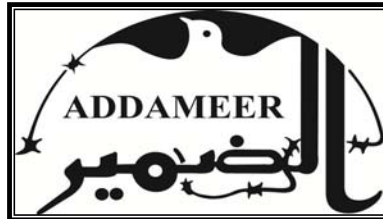


## QUARTERLY UPDATE ON PALESTINIAN PRISONERS



Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association  
(15 January 2011–15 April 2011)

### CURRENT ARREST AND DETENTION STATISTICS\*

Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli detention, including:

217 administrative detainees, including 3 women and 9 PLC members

37 women, including 1 under the age of 16

224 child prisoners, including 46 under the age of 16

13 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council

136 prisoners who have been imprisoned for more than 20 years

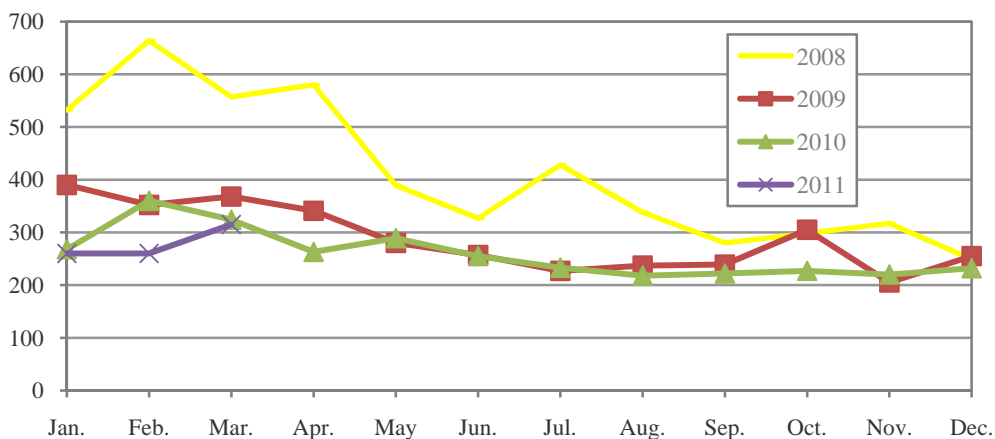
182 Palestinians from the 1948 Territories

658 prisoners from the Gaza Strip, including 3 detained under the Unlawful Combatants Law

188 prisoners from East Jerusalem

835 approximate number of Palestinians arrested by Israel during the first quarter of 2011 (1 January – 31 March 2011). This marks a 22.9 percent increase over the fourth quarter of 2010, and a 14 percent decrease over the same period in 2010.

Number of Palestinians arrested by Israel: January 2008 – March 2011



\*Detention and arrest statistics are current as of 31 March 2011. Detention statistics are based on reports from the Israeli Prison Service and Addameer; Arrest statistics are based on figures from the Palestinian Monitoring Group.

### PRISONER NEWS & ADVOCACY UPDATE

#### East Jerusalem

Violence and repression continued in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Silwan, with frequent arrests of children and the firing of tear gas by Israeli forces into family homes and local shops. Addameer represented 110 people from East Jerusalem during the reporting period, including 14 children in March 2011. Wadi Hilweh Center in Silwan reported that in March there were 43 cases of arrest and detention, including 15 children. Children arrested on suspicion of stone-throwing were reportedly subjected to long periods of interrogation at

Moskobiyyeh (Russian Compound) interrogation center in Jerusalem, after which many were transferred to house arrest. The emerging trend of placing residents of villages active against the Occupation on house arrest outside their own neighborhoods continued; al Bustan popular committee member Sheikh Mousa Aouda was sentenced by the Israeli court to a month's house arrest in Jabar al Moukabar village on 1 February, with an additional 10,000 NIS fine if he breaks the conditions of his house arrest.

Richard Falk, UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, delivered a report to the UN Human Rights Council on 21 March condemning Israel's policies and practices in East Jerusalem, including its ongoing settlement expansion, forced evictions of Palestinian families and ill treatment of prisoners.

### **Hamas-affiliated Palestinians arrested**

Five Hebron residents who were arrested by Israeli forces on 7 January one day after their release from detention by the Palestinian Authority without charge, remain in prison. Majd Oubeid is being held in administrative detention, due to expire on 7 June; Ahmed Iwewe is also held in administrative detention, due to expire on 7 July; Mohannad Nayru was sentenced to 7 months detention and 2000 shekels fine; Wisam al Qawame's trial is ongoing, with the last court hearing on 16 April; whilst Wael Bitar, whose uncle was killed by Israeli forces during the course of the arrest, was charged with providing support to a wanted person.

