



PALESTINIAN CENTRE
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

TORTURE AND GENOCIDE

The Shattered Futures of Former
Palestinian Detainees in Gaza

October 2023 – October 2024

I have lost everything, my house
my brother, my friends, my father's
memory and myself, "the old me".

What is there left after losing oneself?

43-year-old Palestinian from Gaza



Acronyms

B'Tselem	B'Tselem – The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories
UNCAT	Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IHRL	International Human Rights Law
IOF	Israeli Occupation Forces
IPS	Israel Prison Service
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PCHR	Palestinian Centre for Human Rights
PRCS	Palestine Red Crescent Society
PCATI	Public Committee Against Torture in Israel
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
SUVs	Sport Utility Vehicles
UN	United Nations
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Definitions

Arrest	Arrest refers to the apprehension of Palestinians from Gaza by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) under Israel's Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law.
Civilian	Under International Humanitarian Law (IHL), a civilian is defined as ‘any person who is not a combatant. When civilians take a direct part in fighting, they lose their protection from attack (When there is any doubt about a person’s status, he or she shall be considered to be a civilian).’ ¹ Unlawful combatants, a concept used by Israel to justify the detention of Palestinians from Gaza and strip them of their fundamental rights, belong to the civilian category. (See below).
Detainee	A detainee refers to any individual arrested by the IOF and detained under Israel's Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law.
Detention	Detention is the act of holding a person in custody by public officials. In Gaza, detention can occur in various locations, ranging from forward operating bases to military detention facilities and prisons. In this report, detention refers to detention under Israel's Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law.
Gaza workers	Gaza workers are Palestinians from Gaza who were legally present in Israel on 7 October 2023. Prior to this date, approximately 18,000 workers from Gaza were authorized to work in Israel by Israeli authorities, regularly crossing into Israel and the West Bank for employment. Following the events of October 2023, work permits were cancelled, forcing thousands to either flee to the West Bank or report directly to police stations, where they were subsequently arrested.
Human Shield	A human shield is a tactic in armed conflict where combatants use civilians or other non-combatants to protect themselves from attacks or deter opponents from targeting them. The use of human shields is prohibited under

¹International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (2009). Exploring Humanitarian Law Glossary, p. 5.

Incommunicado detention	Incommunicado detention refers to the confinement of an individual in such a manner that they are denied the right to communicate with the outside world, including lawyers, family members, the ICRC, and their whereabouts are only known to the authorities.
Interviewee	An interviewee refers to an individual who was detained by Israel between October 2023 and October 2024 and later interviewed by PCHR.
Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF)	The term Israeli Occupation Forces typically refers to the Israeli military, called “Israeli Defence Forces”, as well as other security forces involved in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
Forward operating bases	Forward operating bases are temporarily military outposts established by the IOF during military operations inside Gaza. These facilities were set up in various locations, including in private homes, warehouses, mosques, schools, café, former police centres, open areas, including pits in the ground, streets, or at military.
Military detention facilities/camps	Military detention facilities/camps refer to semi-permanent and permanent detention facilities administered by the IOF and intelligence services, located in Israel and the West Bank. In some cases, they were set up specifically to detain Palestinians from Gaza after October 2023.
Palestinian resistance groups	Palestinian resistance groups refer to organizations engaged in armed hostilities against the Israeli occupation.
Prisons	Prisons are official detention centres, administered by the Israel Prison Service (IPS). These facilities are characterised by permanent structures, such as cells.
Release	Release refers to the discharge of a person from custody. In this report, they occurred mainly at the Kerem Shalom crossing, although some were also released at Zikim, west of the Erez crossing, or Kissufim, near Deir-al-Balah. Some releases also occurred within Gaza, when detainees who appeared to have remained in Gaza were released inside Gaza at various locations, often close to where they had been arrested or detained.

Transfers	<p>Transfers refer to the process of moving a detainee from one location to another. They typically begin at the moment of arrest and can occur on foot or by vehicle, continuing through various stages of detention until the individual is released.</p>
Unidentified facilities	<p>Unidentified facilities refer to detention facilities that could not be clearly identified as either a military detention facility or a prison because the interviewees were unable to identify the facility, and this information was not provided to them.</p>
Unlawful Combatants	<p>While the terms ‘combatant,’ ‘prisoner of war,’ and ‘civilian’ are clearly defined and commonly used in IHL, the term ‘unlawful combatant’, created by the United States of America and widely used by Israelis, is absent from IHL instruments and is not officially recognised by IHL. Israeli as:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a person who takes part in hostile activity against the State of Israel, directly or indirectly, or belongs to a force engaged in hostile activity against the State of Israel, but does not meet the conditions granting the status of prisoner of war under international humanitarian law, as detailed in article 4 of the Third Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 regarding the treatment of prisoners of war.</p> <p>In other words, this term refers to individuals who do not meet the criteria for combatant status, such as civilians participating in hostilities or members of resistance movements not affiliated with a Party to the conflict. As a result, they do not fall under the protections of the First, Second, or Third Geneva Conventions. However, they may still be entitled to certain protections under the Fourth Geneva Convention, particularly regarding the treatment of civilians during armed conflict, depending on the circumstances. Israel has been using this concept broadly to justify the arrest and detention of any Palestinian from Gaza.</p>

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Executive Summary

For over 18 months, Israel has relentlessly bombarded Gaza, leaving its 2.3 million residents in a state of unimaginable suffering. The ongoing assault has claimed over 51,600 Palestinian lives, including thousands of women and children, and injured more than 111,000 others. Countless more remain buried under the rubble, with the true scale of the devastation likely much higher. In addition to the physical destruction, Israel has detained thousands of Palestinians, including vulnerable groups like children, the elderly, and those with disabilities. The whereabouts and fate of the vast majority of these detainees remain unknown, with Israeli authorities denying families, lawyers, and the ICRC access, rendering them victims of enforced disappearance.

While public attention has focused on Sde Teiman, PCHR's investigation reveals that the abuse extends far beyond this location and spans across all detention centres where Palestinians from Gaza are being held. Testimonies collected over the past year from released detainees and those still in custody paint a broader and horrifying picture of systematic abuse and torture against detainees from Gaza.

Despite widespread recognition of the use of torture against Palestinians from Gaza since 7 October 2023, its use has rarely been analysed within the broader context of the ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people. This report aims to fill this gap by examining torture not only as a human rights violation or war crime, but also as an integral component of Israel's genocide against Palestinians. It is based on testimonies from 100 former detainees arrested between October 2023 and 2024, collected by PCHR's field researchers and legal team. It is complemented by the testimonies of PCHR's lawyer who visited 53 Palestinians still in Israeli custody between September and December 2024. This report is part of PCHR's ongoing analysis of the genocide, with further publications to follow, including an overarching report on the genocidal war carried out by Israel between October 2023 and January 2025.

PCHR's investigation reveals that the Israeli army arrested Palestinian civilians from Gaza en masse from their homes, schools, hospitals, streets, at checkpoints, while seeking shelter from bombardments. Most arrests involved men (83 men, including 10 health professionals), but also targeted women (10 including a breastfeeding mother), 3 boys (aged 15-17), and 4 elderly men.

After their arrest, they described being repeatedly transferred to various detention facilities. On average, one person was transferred around 4,5 times. Repeated transfers often left detainees in a state of uncertainty, confusion, and fear. This was compounded by the fact that most were not informed about where they were transferred or why, even upon their release.

They were held in various facilities throughout Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in many cases these facilities were specifically established for this purpose and Palestinians from Gaza were completely separated from other detainees, including those from the West Bank. All interviewees arrested inside Gaza were held in military detention facilities and only 30 were held in prison (mainly women and the workers arrested in Israel). They were all arrested and detained under the Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law No. 5762–2002 (the Law), enacted in 2002.

The vast majority of the interviewees were held incommunicado throughout their detention, with no access to a judge, legal representation or their family and relatives, even when required by the Law. Their families remained unaware of their whereabouts until after their release, sometimes several days later, owing to the challenges in communication and movement within Gaza. Interviewees were not provided with any information about the grounds for their arrest and the evidence against them, and all were released in Gaza without charge.

During their detention, PCHR found that detainees were subjected to inhumane conditions and extreme forms of physical and psychological ill-treatment that bear alarming similarities to those used in notorious facilities like Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib.

In this context, PCHR concluded that the treatment of the 100 interviewees held in military facilities and prisons across Gaza, Israel, and other parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, met the elements of torture under international law. First, the torture inflicted severe pain and suffering, both physical and psychological and followed a consistent pattern across all detention facilities and affected all 100 interviewees who suffered serious health consequences. It was characterised by brutal and intimidating interrogation techniques, dire living conditions, and a combination of various well-known methods of torture, including repeated beatings, suspension, electrocution, forced stress positions, sexual violence, being used as human shields, as well as psychological violence. Second, the treatment served three specific purposes: a discriminatory purpose on the basis of nationality and religious grounds; to humiliate and dehumanise; to punish; and to obtain information or confessions. Finally, this pain and suffering was intentionally inflicted by public officials, namely members of the IOF, Israeli Intelligence agencies, and IPS, while the victims were in their custody.

After assessing the legal elements of genocide, PCHR also concluded that by torturing Palestinians from Gaza, members of the IOF, intelligence service agencies, and IPS personnel committed genocide, namely the acts of ‘causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group’ and ‘deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part’:

1. PCHR found that the bodily and mental harm inflicted on detainees, through acts of torture, was of such a serious nature as to contribute or tend to contribute to the destruction of all or part of the Palestinian group, in that it inflicted and will continue to inflict grave and long-term disadvantages to the victims’ ability to lead a normal and constructive life.
2. PCHR also considered the overall effect of the conditions of life imposed on the interviewees, both during and after their detention. Israeli authorities established and maintained inhumane living conditions in all the detention facilities where Palestinians were subjected to torture and deliberately released them in worse conditions. PCHR found that the combined effect of these conditions, still being experienced by the victims, will have a devastating effect on the physical survival of the Palestinian population of Gaza. PCHR concluded that these conditions of life were deliberately designed by the Israeli authorities to induce a slow death, diminishing the chances of survival for torture victims caught in the midst of its ongoing military attacks and blockade, and were therefore calculated to bring about the physical destruction of the Palestinian group.

Finally, PCHR found that these acts were executed with the intent to destroy the Palestinian population of Gaza. The IOF, intelligence service agencies, and IPS personal targeted for extinction thousands of Palestinians living in Gaza, including the 100 interviewees. They stripped them of their personal belongings, homes, and dignity, arrested them under brutal and terrifying circumstances, deliberately and methodically tortured them solely on the basis of their identity. After subjecting them to the most horrific forms of abuse and inhumane conditions, the detainees were released in a severely weakened state, many with lasting injuries, and were abandoned into a war zone, fully aware that their chances of survival were strongly diminished. PCHR also collected several genocidal statements made by members of the Israeli military during their interactions with the detainees, featuring the destruction of Gaza and the eradication of its people. These statements and the patterns of conduct of the direct perpetrators show their full awareness of the harm they were inflicting and their intention for it to have enduring consequences for the Palestinians of Gaza, far beyond their period of detention.

To date, hundreds of Palestinians are still missing, forcibly disappeared by the Israeli authorities. On 9 August 2024, PCHR launched an online platform enabling Palestinians in Gaza to report cases of their relatives' disappearance and detention since 7 October 2023. By April 2025, approximately 1,000 reports had been filed. Furthermore, PCHR's lawyers in Israel attempting to locate and visit detainees have faced direct targeting by the Israeli authorities for providing legal representation. Two of them decided to end their collaboration with PCHR due to fear for their lives and families. Recently, a lawyer finally managed to visit 53 detainees in six military camps and prisons. Their findings confirmed that conditions of detention and ill-treatment remain unchanged, aligning with the accounts provided by the 100 former detainees.

As a result, PCHR calls on States to:

- Fulfil their obligation to ensure that Israel complies with international law, including the prohibition of torture and the treatment of detainees;
- Fulfil their obligation to prevent genocide, including acts of torture, in particular by imposing an arms embargo on Israel and putting pressure on the Israeli government to end the ongoing genocide.
- Demand that Israel complies with the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of detainees;
- Demand that Israel fulfils its obligation to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Demand that Israeli undertakes prompt and impartial investigations, wherever there is ground to believe that an act of torture has been committed in any territory under its jurisdiction.
- Investigate allegations of genocide and torture under the principle of universal jurisdiction, where applicable;
- Insist on unhindered access for monitoring bodies to medical facilities and places of detention.

Additionally, PCHR urges the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court

- Ensure that the acts of genocide, including acts of torture and ill-treatment, committed by Israeli officials are investigated and prosecuted.
- Urgently add the commission of the crime of genocide in the arrests warrants against Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant.

Methodology

This report presents PCHR’s findings and analysis regarding the arrest and detention of Palestinians from Gaza, supported by direct quotes from interviewees, which provide valuable insights into their experiences and perspectives. By integrating their voices throughout the report, PCHR aims to ensure that the lived realities of those interviewed are accurately represented.

For the purpose of this report, PCHR collected testimonial, documentary, and open-source information. The report is based on 100 interviews conducted by PCHR with Palestinians who resided in Gaza prior to 7 October 2023 and who were detained by Israel, over a period of one year, between 7 October 2023 and 2024. Some interviewees also provided photos of their injuries. Due to the widespread destruction of hospitals and the targeting of medical personnel, obtaining medical reports was not possible.

The report also relies on six detailed reports prepared by PCHR’s lawyer following their visits to detainees still in Israeli custody. Between September and December 2024, PCHR’s lawyer managed to visit 53 detainees in three military camps (Ofer Camp, Naftali Camp, and Sde Teiman) and three prisons (Nafha Prison, Negev Prison, and Ofer Prison). Despite significant challenges, they succeeded in obtaining information about detainees still in Israeli custody. According to the lawyer, the detainees appeared both physically and mentally exhausted, seemingly disconnected from the outside world. They were unaware of the date or time, had no knowledge of the length of their detention, and were not informed of the charges against them. The visits took place under extremely challenging conditions, with no regard for client-lawyer confidentiality. Detainees’ hands and/or feet were kept shackled, they were separated by glass or a thick wired fence with tiny holes, and the meeting took place in the presence of prison staff or soldiers. The reports were used to corroborate the experiences of those released by cross-referencing them with the accounts from those still in custody, and to help confirm the ongoing nature of the abuse.

In addition to conducting interviews and visiting detainees, PCHR also collected open-source materials, including social media posts, media articles, reports, or webpages, to corroborate the information provided by interviewees.

The interviews were conducted by PCHR's Legal Aid and Field Research units between December 2023 and November 2024. PCHR's Legal Aid Unit consists of 11 lawyers, located in Gaza, the West Bank and Egypt, and the Field Research Unit consists of 11 field researchers – five based in Gaza and six in the West Bank.

PCHR contacted the interviewees as soon as they learned of their release. They visited the locations where detainees were released or seeking shelter – wearing identification badges – to arrange interviews. Interviews were either conducted immediately or scheduled for a later time.

The interviews were conducted in person mainly from inside Gaza, with the exception of two cases conducted from abroad. The interviews were conducted in a challenging context, with both interviewers and interviewees facing displacement and life-threatening security challenges. Due to the lack of safe space in Gaza given the ongoing conflict, interviews were conducted from locations considered the safest: hospitals, schools, and shelters. Interviewers explained to each interviewee the purpose of the interview and how the information would be used. All interviewees gave their informed oral consent to share their testimony for the purpose of analysis and advocacy.

All interview summaries were prepared in the same manner. Interviewers took written notes during each interview and later transcribed them. The transcripts were then submitted to their supervisors, who prepared summaries. A senior staff member reviewed these summaries to ensure quality. The summaries were then translated from Arabic to English. Some have already been published on PCHR's website.² All testimonies are also stored on a safe, offline database.

All the written interviews, both in English and Arabic, as well as photographs, have been reviewed by a team of Palestinian and international experts with extensive experience in documenting torture and other forms of ill-treatment under the Istanbul Protocol and international criminal law.

The report has been prepared with the support of DIGNITY. Specifically, DIGNITY has built capacity of PCHR to collect, preserve and analyse information and evidence of torture and other international crimes in accordance with international standards. DIGNITY has also contributed to the health-related analysis, notably of torture methods and of the physical, psychological and social consequences of torture. DIGNITY is an independent human rights organisation based in Copenhagen, Denmark. DIGNITY works on applying research-based knowledge to prevent torture and violence, rehabilitate survivors, and promote justice and accountability.

²- Available [here](#).

Background

Since 7 October 2023, Israel has been waging one of its most violent and destructive attacks on the Gaza Strip, inflicting devastating consequences on its 2.3 million residents. The assault has transformed Gaza into what can only be described as a “Hell On Earth”. More than 51.600 Palestinians have been killed, including thousands of women and children, with 115.300 others injured.³ Countless bodies remain trapped under the rubble of destroyed buildings, with no way to retrieve them, and many more are likely to have died.⁴

The destruction has gone beyond the loss of life; it has obliterated Gaza's vital infrastructure. Entire residential neighbourhoods and cities have been wiped out, while educational and healthcare facilities have been completely destroyed. The collapse of electricity and water networks has left millions without basic necessities, and hospitals have become mass graves.

Amidst this chaos, over two million people have been displaced multiple times, fleeing the relentless violence in search of safety, only to find themselves packed into overcrowded tents with no access to food, water, or medical care. The situation has descended into an unprecedented humanitarian crisis, where basic survival is a daily struggle for the people of Gaza.

In light of the scale and intensity of these military attacks, coupled with official Israeli statements indicating an intent to destroy Gaza and its population, PCHR, alongside other Palestinian human rights organisations, was among the first to warn of the imminent risk of genocide as early as October 2023, drawing on their direct observations on the ground.⁵

The lack of reaction from the international community has also prompted the state of South Africa to initiate legal proceedings against Israel before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for violations of the Genocide Convention.⁶ This action resulted in the ICJ finding a ‘real and imminent risk of irreparable prejudice’ against Palestinians, in other words a ‘risk’ of genocide.⁷

3- OCHA oPt. (2025). Reported Impact Snapshot: Gaza Strip – 18 February 2025. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Available [here](#).

4- A recent study has estimated that up to 64,260 deaths occurred by 30 June 2024. The Lancet (2024). Traumatic injury mortality in the Gaza Strip from October 7, 2023, to June 30, 2024: A capture–recapture analysis. Available [here](#).

5- PCHR (2023). Welcoming South Africa’s Principled Move to Pursue Justice for Israel’s Genocide against Palestinians in Gaza at the International Court of Justice, 30 December. Available [here](#).

6- PCHR, Al-Haq, Al Mezan (2023). Urgent Action: Palestinian Human Rights Organisations Call on Third States to Urgently Intervene to Protect the Palestinian People Against Genocide, 13 October. Available [here](#).

7- ICJ (2024). Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel) - Request for the Indication of Provisional Measures, Order, ICJ General List No. 192. para. 74. Available [here](#).

For over a year, PCHR has consistently and systematically documented Israeli crimes and military attacks in the Gaza Strip, despite the immense challenges and dangers faced by its staff working tirelessly.⁸ In a comprehensive report, PCHR analysed the information gathered and concluded that Israel's actions – carried out through its state apparatus and by all individuals and entities operating under its direction, control, or influence – are in violation of its obligations under the 1948 Genocide Convention.⁹

Key elements of genocide identified include the deliberate targeting and killing of thousands of Palestinians, causing serious bodily and mental harm to them; deliberately inflicting on them conditions of life intended to bring about their destruction in whole or in part, including through starvation, the destruction of civilian, agricultural, educational and health infrastructures; and finally imposing measures intended to prevent births within the Gaza Strip. PCHR found that Israel's political leaders, military commanders, and persons in positions of power have acted with genocidal intent. The following selected statements, among many others gathered by PCHR, exemplify their intent:

- On 8 October 2023, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made a clear and chilling declaration of his intent to reduce Gaza to rubble. He urged all residents to evacuate, saying: 'I say to the residents of Gaza: Leave now because we will operate forcefully everywhere... that wicked city, we will turn them into rubble.'¹⁰
- On 13 October 2023, Israeli President Isaac Herzog echoed this rhetoric, making a disturbing claim about the population of Gaza. He stated: 'It's an entire nation out there that is responsible. This rhetoric about civilians not aware, not involved, it's absolutely not true. They could've risen up; they could have fought against that evil regime.'¹¹
- In a video statement released by the official Knesset YouTube channel on 9 October 2023, Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant referred to Palestinians as "Human Animals". Gallant also announced a complete siege on Gaza, denying its residents essential resources, stating: 'I have ordered a complete siege on the Gaza Strip. There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed. We are fighting human animals, and we are acting accordingly.'¹²

8- See for example, PCHR (2023). After receiving harrowing testimonies from released Palestinian detainees: Our organizations condemn Israel's acts of torture and abuse against hundreds of arbitrarily detained Palestinians from Gaza, 11 December. Available [here](#); PCHR (2024). Palestinian Human Rights Organisations on Israel's Arbitrary Arrests, Enforced Disappearance, Inhumane Treatment, and Torture of Palestinians, 19 April. Available [here](#); PCHR (2024). 800,000 Students Deprived of Their Right to Education amid Ongoing Destruction of Schools and Universities, 9 September. Available [here](#); PCHR (2024). Israel's Perpetuation of Starvation as Weapon of Genocide: World Central Kitchen Vehicle Targeted in Israeli Airstrike in Khan Yunis, 30 November. Available [here](#); PCHR (2024). Forgotten Victims: Death, Torture, and Enforced Disappearance of Palestinian Detainees from Gaza, 10 December. Available [here](#); PCHR (2024). Generation Wiped Out: Gaza's Children in the Crosshairs of Genocide, 31 December. Available [here](#).

9- To be published.

10- Netanyahu, B. (2024). Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Official Account on Twitter. Available [here](#).

11- Statement recorded by Law for Palestine. Available [here](#).

12- Statement recorded by Law for Palestine. Available [here](#).

Several international bodies and experts have also published their legal analysis of the situation in Gaza, reaching the same conclusion, including the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 (UNSR), Amnesty International,¹³ Human Rights Watch,¹⁴ and Forensic Architecture.¹⁵

¹³- Amnesty International (2024). Israel's Apartheid Against the Palestinians. Available [here](#).

¹⁴- Human Rights Watch (2024). Israel's Crime of Extermination: Acts of Genocide in Gaza. Available [here](#).

¹⁵- Forensic Architecture (2024). A Cartography of Genocide. Available [here](#).

Introduction

Since the beginning of the genocide, Israel has arbitrarily arrested thousands of Palestinians from Gaza, including children, women, individuals with disabilities, and the elderly.¹⁶ The arrests have extended to professionals such as individuals legally working in Israel, health professionals, journalists, lawyers, humanitarian aid workers, and teachers, reflecting a systematic targeting of diverse sectors within Palestinian society. All have been detained in various facilities across Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The exact number, as well as the fate and whereabouts of those still detained, remain undisclosed by Israeli authorities and the ICRC and families have been denied access to them, resulting in their enforced disappearance.

Testimonies and reports from UN agencies such as the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)¹⁷ and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR),¹⁸ as well as prominent human rights organisations including PCHR, Al-Haq, Al-Mezan,¹⁹ B'tselem,²⁰ and Amnesty International,²¹ alongside various media outlets²² have consistently exposed a pattern of torture and other forms of ill-treatment against Palestinians from Gaza detained by Israel.

While public attention has particularly focused on the military detention facility of Sde Teiman due to whistleblowers' accounts²³ and outrage following the recorded rape of a detainee,²⁴ PCHR's investigation reveals that the scope of the abuse extends far beyond this facility. For over a year, PCHR has documented more than 130 testimonies of former detainees. Torture and ill-treatment have been reported from the moment of arrest through to release, occurring across all Israeli military detention facilities and prisons where Palestinians are held. These detainees face methods of torture that bear alarming similarities to those used in notorious facilities like Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib.

16- OHCHR (2024). Thematic report on detention in the context of Gaza hostilities, para. 3. Available [here](#).

17- UNRWA (2024). Palestinian detainees held arbitrarily and secretly, subjected to torture and mistreatment. Available [here](#).

18- OHCHR (2024). UN report: Palestinian detainees held arbitrarily and secretly, subjected to torture and mistreatment. Available [here](#).

19- PCHR (2024). After receiving harrowing testimonies from released Palestinian detainees, our organizations condemn Israel's acts of torture and abuse against hundreds of arbitrarily detained Palestinians. Available [here](#).

20- B'tselem (2024). Welcome to Hell: The Torture of Palestinian Detainees in Israeli Prisons. Available [here](#).

21- Amnesty International (2024). Israel must end mass incommunicado detention and torture of Palestinians from Gaza. Available [here](#).

22- See for example, Abdulrahim, R. (2024). Stripped, beaten or vanished: Israel's treatment of Gaza detainees raises alarm. The New York Times. Available [here](#).

23- Gallagher, P. (2024). Strapped down, blindfolded, held in diapers: Israeli whistleblowers detail abuse of Palestinians in shadowy detention center. CNN. Available [here](#).

24- Cordall, S. S. (2024). "Everything is legitimate": Israeli leaders defend soldiers accused of rape' Al Jazeera. Available [here](#).

Despite widespread recognition of the use of torture against Palestinians from Gaza since 7 October 2023, its use has rarely been analysed within the broader context of the ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people. This report aims to fill this gap by examining torture not only as a human rights violation or war crime, but also as an integral component of Israel's genocidal campaign against Palestinians. The findings presented in this report are based on testimonies from 100 former detainees, collected by PCHR's field researchers and lawyers.

By analysing torture both as a crime in itself and as an act of genocide, PCHR seeks to demonstrate how the systematic use of torture is not merely a method of inflicting pain and suffering, but a deliberate tool designed to destroy the Palestinian group.

To do so, the report first outlines key patterns in the arrest, detention, and release of Palestinians from Gaza (Section I), along with the main methods of ill-treatment experienced by the 100 former detainees, shedding light on the severe consequences of these practices (Section II).

Building on these findings, the report then explores how the documented ill-treatment constitutes torture, as well as how such acts served as part of the genocidal strategy aimed at the destruction of the Palestinian group (Section III). The report concludes with recommendations for Third States and the International Criminal Court, aimed at addressing the ongoing violations and ensuring accountability. Further details on detention facilities are provided in Annex.

The scope of this report is specifically focused on the experiences of Palestinians in Gaza and does not include the other Occupied Palestinian Territory. However, PCHR has also collected cases of detainees from the West Bank and East Jerusalem and continues to monitor and document the crimes committed by Israel in this region.

Finally, the report does not attribute specific individual criminal responsibility but instead focuses on demonstrating how the direct perpetrators, in carrying out acts of torture, were driven by an intent not only to inflict suffering but also to contribute to the destruction of the Palestinian group. It highlights how the genocidal and dehumanising discourse and rhetoric by Senior Israeli officials - documented by PCHR in its genocide report - have permeated down to the field, influencing and shaping the actions of lower-level officials, including the systematic use of torture. In this way, the report highlights how the rhetoric of genocide is not merely theoretical but has been operationalized on the ground, enabling perpetrators to carry out acts that align with the broader objective of eradicating the Palestinian people.

1. Israeli Arrest and Detention Practices

After more than a year of investigation and the analysis of 100 testimonies, PCHR identified consistent patterns in Israeli arrest and detention practices, revealing a systemic approach that persists regardless of the location.



