

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	714
Land:	Gaza-Vestbredden
Kilde:	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
Titel:	UN Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory
Udgivet:	16. december 2023
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	28. februar 2024

UN Human Rights in Occupied Palestinian Territory

Ramallah

16 December 2023

Disturbing reports from the north of Gaza of mass detentions, ill-treatment and enforced disappearances of possibly thousands of Palestinians.

OHCHR has received numerous disturbing reports from the north of Gaza of mass detentions, ill-treatment and enforced disappearance of possibly thousands of Palestinian men and boys, and a number of women and girls, at the hands of Israeli Defence Forces (IDF). Most were rounded up as they were attempting to move south or were taken during operations conducted on their homes, hospitals, schools and other places of refuge.

Reports claim that children as young as 12 and persons as old as 70 are among those detained. Most concerning, there are numerous reports that many of those detained were subjected to serious ill-treatment, which in some instances may amount to torture. This includes allegations that many were forced to strip down to their underwear, were blindfolded and tightly handcuffed, and were filmed and photographed in deliberately humiliating positions prior to being transported, without their clothing and with little food or water, to unknown places of detention. Reports further allege that the IDF instructed remaining civilians, usually women and children, to move south before destroying their shelters, in many cases resulting in multiple displacements. Credible information has also been received that approximately 140 women and girls have been arbitrarily detained and are currently being detained in undisclosed locations.

Families of detainees have not been provided any information on the fate or location of their loved ones or any reasons for their detention – exacerbating their sense of anguish and fear.

The IDF claims that they have been detaining only “ Hamas affiliated ” Palestinians and that they have “ good reasons ” to be suspicious of all Palestinians who remain in the north of Gaza contrary to orders issued by the IDF that they relocate south – raising concerns of collective punishment.

OHCHR notes that Israel’s instructions to civilians to relocate south in no way relieves Israel of its obligations under international humanitarian law. Tens of thousands of civilians remain in northern Gaza, and Israel retains its obligations to ensure that they are respected and protected. International humanitarian law requires that civilians are only detained for imperative security reasons. Torture and other ill-treatment, including outrages upon personal dignity, are strictly prohibited under international law, regardless of the status of the detainee.

Israel must take urgent steps to ensure that civilians are only detained according to law – and that all persons arrested or detained are treated humanely, with dignity, and with full respect for their due process rights. Israel must also implement measures to provide families of detained persons access to all available information on their fate and location. All instances of ill-treatment or torture of people arrested or detained must be fully and transparently investigated, and if found to have taken place, action must be taken to ensure accountability and to prevent recurrence.

Of grave concern, OHCHR has received an increasing number of reports that civilians have been killed, including in apparent extrajudicial executions, in places of refuge, particularly schools. Such incidents may constitute war crimes that must be immediately and fully investigated.

Arrests in Kamal Adwan Hospital

In the morning of 12 December, IDF raided Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahya, Northern Gaza, following several days of siege and shelling of the hospital. The hospital was reportedly hosting approximately 3,000 IDPs, in addition to patients and medical staff. IDF reportedly detained 1,000-1,200 Palestinians, mostly men and boys aged between 16 and 65 years old, including medical staff, patients and IDPs and transferred them to an unknown destination. More than 70 medical staff, including Dr. Ahmed Al Kahlout, General Director of the Hospital, remain detained.

Arrests in Beit Lahya Elem. Boys & Elem. Co-ed school (UNRWA School)

On 7 December, IDF reportedly stormed Beit Lahya Elem. Boys & Elem. Co-ed school, which was housing approximately 3,000 to 4,000 displaced persons. The IDF arrested tens of male Palestinians, allegedly including older men, boys and a well-known Palestinian journalist. IDF then blindfolded the detainees and stripped them down to their underwear before forcing them to sit on the street outside despite the cold weather. After apparently videoing and photographing the detainees, they were forced onto trucks, still unclothed, and transported to unknown destinations. On 9 December, footage of tens of already near-naked Palestinian men surrounded by IDF tanks, claimed by IDF as Hamas fighters surrendering weapons, was circulated in the media. Men were reportedly taken to an unknown destination, while children and women were instructed to move to the south. Later, it was reported that the school was set on fire by IDF soldiers.

PRCS staff – WHO – detention and ill-treatment

On 12 December, WHO [expressed](#) concern over the IDF's prolonged checking process and detention of a PRCS staff member during a joint mission to supply and evacuate Al Ahli Hospital in northern Gaza. WHO reported that one of the injured Palestinians died while being transported to the south while IDF hindered the convoy's movement. WHO also [reported](#) that IDF seized a member of the mission crew, a staff member of PRCS, and "forced (him) to kneel at gunpoint... (he was) taken out of sight, where he was reportedly harassed, beaten, stripped naked and searched". He was released later that night but "left to walk south with his hands still tied behind his back, without clothes or shoes."

ENDS

For more information and media requests, please contact:

Public Information Officer, Yusra Jamous – yusra.jamous@un.org

Tag and share

Twitter [@OHCHR Palestine](#)

Facebook [UN Human Rights Palestine](#)