### **Update on the detention of Palestinian lawmakers**

As of the end of March 2011, 13 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council remained in detention, 9 of them in administrative detention.

### **PLC members in administrative detention**

On 31 January Mohammad al Natsha, a 53 year old lawmaker from the Hamas movement, was arrested by Israeli authorities in Hebron. He had served prison terms in both Israeli and PA prisons, and spent several years in isolation. During this time he was elected to the Palestinian Legislative Council. After 9 years of imprisonment by Israel, he was released in September 2010. On 13 February Natsha was given an administrative detention order lasting 6 months. He is currently held in Megiddo prison.

Change and Reform PLC member Azzam Salhab was rearrested on 2 March in Hebron and is now in administrative detention. He had previously been in administrative detention for 18 months and was released on 8 September 2010.

On 31 March Change and Reform PLC member Mohammad Badr was arrested during a night raid in Hebron and is now in administrative detention.

On 3 February Change and Reform PLC member Abdel Jabar al Fuqaha was released from administrative detention.

### **Other PLC members arrested/detained**

PLC member and Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Ahmad Sa'adat, is entering his 25<sup>th</sup> consecutive month in isolation, currently at Nafha prison where he continues to be denied family visits. He is currently serving his 4<sup>th</sup> isolation order lasting 6 months, due to expire on 21 April. The 15 March marked 5 years since Ahmad Sa'adat was abducted from Jericho prison by Israeli forces, and was symbolically the date of mass protests across the West Bank and Gaza calling for national unity and an end to political division. One of the key demands of the 15 March protesters was also to free political prisoners.

### **Violations by IPS special intervention units**

- On 9 April the Nahshon raided Eshel prison in the night, forcing prisoners out of their cells into the cold for 10 hours. Some property and belongings inside the cells were destroyed or thrown outside the room. Personal items such as letters and photos were taken by the Nahshon for what they claimed were purposes of investigation. The walls of the room were also searched for hidden mobile phones. The prisoners were taken to different cells outside the section without any bedding or clothing whilst the search was being conducted and were not allowed to talk to anyone in the adjoining cell or leave to go outside into the garden.

## Update on isolation

At the time of reporting, **12 people were held in isolation.**

- On 26 February the lawyer of PFLP Secretary General and PLC member **Ahmad Sa'dat** and Hamas lawmaker **Jamal Abu Hija** reported that their cells had been raided by Israeli forces and some of their possessions destroyed. Both PLC members have been held in isolation at Nafha prison. They refused meals in protest at the raids.
- **Saed Yassin**, in isolation at Ramon prison since 2010, went on hunger strike on 8 March protesting the conditions of his imprisonment. Prisoners from Ashkelon, Nafha and Ketziot prisons also went on hunger strike in solidarity with Saed. On 31 March he stopped his hunger strike after the Israeli authorities accepted his demands that he be allowed to continue his University education, have access to television and radio and to have contact with his daughter. His isolation ended and he was taken to Ramleh hospital before being transferred to Damon prison.
- **Abada Sa'id**, who has been serving an 11 year sentence and was recently transferred from Gilboa to Eshel prison in Beersheba, was taken into isolation on 20 March despite requests that he be incarcerated in the same section as his brothers, who are also held at Eshel. His wife, **Nelli Sa'id As-Safadi**, is also serving a 20 month sentence in Salem. Read her profile [here](#).
- **Ahed Abu Ghulmeh**, **Hassan Salama** and **Ibrahim Hamed** are in isolation cells in Ayalon. Based on testimony from Ahed and members of his family, the rooms are 2.5 meters long and 1.5 meters wide with some ventilation and TV and radio, but with many insects and poor hygiene. Ahed suffers from pain in both his legs after breaking them during the process of arrest by the PA, but has had no medical examination in the last year. Whilst being detained by the PA in Jericho prison, Israeli forces kidnapped him and other prisoners there, including PFLP leader Ahmad Sa'adat, on 15 March 2006. Ahed has been in isolation since 14 January 2010, and on 26 March this year his isolation was extended for another year.