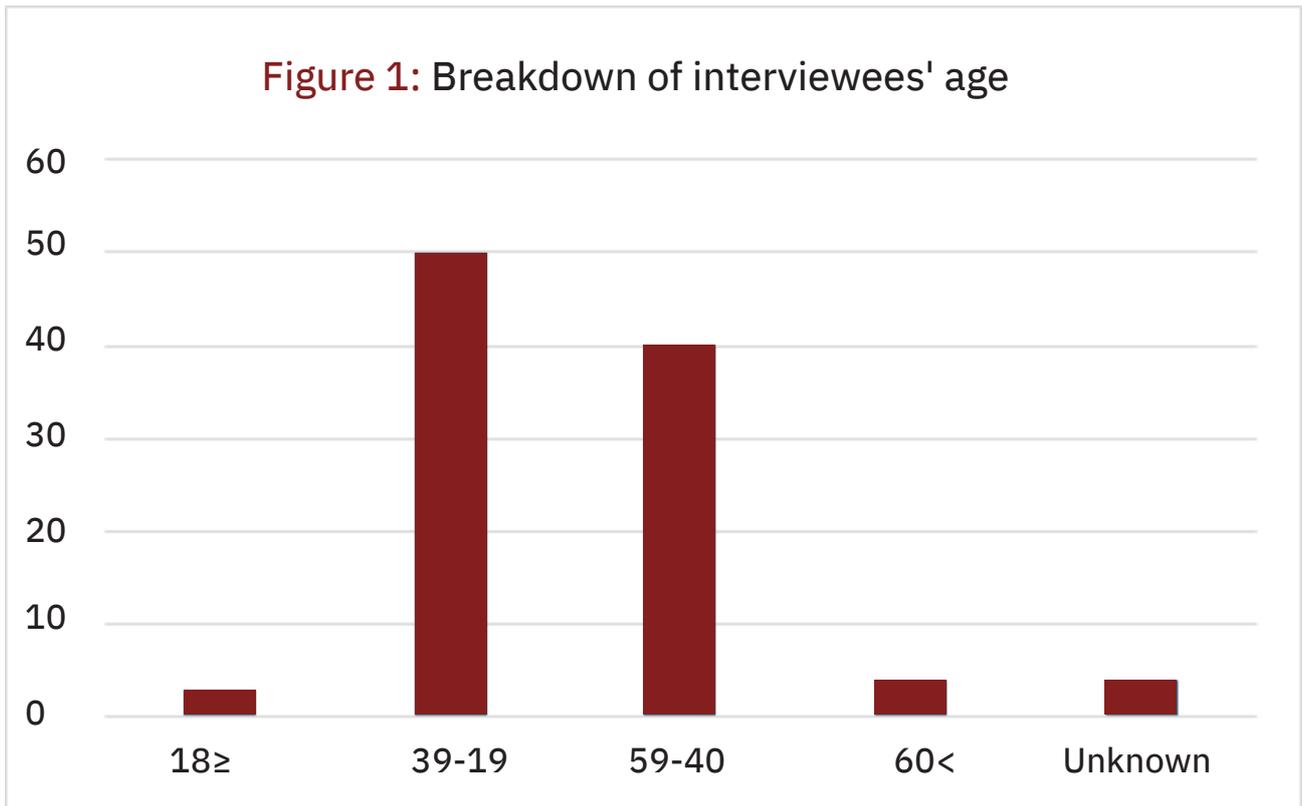
A. Arrests

All the individuals interviewed by PCHR were Palestinians from Gaza who were arrested from their homes, schools, hospitals, streets, at checkpoints, while seeking shelter from bombardments, or while reporting to the Israeli Police or being arrested by the Israeli authorities, for the workers who were in Israel on 7 October 2023 (Gaza workers).²⁵

Many had been displaced multiple times before their arrest, moving from one temporary shelter to another while facing constant risk of death, loss of family, and inadequate living conditions. Interviewees primarily lived or sought refuge in areas designated as safe by the IOF, only to be ordered to evacuate ahead of Israeli military operations. Some who could not evacuate remained in their shelters, enduring the constant threat of artillery attacks and airstrikes, with some describing being besieged for days before their arrest, without basic necessities such as food, water, or telecommunications. Others who could evacuate were later arrested at checkpoints.

²⁵- Several workers from Gaza (Gaza workers) were legally present in Israel on 7 October 2023 and were arrested after their work permits were cancelled.

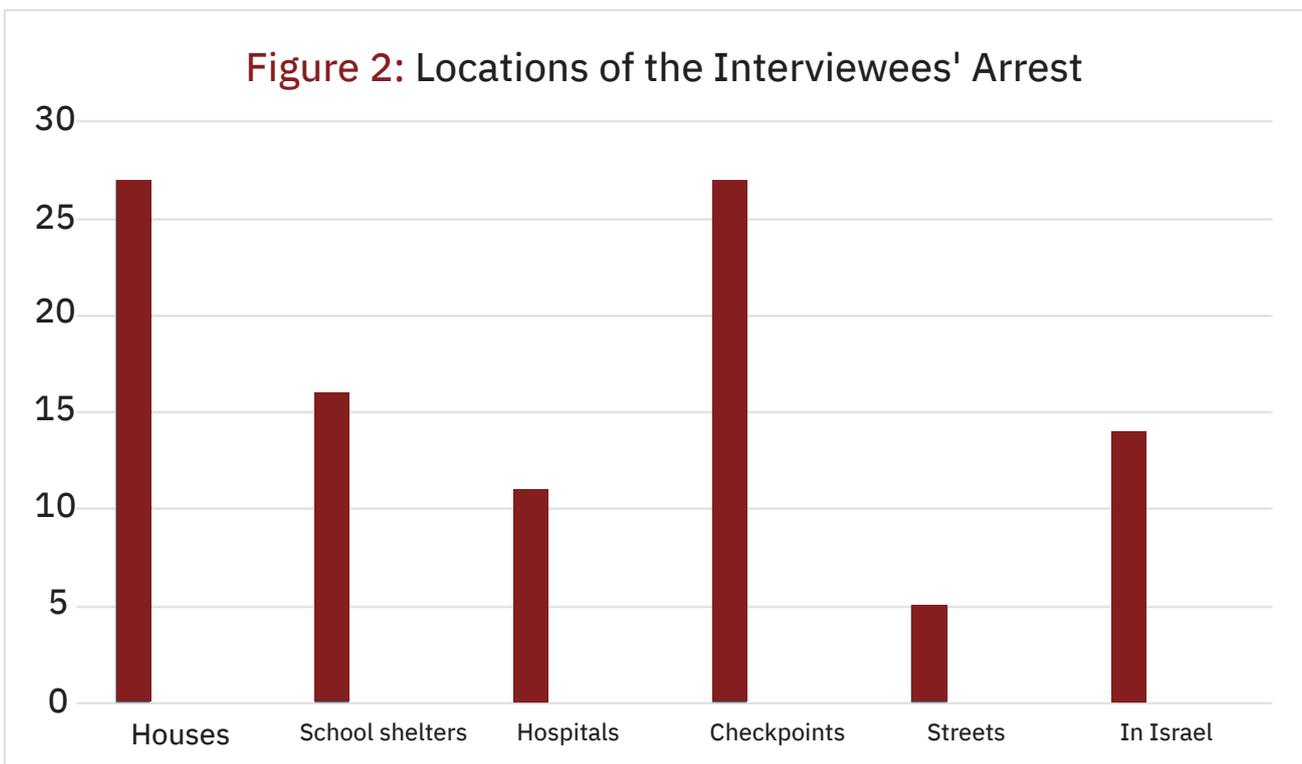
Similar to UNRWA's findings,²⁶ most interviewed individuals arrested were men. In total there were 90 men and boys, aged 15 to 75 years at the time of their interview. In addition, there were ten women aged 24 to 44 years. The mean age of all interviewees was 38.6 years. The interviewees included three boys (15 to 17-year-old) a blind man, a breastfeeding mother, and four elderly persons (>60).



26- UNRWA (n15).

Among the interviewees, ten were health professionals arrested at work or from home (three doctors, five paramedics, including three senior paramedics, one hospital staff member, and one physiotherapist), one was a journalist, and one was a human rights defender (PCHR’s staff member). The remaining interviewees held a range of jobs including but not limited to construction worker, taxi driver, teacher, and fitness instructor. 13 were Gaza workers.

Figure 2: Locations of the Interviewees' Arrest



Interviewees recounted how they were arrested by the IOF without distinction, sometimes by the hundreds, and how several family members were arrested together, primarily men.

The soldiers separated women from men, ordering men to raise their hands and kneel while women were told to walk away and leave the area. They then called the women to come and take the children with them, and when my mom tried to take me, the soldier ordered her to leave.

16-year-old boy, student, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 22 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities.²⁷

None of the 100 individuals were provided with any information about the legal grounds for their arrest.

27- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Table 1: Locations and General Conditions of the Arrests

Locations of the arrest		General Conditions of the Arrests	Total
Houses	<p>5 in North Gaza, incl. 4 in Beit Lahia 14 in Gaza City 7 in Khan Younis 1 in Rafah</p>	<p>27 interviewees stayed behind or were trapped by the fighting alongside their families in various locations - their private homes or the homes where they had sought refuge. They were arrested by the IOF between 13 November 2023 and 14 May 2024 while at home.</p>	27
School shelters	<p>4 at UNRWA schools: - Al-Ayyoubia Primary School for Boys - Gaza City - Palestine Preparatory School for Girls - Gaza City - Al-Hanawi School - Khan Younis - Al-Shawwa UNRWA School - Beit Hanoun</p> <p>3 at Amr Ibn Al-Aas Elementary School for Girls in Sheikh Radwan - Gaza City 1 at Al-Rimal Elementary Mixed School "B" in Gaza City 1 at Al-Aqsa University in Tal Al-Hawa - Gaza City 2 at Haroun Al Rashid Secondary School for Boys in Khan Younis 1 at Tal Al-Zaatar Secondary School for Girls, North Gaza</p>	<p>12 interviewees were arrested between December 2023 and May 2024 while seeking shelter at various schools, including UNRWA schools and a university. All described how their shelters were raided by the IOF, leading to their arrest under difficult and traumatising circumstances, and the destruction of the schools.</p>	16
	<p>4 at Abu Helou School shelter in Al-Bureij refugee camp</p>	<p>Four interviewees described a raid by the IOF into Abu Helou School. On 25 December 2023, Israeli warplanes dropped leaflets on al-Bureij refugee camp, ordering residents to evacuate to Deir al-Balah and Rafah. Having nowhere else to go, several families decided to stay. Three days later, the interviewees described how the IOF invaded the school, ordering everyone inside via loudspeakers to gather in the schoolyard with their hands and ID cards raised.</p>	

Locations of the arrest		General Conditions of the Arrests	Total
Hospitals	3 at Al-Shifa Medical Complex in Gaza City	Three individuals who sought refuge at Al-Shifa Hospital in March 2024 recounted their experiences during its siege. They described how the IOF surrounded the hospital, arresting everyone in the front yard and courtyard. Army vehicles entered the premises, and Israeli soldiers opened fire while drones carried out relentless bombings. Those taking shelter near the windows were shot at.	11
	3 at Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahia	On 12 December 2023, the IOF attacked Kamal Adwan Hospital after besieging and shelling it for several days. According to reports, the hospital was hosting hundreds of people, including medical staff, patients, and civilians, including women and children. ²⁸ Two interviewees, a paramedic and a civilian, testified about the attack and their arrest. They explained that people trapped inside the hospital for several days were shot at by quadcopters or drones if they tried to exit through the northern or western doors. On 11 December 2023, the IOF targeted the first floor of the hospital and launched a raid the next day.	
	3 at Al-Ahli Hospital in Al-Zaitoun - Gaza City	Three interviewees were present during the attack on Al-Ahli hospital on 18 December 2023. The hospital was one of the last remaining facilities providing emergency care in Northern Gaza and held patients needing urgent surgery. ²⁹ The IOF besieged the hospital for two days, before raiding it. During the attack, the IOF destroyed parts of the building ³⁰ and arrested around 20 doctors and medical staff, ³¹ as well as several patients and civilians seeking refuge in the hospital. One interviewee explained that he attempted to inform the soldiers that only medical personnel, patients, and their companions were present, and that they had a list of names to verify this. The soldiers, however, refused to communicate. Three of the arrested individuals, including a doctor, a Senior paramedic, and a civilian, were later released and interviewed by PCHR.	

28- Mraffko, C. (2023). Israel-Hamas war: The deadly targeting of hospitals in Gaza, Le Monde. Available here; Al Jazeera (2023). Israeli forces raid Gaza's Kamal Adwan Hospital after days of strike, available here.

29- Tétrault-Farber, G. (2023). Northern Gaza no longer has a functional hospital, WHO says, Reuters. Available here.

30- AFP (2023). Gaza's Al-Ahli Hospital out of action after Israeli army assault: Director. Al Arabiya. Available here.

31- Opening remarks by Dr Richard Peeperkorn and Sean Casey, UN Palais briefing (2023). Available here.

Locations of the arrest		General Conditions of the Arrests	Total
Hospitals	2 at Al-Amal Hospital, Red Crescent Building, in Khan Younis	On 22 January 2024, the IOF besieged Al-Amal Hospital, without any prior warning, despite the coordination between the ICRC and the IOF. Snipers were positioned around the hospital, and surveillance drones were flying overhead. The administrative building where displaced persons were sheltering was bombed, without any warning, as well as the hospital's yard, resulting in several deaths. Israeli snipers then targeted maintenance workers who were attempting to repair the hospital's generator, the Director of the Volunteer Department for the Palestinian Red Crescent was shot as a result. After the destruction of other vital parts of the hospital, the IOF raided the Red Crescent Buildings on 9 February 2024, where around 30.000 people were sheltering, including the wounded, patients, their companions, and medical staff and arrested several individuals. Two of the arrested individuals, a senior paramedic and a civilian, were detained and interviewed by PCHR.	
Checkpoints	6 in Khan Younis	Between 24 and 28 January 2024, four interviewees were arrested at a checkpoint in Khan Younis. On 22 and 24 January 2024, the IOF dropped leaflets and used loudspeakers to order an immediate evacuation to the west via the Sea Road through a designated 'safe corridor'. The IOF had stationed itself there two days earlier and established a checkpoint. The interviewees and their families, already displaced, decided to use this route to seek refuge. Upon arrival at the checkpoint, interviewees reported that Israeli soldiers ordered them to raise their identity cards and pass through. Soldiers appeared to randomly stop individuals and order them to stand aside. Two other interviewees also testified about their arrest at a checkpoint in Khan Younis, after they were ordered to leave by the IOF, in April and July 2024, respectively.	27

Locations of the arrest		General Conditions of the Arrests	Total
	21 on Salah al-Deen Road, Netzarim Checkpoint, so-called 'safe corridor'	21 interviewees were arrested at Netzarim checkpoint between November and July 2024. Among the arrested were four women and 17 men, including a doctor and paramedic in his Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) uniform. They were attempting to reach the South with their families through the 'safe corridor' due to heavy bombardments in Gaza City and Israeli orders to evacuate to the South. The interviewees described seeing dead bodies, including children, lying on the ground around the checkpoint and experiencing deep fear at the checkpoint, where Israeli soldiers fired shots into the air to intimidate the displaced.	
Streets	5 on the street in Gaza City, Rafah, Khan Younis and close to the airport area.	Five interviewees were arrested on the street in January and October 2024. One interviewee was arrested while he was working with humanitarian aid trucks.	5
In Israel (incl. Gaza workers)	2 at a Police Station 5 at checkpoints between Israel and the West Bank 4 in their accommodation in Israel 2 on the street	14 interviewees were in Israel on 7 October 2023, 13 Gaza workers and one Palestinian receiving medical treatment in a hospital in Jerusalem. Four were arrested at their accommodations, five at a checkpoint while trying to reach the West Bank, three after voluntarily reporting to the Israeli or Palestinian authorities and two on the streets.	14
	1 unknown		100

B. Repeated Transfers

PCHR's findings reveal that the transfers of Palestinians from Gaza between various detention facilities exhibited consistent patterns:

- Interviewees were transferred several times between various facilities without being informed of their transfer and destination.
- The duration of the initial detention was often short, for a few hours or overnight, intended for searches and interrogations in forward operating bases inside Gaza or military detention facilities, followed by transfers to other military detention facilities for longer durations, and sometimes to prisons.
- Interviewees were subjected to several forms of physical and psychological ill-treatment during transfers (see Section II for more details).

After their arrest, interviewees described being transferred to various detention facilities. Most detainees were subjected to repeated transfers between different detention facilities from the moment of their arrest, without warning or information. Repeated transfers often left detainees in a state of uncertainty, confusion, and fear. This was compounded by the fact that most were not informed about where they were transferred or why, even upon their release.

Some detainees also reported stops during their transfers where they were exposed to ill-treatment and other violations before they had to shift to another means of transport. Some also reported being beaten by Israeli civilians on the way to detention.

The carrier travelled for some time and then stopped to throw me on the ground. The soldiers again beat me while I was on the ground, spat and peed on me. They then brought me back to the carrier, which kept going and then stopped again to deploy the Israeli soldiers in other places. All the way, I was subjected to the same abuses.

35-year-old male, paramedic, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 38 days initially in a private home before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities and prisons.³²

³² The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Among the 100 interviewees, PCHR documented a total of at least 459 transfers from the moment of arrest until release, ranging from two to nine transfers per person, with an average of 4,5 transfers per person between the initial transfer to the first detention facility and the final transfer to their place of release. The majority of these transfers were between military facilities where interviewees were moved without being informed of their transfer or destination.

After the one speaking in Hebrew finished the photography, I was taken into a Hyundai bus while handcuffed, beating my head to the SUV and strongly tightening the ties behind my back. [They] stopped to drop us off the street one by one. We heard settlers speaking in Hebrew and sound of cars. We were beaten by the settlers as the soldier was telling them that we were from the Elite Forces.

27-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 55 days, in various unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel, including in the Negev.

C. Detention Facilities

PCHR's findings reveal that the detention of Palestinians from Gaza also exhibited consistent patterns across various facilities:

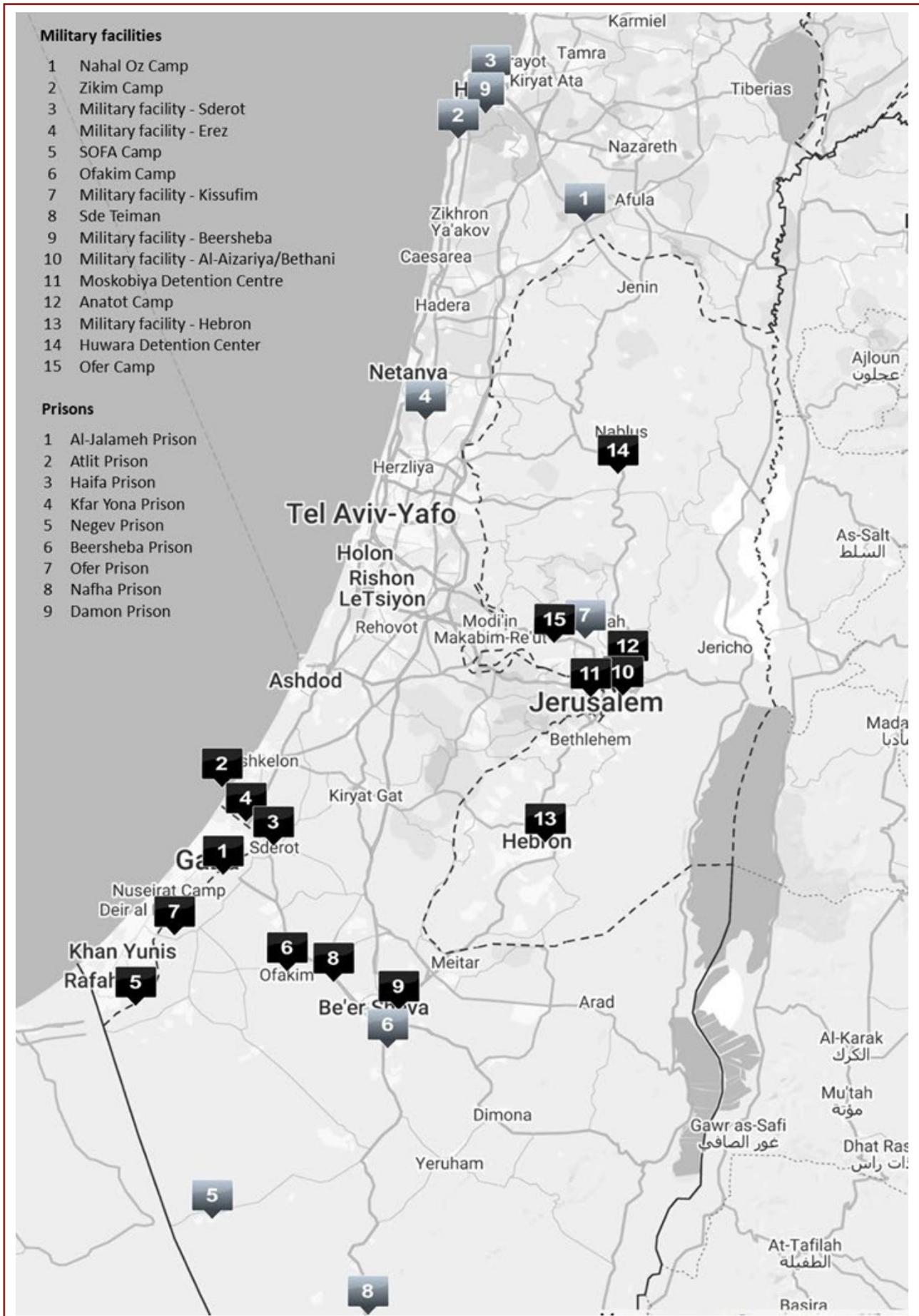
- Most interviewees were not informed about their place of detention.
- Most interviewees remained handcuffed and blindfolded throughout their detention, with some additionally having their feet cuffed.
- Personal belongings, including money that had not been confiscated upon arrest, were taken upon their arrival at the detention facilities.
- Upon arrival at military detention facilities and prisons, some interviewees underwent a routine intake process.
- Interviewees were subjected to interrogations and body searches, including strip-searches.
- Interviewees were also subjected to different forms of physical and psychological ill-treatment (see Section II for more details).

PCHR's findings show that all interviewees arrested inside Gaza were held in one or more military detention facilities. Among them, only 30 individuals were held in prisons, including all 10 women. In total, 74% of those arrested in Gaza were held exclusively in military facilities. Of the 13 workers in Gaza, five were held in prisons only, while the others were held in military detention facilities and sometimes prisons.

The details of many interviewees' places of detention remain unclear, particularly regarding the specific locations and types of detention facilities. Most interviewees were not able to identify their detention facilities due to constant blindfolding, repeated transfers, and the lack of information provided by Israeli authorities. Of the 100 interviewees, only 22 were aware of the exact location of all their detention facilities. The remaining individuals were held in at least one identified facility, with 38 completely unaware of where they had been detained even after their release. As a result, PCHR was unable to identify all the facilities where Palestinians from Gaza were held. The following section, along with the Annex, is only based on the testimonies and may not provide a comprehensive and precise list of the detention facilities.

i. List of Detention Facilities

Map: Location of the identified facilities where interviewees were detained.



PCHR classified the various detention facilities into four categories based on the description provided by the interviewees: forward operating bases, military detention facilities/camps, prisons, and unidentified facilities. The annex provides the full list of identified facilities.

The interviewees reported the following facilities:

- **Identified Forward Operating Bases:** Such bases were temporarily established by the IOF inside Gaza. These facilities were set up in various locations, including open areas, pits in the ground, streets, military checkpoints, former police stations, as well as civilian spaces, such as private homes and buildings, warehouses, mosques, schools, hospitals, or cafés. 42 interviewees described being initially detained in such locations. Detainees were usually detained there, for a few hours or overnight, after their arrest for interrogation and searches before being sent to other detention facilities outside Gaza. Most were held while blindfolded and handcuffed, sometimes in underwear despite the cold winter conditions. In these forward operating bases, detainees reported enduring harsh conditions of detention as outlined in Section I.A. Seven interviewees were exclusively held in such facilities and were never transferred outside Gaza.
- The main outpost was located at Netzarim Checkpoint, which was described by 14 interviewees as a militarised area, with military tanks positioned on both sides of the road, sand dunes surrounding the perimeter, and heavily armed soldiers. Dozens of snipers were stationed atop the tanks and dunes, providing an intimidating presence for the civilians crossing the checkpoint. At the beginning of the military operations, Palestinians detained at the checkpoint recounted the presence of tents used for interrogations. At the end of 2024, two large iron containers were reported. The detention section itself was described as sand dunes or gravel floor.

- **Identified military detention facilities/camps:** They refer to semi-permanent and permanent detention facilities administered by the IOF and intelligence services, located outside Gaza, in Israel and Palestinian Occupied Territory. In some cases, they were set up specifically to detain Palestinians from Gaza after October 2023. These camps serve as initial destinations for those arrested and transferred outside Gaza by the IOF. While some detainees stayed in these camps for only a few days, others remained there for longer periods, with one detainee being detained in one such facility for 150 days. Although most interviewees did not know where they were held, some were able to name specific camps, while others could only provide a general location without identifying the exact camp. As a result, many of the camps and their location remain unidentified. These camps were commonly described as consisting of barracks with pebble or concrete floor and/or surrounded by barbed wire and roofed with tin plates. According to an interviewee, they could accommodate as many as 500 to 800 detainees within a single facility. Some described being held in cages, seeing watchtowers, and containers. Some camps were reported being set up close to or outside a prison. Most of the men arrested in Gaza and interviewed by PCHR were only held in military detention facilities.
 - Ten military detention centres were specifically mentioned by name: Al-Aizariya/Bethani camp, Anatot camp, Huwara detention centre, Moskobiya detention centre, Nahal Oz camp, Ofakim camp, Ofer camp, Sde Teiman, SOFA camp, and Zikim camp. In addition, there were references to detention centres by location without further details or information about their exact name. These included facilities in Ashkelon, Beer-sheba, Jerusalem, and Hebron, the Negev, Ofer, Sderot, and Zikim as well as Erez, Kissufim, and Netzarim Crossings, and near the Egyptian border. These may refer to some of the identified camps.
- **Identified prisons:** Prisons are administered by the IPS. Out of the 100 interviewees, 43 (including ten women interviewees and 13 Gaza workers) reported being held in Israeli prisons and most were able to identify the prison.
 - Eight prisons and detention centres were identified by name:, Al-Jalameh prison, Atlit Prison, Beersheba Prison, Damon Prison, Kfar Yona Prison, Nafha Prison, Negev Prison, and Ofer Prison. In two cases, the exact name of the prison was not specified.

In 127 reported incidents, interviewees were unable to provide any information about the place of detention. Constant blindfolding, repeated transfers, and the lack of information provided by the Israeli authorities left the detainees in a state of disorientation and unable to know where they were being held.

- **Unidentified military detention facilities:** PCHR found 100 references to military detention facilities with no specific location provided. Some were mentioned as being in Israel, and it is possible that multiple references refer to the same facility.
- **Unidentified facilities:** There were also 27 references to completely unknown detention facilities. It is unclear whether these were military detention facilities or prisons. Some were mentioned as being in Israel, and it is possible that multiple references refer to the same facility.

ii. Routine Intake Process

Upon arrival at most detention facilities, interviewees underwent a routine intake process. The reported routines included documentation of personal information and photographs as well as finger, toe, or retinal scanning in addition to biological samples (reportedly saliva samples and one case of a DNA test from a married couple). Belongings were confiscated including phones, money, jewellery, identification cards, papers, working permits, as well as clothes. Many reported receiving a thin mattress and a blanket, as well as being searched, including strip searched, and some were issued uniforms to wear. Interviewees received a numbered plastic bracelet placed on their wrist. Some stated that they were only called by that number during their detention. Some interviewees reported being taken to a clinic or a doctor upon arrival. Many were immediately taken to interrogation.

D. Incommunicado Detention

Palestinians from Gaza are generally arrested and detained under the Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law No. 5762–2002 (the Law), enacted in 2002.³³ Originally designed to enable the prolonged detention without charge of two Lebanese nationals, it was later applied to Palestinian detainees following the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in 2005.³⁴ Subsequent amendments in 2008 expanded its provisions to apply it to future combat operations entailing the arrest of Palestinians on a massive scale.³⁵ After 7 October 2023, further amendments were adopted.³⁶ Under the Law, civilians can be detained indefinitely by the Israeli military if they consider that there are reasonable grounds to believe that they are unlawful combatants and that their release would harm state security.³⁷ Once a civilian is designated as an unlawful combatant, it is assumed their release poses a threat as long as hostilities against Israel continue, creating a presumption of guilt.³⁸

The Law allows Israel to detain civilians, including children, incommunicado, without charge or trial, as well as deny them access to the evidence against them³⁹ and to a judge or lawyer for extended periods. For example, a civilian can be detained without access to a judge for up to 45 days from the date on which the incarceration order is issued (75 days between December 2023 and July 2024, and 14 days before December).⁴⁰ A person can also be denied legal representation for a cumulative period of 75 days (6 months between December 2023 and July 2024, and 21 days before December).⁴¹ Such a law constitutes a blatant violation of Palestinians' fundamental rights under IHL.

PCHR's review reveals that the average duration of detention among those interviewed was approximately 50 days, with periods ranging from one day to 257 days.

The vast majority of the interviewees were held incommunicado throughout their detention, with no access to a judge, legal representation or their family and relatives, even when required by the Law. Their families remained unaware of their whereabouts until after their release, sometimes several days later, owing to the challenges in communication and movement within Gaza.

³³- Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law, 5762–2002.

³⁴- Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2017). Gaza: Unlawful Combatants Laws Violates Rights - Administrative Detention with Minimal Judicial Oversight. Available [here](#).

³⁵- Langford, P., Mariniello, T., Lobba, P. (2019). Israel's Administrative Detention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: An Assessment of the Applicable Norms of International Law and Possibilities of Enforcement', p. 19.

³⁶- Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law, 5762–2002 (Amendment no. 4 and Temporary Provision – Iron Swords, December 2023); (Amendment no 2., July 2024).

³⁷- Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law, 5762–2002, Art. 3(a).

³⁸- Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law, 5762–2002, Art. 7.

³⁹- Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law, 5762–2002, Art. 7.

⁴⁰- Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law, 5762–2002, Art. 10a(4).

