that keep them in good health. This related to the quality of food and healthcare. They also have the right to any kind of spiritual assistance that they might require.¹⁷The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners for instance declares that “windows shall be large enough to enable the prisoners to read or work by natural light, and shall be so constructed that they can allow the entrance of fresh air whether or not there is artificial ventilation.”¹⁸

On the contrary, conditions within the Israeli prisons are reported to be harsh for the Palestinian detainees and political prisoners, leading to health problems and psychological illness. The cells can be dark and dirty, with insects getting inside. In summer time the rooms can get very hot and in the winter, moisture and cold.¹⁹This has resulted in rheumatism and dermatological problems for many of the women.²⁰The absence of sunlight and lack of ventilation leads to a growing of mold on the walls, which leads to breathing problems and skin conditions for the residents.²¹The prison authority has repeatedly denied the prisoners access to cleaning products despite their request for it.²²The overcrowded rooms add up to the already low living conditions and affect the female’s mental and physical conditions in numerous ways.²³

There is a shortage of clothing and there are not always clean bed sheets available. The detainees are only supplied with 2-3 rolls of toilet paper per month, but no necessary hygiene products so as soap or toothpaste. This is something they have to buy from the expensive prison canteen. The prisoners are supplied with 10 sanitary napkins each per month, with no

¹⁷The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, IV Geneva Convention.

¹⁸ Standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners, Adopted by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Geneva in 1955.

¹⁹“Palestinian women political prisoners – systematic forms of political and gender-based state violence”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, 2010.

²⁰“Women”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=295> on May 6, 2015.

²¹“From the Testimony of a Palestinian Woman Prisoner”, The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, researched and written by HadeelBadarni, July 2013.

²²“Women”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=295> on May 6, 2015.

²³“From the Testimony of a Palestinian Woman Prisoner”, The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, researched and written by HadeelBadarni, July 2013.

consideration of individual need.²⁴ This, even though the Bangkok Rule number 5 say that facilities and materials have to meet women's specific hygiene needs, including sanitary napkins free of charge.²⁵ Showers are only available for the women a few hours a day, which create difficulty for them to arrange between each other. Sanitation problems, caused by this whole situation, leads to a risk of infection diseases.²⁶

The food lacks of essential nutrients, which cause so as weight loss, weakness and an iron shortage for the women. There are not enough vegetables, fruits or meat for all of them. When they are served vegetables or fruit it is commonly rotten and uneatable.²⁷

For female prisoners, there has been no regard taken upon them being a woman. The prisons are usually built by men and meant for men, which means that there are no specific considerations of gender differences between the detained.²⁸ The Fourth Geneva Convention, article 76, gives female detainees the right to "be confined in separate quarters and shall be under the direct supervision of women."²⁹ Yet, there are at many times male attendants at the prison instead of female ones. Also, the female detainees or soldiers can be very violent because of their will to win respect and recognition from other soldiers or superiors.³⁰ Within the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners it has also been stated that different categories of prisoners should be kept separately.³¹ Shireen Issawi was thus reported to be put together with the Israeli prisoners for the second time during her detention in September last year.³² The female Israeli criminal offenders who are sometimes supposed to share the cell with a female Palestinian political prisoner might threaten, assault and humiliate the Palestinian woman. There have been cases of verbal and physical abuse. This would never happen if the prison administration had recognized the Bangkok Rule number 54, which says that they have

²⁴"From the Testimony of a Palestinian Woman Prisoner", The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, researched and written by Hadeel Badarni, July 2013.

²⁵United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), Resolution 2010/16.

²⁶"From the Testimony of a Palestinian Woman Prisoner", The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, researched and written by Hadeel Badarni, July 2013.

²⁷Palestinian women political prisoners 2010 & testimony of female political prisoners

²⁸"Palestinian women political prisoners – systematic forms of political and gender-based state violence", Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, 2010.

²⁹The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, IV Geneva Convention.