## Other news

- On 19 February **Dirar Abu Sisi**, the Deputy Director of the Gaza power station, went missing in Ukraine whilst he was there applying for citizenship. Dirar's wife, Veronika, is Ukrainian. He was reportedly kidnapped by uniformed men and re-emerged in an Israeli prison, where he was subjected to over 40 days of interrogation before being charged on 4 April on several counts related to his alleged association with Hamas, including helping them to develop long-range Qassam rockets. Dirar's lawyer, Smader Ben Natan, has claimed that although Dirar reportedly confessed to some activities, this occurred under heavy duress which could be defined as torture. Dirar and his family have denied he has any involvement with Hamas. His wife Veronika has threatened to sue the Ukrainian and Israeli Government at the European Court of Human Rights, claiming the charges are fabricated in order to justify his kidnapping and illegal arrest. In the week of 10 April Dirar was reportedly moved into solitary confinement.
- On 11 March 5 members of a family from the Itamar settlement near Nablus, including 2 children and 1 infant, were stabbed to death by an unknown assailant, prompting a mass search and arrest operation by the Israeli forces in the neighboring village of **Awarta**. The village, home to approximately 6000 Palestinians, was sealed off for several days and curfews imposed whilst armored vehicles patrolled the streets and Israeli forces entered people's homes with sniffer dogs. At least 40 people were detained in the first few days after the killings, and since then night raids where villagers are rounded up and taken for questioning have continued on a weekly basis. Approximately 600-700 people have been taken for questioning at Huwarra police station, 200 of them women, including the elderly and pregnant women. Addameer published a [press release](#) and [update](#) during the week of 10 April, when Israeli forces were raiding homes, destroying property and arresting residents - including a 16 year old girl - condemning the mass arrest campaign and calling for closer international monitoring of the actions of Israeli forces entering Awarta. In the wake of the murders Israeli settlers unleashed a string of revenge attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank, and erected an illegal outpost in Itamar. The Israeli Government also reportedly announced the construction of hundreds of new settlements throughout the West Bank. Details of Israeli investigations into the murders remained under gag order until 17 April, when it was reported that two teenagers from Awarta had confessed to the murder.
- Calls for **national unity** and an end to the political division in the West Bank and Gaza spearheaded by the self-proclaimed 15 March youth movement culminated in a series of demonstrations, including on 15 March and on Land Day on 30 March. On Land Day, which commemorates the killing of six

Palestinians protesting against land confiscations in the Galilee in 1976, protestors attempting to march to City Inn Square in Ramallah and then on to Beit El settlement were initially blocked by Palestinian police and several were either arrested or driven far away to the suburbs of Ramallah. Two members of the 15 March movement, including one who has been on hunger strike since 26 March demanding national reform and reconciliation, were arrested by Israeli forces during the weekly demonstrations against the Wall and settlements in Nabi Saleh on 8 April. They were held at Ofer prison for two days before being released.

## **STOP ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION CAMPAIGN**

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There are currently 217 administrative detainees, 3 of whom are women and 9 of whom are PLC members. This represents a 4.8% increase on December 2010, when Israeli authorities held 207 administrative detainees without charge or trial.

- **Emad Al-Ashhab** who was arrested on 21 February 2010 whilst he was still a minor and held in administrative detention, was released on 3 February 2011 after serving his fourth administrative detention order.
- **Kifah Qatash's** administrative detention order was renewed on 5 April for another 4 months, due to expire in August, making it Kifah's third consecutive order. Kifah, a 37-year-old mother of two, was arrested on 1 August 2010 and placed in administrative detention on 5 August. Addameer submitted a complaint to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention on her behalf on 2 December 2010. Click [here](#) to read an urgent appeal on her behalf.
- **Hana Shalabi's** administrative detention order was renewed for another 6 months on 11 March, to end 10 September. Hana, 29 years old, was arrested 14 September 2009.
- Eight PLC members are currently in administrative detention, one of whom – **Mohammad al Natsha** – was arrested during the reporting period on 31 January. On 3 February Change and Reform PLC member **Abdel Jabar al Fuqaha** was released from administrative detention.
- **Ayed Dudeen**, currently the longest held administrative detainee – had his detention extended on 11 February for 2 months. His lawyers appealed to shorten the extension to 1 month, but this was rejected and the case went to the High Court, where the 2 months extension was confirmed on the 27 March. A request was submitted to the Head of the General Security Service to give his opinion on the case, given the long period of detention without charge or trial. Based on his opinion, the Military Court decided to extend the detention but stated that if no new material about his activities posing a security risk emerge by June he should be released. Ayed was given the option of being deported to Gaza, which he refused. His administrative order was renewed for two months on 11 April, making it his 30<sup>th</sup> order since he was arrested October 2007.
- **Mazen Natsheh**, who has been held in administrative detention several times since he was first arrested in 1994, had his administrative detention order renewed on 4 April for another 6 months. This is his fourth consecutive administrative detention order since he was arrested for the seventh time on 7 October 2009, 4 months after being released from 4 years of administrative detention. Click [here](#) to read Mazen's profile.