⁴¹- Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law, 5762–2002, Art. 10a(5)(c).

Interviewees were not provided with any information about the evidence against them.

When I asked about what I had done, the interrogator would answer, ‘because you are from the Gaza Strip’, though they previously approved my permit to work in Israel.

46-year-old male, Gaza worker, arrested from a private home in Israel, held for a total of 25 days in Kfar Yona Prison at an unknown location and a military detention facility in Ofer.

Out of the 100 interviewees, only 10 were brought before a judge: six appeared before a judge via a virtual hearing and four (held in the Negev prison) were physically brought before a judge. Only two had access to legal representation, appointed by the army.

After about two weeks in the new tent, a soldier called my name, handcuffed my hands in front of me, and took me to a nearby room. As soon as I entered the room, the soldier said, ‘You’re in court now’, and sat me down on a chair. In front of me was a screen, and a Zoom meeting was in session. A judge was sitting behind a desk with files in front of him, and another person was standing, wearing a black robe and a small cap, like those worn by settlers. As soon as I sat down, the judge said, ‘You’re in court now.’ Then he asked me, ‘Do you have a lawyer?’ I said, ‘No.’ The judge then said, ‘You will remain detained here until the war ends, according to the secret file.’ I asked the judge, ‘What charges do I have?’ He replied, ‘None.’ Then the soldier immediately pulled me out and returned me to the tent where I had been staying.

22-year-old male, student, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held in various unidentified military detention facilities, including in the Negev, as well as the Negev prison.



E. Release

PCHR's findings reveal that the release of Palestinians back to Gaza exhibited consistent patterns:

- Blindfolds and cuffs were removed before the release.
- All interviewees were forced to run or walk across the border crossings, some over distances of several kilometres, despite their weak health and injuries.
- Several reported being shot at by Israeli soldiers while attempting to make their way back to Gaza and were threatened with death if they stopped moving away.
- Several interviewees were received by UNRWA and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

After their detention, most detainees were initially released at the Kerem Shalom crossing. Releases have also occurred at Zikim, west of the Erez crossing and Kisufim near Deir al-Balah. Seven interviewees who appeared to have remained in Gaza were released inside the Strip in various locations, close to where they were arrested or detained.

Interviewees reported being forced to run across the crossings, with some having to cover several kilometres.

[...] we were taken onto a bus while we were handcuffed and blindfolded, forcing us to keep our heads down until we arrived at Kerem Shalom crossing. The soldiers fired shots in the air and ordered us to run. We were 70 male detainees and 19 female detainees. We were so tired and in pain that we could not run, so the soldiers shot in the air to scare us and run quickly.

24-year-old, female, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 51 days, in a warehouse, private home, pit in the ground, several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.

At the crossings, several were received by UNRWA and/or the ICRC who provided them with food, water, and financial assistance. Some interviewees mentioned undergoing medical examinations at UNRWA/ICRC welcome tents and those with deteriorating health conditions were taken to the hospital. Some detainees managed to contact their family and were picked up or managed to reach their family, while others were taken to various shelters.

All the interviewees were released without being charged of an offence.

2. The Ill-Treatment of Palestinians from Gaza



The testimonies collected by PCHR reveal a broad range of ill-treatment methods, with consistent accounts across individuals. All interviewees reported enduring inhumane detention conditions and experiencing various forms of physical and psychological ill-treatment during arrest, transfer, detention and on release. Patterns of ill-treatment remained consistent across different locations of arrest and detention, although variations in severity were observed between military facilities and prisons.

Additionally, PCHR's lawyer who managed to visit detainees still in Israeli custody confirmed that conditions of detention and the methods of ill-treatment remain unchanged at the time of the visits between September and December 2024, aligning with accounts provided by the 100 former detainees.

Some forms of ill-treatment were under-reported, particularly those involving sexual violence. Survivors of such trauma may hesitate to share their experiences due to feelings of shame, stigma, and the lasting impact of their trauma. Building the trust necessary for victims to disclose such sensitive information would typically require multiple interviews and specific training, which was not feasible in this context. Additionally, the risk of retaliation from the IOF as a result of the interviews likely inhibited survivors from fully disclosing their experiences.

A. Conditions of Detention

While the conditions of detention described in prisons were dire, they were worse in military facilities (forward operating bases and military detention centres), where 95% of interviewees were detained at least once. The sub-sections below describe conditions across all places of detention.

Military detention facilities, in particular, were described as uninhabitable, unfit even for animals. 13 interviewees reported being held in cages or in cage-like cells for several days. One detainee described the conditions as akin to being treated like slaves. Communication among detainees was strictly prohibited and often punished with insults and violence. Interviewees reported being held in cramped barracks or rooms. For example, one interviewee reported being held with 120 detainees in a cell designed for ten people. The overcrowding resulted in poor detention conditions, including long waiting times for toilet access as discussed below. Six interviewees were held in military facilities without shelter from the rain, and many were left outdoors in the cold, some in their underwear and reporting shivering. Similar conditions are still imposed on Palestinians currently in Israeli custody, as reported by PCHR's lawyer following their visits.

Those detained in prisons also spoke about being held in small, crowded cells. Some of them provided specific information, such as one interviewee held in Damon prison who was among ten detainees held in a cell with five beds. Another interviewee reported that she was held with five other women for 20 days in a solitary confinement cell with a small window. Another interviewee reported being held in a room of 6×3 sqm with 16 mattresses with 22 detainees.

Water and food

Interviewees endured partial or total restrictions on water and food for days. Throughout their entire detention, detainees were subjected to inadequate rations, reported as not sufficient for even a child, resulting in significant weight loss and severe health consequences. Such deprivation is still imposed on Palestinians currently in Israeli custody, as reported by PCHR's lawyer following their visits between September and October 2024.

When water was made available, it was often contaminated or non-potable, further endangering detainees' health and well-being. For example, one interviewee told PCHR that he was held in a facility where only 1.5 litres of water was provided for ten detainees (for an unspecified period of time).

The little food provided was consistently described as poor in quality, lacking in nutritional value, and in insufficient quantities, leaving detainees exposed to hunger and malnutrition. Meals and their quantity varied between facilities. Examples of meals provided include:

- Breakfast: a small pack of labneh (strained yogurt) with two loaves of bread
- Lunch: a can of sardines
- Dinner: jam

Or

- One meal a day, consisting of one or two slices of toast and sometimes a cucumber for two detainees to share.

Interviewees explained that the food was rotten, burnt, or otherwise spoiled. One detainee also shared that they were forced to eat less because detainees were rarely allowed to go to the toilet.

In addition to severe deprivation of food, detainees were subjected to violence and humiliating conditions related to access to food and water. Interviewees were forced to eat and/or drink while handcuffed and/or blindfolded. Some detainees were kicked, punched, or beaten with sticks for asking for food and/or water. Other examples include the following:

- Soldiers kicking a detainee so hard in the waist as punishment for going to a tap to drink that he vomited.
- A soldier spitting on the food intended for detainees.
- Soldiers mocking detainees by saying ‘if you behave well, you will get a cucumber to share.’
- Soldiers placing food and snacks in front of detainees which they could not reach while laughing and insulting them, or even eating in front of the hungry detainees.
- Throwing food at detainees ‘like dogs’.

On the 4th day in prison, an Israeli soldier threw food on the floor, which was only labneh [strained yogurt], yelling, ‘Eat off the ground, you Hamas whores, just like animals!’

39-year-old female, arrested from a school in Gaza City, held for a total of 66 days, initially in a mosque and private home, before being transferred to Zikim camp, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.

Some specifically mentioned health consequences as a result of the poor quality and limited access to food and water, such as severe weight loss, vomiting after eating mouldy bread, abdominal pain, upset stomachs, constipation and pain during defecation (see section II.C. on health consequences).

I had no pre-existing medical conditions. I was examined by a doctor after we were given spoiled food, which led to food poisoning, and I was taken to the hospital where I underwent a stomach wash.

39-year-old, male, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 55 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to an unidentified military detention facility, as well as Ofer and the Negev

Access to Hygiene

Access to hygiene in detention was restricted or outright denied. Poor hygiene conditions were caused by overcrowding, limited or no access to water or hygiene products, and dirty communal toilets or no toilet at all. For example, one facility had only one toilet for 500-700 detainees, another held 400 persons with only two mobile toilets. As the weather warmed up, some facilities became dirty and malodorous, with mosquitoes, lice and other insects spreading. Skin and respiratory diseases, as well as scabies, were rampant. Such conditions are still experienced by detainees currently in Israeli custody, as reported by PCHR's lawyer during their recent visits to detainees.

Interviewees reported obstacles to accessing toilets ranging from no access at all to long waiting times. For example:

- One interviewee reported being denied access to the toilet for three days and being beaten when asking to go. He managed to find an empty bottle into which he secretly urinated.
- Another interviewee reported that when they asked to go to the toilet, they were told to urinate on the floor.
- There were many reports of detainees wetting themselves because of denied or delayed access to toilets.

Those who did have access were taken to the toilet and showers while blindfolded and/or handcuffed. Some detainees further reported needing assistance from others to pull their clothes up and down, and were unable to clean themselves as their hands were tied.

The detention site, where we were held, was very dirty with mosquitoes and insects everywhere and there was no potable water, so we had to drink from the toilet taps. Also, birds were defecating on us. We were not allowed to use the toilet whenever we wanted.

57-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 28 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to an unidentified forward operating base in Khan Younis.

And after asking the detainee appointed by the soldiers to assist us in getting us to the toilet, we would wait for our turn for half an hour. We went to the toilet while being handcuffed and blindfolded, noting that no water or toilet paper was available, and the appointed detainee was the only one who helped us take off or put on our clothes.

33-year-old male, engineer, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 50 days in various unknown locations, including a military detention facility in the Negev.⁴²

Similarly, access to showers was severely restricted. One detainee reported being allowed to shower 'once in a while', another only on the 20th day, while a third had access twice a week. Many detainees stated that shower time was limited to just a few minutes, with no privacy, as they were forced to shower alongside four to 19 other detainees, all under the watchful eyes of soldiers.

Once during my detention in the barrack, cleaners and a sewage suction truck belonging to the IOF arrived to clean the bathrooms and pull the sewage water. After they finished, they pumped some of the wastewater they sucked from the bathroom into the barrack yard, soaking our belongings and clothes.

29-year-old, Gaza worker, arrested from a shelter in Israel, held for a total of 26 days, at two different prisons.

Female detainees faced additional challenges. Five of the ten female interviewees reported being held in one or more facilities with limited access to sanitary pads, receiving only one pad a day. An interviewee reported that they had to return the used pads to the staff in a sack to receive a new one and were refused more than one per day. One interviewee had access to toilet paper to which she resorted in the absence of sufficient sanitary pads, but another two interviewees bled through their clothes.

⁴²-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Healthcare

Many interviewees described being held in facilities with restricted, delayed, or denied access to healthcare, enduring physical and verbal abuse during health procedures, and facing punishment for requesting medication or a doctor's visit. When seeking care, interviewees reported being told: 'Do you think you are in a hotel?' or 'I don't care about your health condition, may you all die...our dogs matter more than you.'

Such abuse was inflicted by both soldiers and medical workers. Interviewees testified how soldiers denied them access to health care during their detention. For example, one interviewee was handcuffed tightly upon arrest, despite informing the soldiers that he was diabetic. He was not allowed to see a doctor until 19 days later, when the soldiers had difficulty taking his fingerprints because his hand was so swollen. The doctor ordered an operation, but before it was carried out, he was subjected to Shabh (suspension by the wrists). Another interviewee was only taken to the clinic when he fainted, despite having asked for medical attention beforehand.

Such deprivation also resulted in severe injuries. One of the most harrowing cases involved an interviewee who was denied treatment for a severely swollen foot caused by shackling, only being taken to the hospital when it became so infected that amputation was necessary (see more below). In addition, detainees witnessed sick and disabled fellow prisoners being denied medical care, subjected to both physical and verbal abuse, with some dying as a result of these conditions.

Interviewees reported humiliations, before and while receiving care. For example, a breastfeeding detainee who had been separated from her baby and was suffering from unbearable breast pain spoke of how soldiers would mock her when delivering her daily breast pump.

PCHR's investigation also revealed the active role medical staff played in the ill-treatment, both directly and indirectly. Several interviewees also reported being taken to a doctor on arrival – as a form of initial medical procedure. Although detainees reported both acute (e.g., fractured bones after beatings) and chronic (e.g., diabetes) medical conditions, most were denied treatment or only given Acamol (Paracetamol). Some were not provided care despite symptoms such as vomiting, nausea, and difficulty breathing.

In numerous cases, detainees were examined by medical personnel immediately after enduring torture, often showing signs of severe injury. In one instance, a doctor repeatedly saw a detainee following each torture session, making it virtually impossible that they were unaware of the abuse taking place. Despite detainees reporting their torture to medical personnel, no action was taken to intervene or report the abuse, or even treat the patient.

I constantly had blood in my urine, and I told the doctor, but he only replied, ‘drink water’, noting that the water we drank was contaminated and unpotable.

43-year-old male, arrested in Israel, held for a total of 42 days at a military detention facility and Ofer prison.

I was shown to a doctor who refused to provide any medical care. He said ‘You are the ones who kidnapped our children and carried out terrorist acts inside Israel. We do not provide care to terrorists. I asked for treatment for the scars and wounds on my body, but he refused to provide any treatment.

30-year-old male, Gaza worker, arrested in Israel, held for a total of 160 days, initially at an unknown location before being transferred to Ofer prison.

I was then seen by a doctor, to whom I explained, ‘I do not suffer from chronic illnesses, but I am in pain from the beatings and need pain relief.’ The doctor responded by saying, ‘Let Sinwar treat you’, and did not provide me with any medication.

43-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 71 days, initially held at a military outpost, before being transferred to three unidentified military detention facilities, three police stations, as well as the Negev prison

I asked to see a doctor once and regretted it. The only reason [the soldier] took me to the clinic was because of my screams from the pain in my eyes due to the constant beating. Whenever I mentioned the pain, they would beat me more and more until I had a scar in my eye. They took me to the clinic in a very humiliating manner, and in the end the doctor only gave me a painkiller.

43-year-old male, arrested from a house in Gaza City, held for a total of 37 days, initially in a house before being transferred to various unidentified military detention facilities, as well as Zikim camp and Givati Brigade Outpost.

In some instances, detainees were treated while bound to beds and wearing diapers, unable to use the bathroom, a condition not grounded in any medical necessity. Medical staff delivered treatment while detainees were blindfolded and handcuffed, including one who had his four limbs tied to a bed for ten days. Detainees reported being slapped by doctors during their consultations. One detainee even described undergoing surgery without anaesthesia, a shocking violation of basic medical ethics. Many others spoke of being denied proper care, with medical staff either refusing treatment outright or providing minimal relief – such as pain medication for serious injuries – leaving detainees to suffer needlessly.

In some cases, medical staff were present while soldiers accosted their patient, or even part.

After three days, I was taken to see a doctor. I sat in a yard with sharp gravel on the ground. They performed a medical examination and asked me some medical questions while a soldier hit me with his hands.

31-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 53 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to unidentified military detention facility and the Negev prison.

During my time with the doctor, I was also beaten by the soldiers accompanying me. The beating was humiliating, as they slapped my face multiple times. The doctor only provided me with basic first aid for the wound caused by the dog under my left eye, and the wound kept bleeding until I reached the Negev prison.

22-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to two unidentified military detention facilities, as well as the Negev prison and military camp.

After two hours, we arrived at another unknown location and were placed in a large room. A doctor examined us but also, he [the doctor] beat and insulted me.

48-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 51 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to an unidentified military detention facility and an unidentified facility.

The complicity of medical staff in these acts of torture reveals their active role in enabling abuse rather than providing the care and protection they are ethically bound to offer.

Clothing, Bedding, and Sleeping Conditions

Access to clothing and bedding was extremely poor. Clothing was generally reported to be insufficient, with many describing being exposed to cold temperatures, provided with light clothing, and/or forced to remain in their underwear, sometimes outside in the cold. One interviewee remained in the same tracksuit in which he was arrested for the entirety of his detention, 230 days. Although most detainees received a thin blanket and a light mattress, some were forced to sleep directly on the floor without any protection in some facilities. The mattress was often reported to be very thin (1cm), too small for the size of the person or too dirty.

My hair was infested with lice, and fleas were everywhere. The bedding we slept on was extremely filthy; it was soaked in water in the winter and in the summer, the soldiers ordered us to keep the bedding in a closed room, preventing it from being aired out. This led to lice, scabies, and bed bugs spreading among the detainees, causing severe itching. We were not provided with soap for washing, and even when allowed to bathe, there was not enough time.

59-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 257 days, initially in the checkpoint before being transferred to various unidentified military detention facilities, as well as Ofer prison.

Many reported being exposed to cold temperatures during the winter. This was due to insufficiently warm clothing, sleeping on the floor, or a lack of blankets. For example, one interviewee mentioned that they could not sleep because they were shivering from the cold, while another described how they had to sleep on the floor in packed conditions, sticking together for warmth.

In some cases, a cold environment was deliberately created. Reports included sleeping on the floor without blankets and having cold air conditioning switched on during winter. Others described being made to sleep in an open area in cold weather while stripped to their underwear, handcuffed and blindfolded.

Two interviewees recounted having their blankets occasionally confiscated by soldiers. Such practice was also reported by PCHR's lawyers as a practice still used in various detention facilities at the time of their visits between September and December 2024.

One of the hardest moments in detention was when the soldiers took our blankets away at 04:00 amid the very cold weather and only gave them back at midnight.

36-year-old male, arrested from a checkpoint in Khan Younis, held for a total of 50 days at two different unidentified military detention facilities, including in Khan Younis.⁴³

⁴³The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Religious Practices

Restrictions on religious practice were also common. Some detainees were not allowed to pray at all, while others were not allowed to pray together (gamaah), only allowed to pray sitting down, or denied access to water for purification. Some women were also forced to remove their hijabs during their detention.

Interviewees shared with PCHR that they were also subjected to violence and humiliating conditions during their religious practices. Soldiers mocked and laughed at detainees during prayer time, and even beat worshipers while they were praying. They would insult the prophet Muhammad, mocking religious practices, and punish an entire cell when one person said, 'God is Great' (Allahu Akbar).

They asked if I was a Muslim, and I said yes. One of the soldiers insulted my religion and Hamas and showed me pictures of killed children. I was then asked about specific names, threatening to deprive me of my seven children if I did not collaborate.

51-year-old male, arrested from Jalameh crossing checkpoint, initially held the checkpoint before being transferred to Al-Jalameh detention centre, a military detention facility in Ofer and an unidentified military detention facility.

All the time they were deliberately making noise and insulting our Prophet Mohamed. They would suddenly come and hit our heads, kick us with their feet, and beat us.

26-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 50 days, initially in an unidentified military detention facility before being transferred to Camp Anatot, Damon Prison and Beersheba Prison.

In at least two places of detention, detainees were punished for praying. In one case, detainees were punished with forced stress positions for praying, and in another they were punished with suspension (Shabh) for performing funeral prayers when their fellow detainee died.

Interviewees who were detained during Ramadan reported not being given food at sunset (iftar) to break their fast, and being given only ten minutes to eat the pre-fasting meal (sohour).

When I entered detention, I weighed 84 kilograms, but by the time I left, I weighed only 60 kilograms. Then, Ramadan came. The soldiers brought us Iftar (the fast-breaking meal) an hour after sunset and Suhour (the pre-fasting meal) just ten minutes before dawn, often leaving us without enough time to eat.

43-year-old male, arrested in Israel, held for a total of 42 days at a military detention facility and Ofer prison.

Finally, one detainee also reported having an alcoholic beverage poured on his head considered a form of defilement.

B. Methods of Ill-Treatment

The detention of Palestinians from Gaza by Israel was characterised by a cycle of repeated interrogations from the moment of arrest throughout their detention, during which interviewees endured various forms of ill-treatment. Following these interrogations, the ill-treatment did not cease; instead, it continued and mirrored the same patterns across all facilities.

An analysis of the overall patterns of physical and psychological ill-treatment during interrogations and detention reveals the most frequently reported methods, outlined below. It is important to note that the following forms of ill-treatment were almost always combined and rarely imposed individually. For example, harsh handcuffing, blindfolding and cursing were often present regardless of which other form of ill-treatment was inflicted.

i. Interrogation as the Crest of Ill-treatment

After completing the interrogation, I was sent back to the barracks again, and a week later I was interrogated again; the interrogation was the same as the first interrogation in terms of questions, the number of days and the severity of the torture, and the aim of the interrogation was to torture and humiliate and not to obtain information, because they know that I do not work with the resistance and have nothing to do with it, and this applies to all the prisoners whose voices I could hear as they were tortured and humiliated.

43-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 71 days, initially held at a military outpost, before being transferred to three unidentified military detention facilities, three police stations, as well as the Negev prison.

During interrogation, the largest variety and most intense and brutal forms of ill-treatment were inflicted. All interviewees reported being interrogated by Israeli soldiers or intelligence officers at least once, with some facing it daily. Female interviewees also reported being interrogated by male soldiers, adding another layer of humiliation and distress. The questioning often focused on similar topics, including whether they or their family members were affiliated with Hamas or other armed groups, their activities on 7 October 2023, the location of tunnels and hostages, or whether they had any connections to individuals involved in the events of that day. Interviewees were accused of belonging to Palestinian resistance groups and of lying if they denied it.

Interrogations could last from 15 minutes up to four days with breaks and were frequently conducted while detainees were blindfolded and/or handcuffed, or even naked and sometimes in stress positions (e.g., standing, kneeling, sitting on the floor while being stepped on, forced to sit in a very small chair or with hands and/or feet tied to a chair).

They handcuffed and blindfolded me so I could not see anything and then took me to another house...belonging to [name redacted], where the IOF made me remove my underwear, and I was naked. An Israeli officer, who identified himself as captain [name redacted], interrogated me. During the interrogation, I was severely and violently kicked and beaten with an iron rod and rifle butts on my head, feet, hands, and all over my body. The soldiers also inserted their fingers in my ears. That was a very painful torture method and hurt a lot. They tied my hands behind my back and raised them up and kicked me very hard on both sides of my waist until I felt like I could not breathe.

57-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 28 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to an unidentified forward operating base in Khan Younis.

At approximately 08:00, I was taken for interrogation and returned to prison at 20:00. A male officer and a female soldier were interrogating me [...]. My right hand was tied to my right leg with steel cuffs. [...] He then asked me where I was on 7 October, and if I knew the whereabouts of the Israeli hostages or any of the persons who broke through Israel's borders on 7 October. The officer also asked me if any of my relatives or brothers crossed into Israel that day, but I kept telling him that I did not know. When the female soldier did not like my answer, she would hit my head hard on the table, while the officer was telling me that the female soldier's shoes were better than me. They insulted me a lot with the worst words. Once, the female soldier took off my shoe and slapped me with it while laughing at me.

24-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 47 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to Camp Anatot, Damon Prison and an unidentified military detention facility.⁴⁴

While the patterns of ill-treatment outlined below, such as threats, insults, humiliation, beatings and other forms of physical violence(see Section II.B.ii.), were commonly inflicted on detainees, some methods were reported exclusively during interrogations. They included waterboarding, electrocution, having cigarettes extinguished on their skin, being forced to walk on shattered glass, and having sand, dirt, or mud shoved into their mouths. Detainees were also blackmailed, and falsely told that their family members, including children, had been killed. In some cases, interviewees felt compelled to confess to crimes they did not commit, simply to end the brutal mistreatment.

⁴⁴-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

I was then escorted to a room, where they played loud music and turned fans and air conditioning on the cool mode, forcing us to kneel on a gravel floor for hours. I was then taken to another room where there was an interrogator who forced me to sit on a very small chair while tying my hands to my legs. I was interrogated for 12 consecutive hours and more than one interrogator mocked and insulted me all through the interrogation. I was then taken back to the music room for four hours and then put with other detainees on a bus where I was severely beaten and insulted, and they drove us back to the barrack.

34-year-old male, arrested from a school shelter, held for a total of 32 days in two unknown locations, including a military detention facility.

PCHR also documented several instances of forced medication before and especially during interrogation. One interviewee reported involuntary medication by a military investigator causing him to feel ‘like he was flying’ and being not fully aware. He was put in a diaper and a jumpsuit and placed in a bed with an iron ring around the head and steel cuffs by the feet that were used to sporadically electrocute him. He was then questioned by the interrogator about 7 October and electrocuted when the interrogator did not like his answer. Another interviewee who was forced to perform a DNA test, also recounted witnessing male detainees drugged and lying in a big room as they were questioned and yelled at if they closed their eyes.

We arrived at a military site that I did not recognize [...] I appeared before a military investigator from the Golani brigade, who forced me to take a pill presumably with hallucinatory effects with a very small amount of water and when I asked for more water, the investigator refused. The soldiers then put me in a diaper and a kaki jumpsuit, and I laid on the bed after they placed an iron ring around my head and steel cuffs at my feet, both of which were used to sporadically electrocute me in the head and feet. The investigator began to say specific words waiting for my answer like ‘weapon-Hamas-hostages-tunnels-7 October’ and when I did not answer or the investigator did not like my answer, he shocked me. Honestly, I felt very weird like I was flying in the sky and not fully aware to be able to respond to the questions. I remained like this for days during which I was forced to take the hallucinatory pills and was administered electric shocks, imagining myself in our house and calling my family. They offered me neither food nor water, and I was still wearing a diaper not wanting to go to the toilet.

[...]

⁴⁵-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

⁴⁶-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

They took me to another room, where I heard gunshots and soldiers pretending to escape, alleging that members of Hamas had taken over the place. They asked me about the brigade I belong to, where I live, and the mosque near me. I told them I am a paramedic and do not belong to Hamas or Al-Qassam (it turned out that they were ‘birds’ who are deployed among detainees to deceive them and obtain confessions from them) [...] The soldiers tied my feet with a chain and pulled me to the ceiling. My head was dangling down, and they submerged my head into a bucket of water. I was extremely thirsty, so I drank a large amount of water. They pressed my head down in the water for some time and shackled my hands and feet, so I barely touched the ground [...] for several hours. After taking me down [...] the investigator drew an ambulance on the wall and ordered me to drive it and bring Sinwar, the Hamas Leader. I told him there was no fuel in the ambulance, so he gave me an electric shock. I pretended to be driving the ambulance and heading to Tal al-Hawa neighbourhood in Gaza City. After I returned, I told him that Sinwar had gone to Egypt. The investigator laughed and said that he would go to Al-Nasr neighbourhood in Gaza City and bring Sinwar. A female soldier then came in, gave me a piece of chocolate, and took me back to the cage.

35-year-old male, paramedic, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 38 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities and prisons.⁴⁵

In one instance, an interviewee reported being subjected to a mock execution. In others, detainees were placed in pits in the ground and told that they would be buried alive by the bulldozers, and one reported having gasoline poured on him while handcuffed and blindfolded.

Later, he ordered me to go behind a sand berm and forced me to strip fully naked. He then ordered me to wear my clothes again and approached me to tie my hands behind my back with a plastic zip tie, blindfolded me, and led me to another sand berm, where there were two soldiers. One of them interrogated me for a few minutes about where I was on 7 October, and whether I am affiliated with Hamas or any Palestinian faction, but I said no. He then told the soldier: ‘Take him and shoot him’, so he took me and threw me on the ground, pulling his trigger and firing 6-7 bullets above my head. I was literally shaking in fear and begging the soldier to kill me.

33-year-old male, engineer, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 50 days in various unknown locations, including a military detention facility in the Negev.⁴⁶

⁴⁵-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

⁴⁶-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).



At Camp Anatot and Damon Prison, where female Palestinians were held, some interviewees reported being subjected to searches before and/or after each interrogation session, including humiliating strip-searches conducted in the presence of male soldiers.

Between interrogation sessions, some interviewees endured further ill-treatment, including being suspended, forced to kneel, or made to sit on a gravel floor for hours. They also experienced sensory abuse, such as prolonged exposure to loud music and extreme temperatures – being placed in front of air conditioning units or fans – for extended periods before being returned to the interrogation room.

These conditions significantly intensified their psychological and physical distress, exacerbating the overall impact of the interrogation.

They then called my name and took me to the interrogation area, known as the “DISCO”: I was stripped of my clothes and brought into a 4x4 room with a pebble floor and a cypress tree in the middle. A huge speaker blasted loud music for four consecutive days, causing bleeding in my left ear.

25-year-old male, arrested on the street in Gaza, held for a total of 28 days in an unknown location.

ii. Most Common Methods of Ill-treatment

Suspension and ‘Shabh’

Suspension was widely used during detention, particularly during and between interrogation. A form of suspension commonly reported by interviewees is Shabh where the person’s full weight is suspended by his tied hands. Interviewees reported being repeatedly suspended for several hours and this being repeated several days at a time.