³⁰"Women", Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=295> on May 6, 2015.

³¹Standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners, Adopted by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Geneva in 1955.

³² "Shirin el-Isawi Isolated again with Israeli Criminals", Ahrarwledna, September 25, 2014, found at <http://www.ahrarwledna.com/en/index.php?s=23&id=2514> on May 5, 2015.

to provide comprehensive programs for female prisoners with different cultural or religious background.³³

Medical treatment

According to the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners “Sick prisoners who require specialist treatment shall be transferred to specialized institutions or to civil hospitals.”³⁴ A study from September 2008 conducted by Addameer, showed how 38% of the female Palestinian prisoners carried treatable diseases, but without them receiving any treatment. There seem to be a systematic denial of medical treatment for Palestinian prisoners.³⁵ It can take months from that of a medical complain till the necessary examination is performed. The waiting time can of course create an aggravated condition for the prisoner.³⁶ The negligence of cultural and gender sensitive medical treatment has acutely affected the female Palestinian prisoners health conditions and put them in a very uncomfortable position. There is also an absence of Arabic speaking female medical specialist.³⁷

The physical and mental situation within the prison can also cause menstruation perturbations.³⁸ Most of the young women report of having irregularity on their monthly date of period. Yet, many of them do not have regularly gynecological examinations. Worth mentioning, this subject is usually discussed behind closed doors within the Palestinian society. This brings reasons to believe that not all information is known about this issue as well as that the women in need of medical attention might not ask for it in response of the embarrassment.³⁹

Article 16 of Fourth Geneva Convention grants special protection of pregnant women. The Standard Minimum Rules of Treatment for Prisoners also declares that there shall be special accommodation for all necessary pre-natal and post-natal care and treatment in women's

³³United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), Resolution 2010/16.

³⁴Standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners, Adopted by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Geneva in 1955.

³⁵“Women”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=295> on May 6, 2015.

³⁶“From the Testimony of a Palestinian Woman Prisoner”, The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, researched and written by Hadeel Badarni, July 2013.

³⁷“Women”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=295> on May 6, 2015.

³⁸“Palestinian women political prisoners – systematic forms of political and gender-based state violence”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, 2010.

³⁹“From the Testimony of a Palestinian Woman Prisoner”, The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, researched and written by Hadeel Badarni, July 2013.

institutions.⁴⁰ Also The Bangkok Rule number 42 articulates the need of appropriate programs for pregnant women, nursing mothers as well as for women with children in prison.⁴¹ Testimonies have shown how pregnant prisoners have lived under the same harsh conditions as the rest of the prisoners. The mothers and their babies received limited or even no pre-natal and post-natal care. There were no further considerations taken of the mothers nutrition or diet, instead they received the same amount of food as the other prisoners. Upon delivery, the female prisoners have been chained to their bed until they reach the delivery bed. They were chained again only minutes after having the baby, in contrast to the Bangkok Rule number 24 which means that instruments of restraints shall never be used on women immediately after giving birth. This ill-treatment may cause health problems both for the baby as well as for the mother.⁴²

Fatema Younis Azzeq even testified how she suffered from ill-treatment so as being exposed to physical violence while being pregnant. Yet, no permission was given to special medical treatment or hospital visits. Neither was she allowed to bring a family member or even her lawyer for the delivery. After having delivered her son, she and her baby had to live in a cell together with five other prisoners, which made them both suffer from health problems.⁴³

Ill-treatment

Female prisoners have experienced physical as well as psychological abuses. There are testimonies about threats, insults and beatings. Violent night raids into the prisoners rooms happen regularly.⁴⁴ Lina Khattab, who was arrested on December 13th 2014, reported how she was abused and beaten during her detention. One of the soldiers had been hitting her, ripping her clothes as well as shouted offensive insults at her.⁴⁵

According to The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 5, “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”⁴⁶ Article 27,

⁴⁰Standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners, Adopted by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Geneva in 1955.