## **CHILD PRISONERS**

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As of 31 March 2011, there were 224 child prisoners, 46 of whom are under age 16. Approximately 123 Palestinians under the age of 18 have been arrested so far this year. Addameer represented 54 children during the reporting period.

During the reporting period there was a wave of arrests targeting children, particularly in the villages active against the Wall and settlements.

- Fourteen year old Islam Dar Ayoub Tamimi was arrested from his home in the village of Nabi Saleh on 24 January in the middle of the night. The following day his younger brother Kareem Saleh Ayoub Tamimi, 11 years old, was briefly arrested and released a few hours later, whilst two more minors were arrested on 26 January. Islam was subjected to five hours of interrogation without access to a lawyer or his family, before confessing to stone-throwing with which he has now been charged. Sources Addameer spoke to believe that the main purpose of his interrogation was to extract information from Islam about the popular committee leaders who organize the weekly demonstrations in Nabi Saleh against the Wall and settlements. Islam's lawyer has challenged the admissibility of the charges against him arguing that they are based on a forced confession, and the next hearing will be on 16 May where defense witnesses will be called to testify. Islam had remained in detention during the course of his trial until 5 April when he was placed under house arrest.
- In Hebron, 8 minors were arrested in a series of night raids in Beit Ummar from 6-8 February. This was followed by the arrest of another 9 minors on 19 February after the weekly demonstration in Beit Ummar.
- A wave of arrests targeting under-18s also took place in Abwein village outside Ramallah in January and February. Four minors arrested on 26 January, all born in 1993, were charged with stone throwing and ordered into detention until the end of their trial. All were convicted of stone throwing. One minor aged 16 and reported to have cancer, Mustafa Shaheb Abdul Wahhad, was released on 4 April following an urgent appeal by his lawyers to have him released on medical grounds. Medical reports suggested that malignant tumors in his chest grew whilst he was being held at Ofer prison.
- The trial of **Mohammad Halabiyeh**, who was arrested in February 2010 and subjected to torture and ill treatment by Israeli forces during his arrest, is drawing to a close. During the reporting period, members of the Israeli Occupying Forces were summoned to give evidence, and photographs were produced of the night of Mohammad's arrest, when his leg was broken and he was taken to hospital. Both the Prosecution and Defense (Addameer Association) have now given their concluding statements and a final decision from the Military Court is expected in late April or May.
- **Hadeel Abu Turki** – a 15-year-old girl who was arrested in Hebron on 14 November 2010 – was released on 27 January and placed in a rehabilitation center for girls in Beit Jala for one year following a plea bargaining process.

## **PROTECTION OF FEMALE PRISONERS**

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As of 31 March 2011, there were 37 Palestinian women in Israeli detention in HaSharon and Damon prisons inside Israel. Three women were arrested by Israeli authorities during the reporting period, and one of whom was placed under administrative detention. Four women were released.

- **Linan Abu Ghulmeh**, who was arrested on 15 July 2010 had her administrative detention order renewed on 26 January for another six months. Read her profile [here](#). She is still being denied visits from her sister Taghreed, who was arrested on the same day but released on 2 January.
- **Aliya Mohammad Yahia al Jabrei**, 41 years old, who was arrested on 15 February, was placed in administrative detention.
- **Muntaha Al Taweel**, a 45-year-old mother of four who had served four consecutive administrative detention orders, was released on 1 February. She had spent 358 days in prison without charge or trial.
- **Sabreen Abu Mashal** and **Nada Derbas** were also released during the reporting period.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND ANNEXATION WALL-RELATED ARRESTS**

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Arrests of activists engaged in demonstrations against the Wall continued during the reporting period, with a noticeable increase in arrests in the villages of Beit Ummar and Nabi Saleh. Children and youth were particularly targeted, and interrogated without the presence of a lawyer or family member in order to extract information related to protest organizers in their village. Increased monitoring of the village of Nabi Saleh by

Israeli forces led some residents to go into hiding, and ultimately resulted in the arrest of one of the key protest organizers there, Bassem Tamimi, who remains in detention.