The soldiers [...] hung me in the Shabh position with the sun above my head. Shabh is a position whereby a person is hung from the ceiling and his toes are lifted off the ground. There were other detainees next to me in Shabh position as well, and I could identify one of them as my relative [name redacted]. I was left hanging in this position for six hours.

42-year-old male, journalist, arrested from a private home in Beit Lahia, held for a total of 43 days, initially on the street, before being transferred to unknown locations, including a military detention facility in Zikim.⁴⁷

I was shackled in the position known as Shabh in Arabic at an IOF military site. They hung me from my hands, which were tied to a barbed-wire fence, and my feet did not touch the ground. The pain was unbearable pains, especially since I weigh 136 kilograms, and all the weight rested on my wrists. I remained in that painful position until dawn and it was raining. They put me down and the soldiers poured water on my face. I saw blood on my wrists and then they tightened the handcuffs behind my back.

27-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 55 days, in various unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel, including in the Negev.

We arrived at an unknown place, but I could smell blood in the area. They tied our hands behind our back and hung us on hooks in the wall like those used to hang animals and cows after being slaughtered.

19-year-old male, arrested from a university in Gaza City, held for a total of 77 days, in various unidentified military detention facilities, including in Hebron, and Al-Aizariya/Bethani Camp in Jerusalem.

Shabh was also used as a form of punishment for complaining, failing to comply with orders, or attempting to move.

⁴⁷-The full interview is available on PCHR’s website [here](#).

I spent half of my detention period in the Shabh position but not in the usual way. I was forced to stand on my feet with my hands tied behind my back to a barbed-wire square fence, not feeling my hands and feet with all heaviness of my body mainly centred in my hands and feet. Whenever I tried to move, I felt unbearable pain.

[...]

Throughout my 40-day detention [at Zikim camp], I was blindfolded with my hands and feet tied and forced to kneel. I was also subjected to Shabh if I spoke or moved. Moreover, if you did not respond to a question they asked, you would be forced into Shabh position for long hours.

43-year-old male, arrested from a house in Gaza City, held for a total of 37 days, initially in a house before being transferred to various unidentified military detention facilities, as well as Zikim camp and Givati Brigade Outpost.

We were punished by being subjected to Shabh for five hours, forcing us to stand with our hands tied to barbed wires above us. Whenever we tried to put our hands down, we were beaten with a stick that looked like a metal skewer, and sometimes some young men were brutally beaten, leading to bonefractures.

36-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Beit Lahia, held for a total of 38 days in an unidentified military detention facility.

Forced stress positions

Forced stress positions are one of the main methods of ill-treatment reported during arrest, transfer, and detention. In military facilities, detainees endured long hours, and in many cases entire days in agonising positions – sitting, standing, or kneeling, unable to speak or move. The most commonly reported position was kneeling, often combined with blindfolding and tied hands. Stress positions were often combined with insults, threats, and sometimes beating. Failure to comply resulted in verbal abuse and further physical ill-treatment.

Reported duration ranged from ten minutes to 25 days. Most stated that they were forced to kneel ‘all day’, ‘all night’, ‘long hours’; or ‘most of the time’.

For 25 consecutive days, we were forced to stay in the kneeling position from approximately 04:00 to 23:00 and they counted us several times.

42-year-old male, journalist, arrested from a private home in Beit Lahia, held for a total of 43 days, initially on the street, before being transferred to unknown locations, including a military detention facility in Zikim.⁴⁸

They forced us to kneel and whoever moved or fell would be subjected to Shabh for four hours, a common torture technique where your hands and feet are tied together behind your back while you are hung until it hurts, and your hands start to bleed.

42-year-old male, construction worker, arrested from UNWRA school in Gaza City - Jabalia, held for a total of 24 days, initially in Zikim military base before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities in Erez and Beersheba.⁴⁹

During transfer, interviewees were often ordered to keep their heads down. Transfers could last several hours.

I was taken to Beersheba prison. All the way from ‘Anatot to Beersheba, I was insulted, such as ‘you donkey whore,’ and being hit constantly on my head and not allowed to rest my back on the seat and forcing me to keep my head down.

26-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 50 days, initially in an unidentified military detention facility before being transferred to Camp Anatot, Damon Prison and Beersheba Prison.

Tied hands and feet and blindfolding



Interviewees, including children, were subjected to prolonged mechanical restraint using handcuffs and/or foot cuffing in combination with blindfolding. This occurred from the moment of arrest and continued throughout transfer and detention. While cuffing and blindfolding were common during arrests and in military facilities, it appeared less prevalent in prison.

⁴⁸-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

⁴⁹-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Prolonged restraint led to degrading conditions where detainees were forced to sleep, eat, and use the toilet while handcuffed and blindfolded.

Throughout the 29 days in detention, we were blindfolded and handcuffed in front for 24 hours and even while sleeping. [...] We were only allowed to go to the toilet twice a day while being handcuffed and blindfolded.

Male taxi driver, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 32 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities.

The tight handcuffing resulted in pain and injuries on many occasions.

One night, I woke up screaming due to the severe pain in my right hand. The jailer came and inspected my hand and loosened the handcuffs around my wrists. He told me that he would take me to the doctor in the morning because my hand was swollen and black. In the morning, I asked to meet the doctor who made rounds in the section. I raised my hand and when the doctor saw it, he immediately took me to a section of the military site. I think it was a hospital, where I was prepared to undergo surgery. I underwent surgery to ensure that the blood flowed to the hand. After that, I stayed in the hospital for 10 days; during which, my limbs were tied to the bed. I was then taken back to the section and stayed there for about four or five days.

60-year-old male, paramedic, arrested from Al-Ahli Arab Hospital, held for a total of 17 days, in an unidentified military detention facility.

One detainee's foot had to be amputated due to the tight cuffs and lack of medical assistance.

The foot cuffs were so tight that my left foot became infected, and I was screaming from the severity of the pain and could not even sleep at all. I asked for help and begged them to bring me a doctor or painkiller, but they told me that my foot was fine. Every time I screamed in pain, they would unleash dogs, terrifying us and accusing me of disturbing the security. [...] My feet swelled because I was not given proper medical care despite asking for it over 100 times. Pus was coming out of my feet, and it was so bad that it filled two liters because of the inflammation.

When they finally realized how serious my condition was, they put me in a solitary confinement cell, and then took me to the hospital after 20 days of brutal beatings and torture. I was barely conscious as they dragged me to the hospital with my hands and feet tied. The doctor performed surgical debridement of my foot as I saw every bone in my leg because of the torture I was subjected to, then they told me that my foot was fine, and I was discharged. Three days later, [...] they suddenly rushed me into surgery, and when I woke up two hours later, my foot was already amputated.

42-year-old, male taxi driver, arrested from a school in Khan Younis, held for a total of 52 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to an unknown facility and an unidentified military detention facility.

Some interviewees also reported having their feet tied, especially during transport where their feet were tied to other detainees' feet.

The soldiers then tied my hands with plastic-zip ties in front and tied my legs with steel cuffs to another detainee's leg. The cuffs were very tight and painful, as if my leg would be cut off.

24-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 47 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to Camp Anatot, Damon Prison and an unidentified military detention facility.⁵⁰

Interviewees also described how their blindfold was tightly applied despite requests for it to be loosened.

I was feeling very cold and asked the soldier to remove the blindfold, but he tightened it more and more, which made my eyelashes get into my eyes, thinking I was going blind. I screamed and cried, and my eyes were bleeding due to the severe pain. Whenever my father-in-law asked them to loosen the fold, they would severely beat me and him and tighten the blindfolds even more.

24-year-old, female, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 51 days, in a warehouse, private home, pit in the ground, several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.

Blindfolding led to disorientation, as the interviewees did not know where they were being held or where they were being taken. These restraints were often used in combination with other forms of ill-treatment, such as beatings, forced stress positions, and verbal abuse.

⁵⁰-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Beatings and Other Physical Assaults, Including Kicking and dragging

The use of beatings was another recurrent method of ill-treatment reported by all interviewees, from the moment of arrest, during transfer, and throughout detention in both military facilities and prisons. Children were not exempt from beatings. Beatings were reported to most parts of the body, including the genitals. Physical violence consisted of slaps, punches, kicks, being stepped or walked on, being pushed to the ground, thrown out of vehicles or being lifted off the ground and then thrown down repeatedly, having fingers forced repeatedly into the ears, hitting both ears (telephono), being dragged across the ground or pulled from the shoulders, and blows with objects such as rifle's butt, batons, chains, sticks, iron rods, brass knuckles, steel, shoes, or other objects. Some interviewees reported having their head slammed into a wall or a table. Persons with injuries were not spared beating, including the previously cited interviewee who had his leg amputated.

The soldiers then ordered me to take off all my clothes except for my underwear. They led me with other detainees about 100 meters away, where we were severely beaten with their guns' butts on our backs and repeatedly slapped in our faces, not to mention the continuous insults. Afterwards, the soldiers ordered me to take off my underwear and gave me a light white overall to wear. I was then handcuffed, blindfolded, and detained with others amid constant beating.

33-year-old male, arrested from a checkpoint in Khan Younis, held for a total of 64 days in two different unidentified military detention facilities, including in Jerusalem.

The soldiers punched us for half an hour, and then a vehicle arrived, I think it was a semi-transport vehicle, where we were loaded and ordered to lie on our stomach to have our feet cuffed. My suffering began when the soldiers started beating me with a baton continuously for 40 minutes and when the vehicle stopped, and we were forced to get down. I heard soldiers speaking broken Arabic and insulting us with the most offensive words such as 'You son of a bitch.'

21-year-old male, arrested from a school in Gaza City, held for a total of 60 days, initially in a pit in the ground and a building before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities.

Once we arrived in [an unidentified military detention facilities in Israel], we were beaten all over our body, especially in the sensitive areas. We entered the wards that looked like a large garage or barrack. I stayed there for 40 days suffering from intense pain. I fainted once and hit my head on the floor. When I woke up, I felt like I was dying from pain, especially from the shortness of breath I had because of the broken platinum in my hand.

39-year-old male, paramedic, arrested from Kamal Adwan Hospital, held for a total of 42 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel. He had a platinum nail in his hand from a previous surgery.

Interviewees reported being kicked with boots on the body, head, and face, as well as being stepped on. Some also reported being pushed, dragged, or pulled by the neck or hair, and thrown to the ground or in and out of transfer vehicles. One interviewee reported being cut and mutilated by soldiers.

After the SUV stopped, the soldiers shoved me along with the other detainees out of the vehicle and threw us onto the ground. Afterwards, the soldiers lifted me about one hundred centimetres from the ground and then threw me again. They repeated this move four times and then severely kicked me and the other detainees and beat us with sticks and riffles. They also insulted me and accused me of being from Hamas' elite force, but I could not reply due to the severe beating, which continued for about an hour and a half. They then dragged me all the way on a pebble road, scraping the skin off my back, shoulders, legs, and face, so I could not move.

Gaza worker, arrested from a private home in Israel, held for a total of 156 days, initially in a Police Station in Israel and an open area before being transferred to various unidentified military detention facilities and Ofer prison.

[They] kicked us while wearing their military boots and with riffles' butts. They also scarred my face with a sharp object (deep wounds and extensive scars were seen on his face, particularly under his eyes) and made a series of cuts on my hands (wounds on all of his fingers and nails). Using a knife, they tried to cut my ear and removed part of it. I was completely mutilated. They also severely stepped with their boots on my eyes until they were filled with blood out of the intense beating, making me unable to see as blood was covering my face too.

22-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for one day in a private home and a tank.

Some interviewees reported being tied to a vehicle and then dragged.

They tied me to the truck from the outside with a plastic tie from my right hand and drove for about 7 minutes, then a soldier came and cut the tie, I was bleeding from my head as a result of it hitting the truck while it was moving, which caused me to fall to the ground, the soldier opened my eyes so I could talk to the officer.

25-year-old male, arrested on the street in Gaza, held for a total of 28 days in an unknown location.



Strip Searches and Other Body Searches

Strip and body searches were a constant source of humiliation and degradation, carried out both during initial arrest and throughout detention, in military facilities and prisons alike. Both men and women were subjected to these invasive searches, often forced to strip down to their underwear or, in some cases, completely naked. The body searches, conducted without reason or justification, were an enduring part of their torment. These degrading searches occurred frequently – sometimes every few hours – even when the detainee had not moved from their spot. To add to the humiliation, they were often performed in front of others and soldiers of all genders, stripping them not only of their clothing but of their dignity.

I was completely naked and when I looked up, I saw from under the blindfold four masked persons coming towards me. They searched me with their hands though I was completely naked.

19-year-old male, cook, arrested from a university in Gaza City, held for a total of 77 days, in various unidentified military detention facilities, including in Hebron, and Al-Aizariya/Bethani Camp in Jerusalem.

Female interviewees also reported being subjected to forced nudity meant to degrade and humiliate them in a manner that was sexualised (for more details see below “Sexual violence”).

The searches were often accompanied by other forms of ill-treatment.

[T]he female soldiers were very strong and tough. They pulled us from our hair once we entered since we were stripped of our hijab. They dragged us on the floor like we were dogs. Afterwards, they strip-searched us. Each part of our body was thoroughly searched while fully naked. Then, they gave us the prison uniforms... and immediately led us to interrogation. [After the interrogation], the warden pulled me hard by my hair out of the room, took my clothes off again in the room, strip searched me, and gave me underwear ordering me to take a shower. They did not give me any clothes to wear, but later female detainees from the West Bank gave me pyjamas and headscarf to wear.

26-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 50 days, initially in an unidentified military detention facility before being transferred to Camp Anatot, Damon Prison and Beersheba Prison.

A soldier ordered a female soldier to search me. She took me somewhere beside the mosque and strip-searched me, forcing me to take all my clothes off while she was pointing her weapon at me [...]. I had a bag with my family members' phones and some personal belongings, but it was confiscated.

39-year-old female, arrested from a school in Gaza City, held for a total of 66 days, initially in a mosque and private home, before being transferred to Zikim camp, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.

Forced Nudity

Forced partial or full nudity was a common form of ill-treatment during arrest, transfer, and in military facilities, mainly targeting men and boys. Forced nudity was combined with blindfolding and handcuffing. Men were kept in their underwear for prolonged periods, including during transport. Some reported being photographed in this state. Most were given white overalls to wear (some without underwear) while others remained completely naked or in their underwear for up to six hours. In two cases, female interviewees reported being subjected to forced nudity.

During their arrest, male interviewees were commonly forced to strip to their underwear or to be completely naked, sometimes in front of family members and strangers. Female interviewees reported witnessing male arrestees being forced to undress.

The street was crowded with civilians, including men, women, children, and elderly, ordered by the soldiers to raise their hands. They ordered men aged 15-60 years to strip to their underwear, and women, children, and the elderly to walk on the main street, known as the Market Street in Beit Lahia housing Project, and head to Kamal Adwan Hospital.

43-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Beit Lahia, held in various unidentified military detention facilities, including in the Negev and Jerusalem.

[At Al-Ahli hospital], the soldiers ordered us to drop all our belongings and take our clothes off, except the underwear. I obeyed the orders by taking all my clothes off and throwing my belongings on the ground [...]. Afterwards, the soldiers ordered us to divide into groups of five, and for each group to step forward separately. They took pictures of me and others with a camera, forced us to wear a white gown, blindfolded us, and tied our hands so tightly that it hurt me severely.

32-year-old male, translator, arrested from Al-Ahli Arab Hospital, held for a total of 45 days, initially in an open area before being transferred to several unidentified military detention facilities, including in the Negev.

When I arrived at the checkpoint with four other guys, the IOF stopped one of my neighbours, a member of the [name redacted] family, who was walking ahead of me. The soldiers then ordered him to get closer and ordered me to approach them behind the sand barrier. They detained me and 500 other citizens and confined us in Abu Trika Cafe after forcing us to take off all of our clothing, including our underwear. I cannot recall how long it took, but after some time they gave us slender white coats.

19-year-old male, barber, arrested from a private home in Khan Younis, held for a total of 7 days, initially in a former Palestinian Police Centre before being transferred to Nahal Oz Camp.

During detention, forced partial or full nudity in front of co-detainees or people of a different gender was reported. In some cases, interviewees reported being ordered to take off their underwear and remain fully naked. This applied to children as well as adults. Interviewees reported receiving daily orders for all detainees in the cell to lower their pants to their knees revealing their genitals to soldiers.

From the first day, they ordered us to remove our clothes, and we were left in our underwear and shorts [...] The day before we were released, they brought us oversized grey pyjamas and asked us to remove the underwear and shorts we had been wearing throughout the entire time. We were left completely naked for about 10 minutes until they gave us pyjamas and instructed us to put them on.

15-year-old boy detained with his 11-year-old brother and cousins aged 12-15, arrested from a private home, held for a total of 58 days, in a pit in the ground and a house.

The next day, they took us on foot to another house, where they held all detainees from the area, and they were all naked only in their underwear. I was the only woman, and the soldiers put me in front of the men and were beating me all the time.

24-year-old female, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 51 days in a warehouse, private home, pit in the ground, several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.

The IOF forced me to take off my underwear and I remained naked. I felt so angry but helpless and weak because I could not do anything. This made me feel so bad. An Israeli officer, who identified himself as captain [name redacted], interrogated me. In the evening, they tied my feet and hands and left me on the house stairs [...] The next morning, on 15 May 2024, I remained naked in the same house all day while being blindfolded, and my hands and feet tied, so I could not move at all. They broke window glass on the stairs and forced me to walk over it. On the third day, they forced me out of the house and put me in a military vehicle while still naked and blindfolded.

57-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 28 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to an unidentified forward operating base in Khan Younis.

Sexual Violence

Several interviewees reported being subjected to sexual violence, including verbal abuse, forced strip-searches, public nudity, sexual harassment, sexual assault, as well as rape and threats of rape. The IOF also involved dogs in acts of sexual violence.

As mentioned above, PCHR finds that sexual violence was under-reported due to the victims' reluctance to disclose such sensitive information, the circumstances of the interview, and a lack of training in documenting such cases – a task PCHR had not previously undertaken on this scale. Despite these challenges, there were clear cases of sexual violence, though in some instances, the evidence was less conclusive, leading to varying levels of certainty in the documentation.

The most frequent form of sexual violence reported was verbal abuse. Detainees were relentlessly subjected to sexually explicit insults and degrading comments. Palestinian women, in particular, endured the humiliation of being called “whores” or “sluts” by Israeli soldiers – creating an environment filled with fear and a profound loss of dignity.

They had set up a base in a bombed house opposite Al-Taqwa Mosque. The interrogation began with questions about my name, age, and family. He then asked, ‘Are you Hamas? Is your husband affiliated with Hamas or any of your daughters or sons?’ He continued accusing me of being a member of Hamas Elite Forces and insulted me by saying ‘bitch’ and ‘whore’, threatening to detain me for five years and take me to Israel.

40-year-old female, arrested from a school in Gaza City, initially held in a mosque and private home before being transferred to Zikim camp, Camp Anatot, Damon Prison and back to Camp Anatot.

Male detainees were also subjected to insults referring to family members and their genitals. For example, one detainee was forced to say that his mother was a whore and that he would let the soldier commit adultery with his sister.

As previously mentioned, strip-searches and forced nudity were carried out on a vast scale against detainees, but in some cases, these acts were not just about control – they were sexually charged and deeply degrading. One woman recalled the agony of being forcibly stripped of her hijab, only to be thrown into the corner of an armoured vehicle. Men, reduced to their underwear, were thrown on top of her. The soldiers stood by, laughing and taking photos of the scene, while the woman and the men, humiliated and overwhelmed with shame, cried. Another woman shared her harrowing testimony of being forced to undress by female soldiers, who then callously stepped on her body, laughing and speaking in Hebrew.

In another instance, a female detainee reported undergoing a strip search in front of female soldiers who bit their lips, and male soldiers who stared at them. This deliberate, sexually charged behaviour transformed the strip searches into an act of sexual violence, objectifying and sexualizing detainees' bodies for the soldiers' gratification.

Before each interrogation, which lasted eight hours, while strip-searching us and having our legs tied, the female soldiers were biting their lips implying sexual intent and the male soldiers were staring at us. They were laughing at us, insulting us with genital-related swear words and making sexually suggestive movements. When they finished the interrogation, they would search us again.

39-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 42 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to an open area, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.⁵¹

Sexual harassment was also documented, with detainees subjected to degrading and intrusive questions about their virginity and marital status, or forced to endure lewd gestures with explicit sexual overtones. One incident involved a female detainee who was searched and partially undressed in front of male soldiers, only to then be harassed by them.

The male soldiers took me to one of the rooms and ordered me to take off my clothes, but I refused, so they brought three female soldiers who searched me and uncovered my stomach. One of the soldiers asked me about the location of tunnels and 'saboteurs' in the area. I told him that I did not know anything, so he threatened me saying, 'you will pay the price'. He then asked me why I was not married yet and I answered, 'it is God's will.' He laughed and asked if I was still a virgin, and he would know this through the soldiers. I was being interrogated while surrounded by soldiers and at gunpoint. I was very scared and trembling but tried so hard to hide my fear and look brave because I knew that my cries and tears would not help.

[...]

They escorted us to an empty building, where they severely beat up the men while they tried to touch the sensitive areas of my body, and I tried to move to avoid their touching.

29-year-old female, arrested from a private home in North Gaza, held for a total of 50 days, in Zikim camp, an unidentified military detention facility and Damon Prison.

⁵¹- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Several reported incidents of sexual assault, including groping of breasts and reproductive organs. Several male detainees reported being groped by Israeli soldiers, sometimes of a different gender while a couple reported that the soldiers squeezed their genitals tightly causing great pain. In one incident, female detainee was forced to bend over while male soldiers instructed female soldiers to throw themselves at them.

I told the interrogator that on 7 October I was at the hospital. He commented that all you Gazan women are liars and hypocrites, and the Israeli women's shoes are better than you. He insulted me with the worst words that I cannot repeat. They were always sexually harassing the female detainees by touching their necks and breasts and removing our hijabs [...]. In one of the torture methods during the interrogation, the soldiers forced me to bend, and they made the female soldiers throw themselves on me, choosing the fattest.

39-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 42 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to an open area, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.⁵²

One of [the soldiers] grabbed me by my testicles and squeezed them hard, saying in Arabic, 'Thank God you have sons' He continued to squeeze my testicles hard for about two minutes. I fainted and woke up to a blow from his Bostar (military boots) on my buttocks, saying, 'Get up, stop acting': He made me stand up and ordered me to put on the tracksuit within a minute, and started counting to ten, but I could not, so he punched me in the stomach and kicked me with his feet [...] and told me he'll count again, but he counted slowly, so I put on the clothes.

33-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 129 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to a pit in the hole and two unidentified military detention facilities.

In another incident, a male detainee reported being ordered to strip naked, being forcefully grabbed by his genitals and then being lifted by the genitals until he fainted from the pain.

[While detained in an unidentified military detention facility in the Negev], I was heading to drink from a tap until one of the soldiers saw me and kicked me so hard with his foot on my waist that it made me vomit. He then dragged me to a room surrounded by barbed wire, ordered me to strip naked, grabbed my genitals and lifted me up, so I fainted. I woke up from the severe beating I had been subjected to while I was unconscious, and this was repeated three or four times, after which, he ordered me to put on my clothes while the beating continued. I have never been as broken and humiliated in my life as that time.

33-year-old male, engineer, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 50 days in various unknown locations, including a military detention facility in the Negev.⁵³

⁵²-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

⁵³-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Another man was forced to squat and was beaten, while naked and being threatened with rape.

They [soldiers] took us out and led us into a room after they untied my handcuffs, and I remained blindfold. The soldiers asked us to sing and then howl while they curse and swear at us: ‘Son of sharmouta (prostitute), son of a bitch, we will rape all of you.’ Then they ordered us to take off all our clothes, completely naked, and ordered us to turn to the wall, raise my hands up, and go up and down. I felt inferior, as if someone were raping me. And the soldiers mocked us. I could see they were taking videos of us. This was not enough. They also assaulted me with an iron stick beating and punching with their feet and punching my stomach.

33-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 129 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to a pit in the hole and two unidentified military detention facilities.

In addition to the sexual assaults, PCHR documented incidents of rape or attempted rape. One interviewee summarised the sexual abuse he faced that culminated in a soldier raping or attempting to rape him with a baton.

There were also instances of groping and physical assault on my genitals. On the day of my arrest, I was stripped of all my clothes except for my boxers at the Netzarim checkpoint, in front of dozens of young men and Israeli soldiers. The feeling of humiliation and degradation was indescribable. After that, inside the prison, we were ordered daily by the new duty officers to lower our pants to our knees. On one occasion, when I was asked to lower my pants and boxers, one of the soldiers attempted to insert a stick into my rectum, causing me significant injury and resulting in a wound in that area.

30-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 104 days, initially at a private home and a military outpost inside Gaza before being transferred to Ofer prison.

In another incident, an interviewee witnessed the rape on an elderly man during a transfer.

While we were inside the tank, the soldiers beat an elderly man. I knew that from his voice, as he was screaming. The soldiers severely beat him on his head and all over his body and ordered him to have sex with them inside the tank. One of the soldiers, who was speaking Arabic fluently, told him: ‘I want you to suck my dick’, and they forced him to do that. I knew that from the sound I heard. The elderly man tried to prevent them, but in vain as I heard his gargling sound while the soldier was beating him and saying: ‘suck my dick or I will kill you.’

52-year-old male, businessman, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 28 days, initially in a private home and an open area before being transferred to an unidentified military detention facility.

The IOF also often threatened detainees with rape or other forms of sexual violence. Several detainees, including a minor, reported being threatened with rape. This was used both as a direct threat against them and their families.

During our trip to the unknown, the soldier kept telling us, ‘You are all finished. We will do to you the same Hamas did to our women. Hamas raped our women, and we will let the soldiers rape you.’ All the way, he showered me with the most offensive words in Arabic, such as calling me ‘whore and bitch’ and many other honour-related insults.

26-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 50 days, initially in an unidentified military detention facility before being transferred to Camp Anatot, Damon Prison and Beersheba Prison.

At 19:00 on the tenth day of detention, soldiers came with their large dogs and ordered us to sleep on our stomachs and place our hands on our heads, and warned us that whoever moves would get raped.

16-year-old male, student, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 22 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities.⁵⁴

A male detainee was also told he would be raped if his responses during interrogation were deemed unsatisfactory.

I stayed there for one day and was then taken for interrogation that lasted for 5 hours. They asked me the same questions amid constant insults, mocking and threatening to kill my children and rape me if I did not respond to them.

34-year-old male, arrested from a school shelter, held for a total of 32 days in two unknown locations, including a military detention facility.

Finally, the IOF used dogs to carry out acts of sexual violence. For example, an interviewee reported witnessing a fellow detainee getting raped by a dog while the other detainees had their blindfolds removed to witness the rape.

Later, I was called out along with two other detainees (whom I did not know) and we were taken to a concrete yard. They removed our blindfolds and took one detainee, stripped him naked and brought a police dog. The dog raped the detainee thoroughly and had sexual intercourse with him, he was screaming loudly. This torture continued for two minutes. Then they took me and the other detainees to a new barracks and the sound of the screams of the man who had been raped disappeared.

25-year-old male, arrested on the street in Gaza, held for a total of 28 days in an unknown location.

⁵⁴The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

In another incident, one interviewee reported witnessing a dog maul a co-detainee's penis leading to severe bleeding and ultimately death.

They unleashed police dogs on us again, allowing them to tear into our flesh. One dog attacked a fellow detainee, [name redacted] (45), and started mauling his genitals (penis). He bled to death in my arms. A doctor, shielded in a cage, examined him from a distance and said, 'Throw him outside.'

48-year-old male, arrested from Al-Shifa Hospital, held for a total of 56 days, initially held at the hospital, before being transferred to a military outpost and five military detention facilities.

Sleep Deprivation

Interviewees shared their experience of being relentlessly deprived of sleep. Detainees were abruptly woken in the dead of night for head counts and invasive searches. At times, they were dragged outside into the biting cold, only to be beaten or forced into painful kneeling or standing positions, subjected to loud noises and music. Detainees were often woken up by the sound of banging on tin-plated walls.

Soldiers frequently woke us up late at night, viciously mocking us by ordering us to stand for inmate counts without any reason [...]. We were [...] forced to stand up and were given military orders such as 'stand like rectangles' or 'make a triangle and spread your legs in a seven-shape.' This was on a daily basis throughout our detention in Ofer as the soldiers laughed and mocked us.

65-year-old Gaza worker, arrested from a private home in Israel, held for a total of 26 days in Haifa prison and a military detention facility in Ofer.

Afterwards, I was taken to a barrack [in Zikim camp] and was given a blanket and very light mattress that was too small for my size. I slept while blindfolded and with my hands tied. After half an hour, the female soldiers came and woke us up and whenever we closed our eyes to sleep, they would wake us up again and order us to kneel, while the female and male soldiers kept cursing us with the worst swear words."

