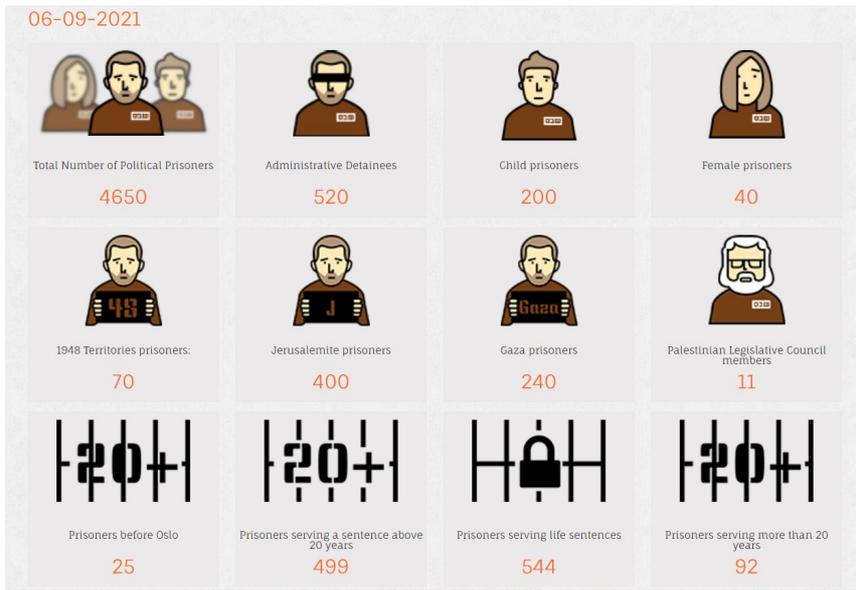


August 2021 Newsletter

Palestinian human rights defenders and civil society organizations have faced intensifying attacks by the Israeli occupation regime, as evidenced by the recent arbitrary arrests of the Health Work Committees Director, and a number of Palestinian students, along with IOF raids on the headquarters of Defense for Children International-Palestine and the Bisan Center for Research and Development. This comes in an effort to repress, criminalize, and intimidate anyone who advocates for Palestinian human rights or challenges Israel's entrenched regime of settler-colonialism and apartheid. The situation prompted the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of HRDs issued a statement addressing multiple prominent cases of arbitrary arrests and harassment against Palestinian HRDs.



[General Update on Palestinian Prisoners Held Arbitrarily in Israeli Occupation Prisons](#)

As of the end of August, over 4,650 Palestinian prisoners remain incarcerated in Israeli prisons. Among them are 40 woman prisoners, and close to 200 children. The escalation of new and renewed administrative detention orders contributes to the current 520 administrative detainees. Throughout the past several weeks, an increasing of Palestinian political prisoners have undergone hunger strikes.

In this month alone, 25 Palestinian detainees maintained, initiated, or completed individual hunger strikes protesting their administrative detention and ill-treatment. Currently, 6 Palestinian detainees remain on hunger strike, the longest-running among them Kayed Fasous. Beyond the obvious health risks undertaken by Palestinian prisoners on hunger strikes, they face additional punitive and retaliatory ill-treatment, including extended solitary confinement and deleterious prison conditions by the IPS.



[**Birzeit University Student Layan Nasir Targeted Amid Israel's Broader Silencing Campaign Against Palestinian Students**](#)

Layan Nasir, a 21-year-old student at Birzeit University, was arrested on 7 July 2021 when IOF stormed her home in the occupied West Bank town of Birzeit under the pretext of detaining her for a short interrogation. The charges brought against Layan target her alleged role and activities in the Democratic Progressive Student Pole, a left-bloc student organization deemed unlawful under an Israeli military order issued by the Israeli military commander in August 2020.

Addameer's lawyer Adv. Bilal Na'amneh requested Layan's release on bail on 17 August 2021, which was denied. He then appealed the decision, arguing that Layan's past release following interrogation for similar alleged activities in January 2021—for which she faced no arrest—clearly refutes any security-based justification. Subsequently, Ofer Military Court of Appeal confirmed [Layan's release on bail](#) of 24,000 Shekels.

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[**Palestinian Civil Society Submit Urgent Appeal to UN Special Procedures on the Arbitrary Detention and Harassment of HRD Shatha Odeh**](#)

Ms. Shatha Odeh, 60, serves as the Director of the Health Work Committees, a leading Palestinian non-governmental organization that promotes health services for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, and the chairwoman of PNGO, a coalition of 142 Palestinian civil society organizations. On 7 July 2021, IOF deployed gas bombs and then stormed her house to forcibly arrest her despite the lack of an arrest warrant.

The arbitrary detention of Ms. Odeh serves as one of the latest escalation of attacks by IOF against the HWC, and more broadly, Palestinian civil society and HRDs. Israel's crackdown on Palestinian civil society continues to intensify, as evidenced by the recent raid on the headquarters of the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) and the delivery of a military order forcing the office to close for six months.

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