### **Nabi Saleh arrests**

On 24 March, protest organizer and co-ordinator of the village popular committee Bassem Tamimi was arrested from his home during a raid in Nabi Saleh by Israeli forces. This followed the arrest of another protest organizer on 6 March, Naji Tamimi, and of a 15 year old on 23 January, Islam Dar Ayoub Tamimi, who was forced to incriminate members of the popular committee active against the Wall and settlements during a 5 hour interrogation without access to a lawyer or family member. Bassem Tamimi has now been charged with incitement, organizing unpermitted marches, solicitation to throw stones, disobeying the duty to report to questioning and obstruction of justice for informing youths in the village of what to do in the case of arrest. He remains in detention along with Naji Tamimi, who has also been charged with incitement and organizing illegal demonstrations. Bassem's trial will open on 8 May. He has been arrested several times previously in connection with his role in organizing demonstrations, and has spent approximately 3 years in administrative detention.

### **Hebron arrests**

On 19 February, at least 13 people taking part in the Saturday demonstration in Beit Ummar against the settlements were arrested, including 9 minors. A popular committee member reported that among those arrested was his 16 year old son, who was subjected to cigarette burns and knife cuts during interrogation. On 28 February a member of the youth committee against the settlements, Issa Ismail Amro, was arrested after being summoned for questioning at Kiryat Arba police station on suspicion of incitement to violence and disturbance of the public order. He was released a few days later. A night raid on Beit Ummar on 9 March also resulted in the arrest of four human rights defenders active against house demolitions.

### **The sentencing of Ameer Makhoul**

On 30 January, Ameer Makhoul, the General Director of Ittijah—the Union of Arab Community-Based Associations who was arrested on 6 May 2010, was sentenced to nine years imprisonment and one year suspended sentence. In a plea bargain Ameer had agreed to plead guilty to charges of espionage, aggravated espionage, contact with a foreign agent and conspiracy to aid the enemy in time of war. In exchange, the prosecution dropped the charges of assistance to the enemy in a time of war, the most serious charge against Mr. Makhoul, which would have carried a life sentence. Nevertheless, Mr. Makhoul's sentence almost reached the maximum sentence normally given for plea bargains - ten years - and rejected requests made by his legal defense for a lesser sentence of seven years. Addameer published a [press release](#) condemning the harsh sentencing.

### **Abdallah Abu Rahma is released**

On 14 March Abdallah Abu Rahma, Co-ordinator of the Popular Committee against the Wall and Settlements in Bil'in was released. He had spent nearly 16 months in prison for incitement and organizing and participating in the weekly protests against the Wall in Bil'in.

### **Director of Al Maqdese arrested**

On 12 February Israeli forces raided the home of Salim Al Jub'eh, who works for Al Maqdese Society for Development, and arrested him. Al Maqdese monitors Israeli violations in Jerusalem and conducts lobbying and advocacy for Palestinian rights. Mr. Jub'eh was released two days later without charge.

## **LEGAL NEWS**

### **Supreme Court decision on Facility 1391**

On 20 January the Supreme Court rejected a petition by Hamoked Center for the Defence of the Individual which demanded the closure of secret prison facility 1391. Hamoked Center for the Defence of the Individual had in 2003 filed a petition to the Court calling on the closure of the facility due to its secretive nature violating human rights and failing to provide basic guarantees of protection for the detainee. The Court's rejection of the petition was based on its understanding that the facility was used only on a restrictive basis and provided it held detainees for only a brief and limited duration, it did not contravene international law. The decision was made on the basis of the Judge's refusal to address the situation in the facility prior to the filing of the petition. For more information on the judgment read [Hamoked's statement](#).

### **Palestinian municipal elections**

Following the Palestinian Supreme Court ruling on 13 December to annul the PA's 10 June 2010 decision to postpone municipal elections indefinitely, the Palestinian Authority announced on 1 February that municipal elections would be held in July. On 12 February it announced that presidential and parliamentary elections would be held by September, which was followed a few days after by the resignation of the cabinet. However at the time of writing a new cabinet had not yet been formed, and it remains unclear whether Hamas will participate in the elections pending negotiations between the leadership in Gaza and Fatah.