31-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 48 days, initially in at the checkpoint before being transferred to Zikim camp, Damon Prison, and an unidentified military detention facility.⁵⁵

⁵⁵-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

I spent 8 days in that place [unidentified forward operating base in Khan Younis], and they were the hardest days of my life. All day, we were forced to kneel and were only allowed limited sleep from 00:00 to 04:30 [...] Those days were extremely difficult due to the severe torture and sleep deprivation, which affected us, our health and led to such a difficult mental state that we even had suicidal thoughts.

36-year-old male, arrested from a checkpoint in Khan Younis, held for a total of 50 days at two different unidentified military detention facilities, including in Khan Younis.⁵⁶

One interviewee reported being unable to sleep because of the sound of people being tortured, and suspecting that this was a recording intended to deprive detainees of their sleep.

Whenever I tried to sleep, I heard people being severely tortured and beaten. They were screaming loudly, pleading: ‘Please stop, stop, we will confess.’ I later realized that those were audio recordings played through large speakers as part of the psychological torture the soldiers practiced against me. The recordings continued for about three hours; during which time, I heard the voices of different people.

29-year-old male, arrested from a shelter, held for a total of 26 days at two different prisons in Nablus and Jerusalem.⁵⁷

Use of Crowd Control Tools for Abuse

Interviewees reported the use of tools designed for crowd control in open spaces being applied on them during their arrest and detention, such as stun grenades. Stun grenades are an explosive device designed to produce a loud sound accompanied by a strong flash of light. They are often used for riot control. Interviewees reported that Israeli soldiers would throw stun grenades into a cell at random times and follow a routine of actions, as described below.

Every two or three days, we were exposed to repression under the pretext that some detainees had broken the rules. This typically occurred in the evening after dinner. It always began with soldiers throwing stun grenades into the barracks, followed by dogs. We were ordered to lie face down with our hands over our heads. The soldiers, accompanied by dogs, would then enter, allowing the dogs to walk around, sniffing and even stepping on our backs. During every session, a dog would walk on my back, and I would be beaten with a weapon’s barrel, usually for about 10 minutes.

30-year-old male, arrested at a hospital in Khan Younis, held for a total of 55 days in a military outpost, before being transferred to four different military detention facilities.

⁵⁶-The full interview is available on PCHR’s website [here](#).

⁵⁷-The full interview is available on PCHR’s website [here](#).

On one occasion, when soldiers stormed the barracks area, they threw a stun grenade next to me, causing temporary hearing loss in one ear due to the intensity of the sound. On another occasion, one of the detainees experienced bleeding in his ear from the loud explosion of a grenade thrown near him.

38-year-old male, arrested on the street in Khan Younis, held for a total of 75 days in two military outposts, before being transferred to a military detention facility.

Several interviewees reported being electrocuted by a hand-held device, likely an electric discharge weapon (EDW), such as a Taser. An EDW delivers electrical pulses to temporarily incapacitate a person through pain compliance.⁵⁸ They are normally designed for use by police for defence as a less lethal alternative to guns.

The soldiers then took me to a location I do not know where. They beat me with the butts of their weapons on my head, back and hands...and applied electric shocks with a stick-like device.

30-year-old male, Gaza worker, arrested in Israel, held for a total of 160 days, initially at an unknown location before being transferred to Ofer prison.

Then a soldier standing next to me shocked me three times with an electric baton on my hand. The electricity was so powerful that it shook my whole body, and my vision was blurry for a minute afterward.

42-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 66 days, initially held at the checkpoint, before being transferred to four unidentified military detention facilities, as well as the Negev and Ofer prisons.

On the third day, I was electrocuted with an electric stick; the electricity was strong, and I was beaten with it for a quarter of an hour on the chest and testicles areas.

43-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 71 days, initially held at a military outpost, before being transferred to three unidentified military detention facilities, three police stations, as well as the Negev prison.

Interviewees also reported being subjected to pepper spray which is normally used as riot control in the open air causing intense irritation in nose, eyes, throat, lungs, and skin.⁵⁹

After that, the soldiers sprayed pepper gas on all the detainees, and I got pepper spray on my back and stayed for a week with my back burning, and some detainees got pepper gas on their faces.

17-year-old boy, arrested from Al-Shifa Hospital, held for a total of 17 days, initially held at the hospital, before being transferred to an unidentified military detention facility.

⁵⁸-DIGNITY (2018). DIGNITY Fact Sheet Collection Health #3 Electric discharge weapons. Available [here](#).

⁵⁹-DIGNITY (2018). DIGNITY Fact Sheet Collection Health #4 Pepper spray. Available [here](#).

She and another soldier put me inside the truck, which had small windows for breathing. The soldiers sprayed pepper spray through these windows, causing severe suffocation and a burning sensation in our eyes and faces.

59-year-old male, arrested from Al-Shifa Hospital, held for a total of 104 days, initially held at the hospital, before being transferred to an Sde Teiman and Ofer prison.

Use of Dogs

In addition to the use of dogs in sexual abuse as mentioned above, dogs were used more broadly during arrest and detention. During arrests, dogs were used for house raids against families.

At around 16:00 on 13 December 2023, we were surprised by the IOF knocking on the door. Many of them were accompanied by dogs. My brother opened the door holding a white cloth and told them that we were civilians, mostly children and women. They then raided the house, and the dog attacked my eldest brother and bit his hand. My mom tried to get the dog off him, but it bit mom.

29-year-old female, arrested from a private home in North Gaza, held for a total of 50 days, in Zikim camp, an unidentified military detention facility and Damon Prison.

During detention, dogs were unleashed to attack detainees both during the day and at night which interviewees reported terrified them.

They brought police dogs with them, while we were lying on our stomach, making the dogs walk on us and attack us while tied. The soldiers threatened to unleash the dogs on us and told us: ‘These dogs are rabid; we will unleash them on you to chew on your flesh.’ Any detainee who tried to remove the blindfold would be taken out and they would unleash the dogs to attack him in a brutal way.

52-year-old male, businessman, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 28 days, initially in a private home and an open area before being transferred to an unidentified military detention facility.

Once we arrived, we were thrown the so-called ‘party’, which was the same they did to us in Al- ‘Izariyah prison. The soldiers severely beat us with batons, and I received several blows all over my body. The dogs were barking at us to terrify us.

19-year-old male, cook, arrested from a university in Gaza City, held for a total of 77 days in various unidentified military detention facilities, including in Hebron, and Al-Aizariya/Bethani camp in Jerusalem.

In addition to instilling fear in and terrorising the detainees, interviewees reported feeling humiliated by the soldiers' use of the dogs because the dogs were made to urinate on them.

Dogs were unleashed on us to terrorize us. The soldiers claimed that the dogs were meant to search us, although we were only wearing the clothes they gave us. We would rather be in the war in Gaza than being humiliated in such a cruel manner.

32-year-old male, paramedic, arrested from Kamal Adwan Hospital, held for a total of 38 days, initially at the hospital before being transferred to several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel.

Almost 15 days before my release, they transferred me along with other detainees by bus to another detention place. Once I arrived, they threw me on the ground and made dogs pee on me, while one of the soldiers hit me with an iron pipe on my right leg, particularly on the knee, causing me an injury and walking difficulty that I still suffer from.

36-year-old male, arrested from a checkpoint in Khan Younis, held for a total of 50 days at two different unidentified military detention facilities, including in Khan Younis.⁶⁰

Exposure to Cold Temperatures

The majority of interviewees reported being exposed to cold weather while wearing insufficient or no clothing, during the winter.

Amid the very cold weather, we were forced to stand for long hours, during which we were beaten and insulted with the worst swear words and we remained in that position for days.

46-year-old, Gaza worker, arrested from a private home in Israel, held for a total of 25 days in Kfar Yona Prison, an unknown location and a military detention facility in Ofer.

Several reported being left outside in the cold, some in their underwear.

That was such a difficult night that I will never forget because we were left naked in the rainy and cold weather, which made me feel suffocated [...]. This continued for an hour under the heavy rain and then we were pulled back inside and wore white nylon overalls.

39-year-old male, paramedic, arrested from Kamal Adwan Hospital, held for a total of 42 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and

⁶⁰ The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Others reported regular searches at night undertaken outside in the cold.

Inmate count would take place while sleeping. Four times a day. We were searched every other day; they took us out in the cold and searched us.

31-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 48 days, initially in at the checkpoint before being transferred to Zikim camp, Damon Prison, and an unidentified military detention facility.⁶¹

Interviewees also reported being exposed to cold temperatures, using fans and air conditioner.

They stripped me down to my underwear while I was blindfolded and handcuffed. I was with other detainees sitting on the floor for 12 hours during which they turned on the air conditioners and fans directing them at us though it was very cold. They threatened over loudspeakers to end Hamas and kill and torture us.

42-year-old male, construction worker, arrested from UNWRA school in Gaza City - Jabalia, held for a total of 24 days, initially in Zikim military base before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities in Erez and Beersheba.⁶²

The next day at around 02:00, masked persons drove me in a car for 5 minutes to a building, where they stripped me and dressed me in a white overall. They then placed me on a barbed-wire swing and poured water on me. They put me on that swing in a sleeping position and covered me with a wet blanket while pointing fans with strong air on me. Also, there was an air conditioner turned on a very low temperature while my cuffs were untied. I do not know how much time I stayed like that, but I think for seven hours.

27-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 55 days, in various unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel, including in the Negev.

Finally, others reported the use of walk-in fridges where soldiers placed them as punishment.

In the remaining three days, I was placed in a large refrigerator like a meat cooler and kept in it for about 10 hours, and every 10 minutes the soldiers would open the doors to let some air in and then close it. The second day, I was placed in a room with air conditioners that produce very hot air and kept there for 10 hours.

43-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 71 days, initially held at a military outpost, before being transferred to three unidentified military detention facilities, three police stations, as well as the Negev prison.

⁶¹- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

⁶²- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).



Use as Human Shields

Several interviewees reported being used as human shields, including children, after their arrest and subsequent detention in private buildings within Gaza. During their captivity, they were deliberately positioned as protective barriers to shield IOF soldiers from potential attacks. This often involved forcing them to stand in front of military assets, such as tanks, or making them enter buildings and film inside before soldiers decided whether to proceed. The interviewees described feeling particularly terrified during these experiences.

I was forcibly made to climb onto a tank, along with some of the other detainees I did not know, who were taken as human shields. As we moved, I was terrified of falling off the tank due to its speed and the risk of being caught in crossfire.

29-year-old male, arrested in Gaza, held for a total of 19 days, held at an unidentified military detention facility.

We walked in line holding each other between two tanks while we were naked and a tank right behind us was moving so fast that I was scared that I would stumble down the road and fell to be rammed by the tank. We walked for around 40 minutes and when we arrived at the outskirts of Al-Shati' refugee camp, we were ordered to stop, and they placed us in front of the tank as there were heavy clashes; they used us as human shields. I felt death was so near and accompanying me.

19-year-old, male, cook, arrested from a university in Gaza City, held for a total of 77 days in various unknown military detention facilities, including in Hebron, and Al-Aizariya/Bethani camp in Jerusalem.

[Children] were always asked to stand by the windows. They would also take some of the children down to the lower floors of the tower, placing them around the area and near the tanks, using them as human shields.

15-year-old boy detained with his 11-year-old brother and cousins aged 12-15, arrested from a private home, held for a total of 58 days, in a pit in the ground and a house.

Two brothers were used as human shields for 44 and 36 days inside Gaza, forced to go from building to building, including Nasser Hospital, ahead of the IOF, to take pictures and film, warn civilians, and check whether the area was safe.

I was used in the Al-Amal neighbourhood for eight days. On the last day, they ordered me to enter a house. I was exhausted, and there was a lock on the staircase that I ignored due to my fatigue. I went up to the floor, took pictures, and returned to them. When they entered and broke the lock that I had overlooked under the stairs, they found three explosive devices. They ran out, shouting 'Shawaz, Shawaz, Shawaz,' and aimed their weapons at me, causing me to tremble with fear. They then ordered me to return to the house, retrieve the three explosive devices, place them in front of the stairs, and go back inside to photograph everything in the house, including the wardrobes, leaving nothing unphotographed.

44-year-old, male, arrested from a private home in Khan Younis, held for a total of 15 days in three military outposts inside Gaza.

Verbal Abuse and Humiliation

Interviewees spoke of constant verbal abuse, a relentless assault on their dignity that began the moment they were arrested and continued throughout their detention. It was pervasive across all facilities, targeting every detainee. The insults were vicious and dehumanizing. They were called animals and dogs, with gendered slurs and degrading attacks on female family members adding to the humiliation. The combination of such verbal abuse and physical violence created an environment of fear and dehumanisation that never let up.

Despite my repeated assertions that I am a civilian, and we are all displaced people who sought refuge in schools and are not involved in anything, they continued to hurl the worst insults and curses at me, my wife, my mother, and my sisters. Facing such insults, especially under severe beatings with iron batons, they deeply infringed on my dignity and pride, leaving me feeling completely powerless and ashamed.

42-year-old male, arrested from a school in Khan Younis, held for a total of 52 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to an unknown facility and an unidentified military detention facility.

They wrote something on my back and then led me to another detention place, during which, I was repeatedly insulted by a soldier telling me ‘You are an animal’, but I told him, ‘No, I am not an animal.’ Suddenly, he and another soldier dragged me away from the detainees, threatened me, kicked me and punched me all over my body; to force me to say I was an animal. I then caved and told him as he wished to avoid the beating and ill-treatment. We were then taken back to our previous detention place.

36-year-old male, arrested from a checkpoint in Khan Younis, held for a total of 50 days at two different unidentified military detention facilities, including in Khan Younis.⁶³

In addition to humiliating verbal abuse, interviewees reported being subjected to a range of humiliating actions. This included being called Hamas whores and being forced to kiss the Israel flag, chant ‘long live Israel’, or being photographed in front of an Israeli flag, forced to dance in their underwear, sing humiliating songs, placed in pits in the ground in their underwear for long periods, or risk physical punishment if orders were not obeyed. An interviewee also reported being given a diaper and left in very painful positions, in full view of other detainees and soldiers.

During this time, another soldier came and began mocking us. He said, ‘I want to sing, you little goats, and you will say “baa baa”.’ He then started singing, and we were forced to repeat “baa baa” after him for about a minute and a half. He laughed and continued to mock us.

17-year-old boy, arrested from Al-Shifa Hospital, held for a total of 17 days, initially held at the hospital, before being transferred to an unidentified military detention facility.

[The interrogator] took a felt-tip pen and wrote “ Hamas Hamas” on my body. Whenever he called out to me, he demanded that I respond with the name Hamas, not [name redacted]. The pain was unbearable, and I desperately needed to pee. I asked the interrogator if I could use the bathroom, but he refused, telling me, ‘Pee on yourself.’ So, I did. Seeing this, [he] began urinating on me.

45-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Khan Younis, held for a total of 23 days at Kerem Shalom crossing and Abu Huli checkpoint, before being transferred to a military detention facility.

During this beating, the soldiers would force the detainees to repeat degrading phrases such as, ‘My mother is a whore, my sister is a whore.’

32-year-old male, arrested from a school, held for a total of 51 days at two military outposts, before being transferred to two military detention facilities and Nafha prison.

⁶³- The full interview is available on PCHR’s website [here](#).

Threats

Detainees were repeatedly threatened with death, prolonged detention, ill-treatment, and torture, as well as sexual violence and harm to family members. In addition, soldiers threatened detainees with the destruction of Gaza, or the extermination of its population. Threats were often reported during interrogation but also occurred from the moment of arrest until release.

They pointed their guns at us while moving the red laser lights and said, ‘who wants to be shot first?’ I was then taken to a barrack lined with barbed wire and roofed with tinfoil. We were five women who stayed there for five days

31-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 48 days, initially in at the checkpoint before being transferred to Zikim camp, Damon Prison, and an unidentified military detention facility.

I was then taken to a tent, where I was untied and unblindfolded. The female soldier searched me and ordered me to take off my clothes, except for my underwear. I first refused to take off my clothes, but then the female soldier pointed her weapon at my head, pulled the trigger and told me, ‘I will kill you.’

24-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 47 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to Camp Anatot, Damon Prison and an unidentified military detention facility.⁶⁵

[We] were later taken to be interrogated by the Shin Bet, while we were still handcuffed and blindfolded, for four hours. We were interrogated separately [...] I was then asked about specific names and threatened that they would deprive me of my seven children if I did not collaborate. He told me, ‘The computer says you are affiliated with the Islamic Jihad.’

51-year-old, male, arrested from Jalameh crossing checkpoint, initially held the checkpoint before being transferred to Al-Jalameh detention centre, a military detention facility in Ofer and an unidentified military detention facility.

Threats extended to children who were arrested. A 15-year-old boy recounted being detained with other children including his cognitively impaired 11-year-old brother.

They called us, the children—myself, my brother [name redacted, 11-years old], and my cousins...[names redacted, 12, 13 and 15-year old]...They took us to the Al-Nabulsi Roundabout area and placed us in a large pit, deep enough to cover us entirely. They threatened us, saying they would bury us in the pit, and no one would know what had happened to us. After five hours they took us on foot to the Prisoners' Towers [...]. While walking, they repeatedly told us that we were being taken to our death.

15-year-old boy detained with his 11-year-old brother and cousins aged 12-15, arrested from a private home, held for a total of 58 days, in a pit in the ground and a house.

64- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

65- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

During their release, some were again threatened with death if they stopped running towards Gaza, compounding the terror and desperation of their escape.

We arrived at the Kerem Shalom crossing [...] where they ordered us off the buses and told us, ‘You have three minutes; if we can see you after that, you will be shot in the head.’ We kept running until we reached the Palestinian side.

65-year-old Gaza worker, arrested from a private home in Israel, held for a total of 26 days in Haifa prison and a military detention facility in Ofer.

Two detainees reported being threatened with arrest if they spoke to news outlets about what they had been through in detention.

On 10 January 2024, I was released as they threatened me with renewed arrested, if I spoke to any news outlets about what I had been through in detention.

Young male, blind, arrested from a school, held for a total of 38 days, initially in a pit in the ground, before being transferred to unknown locations and Zikim camp.

Before we got off the bus, we had been untied and photographed. They told us, ‘You will find journalists waiting for you’ and they threatened us not to say anything about the beating we had been exposed to.

29-year-old female, arrested from a private home in North Gaza, held for a total of 50 days, in Zikim camp, an unidentified military detention facility and Damon Prison.

Witnessing Others Being Exposed to Violence or Killed

All the interviewees reported being forced to watch other detainees being ill-treated or killed. They reported witnessing at least 21 individuals dying while in custody, either directly killed by Israeli soldiers or dying as a result of ill-treatment.



While I was inside the container [for interrogation], I could hear screams of someone being tortured nearby, or the soldiers were playing a sound like that on a loudspeaker just to frighten me.

24-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 47 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to Camp Anatot, Damon Prison and an unidentified military detention facility.⁶⁶

During my detention, I saw several detainees tortured; some of them sustained fractures in their legs, hands and chest after being kicked by soldiers while others were bitten by rabid dogs.

44-year-old male, arrested from a checkpoint in Khan Younis, held for a total of 18 days in an unidentified military detention facility

On that difficult night, there was a detainee sitting next to me while I was handcuffed and blindfolded. He fell on my feet due to the severe torture to which he was subjected. I heard him screaming and saying, ‘I’m going to die, I’m going to die,’ but the soldiers continued beating him more and more and of course we were beaten as well. Moments later, I heard the detainee’s death rattle, and he died. After that, the soldiers took him away and told us: ‘We threw him out and you will all face the same fate.’ That detainee took his last breath below my feet, but I could not identify him because I was blindfolded, and the soldiers took him out, I do not know where.

52-year-old male, businessman, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 28 days, initially in a private home and an open area before being transferred to an unidentified military detention facility.

On my last day at that site, one of the detainees, [name redacted], who had paralysis of the extremities died due to medical neglect by the site’s administration and lack healthcare because he had asked the wardens several times for treatment or to see a doctor without any response. The detainees and I used to take him to the bathroom and wash him and put on his diapers; he had been arrested in that condition.

27-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 55 days, in various unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel, including in the Negev.

⁶⁶ The full interview is available on PCHR’s website [here](#).

One interviewee reported witnessing the summary execution of another detainee and the disposal of his body during transfer.

Later, they took us into another truck while handcuffed, cramming around 80 detainees into a truck meant for 40. They drove us to an unknown place in Israel where they cold-bloodedly executed one of us onboard, [...], in front of us. As he bled, the soldier sarcastically said, ‘let them say you are a martyr now’, kicked him and threw him out of the truck.

42-year-old male, arrested from a school in Khan Younis, held for a total of 52 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to an unknown facility and an unidentified military detention facility.

Other Forms of Psychological Violence

In addition to the methods of ill-treatment reported above, PCHR found additional forms of psychological violence which appear to have been inflicted on several detainees, suggesting that they were not isolated acts but part of the pattern of ill-treatment.

During arrest, some interviewees explained that soldiers fired shots at families, burned people's homes in front of them.

Israeli soldiers shot our neighbour, [name redacted], injuring his hand [...]. They also burned the houses belonging to [three family names redacted] in front of us.

Male human rights defender, arrested from a private home in Beit Lahia, held for a total of 7 days in several unidentified military detention facilities, including Zikim and Ofakim Military Camps.⁶⁷

⁶⁷- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Half of the women who were interviewed were mothers who were forced to abandon their babies and young children during their arrest. One mother of a 4-year-old boy and a 9-month-old baby described being separated from her terror-stricken children who had survived a missile hitting their house and witnessed family members being gruesomely injured. The mother reported that she was terrified when the soldiers questioned whether her children were hers because of their fair skin. Her family was forced to undergo DNA testing.

When the soldiers saw my children, they found them white-skinned with blond hair, so they thought my children were not mine and they were from the Israeli hostages. They then took blood samples from my children, while a female soldier dragged me away. I was so scared and shouted asking them, ‘where are you taking me?’ An Israeli soldier told me that they would take me only for half an hour to do a test and bring me back. I asked him If I could take my breastfeeding baby with me, but the soldier spoke with my father-in-law in Hebrew. He told me that if I did [not leave my baby], they would kill us all, so I had to leave. My child was grabbing my hijab not wanting me to leave him. I gave him to his grandmother; all of us were crying. After that, they forced me along with my husband, father-in-law, brother-in-law and 15 other people into a tank. The next day, [my] breasts were sore, and I was still handcuffed. The pain was unbearable, so I cried and begged them to allow me to breastfeed my baby, but they kept kicking me. [...] They had my hands tied with plastic-zip ties to the back and blindfolded me, not being able to see anything. The tank drove us to a 2-story house in al-Zaytoun neighbourhood as it served as a military barracks for the soldiers. When we arrived there, a female soldier was waiting with syringes [...] The soldiers took me upstairs, where the place smelt like an operating room [...]. I was drugged [...]. The female soldier then gave me an epidural anaesthesia and then took a sample from my back and another from my husband to do a DNA test.

24-year-old female, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 51 days, in a warehouse, private home, pit in the ground, several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.

Interviewees also explained how some detainees were deceived into thinking they would be taken back to their shelters or released and were instead taken to another detention facility. During interrogation, some were also falsely informed that their family members, including children, had been killed. More particularly, a breastfeeding mother, was falsely told that her entire family, including husband and children, had been killed.

During the interrogation, I was severely beaten and insulted while handcuffed and naked. We were then loaded on to a truck and were told that we would be taken back to the shelter. On the way, I found my two sisters-in-law and two other women from the family with us. I knew they were lying to us as they dropped us at a place with a gravel ground and forced us to kneel on the ground the entire day while the soldiers were stepping on our heads with their military boots.

34-year-old male, arrested from a school shelter, held for a total of 32 days in two unknown locations, including a military detention facility.

At around 6:00, on 2nd January, they told us that we would go back home, but we were taken to an unidentified place full of large cages and it was very far.

44-year-old female, hairdresser, arrested from a school in Al Bureij, held for a total of 42 days, in various unknown locations, including in Israel and Zikim, as well as a school, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.⁶⁸

They treated some young men differently, telling them that they would be released and put them with the young men who were to be released, but then returned to the ward, making them feel depressed. They started to cry in despair.

39-year-old paramedic, arrested from Kamal Adwan Hospital, held for a total of 42 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and

I was crying and telling them that I want my children, but the soldier responded: ‘When our hostages come back from Gaza, you will go to your children.’ When I asked him about my husband, he told me, ‘Your husband, your family, and your children have all died.’

24-year-old female, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 51 days, in a warehouse, private home, pit in the ground, several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.

The ward [in Camp Anatot] was completely silent, although we were 100 persons, because we were not allowed to utter a single word, and we were scared to death due to the torture we experienced.

39-year-old paramedic, arrested from Kamal Adwan Hospital, held for a total of 42 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and

When I was in the barracks, I was subject to indescribable degrading treatment; I was not allowed to speak [...].

34-year-old male, arrested from a school shelter, held for a total of 32 days in two unknown locations, including a military detention facility.

68- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

In detention, communication among detainees was strictly prohibited, fostering atmosphere of isolation and helplessness. Expressing emotions also led to further mistreatment.

When they wanted to punish us, they cut off the water. We were not allowed to cry and if we did, they would torture us; for example, they tightened the handcuffs around my wrists creating wounds and whenever I begged the soldier not to press so my veins would not be affected as I have hypertension, he would press even more.

39-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 42 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to an open area, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.⁶⁹

During their release, several interviewees reported being forced to run through the border, with some having to cover several kilometres, despite their weak health and injuries. In some cases, they were shot at by the soldiers.

When they dropped us off, they unhandcuffed us and told us to run and not look back. While running, they were shooting next to us. I ran five kilometres until I found a taxi and took it to drive me home barefoot, with very light clothes.

Gaza worker, arrested from a checkpoint in Israel, held for a total of 38 days in Ofer prison and a prison near Jericho.⁷⁰

We were taken onto a bus while we were handcuffed and blindfolded and we were forced to keep our heads down until we arrived at the Kerem Shalom crossing. The soldiers fired shots in the air and ordered us to run. We were 70 male detainees and 19 female detainees. We were so tired and in pain that we could not run, so the soldiers shot in the air to scare us, and we quickly ran.

24-year-old female, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 51 days, in a warehouse, private home, pit in the ground, several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.

We went out of the crossing along with other released women. We were ordered to run and to shout aloud 'long live Israel.' We walked in the wrong direction, so a sniper shot at us, ordering us to take the other way amid constant shootings. When I arrived, an ambulance took me to [...] Hospital.

39-year-old paramedic, arrested from Kamal Adwan Hospital, held for a total of 42 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel.

69- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

70- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

C. Self-reported Health Consequences and Situation Post Release

Several interviewees shared their deeply painful experiences and the devastating health consequences they faced after enduring brutal ill-treatment throughout their detention. The physical toll was staggering, causing immense pain and damage, including:

- **Acute and chronic dull and sharp pain** due to a broad range of violence on a broad range of body parts, including but not limited to legs, joints, back, stomach, ears, eyes, and arms.
- **Dizziness, fainting, loss of consciousness, and coma** when exposed to violence or near-death experiences.
- **Hallucination** and disorientation after being exposed to beatings to the head or forced medication.
- **Damage to limbs and skeleton** including injuries resulting in **amputation** of the foot, skin **grafting** after gangrene infection of foot, **fractures** of breastbone, vertebrae and ribs, **dislocation** of shoulders, and **joint injury, herniated discs**, and **reduced mobility** in the neck, arms, and legs.
- **Hernia** after genital trauma.
- **Damage to fingers** after fingernails were ripped off.
- **Sensory disturbances** including loss of hearing and visual problems.
- Damage to the skin, including **cuts, bruises, excoriations, wounds, burns** from cigarettes, from cigarette lighters, **bleeding** from the head, face, nose, eye, mouth, ears, legs, and wrists, blue and black **discoloration** of the hands and feet following tight handcuffing and electrocution injury, swelling, and skin **irritation, including** infections and itching.
- **Breathing difficulties** during suspension and transportation in confined spaces or pepper spray in confined spaces.
- **Haematuria** (blood in the urine) after being hit in the waist.
- **Haematemesis** (blood in vomit) after electrocution.
- **Haemorrhoids, kidney stones, and stomach ulcers** due to water and food regime in detention.
- General malaise and deterioration of health including **vomiting, weight loss** up to 55 kgs, inability to stand, and exhaustion.



The psychological health consequences included:

- **Fear** including fear of death.
- **Sadness**, feeling morose, feeling Heartbroken, and uncontrolled crying.
- Feelings of **humiliation**, defeat, shame, and devastation.
- **Shock**.
- **Anger**, short-temperedness and feeling helpless.
- Death wish and **suicidal** thoughts.
- **Hallucinations**.
- **Memory loss**.
- **Disorientation**.
- **Insomnia** due to physical or psychological state.
- Worrying.
- Feeling “mental tiredness, “psychological devastation,” or “psychologically destroyed”.

