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Physicians For Human Rights



THE PUBLIC COMMITTEE AGAINST
TORTURE
IN ISRAEL

Joint Statement
28 February 2013

**Israel: Open Independent Investigation into the Suspicious Death following Interrogation of
Palestinian Detainee Arafat Jaradat**

The undersigned human rights organizations call on the Israeli Attorney General (AG) to open an independent and impartial investigation into the circumstances of the death of 30-year-old Palestinian detainee Arafat Jaradat in the Meggido Prison according to the Investigation into Circumstances of Death Law. The organizations also call on the international community to demand that the Israeli government respect the rights of Palestinian prisoners and protect their health and lives.

Adalah, Physicians for Human Rights-Israel (PHR-I) and the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel (PCATI) view with extreme gravity the treatment of Palestinian detainees and prisoners held in General Security Service (GSS) facilities and in prisons in Israel.

On many occasions, we have appealed to the Israeli courts and other authorities against the illegal interrogation methods used by the GSS, the incarceration conditions in which detainees and prisoners are held, and against their ill-treatment treatment, and demanded the investigation of serious allegations of torture and cruel and inhuman treatment. We frequently asserted that interrogation methods and detention procedures do not comply with Israeli law and international law standards which are meant to defend the rights of Palestinian detainees and prisoners and protect their dignity, health, and lives.

We lament the death of Arafat Jaradat in the course of his detention and interrogation and express our grave concern regarding the deterioration of the health of the hunger-striking detainees. These bitter and tragic examples remind us of deep-rooted practices that blatantly violate the rights of detainees under interrogation and prisoners, endangering and threatening their lives.

The GSS and the Israel Prison Service (IPS) cannot shirk their responsibility for the violation of the human rights of Palestinian detainees under interrogation and of prisoners who are held in Israel. We, therefore, demand that an independent and impartial investigation be opened into the circumstances of the death of the prisoner Arafat Jaradat under the Investigation of Circumstances of Death Law, and that the investigative authorities refrain from employing illegal means of interrogation that will cost additional lives.

We also call on the IPS to refrain from harming and punishing hunger-striking prisoners. We also demand the release of all administrative detainees imprisoned without charge or trial and

all 14 Palestinian prisoners who were released as part of the prisoner exchange but whose incarceration was recently renewed under a new military order allowing re-arrest for the slightest of infractions and the imposition of their full sentence even on the basis of secret evidence.

We furthermore demand a halt to the use of inappropriate practices that may cause emotional and/or physical injury tantamount to torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, which could seriously harm the health of detainees and prisoners and cause their death. These practices include:

1. Granting a sweeping exemption to the police and the GSS from the duty to make a video and audio recording of the interrogations of individuals suspected of security offenses, which carry a sentence of more than 10 years.
2. Violating the basic rights of Palestinian detainees and denying guarantees that ensure due process, such as preventing meetings with counsel during the period of interrogation and reducing judicial oversight over the detention and interrogation process.
3. Administrative detention and imprisonment without trial under Sections 185 and 186 of Order Regarding Security Provisions (No. 1651) which allows the army to repeatedly detain released prisoners whose sentence was reduced and compel them to serve their original term of imprisonment because of their involvement in minor offenses on the basis secret evidence and not by way of conviction by a court.
4. The employment of illegal interrogation methods including: interrogation for prolonged hours while prisoners are cuffed by their hands and legs; threatening prisoners and their families; incarceration in appalling conditions as a form of psychological pressure and as a means of weakening the body; shackling detainees in painful positions; physical violence such as beating, tightening shackles and suddenly yanking the prisoner's body and bending his back.
5. Shackling hunger-striking prisoners to their beds in hospital
6. Forbidding hunger-striking prisoners from meeting with independent physicians (apart from meetings that take place following an individual appeal to a court which allows a one-time visit with the prisoner).
7. Denying family visits to prisoners on hunger-strike.
8. Discrimination against Palestinian prisoners and worsening their conditions of confinement due to their classification as "security prisoners" including limiting family visits, preventing conjugal visits with his/her partner, a ban on academic studies, and denial of participation in educational and rehabilitation programs within the prison.

Adalah - The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel

The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel

Physicians for Human Rights - Israel