### **Knesset passes Citizen Bill**

On 28 March the Knesset approved new legislation that revokes citizenship and imposes prison sentences for acts of treason, espionage, or aiding the enemy in a time of war. The law will also revoke the status of any permanent resident convicted of acts of terrorism. Critics of the bill are concerned that it will unfairly target Israeli Arabs.

### **New military policy to investigate Palestinian deaths**

On 4 April a new military policy was submitted to the Israeli Supreme Court which changes the guidelines regarding Military Police Investigations into Palestinian deaths which have been in place since 2000. The Military Advocate General announced that from now on criminal investigations will immediately be opened into civilian deaths in the West Bank, a procedure which since 2000 had been limited to where there was prima facie evidence of illegal behavior. The policy will only be applied to Palestinian civilians not engaged in military combat in the West Bank, and will not apply to Gaza.

## **UNITED NATIONS NEWS**

### **CEDAW 48<sup>th</sup> session**

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women considered Israel's fifth periodic report at its 48<sup>th</sup> session from 17 January to 4 February 2011. Addameer contributed to an [alternative report](#) submitted by the Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counselling to the committee in December 2010. Part of these recommendations were included in its [Concluding Observations on Israel](#), particularly in paragraphs 40 and 41 related to female prisoners.

### **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights visits oPt**

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, visited Israel and the oPt from 6-11 February and met with a number of Government officials, victims of human rights violations and human rights organizations and civil society actors. Among her meetings was one with a group of Palestinian human rights organizations in Ramallah, including Addameer who submitted two briefing papers to the UN High Commissioner concerning human rights violations in Israeli and Palestinian detention centers. Navi Pillay's [press statement](#) at the close of her visit, *inter alia* expressed her concern over reports of arbitrary detention in Palestinian prisons, and over the denial of family visits for Gaza prisoners held in Israel.

### **US vetoes UN Security Council resolution on settlements**

A draft UN Security Council resolution which sought to condemn Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as illegal, was vetoed by the US Government on 18 February. All other 14 members of the UNSC voted in favor of the resolution, whilst the US Government argued it would damage peace talks. The resolution was co-sponsored by over 120 of the 192 UN member states. The Palestinian Council of Human Rights Organizations, of which Addameer is a member, wrote a joint open [letter](#) to the US President condemning the veto for allowing Israel to continue its violations of international law with impunity, and for undermining the role of the United Nations in international maintaining peace and security.

### **UN Human Rights Council 16<sup>th</sup> session**

- The UN Human Rights Council (HRC) held its 16<sup>th</sup> session in Geneva from 28 February to 25 March. Part of it was spent discussing the follow up to the Goldstone Report, including the Committee of

Independent Experts' report, which criticized both Hamas and the Israeli Government for failing to fulfill the recommendations made in the Goldstone Report. On 21 March the UN Human Rights Council adopted a [resolution](#) which *inter alia*, recommends that the UN General Assembly reconsider the Goldstone Report at its 66<sup>th</sup> session, and submit the report to the UN Security Council for further consideration and action, including the possible referral of the situation in the oPt to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. There were 27 votes in favor, 3 votes against and 16 abstentions. In response, the Palestinian Council of Human Rights Organizations, of which Addameer, is a member, published a [press release](#) supporting the adoption of the resolution and condemned the EU for failing to take a strong position in favor of justice for the victims of Operation Cast Lead.

- Six resolutions were passed in total relating to the situation in the oPt, including resolutions concerning follow up to the UN Fact-Finding Mission on the raid on the humanitarian flotilla in May 2010, and condemning Israel's continuing settlement expansion, construction of the Wall and restrictions on movement and access in the oPt.

### **UN International Meeting on Political Prisoners**

On 7 and 8 March the United Nations International Meeting on the Question of Palestine focused on the issue of political prisoners, with an opening [speech](#) from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon calling for the release of Palestinian political prisoners and on Israel to comply fully with its legal obligations. The meeting, which was attended by Addameer Director Sahar Francis, covered a range of issues including the conditions in Israeli prisons, the situation for women and minors, the legal aspects of detention by an Occupying Power, the role the issue of political prisoners plays in the peace process, and how to strengthen the role of the wider international community in finding a solution. The [Concluding Statement](#) of the Organizers *inter alia* called on Israel to release all Palestinian political prisoners, including the immediate release of members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, and to respect the rule of law in its treatment of prisoners.