In terms of my mental health, I am not myself anymore. I am talking to you now about my tragedy and I feel unstable, I cry and laugh at the same time. Even when I see my father, who has lost his memory because of the arrest, and whenever I remember the deplorable circumstances, I have experienced, I still cannot believe that I am still alive and that I have survived all this. I have become soulless when I look at my children and fear that one day they will go through what I went through.

43-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 37 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to various unidentified military detention facilities, as well as Zikim camp and Givati Brigade Outpost.

Before the war I was a hairdresser, but because of the current situation I have had to sell cleaning products and pasta in the markets, and now I sell duggah (spice mix). All I do is feed my children because their father stayed in Gaza City. One day I thought about leaving my children because I could no longer live under these catastrophic conditions. I have not yet recovered from the effects and stress of my imprisonment. I cannot go on with this life, but I am still fighting, even myself, for the sake of my children.

44-year-old female, hairdresser, arrested from a school in Al Bureij, held for a total of 42 days, in various unknown locations, including in Israel and Zikim, as well as a school, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.⁷¹

They psychologically destroyed me and made me feel so degraded that I wished for death at every moment to be free of all the torture and intimidation I was experiencing at every moment. They ruined my mental health and, to be honest, I prayed to Allah to die to spare me all the pain as they tortured us severely.

43-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 37 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to various unidentified military detention facilities, as well as Zikim military detention facility and Givati Brigade Outpost.

Many interviewees reported persistence of health consequences after their release. Almost all the psychological symptoms stayed with the interviewees especially the feelings of helplessness, sadness, and insomnia. Persistent physical symptoms included but were not limited to lingering pain or loss of sensation in the hand and feet, and other body parts, earing loss, nerve damage, damage to limbs and skeleton, including injuries resulting in amputation of the foot, herniated discs, and reduced mobility in the neck. Some detainees developed ulcers and cyst as a result of their detention and torture.

Can you imagine my feeling when I was walking a long distance at midnight naked, exhausted, without food or water, bullets fired around me, and stray dogs that might eat me at any moment. After all that, I knew that I lost my brother who was with me at all stages of my life, even during my arrest. I am no longer [name redacted], the young man who dreams of having a happy family and building his professional future. I am no longer [name redacted], the laughing young man who was active, spirited, and energetic and gave his friends hope. I have become very nervous, very afraid even of the night and only sleep during the day. I lost my home, which I worked and saved money for years to build it to get married and live in my house. I lost my family home, my job, and everything. I lost the past, the present, and the future. I lost my brother for no reason, only because I am a young Palestinian who tried to live in Gaza.

26-year-old male, arrested from a house in Gaza City, held for a total of 7 days in various buildings.

⁷¹- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

While release from the ordeal of detention should have brought relief, for the interviewees, it marked the beginning of another set of hardships. Their post-detention conditions were described as nothing short of desperate. Many were unable to return home, forced instead to live in overcrowded shelters with little to no support. None of the interviewees reported receiving the help they so desperately needed after their harrowing experiences, including medical and psychological care. Many had been separated from their families at the time of their arrest, and even after their release, they had no information about their loved ones' whereabouts. Particularly heart-wrenching were the cases of the detained minors, who were released alone, abandoned without any guidance or support, left to navigate an uncertain future on their own. The suffering did not end with their release – it continued, as they faced the daunting reality of the war with no help and no sense of safety.

We were left in confusion, not knowing where to go or what to do. We began walking south and sat on the sidewalk, exhausted. A man driving a jeep passed by, and he asked us why we were in that area. It was clear from our pyjamas and our exhausted state that we had been through a difficult time—we were extremely hungry, thirsty, and cold. We explained to him that we had been detained, that we had no family there, and that we did not know what to do. He took us with him to Rafah.

15-year-old boy detained with his 11-year-old brother and cousins aged 12-15, arrested from a private home, held for a total of 58 days, in a pit in the ground and a house.

I do not know anything about my husband [name redacted] and I contacted many organizations and the ICRC to know his fate and if he was arrested, but in vain. I call on everyone to help me locate my husband. We are currently displaced in a school deprived of any basic necessities.

33-year-old female, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 46 days, initially in a mosque before being transferred to Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.

I still do not know the fate of my siblings, wife or children, but I had to return to work at the [name redacted] Hospital [...] as we, doctors, have a humanitarian duty to perform.

57-year-old male, doctor, arrested at Al-Ahli Hospital, held for a total of 45 days in various unknown facilities, including an unidentified military detention facility.⁷²

⁷²- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Those who did manage to locate their family members were often unable to reach them. In the context of sustained military aggressions, they worried about their loved ones.

I learnt that my wife and children are still in [city redacted] in very dire humanitarian conditions, with no access to food or water and living in constant fear due to relentless bombardment and forcible starvation as aid trucks are not allowed to enter the North. I am currently in [city redacted], incapable of doing anything for my family who endure the deteriorating humanitarian conditions. I hope the war will end and I can reunite with my family and gain my rights as a worker in Israel, who has not received his pay.

55-year-old male, Gaza worker, arrested in Israel, held for a total of 23 days, initially at a Police station in Israel before being transferred to Ofer prison.

I also knew that my family evacuated to several areas and my 19-year-old son, [name redacted] had a knee injury. I am constantly worried about my family and do not know how they manage to find food and water, as well as medicine in case one of them gets sick amid the dire situation and the lack of aid delivery in North Gaza.

42-year-old male, construction worker, arrested from UNWRA school in Gaza City - Jabalia, held for a total of 24 days, initially in Zikim military base before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities in Erez and Beersheba.⁷³

Sometimes when the whereabouts of family members were traced, it was only to learn of their deaths. In some of the most fortunate cases, interviewees were reunited with family members. They talked about the reunion, but also about their current living conditions in light of the loss of their homes and harsh living conditions with limited access to income, food, and medicine.

I tried to call my family and my husband, but the communications were cut off. I was crying thinking I lost my family, my children, and my husband. After that, a person came and told me that my husband gave him a phone number so I can call him when I get released. He called my husband, but I did not believe it was him until I heard his voice. My husband then came to take me from the crossing, and I could hardly recognize him. We hugged each other and cried a lot.

24-year-old female, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 51 days, in a warehouse, private home, pit in the ground, several unidentified military detention facilities in Gaza and Israel, Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.

⁷³ The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Afterwards, I tried to call my family to tell them I was released, and I could only remember my own mobile number. I called it and was surprised that it was ringing and my brother, [name redacted], picked up. I was so happy to hear his voice, I could not talk because I burst into tears and then told him I was released and was now at the Kerem Shalom crossing. They came and took me to [name redacted] School, where my family was seeking shelter. [...] I want to say that I am now displaced along with my family in the school shelter, where neither me nor my family feel safe at all. After our house was bombed by the Israeli occupation forces and was damaged, we have become homeless.

19-year-old male, arrested from a university in Gaza City, held for a total of 77 days, in various unidentified military detention facilities, including in Hebron, and Al-Aizariya/Bethani Camp in Jerusalem.

At the time of their interviews, the detainees were still displaced, living in various school shelters, or tents, primarily in Rafah (before the Israeli ground invasion).

Since my release, I have been tired, and all my body hurts me due to the beating I was subjected to during my detention. I am currently displaced with half of my family in an UNRWA school in [location redacted] while the other half remained in northern Gaza. After our house was destroyed by the IOF, we have become homeless and do not feel safe fearing for my life and my family's due to the IOF's relentless and indiscriminate bombardment of buildings, houses, densely populated neighbourhoods and public facilities in the area and all over the Gaza Strip. There is no safe place in the Gaza Strip, and I feel that my life is in danger all the time due to the Israeli military operations.

21-year-old male, arrested from a school in Gaza City, held for a total of 60 days, initially in a pit in the ground and a building before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities.



3. Legal Analysis of the Ill-Treatment



This section provides a detailed legal analysis of the practice of ill-treatment of Palestinians from Gaza by Israeli authorities, focusing on the incidents described by the 100 former detainees and analysed above. PCHR first assessed the ill-treatment inflicted upon Palestinian detainees, examining whether the legal elements of torture have been established. Then, this section explores the role of torture in the broader context of genocide, analysing how such acts served the genocidal strategy aimed at the destruction of the Palestinian group.

A. Definitions of Torture under International Law

Torture is universally and absolutely prohibited at all times and against all individuals, by international human rights and humanitarian law instruments, all of which have been ratified by Israel.⁷⁴ This prohibition is recognised as a *jus cogens* norm, a fundamental principle of international law that is universally binding and allows for no exceptions.⁷⁵ To reinforce this absolute prohibition, an international system of criminal sanctions exists, making torture a punishable crime under international law.⁷⁶

The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT) imposes an obligation on States to criminalise torture in their domestic criminal legislation, as well as to investigate and prosecute those responsible for such acts.⁷⁷ Several States have also incorporated provisions for the investigation and prosecution of torture under the principle of universal jurisdiction, which allows for prosecution regardless of where the crime occurred or the nationality of the perpetrator or victim.⁷⁸

The UNCAT defines torture in Article 1 as follows:

[...] any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions.

74- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Art. 5; United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1976), ratified by Israel on 3 January 1992, Art. 7; United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT) (1987), ratified by Israel on 2 November 1991, Art. 1; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990), ratified by Israel on 2 November 1991, Art. 37; United Nations Convention on Persons with Disabilities (2008), ratified by Israel on 28 October 2012, Art. 15; Geneva Convention (GC) I (1949), Art. 12, GCII (1949), Art. 12, GCIII (1949), Arts. 17 and 87, GCIV (1949), Art. 32. Israel ratified the Four Geneva Conventions on 6 July 1951. Although Israel has not ratified the First and Second Additional Protocols to the Conventions, many of their provisions, including Art. 75 of Additional Protocol 1, which prohibits torture, have attained the status of customary international law, see Mancini, M. (2018). 'Content and Customary Nature of Article 75 of Additional Protocol I' in Pocar, F. (ed). *The Additional Protocols 40 Years Later: New Conflicts, New Actors, New Perspectives*, IHL, Milan: FrancoAngeli, p. 90. Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Art. 5; United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1976), ratified by Israel on 3 January 1992, Art. 7; United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT) (1987), ratified by Israel on 2 November 1991, Art. 1; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990), ratified by Israel on 2 November 1991, Art. 37; United Nations Convention on Persons with Disabilities (2008), ratified by Israel on 28 October 2012, Art. 15; Geneva Convention (GC) I (1949), Art. 12, GCII (1949), Art. 12, GCIII (1949), Arts. 17 and 87, GCIV (1949), Art. 32. Israel ratified the Four Geneva Conventions on 6 July 1951. Although Israel has not ratified the First and Second Additional Protocols to the Conventions, many of their provisions, including Art. 75 of Additional Protocol 1, which prohibits torture, have attained the status of customary international law, see Mancini, M. (2018). 'Content and Customary Nature of Article 75 of Additional Protocol I' in Pocar, F. (ed). *The Additional Protocols 40 Years Later: New Conflicts, New Actors, New Perspectives*, IHL, Milan: FrancoAngeli, p. 90.

75- ICTY (1999). *Prosecutor v. Furundžija*, Trial Judgment, No. IT-95-17/1-T, para. 144.

76- UNCAT, Art. 4; United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1951), Art. II(b); GCI Art. 50, GCII, Art. 51, GCIII, Art. 130, GCIV, Art. 147; Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Rome Statute) (2002), Arts. 6(b), 7(1)(f), 8(2)(a)(ii), and 8 (2)(c)(i); Henckaerts, J. M., & Doswald-Beck, L. (2005). *Customary International Humanitarian Law Volume I Rules*. Cambridge: University Press, Rule 90 (pp. 315-319) and Rules 151-155 (ch. 43).

77- UNCAT, Arts. 4 - 7.

78- While 170 states are parties to the UNCAT, no comprehensive study of the number of States utilising universal jurisdiction for prosecuting torture has been conducted. Relevant countries include Australia, France, Germany, the Netherlands or Switzerland.

Furthermore, international criminal law, which addresses individual criminal responsibility for core international crimes, provides three distinct definitions of torture, depending on the context in which it is perpetrated. Torture may be classified as a war crime, a crime against humanity, or an act of genocide. The definitions and their corresponding elements are carefully detailed in the Rome Statute and its Elements of Crimes,⁷⁹ as well as caselaw. In the context of genocide, the ICC,⁸⁰ as well as the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR),⁸¹ and the ICJ,⁸² have affirmed that torture can be classified as an act of genocide if it is perpetrated with genocidal intent against a protected group.

While the definition of torture may vary slightly depending on the context, certain core elements remain consistent across all definitions, the most fundamental of these being the infliction of severe physical or mental pain or suffering. In addition to this central requirement, three other critical elements are often included in the legal definition of torture under international law. The main elements of torture can therefore be summarised as follows:

- 1- Severe pain or suffering: Infliction, by act or omission, of severe physical or mental pain or suffering.
- 2- Prohibited purposes: The act must be committed for one or more prohibited purposes, such as obtaining information, punishment, humiliation, or intimidation.
- 3- Involvement of a public official/control or custody: It must involve public officials or individuals acting in an official capacity, or those exercising control or custody over the victim.
- 4- Intent: It must be carried out with intent to cause severe pain or suffering.

These four elements collectively define torture and distinguish it from other forms of mistreatment. Given the variations in definitions across legal contexts, PCHR focused on identifying and applying these key elements that appear in all definitions of torture. By doing so, PCHR ensured that the legal analysis covers every relevant context. This approach allowed to conclude with certainty that torture has been committed, irrespective of the specific legal framework or context under which it occurred.

79- Rome Statute, Arts. 6(b) and (c), 7(1)(f), 8(2)(a)(ii) and 8(2)(c)(i); ICC (2011). Elements of Crimes, pp. 7, 14 and 32.

80- See Elements of Crimes (n45).

81- ICTR (1999). Prosecutor v. Rutaganda, Trial Judgment, No. ICTR-96-3-T, para. 51; ICTR (2000). Prosecutor v. Musema, Trial Judgment, No. ICTR-96-13-T, para. 156; ICTR (2001). Prosecutor v. Bagilishema, Trial Judgment, No. ICTR-95-1A-T, para. 59; ICTR (2002). Prosecutor v. Gacumbitsi, Trial Judgment, No. ICTR-2001-64-T, para. 291; ICTY (2001). Prosecutor v. Krstić, Trial Judgment, No. IT-98-33-T, para. 513; ICTY (2003). Prosecutor v. Stakić, Trial Judgment, No. IT-97-24-T, para. 516. ICTY (2004). Prosecutor v. Blagojević and Jokić, Trial Judgment, No. IT-02-60-T, para. 646; ICTY (2007). Prosecutor v. Brđjanin, Trial Judgment, No. IT-99-36-T, para. 690; ICTY (2017). Prosecutor v. Mladić, Judgment, No. IT-09-92-T, para. 3434.

82- See ICJ (2007). Bosnia v. Serbia, Judgment, para. 319.

B. The Torture of Palestinians from Gaza ---

Based on the analysis of the ill-treatment conducted in Section II, PCHR finds that the ill-treatment of 100 Palestinians from Gaza held by Israeli authorities between October 2023 and 2024, constitute torture. The interrogation methods, as well as the inhumane conditions, the widespread mistreatment and the context of terror and humiliation in Israeli detention facilities caused severe physical and psychological pain and suffering and had serious health consequences for the victims, at times resulting in death. The following section provides an assessment of the four legal elements of torture.

i. Analysis of the Elements of Torture

1. Severe Pain or Suffering

PCHR finds that that the ill-treatment inflicted upon the 100 interviewees caused severe pain and suffering.

An important degree of pain and suffering must be reached for a criminal act to amount to torture.⁸³ The severity of the pain and suffering ‘may be met by a single act or by a combination of acts when viewed as a whole’.⁸⁴ It is not necessary for there to be specific physical injuries, impairment of a bodily function, or death, or for the consequences of torture to be visible nor permanent.⁸⁵ The severity of the pain or suffering depends on various factors, assessed on a case-by-case basis in light of all the circumstances of the case.⁸⁶ International judges have used both objective and subjective criteria to assess the severity threshold.⁸⁷

PCHR’s investigation reveals that all the interviewees arrested inside Gaza, were in a vulnerable physical and mental condition at the time of their arrest. After experiencing significant suffering and loss due to the ongoing conflict, they were arrested at home, shelters, hospitals, or checkpoints while seeking refuge or fleeing bombardment. Several had already faced multiple displacements and were suffering from hunger due to food and water shortages caused by the lack of basic necessities in Gaza. Those arrested from schools and hospitals also described being besieged for several days without access to food or water and fearing for their lives.

⁸³- See, for example, ICC, Trial Chamber IX (2021). *Prosecutor v. Dominic Ongwen*, Trial Judgment, ICC-02/04-01/15, para. 2701 and ICC, Pre-Trial Chamber II (2009). *Prosecutor v. Bemba Gombo*, Decision Pursuant to Article 61(7)(a) and (b) of the Rome Statute on the Charges of the Prosecutor Against Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo, ICC-01/05-01/08-424, para. 193.

⁸⁴- Ongwen (n49) para. 2701.

⁸⁵- Ibid.

⁸⁶- Ibid.

⁸⁷- The criteria are as follows: the physical condition of the victims, the victims’ age, sex, and state of health, their position of inferiority, their specific social, cultural, and religious background, the physical and mental effect of the treatment on them, the nature and context of the infliction of pain, the premeditation and institutionalisation of the ill-treatment, and the manner and the method used. See, for example, ICTY (2002). *Prosecutor v. Krnojelac*, Trial Judgment, No. IT-97-25-T, para. 182; ICTY (2002). *Prosecutor v. Kvočka*, Trial Judgment, No. IT-98-30/1-T, para. 143; ICTY (2005). *Prosecutor v. Limaj et al.*, No. IT-03-66-T, Trial Judgment, para. 237; ICTY (2007). *Prosecutor v. Mrkšić et al.*, Trial Judgment, No. IT-95-13/1-T, para. 514; ICTY (2012). *Prosecutor v. Haradinaj et al.*, Trial Judgment, No. IT-04-84bis-T, para.

Interviewees also described being held in the same facilities as similar vulnerable groups, including minors, persons with disabilities or injuries, and the elderly.

My little brother Moataz, 11 years old [...] was burned with cigarettes as they put out the cigarettes on his body because he was constantly cursing and swearing at them, he suffers from cognitive impairment.

15-year-old boy detained with his 11-year-old brother and cousins aged 12-15, arrested from a private home, held for a total of 58 days, in a pit in the ground and a house.

Persons with disabilities who disclosed their conditions were not provided with any special accommodations or treatment. Similarly, elderly detainees, as well as sick and injured individuals were not spared from mistreatment and were forced to endure the same harsh conditions as younger, able-bodied detainees, thus amplifying the adverse effects of their ill-treatment due to their condition.

They took some of us, including me, to a site in eastern al-Maghazi area, where I was interrogated and severely beaten while naked. I kept telling the interrogator that I was blind, but he did not care at all and even mocked me saying, 'for your record, if I kill you here, no one will ever know.' The IOF also detained my blind father who suffers from diabetes, and mercilessly beat him along with other young men and elderly. Whoever said that they were sick or had a disability would be beaten even more. [...] I told them that I was blind and knew nothing, so they would beat me more and more.

Young male, blind, arrested from a school, held for a total of 38 days, initially in a pit in the ground, before being transferred to unknown locations and Zikim camp.

When I was on the berm, there was a detainee with us who was in a wheelchair and disabled. I saw the soldiers ordering him to stand up despite his disability. He tried to obey their orders and to stand up, but he fell on the ground. They also ordered him to take off his clothes despite his disability, it was an inhumane scene.

Male, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 32 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities.

One detainee also reported how the elderly were targeted because they were not moving fast enough, while one reported how a detainee on his way to dialysis was beaten.

There were elderly men walking slowly and arriving late, so the soldiers severely beat them with their hands, feet, and batons.

42-year-old male, construction worker, arrested from UNWRA school in Gaza City - Jabalia, held for a total of 24 days, initially in Zikim military base before being transferred to unidentified military detention facilities in Erez and Beersheba.⁸⁸

Nevertheless, they subjected the sick detainees to ill-treatment and refused to give them their medicine. One of the detainees next to me was a kidney patient who was beaten while on his way in the ambulance to undergo dialysis.

36-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Beit Lahia, held for a total of 38 days in an unidentified military detention facility.

Upon arrest, interviewees were immediately put in a position of inferiority. Often blindfolded and handcuffed, many were forced to undress, leaving them disoriented and powerless, in full control of the Israeli soldiers. This environment of coercion and subjugation began at the point of arrest and persisted throughout their detention.

Most detainees were held for a long period of time in such conditions, with an average of 50 days, and the longest detention lasting 257 days. During this period, most detainees were held incommunicado, denied all contact with the outside world, including access to a judge and legal representation, leaving them completely isolated and vulnerable.

During their detention, PCHR documented consistent patterns of ill-treatment, including sexual violence, revealing the institutionalisation of abuse and the manner and the method used. PCHR found that Israeli authorities used specific, well-known, methods of ill-treatment employed during interrogation and detention. All detainees were kept in inhumane conditions, characterised by an environment of pervasive psychological and physical ill-treatment. Conditions in the military facilities, where 95% of the interviewees were held, were particularly dire, with some describing them as uninhabitable and unfit, even for animals. (for more details, see Sections II.A.).

All interviewees, including children, reported being interrogated by Israeli soldiers or intelligence officers at least once, with some facing it daily and/or prolonged interrogation. During these sessions, intense forms of ill-treatment were inflicted upon them, such as electrocution or violent forms of suspension (for more details, see Section II.B.i.). The ill-treatment continued throughout the entire detention period, and even during release.

⁸⁸-The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

This ill-treatment was compounded by detainees' isolation from their families, with many unaware of their families' survival or whereabouts, and the lack of information about their own fate while they were continuously moved between facilities, left disoriented and deprived of any due process, including information as to when or how their detention would end. As a result, detainees remained in a constant state of terror and distress and suffered severe health and social consequences (See Section II.C.).

PCHR's analysis further reveals that the treatment of Palestinian men and women detainees was shaped by gender-specific tactics designed to exploit cultural, societal, and religious norms and increase the impact of the ill-treatment. For men, mainly detained in military facilities, extreme violence and acts of emasculation appeared to be used to strip them of their dignity and masculinity, amplifying both the physical pain and emotional trauma. Emasculation was carried out through various forms of ill-treatment, including sexualised violence, such as forced public nudity, humiliating strip-searches, physical ill-treatment while naked, sometimes in diapers or targeting the genitals. Forced public nudity was a particularly degrading tactic used to emasculate men and strip them of their dignity and social standing. Men were forced to undress in front of their families and neighbours, handcuffed, blindfolded, and left in this state for prolonged periods. In addition to this, they were photographed and transferred in their underwear, with some images later published on social media and in the press.⁸⁹ By making detainees undress in front of each other or having women and other family members looking at undressed men, the IOF weaponised cultural shame to undermine their masculinity, pride, and social role as protectors.

Although women were less frequently arrested, their treatment in detention also revealed a systematic use of sexualised violence designed to exploit cultural, societal, and religious norms and inflict more harm. PCHR's analysis shows an overall pattern of sexualising women through acts linked to their sexuality, desirability, and reproductive capacity. More particularly, female interviewees reported being subjected to forced nudity designed to degrade and humiliate them in a sexualised manner, being sexually assaulted and threatened with sexual violence (for more details, Section II.B.ii. "Sexual violence"), intensifying their sense of degradation and humiliation.

Additionally, female detainees were threatened with further targeted ill-treatment, including harm to their families, heightening their fear and psychological suffering by targeting their maternal roles and responsibilities as caregivers.

⁸⁹- See for example, Middle East Eye (2024). Woman in Gaza tortured and separated from children for 54 days by Israeli forces, YouTube. Available [here](#); Schlein, L. (2024). UN Accuses Israel of Detaining, Mistreating Thousands of Palestinians, Voices of America. Available [here](#). Middle East Monitor (2024). Israeli soldiers humiliate kidnapped Palestinians, Instagram. Available [here](#).

PCHR also found that mothers of young children appeared to have been specifically targeted. Among the ten interviewed women, half were arrested while with their young children. They were forced to abandon them, some as young as 9 months old, without knowing their fate or, in some cases, without having anyone to care for them. As a result, these mothers faced overwhelming emotional distress.

I cried so much thinking about my kids, I wanted to know if they were fine and hear their voices, and whenever I asked the female and male soldiers there to let me call them, they would start laughing and offensively insulted me.

26-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 50 days, initially in an unidentified military detention facility before being transferred to Camp Anatot, Damon Prison and Beersheba Prison.

In light of the above, PCHR finds that the ill-treatment, described in Section II, was inflicted by act of omission, on the 100 interviewees and caused severe pain and suffering.

2. Prohibited Purposes

Some definitions of torture also require that the pain and suffering be accompanied by a specific prohibited purpose (UNCAT and war crimes). This includes, though not exhaustively, purposes such as obtaining information or a confession, punishing, intimidating or coercing the victim or a third person, or discriminating, on any ground, against the victim or a third person. In the case of *Furundžija*, the ICTY also recognised humiliation as an additional purpose.⁹⁰ Importantly, the prohibited purpose need not be the sole or the main purpose of the act or omission in question.⁹¹

Based on the testimonies, PCHR's analysis shows how the acts of ill-treatment served specific purposes, namely: (i) discrimination against the detainees based of their nationality and religion, (ii) humiliation and dehumanisation of the Palestinian population; (iii) punishment; and (iv) obtaining information on the Palestinian resistance groups or confessions.

Discriminatory Purpose

All interviewees were Muslim Palestinians from Gaza ranging in age from minors to the elderly (15-75). Based on the information received from all interviewees, PCHR finds that the ill-treatment aimed to discriminate against Palestinians from Gaza on the basis of their religion and nationality. PCHR's analysis suggests that such exploitation was not incidental, but rather appeared to be part of a deliberate strategy by which Israelis sought to amplify the suffering inflicted on the victims, making the abuse more personal and more deeply traumatic.

⁹⁰- *Furundžija* (n41) para. 162.

⁹¹- ICTY (2016). *Prosecutor v. Karadžić*, Trial Judgment, No. IT-95-5/18-T, para. 508; ICTY (2007). *Mrkšić* (n53) para. 515; ICTY (2001). *Prosecutor v. Celebici*, Trial Judgment, No. IT-95-10-T, para. 470; *Kvočka* (n53) paras 140 and 153; *Limaj* (n53) para. 239.

PCHR finds that individuals were systematically targeted due to their nationality. All detainees were Palestinians from Gaza, including workers who had been in Israel at the time of their arrest. They were all arrested under the 'Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law' and held in the same detention facilities, segregated from other detainees, including Palestinians from the West Bank (with the exception of women). Special military camps were established specifically for their detention, where conditions and treatment were particularly violent.

Several detainees also reported being subjected to acts of deliberate humiliation targeting their national identity and nationality, such as being forced to kiss the Israeli flag or sing 'Long Live Israel' and beaten if they refused. These actions are direct attacks on Palestinian identity, history, and resistance, representing more than just acts of physical or psychological ill-treatment – they symbolized an assertion of dominance over the detainees, enforcing submission to the State of Israel. Detainees were also photographed with the Israeli flag, creating evidence of this submission that could have long-lasting effects on the life of the victims. This form of ill-treatment was a clear demonstration of power and control, aimed at reinforcing the Palestinians' subjugation and the occupation.

Interviewees also reported several forms of discrimination in detention based on religious grounds. For instance, prayer, a fundamental practice for Muslims, was often restricted or outright denied, and, when allowed, was used as an opportunity to subject detainees to further abuse. Such restrictions not only disrupted their spiritual routines but also added to their psychological distress (for more details see Section II.B.ii.).

Some women were also denied the right to wear their hijabs. One woman even reported having men in their underwear thrown at her during this vulnerable state. The removal of a hijab is a violation of a woman's cultural and religious identity. Being forced to remove it, especially in front of male soldiers and other fellow Palestinians, served as a targeted act of humiliation and degradation.

Additionally, PCHR's analysis reveals the use of dogs for humiliation and inflicting physical pain (see Section II.B.ii.), as well as the use of dog-related insults. Subjecting anyone, regardless of their religion or culture, to being called a dog or being walked or urinated on by dogs is deeply offensive and dehumanising. For Muslims, this carries additional layers of meaning and offense due to cultural and religious connotations, well-known to Israelis. In many Muslim cultures, including in Palestine, dogs are considered unclean animals – being compared or subjected to dogs can be particularly humiliating and hurtful, in addition to being dehumanising.

Humiliation and Dehumanisation

PCHR finds that the ill-treatment in detention was strategically utilised to humiliate and dehumanise victims, and the Palestinian community as a whole. This deliberate degradation served to strip detainees of their dignity, reducing them to a state of subhuman existence and exacerbating the psychological and emotional toll of their imprisonment. The humiliation and dehumanisation of Palestinian detainees were evident both in the conditions of detention and in the methods of ill-treatment used.