⁴¹United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), Resolution 2010/16.

⁴²“Women”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=295> on May 6, 2015.

⁴³“Palestinian women political prisoners – systematic forms of political and gender-based state violence”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, 2010.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵“Lina Khattab and fellow women Palestinian political prisoners report abuse and mistreatment” January 24, 2015, found at <http://samidoun.net/2015/01/lina-khattab-and-fellow-women-palestinian-political-prisoners-report-abuse-and-mistreatment/> on May 3, 2015.

⁴⁶The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations.

within the Fourth Geneva Convention also claims that "women shall be especially protected against any attack on their honor, in particular against rape, enforced prostitution or any form of indecent assault".⁴⁷ Thought, "physical interrogation methods" might be used in a matter of necessity within Israeli's Penal Law, this in case of the risk of "a ticking bomb".⁴⁸ In contrary, some detainees have said that these methods are used also in cases when there are no ticking bombs to counteract.⁴⁹

For women specifically, there have been many complaints on the Israeli soldier's body search, forcing them to remove all, or almost all, of their clothing. This happened both upon the arrest as well as during the detention. While being strip searched women have frequently been asked to squat while being naked as well as being exposed to an unpleasant internal body search. Those who refuse are usually being put in isolation cells.⁵⁰ Female detainees have also expressed how they have been exposed to sexual harassment, so as sexually degrading insults and threats of rape, as well as threats of rape of their family members. Accusations have been made on Israeli prison administration for deliberately playing on patriarchal norms and gender stereotypes within the Palestinian culture to scare the female Palestinian prisoners.⁵¹

There are reports that indicate that female prisoners are less exposed to physical violence compared to male prisoners within the Israeli prisons. Instead torture and ill-treatment are used in a gender specific way, exposing women to more mental and sexual abuses. One female detainee reported on how the Israeli interrogator, in her presence, sang an Egyptian song about how a bride would lose her virginity the upcoming night. The abuses are not always clear or obvious. Instead the prisoners can be verbally abused or given just a hint about what will be done to her or her family. Many times the interrogators are trying to get information from the women about their male relatives. This kind of treatment seem to offend them in a more mental way and it seems a lot like the interrogators try to scare them in an attempt to break them down.⁵²

Family

⁴⁷The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, IV Geneva Convention.

⁴⁸"Starved of justice – Palestinians detained without trial by Israel", Amnesty International, 2012.

⁴⁹Public Committee Against Torture in Israel and The Association for Civil Rights in Israel, found at http://www.law.yale.edu/documents/pdf/Public_Committee_Against_Torture.pdf

⁵⁰"Women", Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=295> on May 6, 2015.

⁵¹"Palestinian women political prisoners – systematic forms of political and gender-based state violence", Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, 2010.

⁵²<http://old.kvinnatillkvinna.se/allvarliga-vergrepp-mot-palestinska-f-ngar> 2015-05-03

Only one Israeli prison is located inside of the Occupied Palestinian Territories, namely Ofer prison. But since most of the female detainees are being transferred to Israeli territory, generally to HaSharon prison, their family members from the Occupied Palestinian Territories cannot visit them without permission from the Israeli government to enter the country.⁵³ Many family members have been denied permit on unspecific security grounds. Relatives from Gaza Strip have been completely banned from visiting the detainees.⁵⁴ Moona Qadan was reported last September of being denied family visits for 22 months.⁵⁵ This happens even though the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners states that prisoners shall be allowed regular communication with, as well as visits from, family and friends.⁵⁶

The Bangkok Rule number 28 gives a certain acknowledgement to allow open contact between mother and child, as well as to encourage a positive visiting experience.⁵⁷ When female detainees with young children are forbidden to see their children for a long time, it is a very traumatic experience. For Palestinian women, who are usually very dependent on the family and the life inside the home, this brings certain difficulties. It might lead to depression or to an isolation of their feelings.⁵⁸