### **Upcoming events**

- The Special Rapporteur on the freedom of opinion and expression, Frank William La Rue, will visit Israel and the oPt in May. He was due to visit Israel and the oPt in January, but a strike at the Israeli Foreign Ministry which started on 27 December 2010 affected arrangements for official visits by foreign dignitaries. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur is to gather all relevant information of discrimination against, threats or use of violence and harassment directed at persons seeking to exercise or promote the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories is planning to visit Gaza, along with Egypt and Jordan, in April to gather information for the report he will submit to the UN General Assembly during the second half of 2011.

## **EUROPEAN UNION NEWS**

- On 22 February the EU-Israel Association Council held its 10<sup>th</sup> meeting in Brussels. In its [statement](#) on the occasion of the meeting, the EU underlined *inter alia* the importance of concluding negotiations between the Israeli Government and Palestinian Authority by September 2011; reiterated that it will not recognize any changes to the pre-1967 borders, including with regard to Jerusalem; emphasized the important role played by human rights defenders in upholding rights and freedoms and condemned Israel's detention of prominent human rights activists.
- On 23 February the Polish Government, who will take up the EU Presidency in July, met with their Israeli counterparts in Jerusalem to discuss an upgrading in defense and economic co-operation. Addameer drafted an open [letter](#) on behalf of the PCHRO to the Polish Government, calling on Ministers visiting Jerusalem to emphasize that there could be no upgrade in relations until Israel ends violations of international law against the Palestinian people.
- On 15 March 2011, the European Parliament's Sub-Committee on Human Rights held a hearing on the conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli and Palestinian prisons. Addameer submitted a briefing on Israeli prison conditions ahead of the meeting. Among the key recommendations arising from the hearing was to request an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice on the situation of



Palestinian political prisoners, and to send a fact-finding mission to investigate conditions in Israeli prisons.

- On 30 and 31 March the EU-PA Human Rights Subcommittee held a meeting in Bethlehem, attended by human rights NGOs as well as EU and PA officials. Among the human rights concerns addressed were unlawful arrests and conditions in Palestinian detention centers, and the PA also raised its concern over the lack of legal status of Palestinians in Israeli prisons, the impact of the border closure in Gaza, restricted movement in the West Bank the impact of settler violence.

### Upcoming events

- An EP Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council will visit Palestine from 26-29 April.

### **ADDAMEER NEWS**

- From 21 to 23 January 2011, Addameer lawyer Mahmoud Hassan attended the world conference in support of Palestinian prisoners in Rabbat, Morocco organized by the Palestinian Prisoners' Club and the Moroccan Association to Support the Struggle of the Palestinian People (Association marocaine de soutien au combat du peuple palestinien).
- Between 28 February and 11 March, Addameer undertook an advocacy mission to the United Nations in Geneva coinciding with the first two weeks of the Human Rights Council's (HRC) 16<sup>th</sup> session. Addameer held a number of lobbying meetings with the HRC's special procedures to which it regularly submits individual complaints – the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD), the Special Rapporteur on Torture and the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders – in order to follow up on these cases and emphasize the need for these experts to continue paying attention to the issue of the Palestinian political prisoners in their work. In addition to these meetings, Addameer's advocacy officer also made a [statement](#) before the Council during the consideration of the WGAD's annual report, requesting the WGAD to visit Israel and the oPt as soon as possible. Following the session, the chairman of the WGAD informed Addameer that the WGAD has decided to submit an official request to visit Israel and the oPt. Finally, Addameer organized an event on the female Palestinian political prisoners on the sidelines of the HRC on 8 March to mark international women's day. The event included a screening of an interview with Majda Fidda, a former administrative detainee, and presentations by Addameer and Soha Bishara, a former Lebanese prisoner.
- In the week of 6 March Addameer lawyer Mahmoud Hassan conducted a speaker tour in Germany and held a [panel discussion](#) with activists and students concerning the situation of political prisoners. Interviews with Mahmoud conducted during the trip were published in the newspaper of the Democratic Rights Movement, which has circulation in Turkey, France, the Netherlands and Germany among other countries.
- On 7 and 8 March Addameer Director Sahar Francis attended the UN International Meeting on the Question of Palestine in Vienna, which focused on political prisoners. As well as submitting a paper on the legal aspects of administrative detention, Sahar Francis also made a presentation on the unfair arrest and detention procedures which Palestinians are subjected to compared with Israelis who are arrested for similar offences. See [here](#) for comments made by Sahar Francis and other delegates at the Meeting.
- On 8 March Addameer marked [Women's Day](#) with a campaign to free Palestinian female prisoners. Vigils were held in France and Poland with photos and profiles of all the female prisoners and a petition calling on the Israeli Government to free them, and Addameer also had its own online [petition](#).
- Addameer was interviewed by the international press on a number of occasions, including Associated Press and the Spanish newspaper El Pais, which published an [article](#) about the political situation in Palestine in the context of the uprisings in the Middle East.
- To mark Palestinian Prisoners Day on 17 April, Addameer prepared to launch a new campaign called 'Prisoners at Risk', which focuses on prisoners receiving little public attention but who are subjected to serious human rights violations, including long-term administrative detention, isolation, medical neglect and torture. The first case the campaign will focus on is Ayed Dudeen, currently the longest held administrative detainee, who has been detained since October 2007. More information about the campaign can be found on our [website](#) or on [Facebook](#). Addameer also published its own [press release](#) to mark 17 April and the launch of the campaign, as well as [one](#) on behalf of the Palestinian Council of Human Rights Organizations.