Detainees were kept handcuffed and blindfolded for the entire duration of their detention, with restricted communication among themselves, fostering a sense of isolation and helplessness. Detainees reported being treated like slaves, kept in conditions not even suitable for animals. Soldiers frequently referred to them as ‘inhuman’, ‘animals’, ‘dogs’ or ‘human animals’, not deserving to live.

Ill-treatment was also used as a form of entertainment for Israeli soldiers, aimed to humiliate, dehumanise, and demoralise the detainees, reinforcing their sense of powerlessness and worthlessness.

They were constantly insulting us with the most offensive and degrading swears, including but not limited to ‘You are animals, and you are not human beings’. One of the soldiers told us, ‘We are giving you food only to keep you alive, and we do not care about you or your health. You will all die if not today it will be tomorrow. We are just having fun.’

43-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 37 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to various unidentified military detention facilities, as well as Zikim camp and Givati Brigade Outpost.

Finally, PCHR’s data indicates that Israeli authorities exploited the victims’ gender and personal vulnerabilities to humiliate them and strip them of their dignity (see Section III.B.1.).

Punishment

PCHR also finds that the acts of torture were inflicted both as a form of collective punishment against Palestinians from Gaza for the events on 7 October 2023 and as a response to minor infractions committed by detainees.

During their detention and interrogation, interviewees were accused of being affiliated with Hamas and other groups, either by working for them or having family members linked to them, and therefore responsible for the events on 7 October. Detainees were subjected to physical and psychological ill-treatment as a result. This collective punishment aimed to instil a sense of guilt and fear within the community, suggesting that any resistance would lead to harsh consequences for everyone.

Additionally, ill-treatment was systematically used to instil fear and ensure compliance. Detainees were subjected to punishment for minor infractions, such as complaining, failing to comply with orders, or attempting to move, often resulting in more stressful and painful conditions, such as being forced into stress positions or subjected to further beatings. Such practices created an extremely coercive and degrading environment, designed to break the will of the detainees.

More particularly, many interviewees reported being punished when requesting medical attention. This took the form of humiliation and/or physical ill-treatment, such as beatings and attacks by dogs. For example, one interviewee reported that he was beaten more whenever he asked to see a doctor because of pain and bleeding in his eyes due to beatings. When he was finally taken to the doctor, he was beaten on the way there by five soldiers. On arrival at the clinic, the soldiers forced him to sit in a wheelchair as they mocked him and pushed the chair to the floor.

In another incident, interviewees described how some detainees decided to go on a hunger strike to protest the torture and ill-treatment. In response, they faced ill-treatment, insults, threats, and intimidation from soldiers.

On day eight of detention, we started a hunger strike due to the torture and deplorable conditions to which we were subjected. As a result, the officers threatened that if we went on with our hunger strike, the torture and solitary confinement would scale up.

Afterwards, soldiers broke in with their dogs which attacked us while the soldiers were beating us with their weapons on our heads and punching our waists and limbs. The dogs peed on us amid constant beatings by the soldiers.

36-year-old male, arrested from a checkpoint in Khan Younis, held for a total of 50 days at two different unidentified military detention facilities, including in Khan Younis.⁹²

Obtaining Information on the Palestinian Resistance Groups and Confessions

Interviewees also reported ill-treatment during interrogations aimed at extracting information, confessions, or information. All, including children, reported being interrogated by Israeli soldiers or intelligence officers at least once, with some facing it daily. The questioning often focused on similar topics, including whether they or their family members were affiliated with Hamas or other groups, their activities on 7 October, the location of tunnels and hostages, or whether they had any connections to individuals involved in the events of that day. Interrogations often involved physical and psychological ill-treatment.

⁹²- The full interview is available on PCHR's website [here](#).

Detainees were coerced into confessing or providing the requested information with physical and psychological violence. They were punished with beatings and insults if their responses were deemed unsatisfactory by the interrogators. Others were offered promises of preferential treatment, money, medical care, or release in exchange for information. Some interviewees also reported being pressured to confess to false accusations (for more information about the ill-treatment during interrogation see Section II.B.i.).

3. Involvement of a Public Official/Control or Custody

Finally, some definitions of torture require the involvement of a public official, directly or through acquiescence (UNCAT) or that the victim be in the custody or under the control of the perpetrator (crime against humanity). All interviewees reported that their ill-treatment was inflicted while in Israeli custody, while under the control of various Israeli public officials, including unidentified Israeli soldiers, unidentified members of intelligence service agencies such as Shin Bet, Mossad, and other unidentified military intelligence investigators, as well as unidentified IPS personal.

Doctors, working in military facilities and prisons, were also reported to have contributed to their ill-treatment by failing to provide the necessary medical assistance to injured detainees or detainees with chronic diseases, and in some cases inflicting additional suffering (see Section II.A.).

4. Intent

Finally, PCHR finds that these acts of ill-treatment were intentionally inflicted by the perpetrators, based on the nature and duration of the abuse, the methods employed (e.g., beating with various objects, suspension, or electroshocks), the combination of different forms of ill-treatment, including threats and humiliation, and the dire and coercive conditions under which the victims were detained throughout their detention. Consequently, the perpetrators either had the intention to inflict severe mental and physical pain and suffering on the detainees, or they knew that their acts or omissions were likely to cause such harm.

ii. Conclusion

PCHR concludes that the treatment of the 100 Palestinians from Gaza arrested between October 2023 and 2024 by the IOF and held in military facilities and prisons across Gaza, Israel, and other Occupied Palestinian Territory, meets the elements of torture under international law.

First, the treatment inflicted severe pain and suffering, both physical and psychological. Second, the treatment served three specific purposes: a discriminatory purpose on the basis of nationality and religious grounds; the purpose of humiliation and dehumanisation; and it was used both as a punishment and the purpose of obtaining information or confessions. Finally, this pain and suffering was intentionally inflicted by public officials, namely members of the IOF, Israeli Intelligence agencies, and IPS, while the victims were in their custody.

C. Torture and the Genocide

While killing is the most apparent form of genocide, other methods involve means of destruction that do not always result in immediate death and are designed to cause the destruction of the group over time. Examples of such methods, recognised by international jurisprudence, include torture, inhumane or degrading treatment or sexual violence.⁹³ This recognition by international courts that torture can form part of a genocidal campaign reinforces the role of torture as a method of destruction that can be just as effective as killing in fulfilling the genocidal goals of those who seek to erase a group's existence.

Drawing on the testimonies of the 100 former detainees, this section examines how Israel has employed torture as a tool in its genocidal campaign. The testimonies also offer crucial insights into the genocidal intent of the direct perpetrators and reveal how this intent, originating from the highest levels of the Israeli government, has manifested on the ground.

i. Torture as a Genocidal Act

Under international law, torture can constitute an act of genocide, when it is carried out with genocidal intent. Among the five acts of genocide listed in the Rome Statute and the Genocide Convention, two are relevant to the torture of Palestinians from Gaza documented by PCHR:

- (i) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the Palestinian group during their detention in Israeli facilities where they were subjected to torture, including sexual violence.
- (ii) Inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction. The conditions are inhumane living conditions imposed on detainees during their detention and post-release.

These acts were committed against individuals as members of the Palestinian group which has been recognised as having protected status under the Genocide Convention.⁹⁴

⁹³- See n47-48.

⁹⁴- In its provisional order dated 26 January 2024, the ICJ in *South Africa v. Israel* recognised the Palestinians in Gaza as a protected group under the Genocide Convention. ICJ (2024). *South Africa v. Israel*, Order of 26 January, para. 45.

1. Causing Serious Bodily or Mental Harm

PCHR finds that serious bodily and mental harm, through acts of torture, including sexual violence, was inflicted upon Palestinian detainees who managed to survive the torture and were interviewed as part of this report.

In international criminal law, to amount to genocide, the bodily or mental harm caused must be of such a serious nature as to contribute or tend to contribute to the destruction of all or part of the group. While the harm need not be permanent or irreversible, it must inflict grave and long-term disadvantages to a person's ability to lead a normal and productive life. It must go beyond temporary suffering, embarrassment, or humiliation.⁹⁵

The acts causing such harm include acts of torture, as well as other acts such as inhumane or degrading treatment, sexual violence, including rape, interrogations combined with beatings, threats of death, and harm that damages health or causes disfigurement or injury.⁹⁶ For example, the ICTY found that the ill-treatment experienced by Bosnian Muslim men in detention, which mirrors the experiences reported by Palestinians – such as regular beatings, electrocution, denial of medical care, forced witnessing of the abuse of others, ethnic slurs, or threats of death – resulted in serious bodily and mental harm.⁹⁷

In the context of Gaza, PCHR has already established that torture was committed (see Section III.B.). These acts were described in detail in Sections II, and several examples of the extreme forms of physical and psychological ill-treatment were provided. More particularly, PCHR found that the torture followed consistent patterns across all detention facilities and for all interviewees, characterised by brutal and intimidating interrogation techniques, dire conditions of detention, and the combination of various well-known methods of torture, such as repeated beatings, suspension, electrocution, forced stress positions, or psychological violence.

There is no doubt that the suffering inflicted on Palestinians from Gaza during their arrest, detention, and release was of the most serious nature, especially as they were detained for long periods of time, denied medical care, and forced to watch relatives and co-detainees being tortured.

⁹⁵- See, for example, ICTR (2003). *Prosecutor v. Kajelijeli*, Appeal Judgment and Sentence, No. ICTR-S8-44A-T, para. 814; ICTR (2008). *Prosecutor v. Seromba*, Appeal Judgment, No. ICTR-2001-66-A, para. 46; ICTY (2006). *Prosecutor v. Krajišnik*, Trial Judgment, No. IT-00-39-T, para. 862; ICTY (2015). *Prosecutor v. Tolimir*, Appeal Judgment, No. IT-05-88/2-A, para. 201; ICTY (2016). *Prosecutor v. Karadzic*, Judgment, No. IT-95-5/18-T, para. 543; ICJ (2015). *Croatia v. Serbia*, Judgment, para. 157.

⁹⁶- See n47.

⁹⁷- Brdjanin (n47) paras 744-903.



Since the testimonies used for this report were mostly conducted immediately or shortly after the person’s release and the conflict is still ongoing, they only provide an insight into the conditions and circumstances at that time. Therefore, it has not been possible to assess the exact long-term consequences of the endured ill-treatment for all interviewees. To fully understand the long-term impact of torture on the overall Palestinian population, further investigation is essential. However, even if collected shortly after release, PCHR’s preliminary data already shows that former detainees have suffered serious physical and psychological consequences (see Section II.C.).

Several former detainees were interviewed by PCHR more than two months after their release and already described experiencing serious health consequences, which will likely inflict grave and long-term disadvantages to their ability to lead a normal and productive life.

For example, interviewees reported experiencing mental trauma, persisting after their release, including depression, anxiety, feeling helpless, “mental tiredness”, “psychological devastation,” or “psychologically destroyed”, or having suicidal thoughts. A mother shared that she thought about leaving her children and had not yet recovered from the effect and stress of her detention. Another former detainee reported not feeling himself anymore, feeling “unstable” and “soulless”. Fear of being rearrested causing sleep deprivation was also reported by an interviewee. Another testified: ‘I am extremely tired as I suffer from shortness of breath. I feel so lonely, and fear controls me. I cry for hours every day, no longer bearing to stay separated from my family.’

Torture also inflicted severe bodily harm, which resulted in several cases in permanent injury. As demonstrated in Section II.C., interviewees reported lingering pain or loss of sensation in the hand and feet and other body parts, earing loss, nerve damage, damage to limbs and skeleton, including injuries resulting in amputation of the foot, fractures of breastbone, vertebrae, and ribs, dislocation of joint, herniated discs, and reduced mobility in the neck. Some detainees developed ulcers and cyst as a result of their detention and torture.

The examples below provide a perfect illustration of the effect of the torture on former detainees:

My psychological state is severely affected due to what I endured and what happened to us during my detention and the torture I experienced, in addition to my health condition even after my release from prison. The Israeli occupation soldiers left various scars and wounds on my body due to the extent of the torture I suffered, and these scars remain visible on my body. The scars had a direct impact on my physical condition, with most of them located on my back.

57-year-old male, Gaza worker, arrested in Israel, held for a total of 28 days, initially at a checkpoint in Israel before being transferred to Ofer prison and Al-Moskobiya detention centre. He was interviewed 251 days after his release.

After my release, I began suffering from numbness in my knees and joint pain due to the uncomfortable sitting positions in detention. When I sit for long periods, I find it difficult to stand up easily. I have to remain lying down in the tent as much as possible to rest my body. I also witness the suffering of my children as they struggle to secure the most basic necessities of life, such as water and food.

52-year-old male, businessman, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 28 days, initially in a private home and an open area before being transferred to an unidentified military detention facility.

This water caused me severe stomach ache. Even after my release, I am still being treated for stomach issues caused by drinking this water, suffering from H. pylori in my stomach due to the water I had been drinking in detention. I also suffered from a rib bone fracture in the right backside of my ribcage as I had been severely beaten by the soldiers at the bus doors during the transfers between the barracks.

42-year-old male, arrested at Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 66 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to four different unknown military camps, as well as Ofer prison and the Negev prison. He was interviewed 189 days after his release.

I continue to suffer from back pain to this day and find it difficult to sleep due to the effects of having slept on the sharp gravel ground in the barracks.

42-year-old male, Gaza worker, arrested in the West Bank, held for a total of 33 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to Ofer prison and three different military camps. He was interviewed 176 days after his release.

I was hoping that the next morning would not come, and I would die. ‘I really hoped to die.’ The reality of the strikes made me feel extremely humiliated, especially given my high status in the neighbourhood and at home. Imagine telling your family and friends what happened to you. [...] I was severely beaten by one of the soldiers, resulting in three broken ribs in my chest. [...] The pain is still all over my body and I cannot move or stand. The scars from the plastic ties are still on my hands. Whenever I look at them, I remember what happened to me inside the detention centre and how helpless I was, unable to even defend myself. From time to time, I also feel pain in my chest from the fracture I suffered.

31-year-old male, arrested at Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 53 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to an unknown military camp and the Negev prison. He was interviewed 151 days after his release.

After two or three days, I went to the [...] hospital for treatment because my shoulder was hurting from the demolition tool, and it had dislocated. At the hospital, they scheduled me for surgery for Haemorrhoids because I had been suffering from constipation due to a lack of food, as I had only been eating salty biscuits while being used as a human shield (and I did not undergo the surgery). I developed a nervous condition, and my voice became loud, causing me to yell at my children over the slightest things.

44-year-old male, arrested at home, held for a total of 15 days, in various private buildings inside Gaza. He was interviewed 140 days after his release.

My health condition was affected, and my body had a set of scars and wounds due to the Shabh and torture, in addition to my hearing being affected and I have difficulty hearing because I was repeatedly and deliberately beaten on my ears. As a result of the torture and constant Shabh throughout the period of detention, my body was left with a series of wounds and scars, and I was in pain and wished to die. These wounds and scars remain on my body to this day. My limbs are sometimes numb, and I cannot move them. I also suffered a wound on my head that led to blood loss, but no medical attention or any medical care was provided to me.

30-year-old male, Gaza worker, arrested in Israel, held for a total of 160 days, initially at an unknown location before being transferred to Ofer prison. He was interviewed 85 days after his release.

Many are also highly vulnerable to enduring long-term consequences, including physical disability and mental health consequences, as a result of their detention. Common long-term psychological consequences of torture include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).⁹⁸ PTSD is a common consequence of experiencing stressful or frightening events and has been well-documented in relation to war and detention.⁹⁹ Other long-lasting symptoms from torture include avoidance, intrusive memories self-isolation, chronic pain, anger, and low self-esteem.¹⁰⁰

In general, the psychological consequences of torture are often the most difficult to treat and may persist for years. For the interviewees this is exacerbated by the context in which they have been released, i.e., loss of family members, property and livelihood, displacement, and struggles to obtain basic necessities such as food and water. The destruction of the health system also means that few will access sustained mental health support.

Ill-treatment is not only an individual experience. Survivors' families are also affected when their behaviour changes as is common in traumatized individuals, or if they are no longer able to generate an income through work due to either physical or mental health consequences or to simply care for their loved ones. Research has demonstrated the biologic impact of trauma across generations potentially resulting in adverse somatic and psychiatric effects in children.¹⁰¹ In the context of the Israeli occupation where reconciliation and redress are not delivered, and the threat of future ill-treatment remains, so does a sense of continuous insecurity. Further, the concept of collective trauma has been documented in contexts where entire communities faced ill-treatment or conflict resulting in long-term psychological harm.¹⁰² Inter-generational trauma is a real and present problem among Palestinians faced with decades of traumatic experiences, and is only likely to be augmented in the current context.

Such harm is therefore not transient but enduring, potentially lasting across generations, as individuals and the Palestinian community from Gaza find themselves debilitated by the aftermath. Moreover, the intentional targeting of men of military age, especially those holding key functions, will have far-reaching implications for the cohesion and survival of the group. Many individuals targeted were health professionals and doctors, vital pillars of the community, who play an essential role to treat the illnesses and injuries caused by the Israeli attacks and war on Gaza. These individuals are essential to the group's structural integrity. The systematic detention and torture of these individuals create a severe gap in essential medical services or other relevant sectors, leaving the group vulnerable to both existing and new health crises and death.

98- Steel, Z. et al. (2009). 'Association of torture and other potentially traumatic events with mental health outcomes among populations exposed to mass conflict and displacement: A systematic review and meta-analysis'. *JAMA*, 302(5), 537–549. doi:10.1001/jama.2009.1132.

99- Shahmiri Barzoki, H., et al. (2023). 'Studying the Prevalence of PTSD in Veterans, Combatants and Freed Soldiers of Iran-Iraq War: A Systematic and Meta-analysis Review'. *Psychology, Health & Medicine*, 28(3), pp. 812–818. doi:10.1080/13548506.2021.1981408.

100- Kivlahan C. Et al. (2023). 'Long-term physical and psychological symptoms in Syrian men subjected to detention, conflict-related sexual violence and torture: cohort study of self-reported symptom evolution'. *The Lancet*. Vol 67. doi.org/10.1016/j.eclinm.2023.102373.

101- Ryan, J. et al. (2024). 'An epigenome-wide study of a needs-based family intervention for offspring of trauma-exposed mothers in Kosovo'. *Brain Behav*, 14(9), e70029. doi:10.1002/brb3.70029.

102- Mahamid, F. A. (2020). 'Collective Trauma, Quality of Life and Resilience in Narratives of Third Generation Palestinian Refugee Children'. *Child Indicators Research*, 13(6), pp. 2181–2204. doi: 10.1007/s12187-020-09739-3.

In conclusion, PCHR finds that the treatment of Palestinians from Gaza in Israeli custody constitute the act of ‘causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group.’ The bodily and mental harm, through acts of torture, was of such a serious nature as to contribute or tend to contribute to the destruction of all or part of the Palestinian group, in that it inflicted and will continue to inflict grave and long-term disadvantages to the victims’ ability to lead a normal and constructive life.

2. Inflicting on the Group Conditions of Life Calculated to Bring About Their Physical Destruction



PCHR also finds that Israelis inflicted conditions of life, namely inhumane living conditions imposed on Palestinian detainees during detention and post-release, calculated to bring about the physical destruction of the Palestinian group.

Inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction refers to methods of destruction that do not immediately kill the members of the group, but ultimately seek their physical destruction.¹⁰³ They include methods of destruction apart from direct killings such as subjecting the group to a subsistence diet, systematic expulsion from homes, denial of the right to medical services, as well as the creation of circumstances that would lead to a slow death, such as lack of proper housing, clothing and hygiene or excessive work or physical exertion.¹⁰⁴ Contrary to the act of causing serious bodily and mental harm, this act does not require proof that a result was attained.¹⁰⁵

In the absence of direct evidence, when assessing whether the “conditions of life” amounted to conditions likely to contribute to the physical destruction of a group, the ICTY has focused on the objective probability of these conditions leading to harm. This assessment takes into account the actual nature of the conditions and the duration for which individuals were subjected to them.

¹⁰³- ICTR (1998). *Prosecutor v. Akayesu*, Trial Judgment, No. ICTR-96-4-T, para. 505; Rutaganda (n47) para. 52; Musema (n47) para. 157; Stakić (n47) paras. 517-518; ICTY (2010). *Prosecutor v. Popović et al.*, Trial Judgment, No. IT-05-88-T, para. 814.

¹⁰⁴- See, for example, Akayesu (n57) paras 505-506; Stakić (n47) para. 517; Brdjanin (n47) para. 691; Tolimir, Appeal Judgment (n59) paras 225-26. See also Rutaganda (n47) para 50. ICTR (2001). *Prosecutor v. Kayishema*, Trial Judgment, No. ICTR-95-1-T, paras. 115-116; Brdjanin (n47) para. 691.

¹⁰⁵- Karadžić (n56) para. 546.

Additionally, when available, factors such as the specific characteristics of the group members targeted by these conditions are considered.¹⁰⁶ For example, conditions in Serbian camps during the Former Yugoslavia war, which resembled conditions in Israeli facilities, were found to inflict conditions of life calculated to bring about the physical destruction of the Bosnian Muslim group. The ICTY found that subjecting detainees to inhumane living conditions by depriving them of adequate food, water, medical care, sleeping and toilet facilities amounted to an act of genocide.¹⁰⁷ Detainees were kept in overcrowded camps with poor hygiene, inadequate food, and limited water. The camps were infested with lice, lacked running water or bathing facilities, and detainees had to use buckets as toilets. The food was minimal, consisting of only a thin broth and bread, leading to severe malnutrition. Water was scarce and of poor quality, causing widespread health issues.¹⁰⁸

With regard to Palestinians from Gaza, the conditions in Israeli military detention facilities and prisons, described in detail in Section II.A., were particularly brutal and inhumane. They included lack of or inadequate access to food and water, inadequate or non-existent medical care, inadequate hygiene and lack of space. For example, in the Zikim or Anatot military camps, female and female detainees were tightly handcuffed and blindfolded, even while sleeping, and some were forced to kneel all day long. They were given meagre rations, meals consisting for example of labneh and toast. No drinking water was provided. Bathroom facilities, when available, could only be used while handcuffed. Detainees were awakened several times during the night, forced to kneel and threatened with being shot. In addition to the detention centres mentioned above, PCHR's analysis reveals that inhumane living conditions were reported in all the other detention facilities mentioned by interviewees and continue to be inflicted on detainees currently detained. Most of the detention facilities functioned as long-term detention centres, where detainees were subjected to inhumane living conditions for several weeks and months. Several interviewees, who survived detention, testified to witnessing fellow detainees dying as a result of such conditions.

These inhumane living conditions continued even after their release. Detainees were deliberately released in a very poor state of health, many suffering from untreated injuries and illnesses sustained during their detention. They were denied adequate medical care while in Israeli custody, and upon release were deliberately returned to a war zone where Israeli soldiers knew full well that access to medical care would be impossible.

¹⁰⁶- Brdjanin (n47) para. 906.

¹⁰⁷- ICTY (2003). Prosecutor v. Nikolić, Sentencing Judgment, No. IT-94-2-S, para. 69; Brdjanin (n47) para. 906.

¹⁰⁸- Brdjanin (n47) paras 910 et al.

Gaza's already shattered health system, decimated by Israeli attacks and blockade, lacks the necessary doctors, specialists, hospitals, and medicines needed to treat their injuries and trauma. Additionally, the interviewees were released into a situation where they had no shelter or safe place to rest, heal, or recover as their homes had been destroyed by the IOF, sometimes in front of them, or they were unable to return home due to the conflict. Their suffering continued as they faced constant displacement, bombings, and a lack of basic necessities, such as food, water, clothing, sanitation and medical care, leaving them weakened, in a state of constant fear and insecurity, constantly at risk of death or re-arrest. This deliberate disregard for their well-being has left many former detainees trapped in a cycle of deep physical and psychological trauma, unable to heal and recover, let alone resume normal life.

This testimony perfectly illustrates the fate of detainees released by Israel:

Our lives as displaced people in the tent are incredibly difficult. Our bodies are becoming frail from the prolonged suffering, and the weakness was apparent from the days we spent in detention, along with the scarcity of food. Life is just as hard as it had been in the detention centre. The constant shelling, hunger, and lack of basic resources is affecting us greatly, especially since we are all children and can't meet our basic needs. We endured this hardship until mid-May 2024, when the Israeli army launched a ground invasion in Rafah. We were forced to flee from [redacted] to [redacted].

In mid-June 2024, my father and my uncles were released from detention, and they stayed together in a tent at [redacted]. To this day, we continue to suffer alongside my uncle's widow in a school in [redacted].

15-year-old boy detained with his 11-year-old brother and cousins aged 12-15, arrested from a private home, held for a total of 58 days, in a pit in the ground and a house.

PCHR has considered the overall effect of the conditions of life imposed on the interviewees, both during and after their detention. Israeli authorities established and maintained inhumane living conditions in all the detention facilities where Palestinians were subjected to torture and deliberately released them in worse conditions. PCHR finds that the combined effect of these conditions, still being experienced by the victims, will have a devastating effect on the physical survival of the Palestinian population of Gaza. PCHR concludes that these conditions of life were deliberately designed by the Israeli army to induce a slow death, diminishing the chances of survival for torture victims caught in the midst of its ongoing military attacks and blockade. This strategy was calculated to bring about the physical destruction of the Palestinian group.

ii. Genocidal Intent

For the acts described above to amount to genocide, they must be committed with a specific intent, the intent to destroy in whole or in part the Palestinian group, as such. This intent can be established through direct or indirect evidence. In international criminal law, if direct evidence of genocidal intent is absent, such intent can also be inferred from facts and circumstances, such as the general context, systematic targeting of the group, the scale of atrocities, the presence of a plan or policy, or the repetition of destructive and discriminatory acts.¹⁰⁹ The use of “derogatory language” towards members of the targeted group can also be considered as evidence of genocidal intent.¹¹⁰ Where an inference needs to be drawn, it has to be the only reasonable inference available.¹¹¹

The genocide in Gaza involves multiple levels of actors, from low military rank officers to senior Israeli officials. As mentioned above, the findings presented in this section are limited to the cases documented by PCHR, and do not seek to establish broader conclusions regarding the genocidal intent of senior Israeli officials. A more comprehensive analysis addressing the broader scope of genocide has been conducted in a separate report by PCHR.

This section offers a focused, in-depth exploration of the genocidal intent of the direct perpetrators. By examining how the genocide, initiated at the highest levels of the state, trickled down to those executing the actions in the field, this section contributes an understanding of the implementation and operationalisation of genocidal policies on the ground. To achieve this, PCHR analysed the 100 testimonies through this lens, extracting relevant information that supports the inference of genocidal intent of direct perpetrators. Some of the data presented in Sections III.B. (The torture of Palestinians from Gaza) and C.i. (Torture as a genocidal act) were re-examined with this focus. The analysis is organised into two parts: (1) direct evidence of genocidal intent through the statements made by the direct perpetrators; and (2) indirect evidence of genocidal intent through the patterns of conduct exhibited by the perpetrators, including the targeting of all sectors of the Palestinian community, the use of dehumanising/derogatory language, the scale of the torture and ill-treatment across all detention facilities, as well as the systematic and deliberate release of detainees in poor health or injured into a war zone.

¹⁰⁹ ICTY (2013), *Prosecutor v Karadžić*, Appeal Judgment, No. IT-95-5/18-AR98bis.1, para. 80; Tolimir, Appeal Judgment (n59) para. 246; ICTR (2005), *Prosecutor v. Muhimana*, Judgment, No. ICTR-95-1B-T, para. 496 ; Gacumbitsi (n47) para. 252; Kajelijeli (n59) para. 806.

¹¹⁰ See, for example, Akayesu (n57) para. 728; Kayishema (n68) para. 93; Gacumbitsi (n47) paras. 253; ICTR (2006), *Prosecutor v. Gacumbitsi*, Appeal Judgment, No. ICTR-2001-64-A, para. 43; Karadžić (n56) para. 550; ICTY (2006), *Prosecutor v. Stakić*, Appeal Judgment, No. : IT-97-24-A, para. 52.

¹¹¹ Brđjanin (n47) para. 970. See also ICTR (2008), *Prosecutor v. Hategekimana*, Appeal Judgment, No. ICTR-01-64-A, para. 133.

Direct Evidence of Genocidal Intent Through the Statements of Direct Perpetrators

Through the interviews with individuals who were detained and subjected to torture, PCHR collected several genocidal statements made by members of the Israeli military during their interactions with the detainees.

The destruction of Gaza and the eradication of its people were cited in the testimonies provided by the victims. This rhetoric did not seem to be merely incidental. These statements by IOF soldiers deployed in Gaza or in charge of Palestinian detainees expressly suggest that the Palestinian group in Gaza should be physically destroyed. In this context, PCHR concludes that the only reasonable inference to draw from these statements is that the respective speakers intended to physically destroy the Palestinian group.