Overall this can be looked upon as collective punishment. Relatives and children might not be able to see the detained for months or even years sometimes. Children might have watched how their mothers were being brutally arrested by soldiers, maybe even during a raid inside the family home. After this they might not know where she has been taken or what will happen to her. This is something that will most likely bring psychological impact on the children.⁵⁹

HaSharon prison

The conditions within the Israeli HaSharon prison, where most female prisoners are taken, are very poor and the cells are overcrowded. Despite the very cold winter, there has been no heating in the cells at all. Neither has any reply been given to the request of prisoners to put their own

⁵³“Palestinian women political prisoners – systematic forms of political and gender-based state violence”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, 2010.

⁵⁴“Starved of justice – Palestinians detained without trial by Israel”, Amnesty International, 2012.

⁵⁵<http://www.ahrarwledna.com/en/index.php?s=23&id=2518> 2015-05-03

⁵⁶Standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners, Adopted by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Geneva in 1955.

⁵⁷United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), Resolution 2010/16.

⁵⁸“From the Testimony of a Palestinian Woman Prisoner”, The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, researched and written by Hadeel Badarni, July 2013. And; “Palestinian women political prisoners – systematic norms of political and gender-based state violence”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, 2010.

⁵⁹“Palestinian women political prisoners – systematic forms of political and gender-based state violence”, Addameer prisoner support and Human Rights Association, 2010.

heating systems in the rooms. There are not enough, nor warm enough, blankets given by the prison administration. The detainee's families have not been allowed to bring them blankets and they are therefore forced to buy the expensive and low quality blankets from the prison canteen.⁶⁰

Prison administration has also failed to provide the detainees with necessary medical treatments. In 2013 prisoners who suffer high blood pressure, asthma or severe eye infections were not given access to the medical treatment that they were in need of.⁶¹

Testimonies also show how detainees have been prevented from bringing books and newspapers into the prison, which means that they are denied connections with the outside world. Visits from family members have also been opposed.⁶²

Protests within the prison

Recently, May 5th, five female prisoners were isolated after lifting the Palestinian flag in the stronghold.⁶³ Many times prisoners have been launching different kinds of protests inside the prisons to put attention on their situation. When prisoners choose to start a hunger strike in response to the depriving conditions in the prison, it shows that they are very serious about their complaints. It is a big cry out for help and the only way possible to get the attention.

Hana Shalabi, from the village Bruqin, was arrested by Israeli forces on 16th of February 2012. She was being accused of connections with the Islamic Jihad Movement and for planning a suicide attack, but the evidence against her was never released to her or to her lawyer. Shalabi's lawyer stated that Shalabi went on hunger strike immediately upon the arrest to protest against being strip searched by male Israeli soldiers. After her lawyer filed a request she was eventually transferred from the HaSharon prison, which did not have the facilities to treat her health condition, to the IPS Medical Centre. Shalabi ended the hunger strike and left the hospital on the 28 of March, since a deal was made for her to be released on the condition of being transferred to the Gaza Strip, where she would have to stay for a minimum of three years. Amnesty International reported that this transfer was most likely forced upon Shalabi.⁶⁴

⁶⁰Newsletter February 2015, Women's Organization for Political Prisoners, found at <http://wofpp.org/english/home.html> on April 28, 2015.

⁶¹ "Female Palestinian detainees suffer diseases in Israel's Hasharon prison", Middle East Monitor, December 9, 2013. Found at <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/middle-east/8724-female-palestinian-detainees-suffer-diseases-in-israels-hasharon-prison> on May 26, 2015.

⁶² "From the Testimony of a Palestinian Woman Prisoner", The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, researched and written by Hadeel Badarni, July 2013.

⁶³ "Five Female Prisoners in Hasharoon Isolated", Ahrarwledna, May 5, 2015, found at <http://www.ahrarwledna.com/en/index.php?s=23&id=2766> on May 6, 2015.