### **Upcoming Events**

- Addameer will publish two reports in the coming months: on violations in PA prisons, and in Israeli prisons
- Addameer's Advocacy and Outreach Officer will conduct a speaker tour in the UK at the end of June, which aims to raise awareness of political prisoners and build solidarity with different groups, including trade unions, students and activists.

## **PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY ARREST AND DETENTION NEWS**

Although the number of arrests by the Palestinian Authorities in the West Bank and Gaza is difficult to gauge, the number of complaints received by the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR) can be used as an approximate indicator. Between January and April, ICHR received 655 complaints of arbitrary arrests by authorities in the West Bank and 202 by the authorities in Gaza. It did however note that a large number of detainees held by the Palestinian security agencies in the West Bank had either been released or brought before the civilian courts, following the PA's announcement in January that it would no longer try civilians in military courts. ICHR also received during the reporting period 48 complaints of torture and ill-treatment during detention in the West Bank and 55 in Gaza.

### **March 15 movement calls for prisoners in PA prisons to be freed**

One of the key demands of the 15 March movement in support of national unity and an end to the political division between Hamas and Fatah, is for the PA to free all political prisoners in West Bank and Gaza. A group of hunger strikers made these demands to President Mahmoud Abbas on 3 April but by 15 April the President had reportedly failed to respond by releasing the prisoners. This is despite the High Court ruling that the PA must stop trying civilians in military courts.

### **March 15 movement protests broken up by police in both West Bank and Gaza**

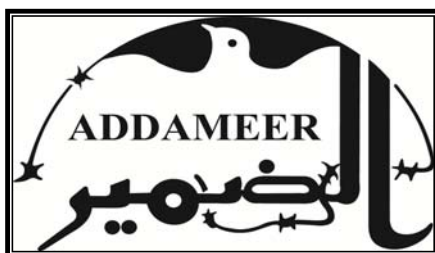
The ICHR reported a number of incidents in which police assaulted and arrested activists calling for an end to national division. The ICHR received a number of complaints concerning lack of co-operation by the police in Ramallah who had reportedly failed to act in the face of assaults on the 15 March activists by unmasked men. At least 1 person was arrested during the demonstrations on 15 March. In Gaza, protesters in Al Khatiba Square on 15 March were assaulted by police and people accompanying them armed with rifles, pistols and batons. Students from al Azhar University were also attacked by security agencies on 16 March. Throughout March at least 50 people were detained in connection with their participation in peaceful demonstrations, many of whom were forced to sign statements pledging to abide by the law. Journalists were also beaten by the police and prohibited from reporting on police intervention in the demonstrations.

### **The resurgence of the death penalty**

The Palestinian Center for Human Rights reported that three death sentences have been issued so far this year by civil and military courts in the Gaza Strip, including two issued within a day of each other on 29 and 30 March. Death sentences require the authorization of the President of the Palestinian National Authority, but this usually is not sought.

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**ABOUT US:** *ADDAMEER* (Arabic for conscience) Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association is a Palestinian non-governmental, civil institution that focuses on human rights issues. Established in 1992 by a group of activists interested in human rights, the center offers support to Palestinian prisoners, advocates for the rights of political prisoners and works to end torture through monitoring, legal procedures and solidarity campaigns.



For more information on Palestinian prisoners and detainees, please contact us directly at:

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