She then threatened to bomb my house, and I told her that there were innocent people inside. She told me, ‘We will bomb them all and wipe off Gaza; we will bomb the innocents and non-innocents.’

31-year-old female, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 48 days, initially in at the checkpoint before being transferred to Zikim camp, Damon Prison, and an unidentified military detention facility.¹¹²

We were taken by bus to the barracks, a prison whose name and location I did not know, but which looked more like calf-housing barracks. All the way on the bus we were beaten and insulted, with threats to destroy Gaza and wipe out its people.

33-year-old male, arrested from a checkpoint in Khan Younis, held for a total of 64 days in two different unidentified military detention facilities, including in Jerusalem.

Constant death threats such as I will die, I do not deserve to live, and I and the rest of the Palestinians are human animals who do not deserve to live. Once, I was verbally threatened that they would rape me and all the others with ‘sodomy’ during my detention in the camp, which I believe was in Zikim. [...] They constantly insulted us with the most offensive and degrading insults, including, but not limited to ‘You are animals, and you are not human beings’. One of the soldiers told us, ‘We are only giving you food to keep you alive, and we do not care about you or your health. You will all die, if not today, it will be tomorrow. We are just having fun.’

43-year-old male, police officer, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 37 days, initially in a private home before being transferred to various unidentified military detention facilities, as well as Zikim camp and Givati Brigade Outpost.

¹¹²- The full interview is available on PCHR’s website [here](#).

The soldiers then ordered all the men to kneel on the street, one behind the other in a long line. The soldiers surrounded us and pointed their rifles at us while insulting and shouting at us, saying ‘you all deserve to die, you are all human animals.’ We were blindfolded and our hands and feet were tied. We remained in this painful position for about five hours straight. We were all extremely exhausted.

43-year-old male, arrested from a private home in Beit Lahia, held in various unidentified military detention facilities, including in the Negev and Jerusalem.

When I was in the detention site, I was violently dragged into interrogation and slapped by the interrogator, who shouted at me, hurled the most offensive insults, threatened me to destroy Gaza, and cursed Gaza and its residents.

44-year-old male, arrested from a checkpoint in Khan Younis, held for a total of 18 days in an unidentified military detention facility

During the interrogation, I was hurled with the worst insults (dog, donkey, son of a bitch, just wait and see what I will do to Gaza). The investigator offered me a cigarette, but I told him, ‘I do not smoke.’ He responded, ‘Did not Hamas teach you how to smoke?’ He then cursed me and Gaza while beating me on my genitalia.

33-year-old female, arrested from a private home in Gaza City, held for a total of 46 days, initially in a mosque before being transferred to Camp Anatot and Damon Prison.

Many patients were not given the medical treatment they needed as patients with chronic illnesses, were denied medical treatment and were left next to toilets. Whenever any of them asked for treatment, the officer and soldiers would reply ‘I don’t care about your health condition, may you all die’, amidst many insults and curses such as ‘Our dogs matter more than you.’

36-year-old male, arrested from a checkpoint in Khan Younis, held for a total of 50 days at two different unidentified military detention facilities, including in Khan Younis.¹¹³

The treatment towards me worsened once they learned I was from Shuja’iya neighbourhood as the torture and humiliation intensified. I heard soldiers say that they would burn Gaza with everything inside, including Shuja’iya, Al-Zaytoun, and Sheikh Radwan. They said they would raise the Israeli flag in Gaza and bring Abu Mazen to govern Gaza. These comments were deeply distressing and intensified my sense of helplessness and anger.

48-year-old male, arrested from Al-Shifa Hospital, held for a total of 56 days, initially held at the hospital, before being transferred to a military outpost and five military detention facilities.

¹¹³- The full interview is available on PCHR’s website [here](#).

The IOF and its personnel insulted us with abnormally bad language, and hearing that language made us feel extremely stressed and sad. They threatened me to assault my family like ‘we will rape your women’ and threatened to completely destroy the Gaza Strip.

39-year-old, male, arrested from Netzarim checkpoint, held for a total of 55 days, initially at the checkpoint before being transferred to an unidentified military detention facility, as well as Ofer and the Negev

I was subjected to vulgar and humiliating insults such as “dog”, “animal”, “son of a whore”, and “son of a prostitute”, which were constantly repeated by the soldiers. They told us as detainees that we were Hamas and that we deserved to die, and they insulted our religion and the divine (God), especially at the beginning of the detention.

38-year-old male, Gaza worker, arrested in Israel, held for a total of 46 days in a prison.

I was subjected to horrific verbal abuse and insults, with extremely offensive language that made me wish for death. The Israeli intelligence threatened to eliminate Hamas and the residents of the Gaza Strip, as well as anyone associated with or supportive of Hamas. They explicitly told me that we would be eradicated because of Hamas's policies.

57-year-old male, Gaza worker, arrested in Israel, held for a total of 28 days, initially at a checkpoint in Israel before being transferred to Ofer prison and Al-Moskobiya detention centre. He was interviewed 251 days after his release.

One soldier even openly admitted that the criminal acts committed by the IOF were carried out as a result of direct orders from the army.

‘Is Abu Mazen an angel: Abu Mazen is the biggest terrorist’ he said, and then I replied ‘Okay, what have I done, I have done nothing?’ and he said, ‘I know you have done nothing, but the army has orders. These are the army’s orders’.

43-year-old male, arrested from Netzarim Checkpoint, held for a total of 71 days, initially held at a military outpost, before being transferred to three unidentified military detention facilities, three police stations, as well as the Negev prison.

Indirect Evidence of Genocidal Intent Through Patterns of Conduct

The targeting of all ages and genders of the Palestinian community

All the victims interviewed by PCHR were civilians, predominantly men of military age or men holding key roles such as health professionals, public agents, a journalist, or a human rights defender. The arrests and detentions also extended to women and vulnerable groups, including minors, individuals with injuries or disabilities, and the elderly. In addition to the 100 interviewees, many testified being arrested alongside numerous others, with some reporting being detained in groups of up to several hundred people. One interviewee specifically recalled being held with as many as 800 other detainees.

All the interviewees reported being subjected to torture and witnessing others being tortured, demonstrating the indiscriminate nature of the targeting and the intent to affect the Palestinian group across various sectors of the population. 21 detainees were also reported to have died as a result of the ill-treatment.

More particularly, one interviewee testified that young men and residents of Northern Gaza received the most violent forms of ill-treatment. By focusing on young men, who are seen as the future of a community, and residents of specific areas, IOF soldiers appear to be attempting to eliminate key segments of the Palestinian population, both physically and psychologically, and from particular geographic areas (in line with the so-called Generals' Plan¹¹⁴). This focused violence, aimed at weakening the Palestinian group, constitutes a key element of genocidal intent, as it seeks to destroy the group by targeting its most vital members.

During the detention, I witnessed other detainees being tortured and beaten. They were taking revenge on the young generation, young men or residents of certain areas such as Shuja'iyah, Zeitoun, Jabalia camp and Beit Hanoun, as they beat them with their hands, feet and rifles so violently that blood flooded from their bodies, and unleashed dogs on them.

41-year-old male, arrested at a school, held for a total of 44 days at various military outposts inside Gaza.

The treatment towards me worsened once they learned I was from Shuja'iyah neighbourhood as the torture and humiliation intensified. I heard soldiers say that they would burn Gaza with everything inside, including Shuja'iyah, Al-Zaytoun, and Sheikh Radwan.

48-year-old male, arrested from Al-Shifa Hospital, held for a total of 56 days, initially held at the hospital, before being transferred to a military outpost and five military detention facilities.

¹¹⁴ McKernan, B. (2024). Israel generals plan to clear northern Gaza of Palestinians. The Guardian. Available [here](#).

PCHR also documented the detention of three minors. The testimony of one child, who was detained by the IOF inside Gaza, provides a clear example of how Israeli authorities specifically targeted children. He was arrested alongside his brother, mentally impaired, and three cousins, all aged between 11 and 15, and detained with 30 other children for 58 days.

While walking, they repeatedly told us that we were being taken to our death. They placed us in one of the apartments [...]. There were about 30 children in that apartment. From the first day, they ordered us to remove our clothes, and we were left in our underwear and shorts. [...] On the second day, they brought us a very small breakfast, a small piece of toast, a very small can of jam, and sometimes tuna, On one occasion, I asked Al-Shawish if we could shower, as we had started to get covered in lice and other insects (lice and fleas), but they ignored my request. When we did go to the bathroom, there were two soldiers with us inside. [...]

On the eighth day of detention, which was the most gruelling, a large soldier with a huge body and a black skin came with his weapon and dog. He began interrogating us. I told him, ‘I answered all your questions before that I do not know anything’, he hit me on my flank area with his foot and shouted, ‘when I ask you, you answer, son of the Sharmouta (bitch).’

I started begging him that I will answer any question he asks, I started crying out of fear because the dog was barking and attempted to attack me, I started begging him that I would answer any question he asked, he left me and did the same to most of the children as he did to me. This soldier was very scary. Most of the children came out crying with fear and terror on their faces. The interrogation sessions were almost every 3 days with each new interrogation accompanied by beatings, insults and humiliation. [...]

15-year-old boy detained with his 11-year-old brother and cousins aged 12-15, arrested from a private home, held for a total of 58 days, in a pit in the ground and a house.



The Use of Dehumanising/Derogatory Language

Dehumanising language was prevalent in the testimonies, reflecting a long-standing, deliberate effort to portray Palestinians as less than human. This sustained portrayal has served to justify their mistreatment and, ultimately, their extermination.

In Section III.B.2. (Humiliation and dehumanisation), PCHR concluded that the torture of Palestinians from Gaza was strategically utilised to dehumanise victims, and the Palestinian community as a whole. More particularly, soldiers frequently referred to them as ‘inhuman’, ‘animals’, ‘dogs’ or ‘human animals’, not deserving to live. The analysis also shows that, in addition to being subjected to this dehumanising language, detainees reported being treated like slaves, kept in conditions not even suitable for animals. All the former detainees reported being deprived of their basic rights as human beings, treated like animals, and held in inhumane and extremely violent conditions with no or limited access to basic necessities, including showers and bathrooms.

IOF soldiers, explicitly and repeatedly, targeted the Palestinian population for destruction, dehumanising them, equating the group with animals and the enemy, as not deserving to live. The use of such dehumanising language in the interactions between soldiers and victims, combined with the brutal actions on the ground, highlights the strategy to strip detainees of their dignity, reducing them to a state of subhuman existence, rendering them as acceptable targets for destruction.

Participation of the Direct Perpetrators in Other Culpable Acts

The analysis also reveals a systematic campaign of widespread violence, killings, destruction of property, and forcible transfer of the interviewees, all Palestinians from Gaza, before their arrest. Many interviewees provided detailed accounts of the takeover of areas by IOF soldiers where they had been seeking shelter, as well as the circumstances leading to their arrest. Several had faced multiple displacements, moving from one precarious location to another, only to be caught in further hostilities. They reported enduring heavy bombings, witnessing the destruction of their neighbourhoods, and the presence of snipers around them. Homes, hospitals, and schools were besieged, sometimes for several days, and deliberately set on fire or destroyed before their eyes by Israeli soldiers.

Throughout these attacks, numerous Palestinians were killed. Several interviewees reported the deaths of family members or others due to the bombing of shelters, as well as killings by snipers or drones. For example, one interviewee recounted the murder of two family members by snipers. Another spoke of four individuals, including a family member, being killed by a drone as they tried to leave a besieged hospital.

The Scale of the Torture and Ill-Treatment Across All Detention Facilities

The genocidal intent of the direct perpetrators is also particularly evident in the description of the arrest and detention practices, which are strikingly similar among all detainees and in all the detention facilities, whether military or IPS.

The arrests carried out by IOF soldiers were marked by brutality and coercion – families were forcibly separated, detainees and their families were left in the dark about their destination, and houses were deliberately torched before their eyes, sending an unmistakable message that they had nothing left to return to. Men of military age, especially those holding key functions, such as health professionals, were arrested and detained in mass operations, a clear part of a broader strategy to decimate the Palestinian population in Gaza and prevent any possibility of its reconstruction.

Despite enduring relentless interrogations and the absence of any evidence connecting the detainees to resistance groups – a fact acknowledged by judges (see Section III.D.) – all were subjected to incommunicado detention, enduring extreme torture and inhumane conditions simply because they were Palestinians from Gaza (see Section II).

This barbaric abuse serves as further evidence of the genocidal intent behind these actions, demonstrating a clear effort to destroy the Palestinian group. Reports from PCHR’s lawyer, who visited detainees as recently as December 2024, have revealed the horrific conditions in which their clients are still held, detailing their physical and psychological degradation. During their visit to Naftali camp, the lawyer stated:

“As soon as I entered the camp, I clearly heard the screams of tortured detainees. It was one of the most harrowing visits I have ever made in my career of visiting the detainees. Out of approximately 100 visits I have made, this is the most difficult one. The visit was both psychologically and emotionally exhausting, due to the harsh conditions that were unimaginable and indescribable, combined with the screams of the detainees and prisoners I heard while waiting and the orders of the soldiers yelling at them.”

Despite widespread media attention, calls from international organisations, and the UN condemnation, Israel has continued and continue to carry out large-scale torture against Palestinians. This ongoing cruelty reinforces the undeniable conclusion that these actions are part of a systematic campaign aimed at the eradication of the Palestinian population in Gaza.

The Systematic and Deliberate Release of Injured and Weakened Detainees Into a War Zone

In addition to the torture endured during detention, detainees were deliberately released in an obvious state of physical and psychological degradation into an active war zone, with nowhere to go and no safe refuge, strongly reducing their chances of survival. Their suffering continued as they faced constant displacement, bombings, and a lack of basic necessities like food, water, and medical care. The intentional destruction of health infrastructure by Israel further obstructed their access to essential support. As a result, Palestinians in Gaza experience a “carceral continuum”, characterised by overlapping forms of captivity, ranging from mass detention to their entrapment within a war zone,¹¹⁵ unable to find safe shelters and the necessary care for their recovery.

In doing so, the IOF soldiers effectively aimed to destroy the Palestinian community of the Gaza Strip, as such, and eliminated all likelihood that it could ever recover, survive the ongoing attacks.

Conclusion

In light of the above, PCHR finds that the scale and nature of the atrocities committed, especially the dehumanising language used, the mass arrest of hundreds, if not, thousands of Palestinians since October 2023 and the systematic use of torture – along with the gravity of the injuries and harm inflicted, the targeted nature of these acts against any Palestinians in Gaza, and their release in a war zone with no escape and care possible, all point to a broader intent to destroy the Palestinian group. This conclusion is further supported by explicit genocidal statements from the direct perpetrators. The intent becomes even more apparent when viewed in conjunction with the widespread destruction of the Gaza Strip and other systematic acts against Palestinians as documented in PCHR’s broader report on the genocide.¹¹⁶

PCHR has no doubt that the acts of torture were executed with the intent to destroy the Palestinian population of Gaza and prevent reconstitution of the group after their release. PCHR concludes that the Israeli army knew that the detention and torture, especially of men of military age, health professionals, and other key professionals, would inevitably result in the disappearance of the Palestinian population of Gaza, and clearly intended through these acts to physically destroy this group.

¹¹⁵- UN (2023). Arbitrary deprivation of liberty in the occupied Palestinian territory: the Palestinian experience behind and beyond bars. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Francesca Albanese. A/78/307. Available [here](#).

¹¹⁶- [To be published]

Conclusion

PCHR finds that the Israeli army arrested Palestinian civilians from Gaza en masse and detained them in various facilities throughout Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, specifically established for this purpose. During their detention, detainees were repeatedly transferred from one facility to another and subjected to inhumane conditions and extreme forms of physical and psychological ill-treatment amounting to torture.

The torture followed a consistent pattern across all detention facilities and affected all 100 interviewees who suffered serious health consequences. It was characterised by brutal and intimidating interrogation techniques, dire living conditions, and a combination of various well-known methods of torture, including repeated beatings, suspension, electrocution, forced stress positions, sexual violence, as well as psychological violence. The vast majority of those interviewed were held incommunicado, and all were released in Gaza without charge.

Finally, PCHR concludes that the acts of torture constitute acts of genocide, namely ‘causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group’ and ‘deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.’

By torturing Palestinians from Gaza, members of the IOF, intelligence service agencies, and IPS personal committed genocide. They targeted for extinction thousands of Palestinians living in Gaza. They stripped all the detainees of their personal belongings and dignity, and deliberately and methodically tortured them solely on the basis of their identity. The statements and patterns of conduct of the direct perpetrators show their full awareness of the harm they were inflicting and their intention for it to have enduring consequences for the Palestinians of Gaza, far beyond their period of detention. As a result, PCHR concludes that these actions were executed with the intent to destroy the Palestinian population of Gaza.

To date, hundreds of Palestinians are still missing, forcibly disappeared by the Israeli authorities. On 9 August 2024, PCHR launched an online platform enabling Palestinians in Gaza to report cases of their relatives' disappearance and detention since 7 October 2023. By mid-September 2024, approximately 400 reports had been filed.

Since October 2023, PCHR has also assisted hundreds of families in locating their members arrested by the IOF, sending communications through its lawyers practicing in Israel to relevant Israeli authorities. In response, the lawyers have faced direct targeting by the Israeli authorities for providing legal representation. For example, they have been summoned for several interrogations by Shin Bet, accused of aiding terrorists, had complaints filed against them by the IPS with the Israeli Bar Association, and been denied access to prisons or prevented from making further inquiries about detainees. Two of them decided to end their collaboration with PCHR due to fear for their lives and families.

Based on information collected by PCHR's lawyer during their visits to detainees still held by Israel, it is estimated that at least 3.750 Palestinians from Gaza were being held across the six prisons and military camps, as of December 2024. The number of Palestinians in Israeli custody is probably significantly higher considering that they are held in other facilities, which have not been accessed by PCHR's lawyer.

Based on the information collected, thousands of Palestinians continue to endure torture and ill-treatment in Israeli detention facilities as of the time of this report.

Recommendations

To States:

- Fulfil their obligation to prevent the ongoing genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, including acts of torture against Palestinian detainees in Israel prisons and military camps, in particular by imposing an arms embargo on Israel;
- Take immediate steps to pressure Israel to comply with the three binding provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice in Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel) ;
- Demand the Israeli occupation authorities to comply with international law, including ending their indefinite incommunicado detention of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, without charge or trial under the Unlawful Combatants Law, to release all those arbitrarily detained without delay, and end the ill-treatment and torture of Palestinian detainees.
- Demand the Israeli occupation authorities to allow immediate and unhindered access to prisons, military detention camps, and medical facilities for relevant investigative and monitoring bodies as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross, lawyers, and family members of the detainees.
“Investigate” allegations of genocide and torture under the principle of universal jurisdiction, where applicable.
- Support and respect the independence and decisions of the International Criminal Court and its officials in light of the recent sanctions imposed by U.S administration. In particular, PCHR calls on State Parties to the Rome Statute to enforce the arrest warrants issued against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant.

To the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court

We call upon the Office of the Prosecutor to:

- Ensure that the acts of genocide, including acts of torture and ill-treatment, committed by Israeli officials are investigated and prosecuted.
- Urgently add the commission of the crime of genocide in the arrests warrants against Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant.

Annex: Detention facilities identified or partially identified by the interviewees

This annex is based on testimonies collected by the PCHR. The exact locations and types of most detention sites remain unknown. Many interviewees were unable to identify their places of detention due to the conditions they faced, including constant blindfolding, repeated transfers, and a lack of information from Israeli authorities. As a result, the table below may not offer a complete or fully accurate list of all detention locations.

Note: Several interviewees reported being detained in specific locations but were unable to identify the exact detention centre. Due to uncertainty regarding their precise whereabouts, we were unable to definitively determine the facilities where they were held.

Five interviewees reported being detained in the Negev. Some described being held in a camp featuring a large barrack surrounded by barbed wire, resembling cattle pens in appearance, while others recalled being confined in tents. One interviewee mentioned that the facility resembled an aircraft storage area, with each barrack roughly 1.000 square meters in size and divided by a narrow corridor down the middle, preventing detainees from moving between the two sections. They may have been referring to Sde Teiman, the military camp in Beersheba, or another detention facility.

11 interviewees also reported being detained in Jerusalem, with one specifically in the Al-Mukaber area. Another described being held in a large barrack and an old building in Jerusalem, without any further indication about the location. One interviewee reported being held in a facility surrounded by a fence with 100 other detainees. These camps could potentially include the Al-Aizariya or Moskobiya detention facilities or another detention facility.



Name	Location	Description
Military detention facilities/camps in Israel		
Nahal Oz Camp	Near the North-East Gaza border	<p>Described as a military camp, enclosed with barbed wire, divided into several sections, each housing approximately 800 detainees. The floor was tiled, and the roof was made of plates.</p> <p>One interviewee was detained in Nahal Oz military camp.</p>
Zikim Camp	Near the Northern Gaza border	<p>Described as a tin-roofed barrack lined with barbed wire, offering no protection from the rain. Located close to an IOF training base, it housed detainees from various parts of northern Gaza and Gaza City in December 2023. The camp also featured a large yard.</p> <p>Eight interviewees, half of whom were women, were detained at Zikim Camp. Half of them were held for only short transit purposes.</p>
Military detention facility - Sderot	Near the Northern Gaza border	<p>Detainees were reported to have been held under the open sky.</p> <p>One interviewee reported being detained in a military detention facility located in Sderot.</p>
Military detention facility - Erez	Near the Northern Gaza border	<p>Described as consisting of barracks. One interviewee reported being put in a fridge, as a form of torture during his detention.</p> <p>Four interviewees reported being detained in a military detention facility located in Erez.</p>

Name	Location	Description
Military detention facilities/camps in Israel		
SOFA camp	East of Rafah, near the Gaza border	<p>Described as belonging to the Southern Command Center of the Israeli Army and consisting of barracks.</p> <p>Two interviewees reported being held at a camp called</p>
Ofakim Camp	Between Gaza and Beersheba	<p>No description provided.</p> <p>One interviewee reported being detained at Ofakim Camp.</p>
Military detention facility – Kissufim	East of Khan Younis, Israel	<p>Two detainees reported being held in the Kissufim area. One was detained in a tent, situated on a ground with construction debris, while the other was held in a barrack. It is possible that these were two separate facilities.</p>
Sde Teiman	Negev desert	<p>Described by interviewees as a facility made up of barracks. PCHR’s lawyer who visited Sde Teiman in December 2024 reported that the camp consisted of three sections (A, B, and C). Each section consists of four barracks of about 15*10 meters, each holding 40-50 detainees, and six prefabricated concrete rooms of about 9*4 meters with four open windows, each holding 20-25 detainees. Over 1.000 detainees were still held in Sde Teiman camp at the time of the visit.</p> <p>Two interviewees expressly reported being held at Sde Teiman.</p>

Name	Location	Description
Military detention facilities/camps in Israel		
Military detention facility - Beersheba	Beersheba, Negev desert	<p>Described as a cage or barracks divided into two sections with a 2-meter-wide corridor between them with approximately 100 detainees held in each barrack. It reportedly featured two military watchtowers, positioned in front. The structure was lined with barbed wire and roofed with tin plates.</p> <p>Three interviewees expressly mentioned being held in Beersheba.</p>
Military detention facility - Al-Aizariya/Bethani, Jerusalem	South-East of Jerusalem	<p>Described as containing several barracks.</p> <p>One interviewee reported being detained at Al-Aizariya military detention facility.</p>
Moskobiya Detention Centre ¹¹⁷	Jerusalem	<p>No description provided.</p> <p>One interviewee reported being held at Moskobiya Detention Centre.</p>
Anatot Camp	Between Ramallah and Jerusalem	<p>Military detention facility where women from Gaza are held. Described by interviewees as a cage equipped with surveillance cameras or as a livestock barrack.</p> <p>Eight interviewees reported being held at Anatot Camp.</p>

¹¹⁷- Addameer. Moskobiya detention centre. Available [here](#).

Name	Location	Description
Military detention facilities/camps in Israel		
Military detention facility - Hebron	Hebron, West Bank	<p>Described as being surrounded by mountains and where Adhan could be heard from time to time. The site included rooms built of concrete. Based on the description, we concluded that this facility was probably a detention centre located in the “Gush Etzion” settlement, situated south of Bethlehem and north of Hebron, which is used by the IOF and consists of 12 concrete-built cells. Nearby is an interrogation facility run by the Shin Bet.</p> <p>One interviewee reported being detained at this facility.</p>
Huwara Detention Center	Nablus, West Bank	One interviewee mentioned being detained in Huwara detention centre in Nablus, without providing any further details.
Ofer Camp	West Bank	See Ofer prison below.
Prisons		
Damon prison ¹¹⁸	Carmel Mountains Region, Northern Israel	<p>Prison where women from Gaza are held.</p> <p>All the ten women interviewed by PCHR reported being held at Damon prison.</p>
Al-Jalameh prison	Northern Israel, close to Haifa	<p>Described as an open place surrounded with a barbed wire fence without any bedding or food. This description seems to refer to the outdoor area of the centre.</p> <p>One interviewee reported being detained at Al-Jalameh detention centre.</p>

¹¹⁸- Addameer. Damon Prison. Available [here](#).

Name	Location	Description
Prisons		
Atlit Prison	Haifa	One interviewee described being detained at Atlit Prison. Originally used under the British mandate, it held, among others, Palestinian and Lebanese detainees during the Arab Revolt in Palestine (1936-1939) before being converted into a museum. However, according to PCHR's investigation, the prison was reopened after 7 October 2023.
Haifa prison	Haifa, Northern Israel	No description provided. This facility could have been Al Jalameh detention centre or Atlit Prison mentioned above. One interviewee reported being held at Haifa prison.
Kfar Yona prison	Central Israel, located in the Beit Lid area on the road between Tulkarem and Netanya, inside Israel	No description provided. One interviewee reported being held at Kfar Yona prison.
Negev prison – including tents ¹¹⁹	Negev desert	12 interviewees reported being held at the Negev Prison. One detainee recalled seeing a sign saying “the Negev Prison Complex” upon arrival. Five interviewees described being transferred to tents after being held in cells within the barracks of Sections A and B, with 15 to 30 detainees in each tent. One detainee reported being solely detained in tents, with 50 tents housing 150 detainees in each. PCHR’s lawyer who visited detainees in September 2024 reported that the prison is divided into sections, with each section containing four areas, each housing 150 detainees distributed across five tents, with 30 detainees in each tent. Each tent only contains 14 bunk beds, with insufficient mattresses for all detainees.

119- Addameer. Negev Desert Prison. Available [here](#).

Name	Location	Description
Prisons		
Beersheba Prison ¹²⁰	Beersheba, Negev, Israel	<p>No description provided.</p> <p>One interviewee reported being held at Beersheba prison.</p>
Ofer prison, including military detention facilities set up inside or around the prison West Bank ¹²¹	Haifa, Northern Israel	<p>14 interviewees reported being held at Ofer prison, which is administered by the IPS and Shin Bet. One was first detained outside in an area consisting of three tents, surrounded with a barbed wire fence, placed on a gravel floor - there were about 150 detainees. After 20 days, he was transferred inside the prison. One other interviewee also reported the presence of tents outside the prison. On 28 October, the Head of the Israeli Coordination and Liaison Administration visited the camp and wrote down the detainees and their belongings. One detainee reported being held with 15 others in a cramped 3*5 meter cell, which contained a bathroom, a shower, and a small kitchen. There were eight sleeping beds – two sets of bunk beds – while the remaining detainees slept on the floor. The corridor outside the room consisted of 14 cells.</p> <p>PCHR’s lawyer who visited detainees still held in Ofer prison in October 2024 reported that Palestinians from Gaza were held in sections 23 and 24 of the prison. They are completely isolated and separated from other prisoners, including those from the West Bank. Each section consists of 22 rooms and holds approximately 240 – 250 detainees. A total of around 500 detainees from Gaza were in Ofer prison in October 2024.</p>

¹²⁰- Addameer. Beersheba Prison. Available [here](#).

¹²¹- Addameer. Ofer Prison. Available [here](#).

		<p>Five other interviewees, all Gaza workers, reported being held in facilities resembling military detention facilities in Ofer. Based on the descriptions given, it is likely that they were held in the same facility.</p> <p>However, it is also possible that they were held in different military detention facilities set up around the Ofer area, or even within the Ofer prison itself. The information provided did not allow us to draw a definitive conclusion as to the exact nature and location of the facilities mentioned.</p> <p>Described by interviewees as being composed of cages with gravel floor, holding up to 4.000 Gaza workers in 150-200 person cages in October 2023. Detainees were exposed to the rain. Another detainee described tin plated barracks lined with barbed wire.</p>
Nafha Prison ¹²²	100 km from Beer-sheba and 200km away from Jerusalem	<p>No description provided.</p> <p>Three interviewees reported being held there.</p>

¹²⁰- Addameer. Nafha Prison. Available [here](#).