⁶⁴ "Starved of justice – Palestinians detained without trial by Israel", Amnesty International, 2012.

The hunger strike in 2012, starting on the Palestinian Prisoner's Day, brought together a number of at least 1200 prisoners. They were demanding a change for their living conditions as well as to put an end to the solitary confinements, the nightly raids and the ban of family visitors from Gaza. The female prisoners within HaSharon prison followed up by hunger striking for two days each week. In 2013 eight prisoners started a strike against administrative detention.

Targeting Human Rights defenders

In September 2014 Addameer reported on how their Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association as well as Lawyers of Palestinian Human Rights had sent two joint complaints to the United Nations Special Reporter on the situation of Human Rights Defenders. The complaints referred to the two female human rights defenders, Shireen Issawi and Bushra al-Taweel, who were arrested earlier the same year. Issawa, a human rights lawyer from East Jerusalem, and al-Taweel, a journalist and student working for the Aneen al-Qaid news as well as the Prisoners Club. They were both working for Palestinian prisoner's human rights and their arrest raised concerns about the Israeli authorities targeting of human rights defenders.⁶⁵

On April 2nd 2015 another Palestinian human rights defender, Khalida Jarrar, got detained by Israeli forces. Jarrar was known as a lawyer advocating prisoner's rights as well as being a member on the government-appointed committee mandated to follow up the Palestinian affiliation to the International Criminal Court. She was also a member of the political party "Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine", which has been considered an "illegal terrorist organization" by Israel.⁶⁶ On April 15th, Jarrar was confirmed administrative detention as well as 12 political charges related to her public speeches, political activities and advocacy for Palestinian detainees.⁶⁷

The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders demands a specific protection of human rights defenders. It also says that states have a duty to "protect, promote and implement all human rights."⁶⁸ The three examples above show on the contrary how Israel seems to target human rights defenders of Palestine specifically.

Reintegration into the society

⁶⁵ "Complaints submitted to the United Nations concerning the Israeli detention of two female Palestinian human rights defenders: MsShireenIssawi and MsBushra al-Taweel", Addameer, September 16, 2014. Found at <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=723> on April 22, 2015.

⁶⁶ "Dispatches: Israel Locks Up Palestinian Lawmaker", Bill Van Esveld, Human Rights Watch, April 9, 2015. Found at <http://www.hrw.org/news/2015/04/09/dispatches-israel-locks-palestinian-lawmaker> on April 28, 2015.

⁶⁷ "KhalidaJarrar Solidarity Campaign: Free KhalidaJarrar!", Samidoun, May 5, 2015. Found at <http://samidoun.net/khalidajarrar/> on April 28, 2015.

⁶⁸ Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, United Nations Human Rights. Found at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/SRHRDefenders/Pages/Declaration.aspx> on May 4, 2015.

Many female detainees that have been released, experience how they are first being treated like princesses among their Palestinian surrounding. Although, after a while, they seem to have been forgotten, left with those difficult memories to handle by themselves.⁶⁹ These women are in great need of psychological support as well as support to reintegrate into the ordinary life of the society.

⁶⁹“Allvarliga övergrepp mot Palestinska fångar”, Kvinna till Kvinna, June 26, 2012. Found at <http://old.kvinnatillkvinna.se/allvarliga-vergrepp-mot-palestinska-f-ngar> on May 3, 2015.

Conclusions

PWWSD has with this report shown how female Palestinian political prisoners and detainees are being deprived their rights within Israeli prisons as well as how international laws are being broken by Israel within. Most of the women have illegally been transferred to Israeli territory and have therein not been offered their right to a fair trial. They have been isolated from their lawyers, family, friends as well as the outside world over all. Within the prisons the women suffer both physically and mentally. They have been exposed to ill-treatment and torture. Their health is threatened by the harsh conditions within the prisons, but most of them do not receive the needed medical treatment. Also, there have been no consideration taken upon their gender.