

# “Another genocide behind walls”

Sexual violence in Israeli prisons and  
detention centres and engineered impunity

October 2023 – October 2025



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**\* Cover Photo:**

The aftermath of an Israeli airstrike targeting a chalet housing the Abu Nahal family

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Detained Palestinians, stripped to their underwear, sit on a street in Beit Lahia, northern Gaza Strip, as Israeli soldiers stand guard. 8 December 2023. (Reuters)

## Executive summary

Since 7 October 2023, the Israeli detention system has undergone a significant shift in its operational approach, moving beyond its declared security role to become an official structure that institutionalises systematic torture and widespread destruction of Palestinians. The political discourse that dehumanised Palestinians, especially those in the Gaza Strip, by describing them as “Amalek<sup>(1)</sup>” and “human animals,” has shaped practices and rules of operation within Israeli detention centres and prisons, which have been transformed into spaces isolated from oversight, akin to legal and physical ‘black holes,’ foremost among them the Sde Teiman detention camp. However, this transformation did not emerge from nothing; rather, it was based on a long history of severe and unaccountable violence against Palestinians and an institutional structure of oppression and subjugation that deprives them of their rights and systematically

1 Amalek (in Biblical Hebrew: עמלק) was a nation depicted in the Hebrew Bible as a staunch enemy of the Israelites, with the religious text calling for their complete and indiscriminate destruction.

reclassifies Palestinians as a “security threat” to justify their permanent exclusion from legal protection.

The 7th of October 2023 marked a moment of “great security breakdown” that gave Israeli security forces a “blank cheque” to bypass previous restrictions and remove the remaining formal legal protections for Palestinian prisoners and detainees, particularly those from the Gaza Strip. This made detention centres areas of total impunity, intentionally operating outside the law and avoiding oversight or accountability.

Almost all prisoners and detainees were cut off from visits, legal aid, and international oversight. The International Committee of the Red Cross was also prevented from accessing them. Laws like the “Unlawful Combatants Law” and others were used to remove procedural protections. Combined with enforced disappearances, this created a system that enabled ongoing torture, sexual violence, and other abuses against Palestinians. Detention centres became zones of immunity and impunity, where crimes happened without independent scrutiny or meaningful accountability.

This report details widespread patterns of sexual violence against detainees in the Gaza Strip, serving as a tool to break both individual and collective will and inflict serious physical and psychological harm. The documented practices involved direct sexual assault, assaults with instruments, and torture focused on the genitals. They also included organised displays like filming and the collective presence of security personnel during the assaults, which strengthens the evidence of these crimes being institutional and systematic. These violations are compounded by detention policies that result in serious and long-lasting physical and psychological harm, including injuries that cause permanent disability and impacts on the reproductive health of certain victims.

The risks extend beyond the occurrence of violations to the mechanisms that enable and obscure them, with evidence pointing to medical facilitation or cover-ups in some cases, undermining professional ethics and violating the safeguards imposed by international law for the protection of detainees.

In a troubling parallel, the report uncovers the Israeli medical system’s role in militarising

medicine, with certain medical personnel shifting from caregivers to facilitators of torture’s legitimisation and continuation. This extends beyond denying life-saving treatment or participation in painful medical procedures without adequate anaesthesia or pain relief. It also includes issuing certificates of “fit for interrogation,” hiding torture injuries in medical records, and forcing detainees to cooperate with interrogators to get treatment. This pattern is further supported by documentation practices that obscure the perpetrator’s identity and hide doctors’ details, making it difficult to trace, preserve evidence, and hold individuals accountable.

With the scale of violations growing, the report shows that the Israeli justice system has not functioned as an effective mechanism for accountability. Rather, it has been historically and systematically employed to entrench impunity for crimes committed against Palestinians, effectively making the judiciary the first line of defence for Israeli violations and their perpetrators.

Nevertheless, this structural failure is especially clear in the detention and prison system, where judicial and oversight mechanisms often serve as a procedural cover that undermines independent oversight, normalises torture, and grants investigators and system administrators practical immunity. In this context, the incidents at Sde Teiman exemplify this pattern.

The Israeli judicial system’s response extended beyond obstructing accountability. It showed signs of undermining evidence by restricting victims, as complainants and witnesses, from participating in proceedings and reclassifying serious incidents as minor offences or misdemeanours, ultimately culminating in the [dismissal of charges](#) in one of the most serious documented cases, despite their reliance on substantial medical and visual evidence. These facts collectively indicate an institutional reluctance to ensure effective accountability, thereby triggering the admissibility criteria and bolstering the International Criminal Court’s jurisdiction to investigate these crimes and prosecute perpetrators across the entire chain of command.

From an international law standpoint, the widespread acts of torture and sexual violence,

considering the broader context of the attack and related policies, violate the Genocide Convention. This includes causing serious physical or mental harm to group members and implementing measures aimed at preventing births within the group, all within a larger objective of partially or fully destroying the Palestinian community in the Gaza Strip. These actions also qualify as serious war crimes and crimes against humanity under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

The data also uncovers institutional collusion and enablement, including the roles of regulatory, supervisory, and judicial bodies that helped perpetuate violations or hindered their documentation and the accountability of those responsible. This impact extends beyond administrative and professional duties, providing a strong foundation for examining potential international criminal responsibility for individuals who devised, approved, or carried out these policies, with knowledge of their effects, across the entire chain of command.

Thus, responsibility for these crimes goes beyond the direct perpetrators, encompassing leadership and institutions that sheltered them. Medical and legal personnel who cover up evidence and legitimise sexual violence and torture commit acts of ‘aiding and abetting,’ requiring international accountability. This is especially true considering the systematic immunity granted to perpetrators and the obstruction of domestic justice by the state.

Drawing from this situation, the report ends by emphasising an urgent roadmap for international accountability. It urges the International Criminal Court to explicitly include genocide in its investigation of the Palestinian situation, speed up the process, and prioritise issues like torture and sexual violence in detention centres and prisons. These acts are recognised both as crimes and as crucial evidence of the intent to destroy the Palestinian community, especially in Gaza.

This roadmap calls for states, both individually and collectively, to strictly enforce their duties to prevent violations. It emphasises the need for immediate, concrete actions such as pressing for the closure of field and secret detention centres, ending enforced

disappearances, releasing arbitrary detainees, and allowing access to independent international monitoring, as well as ensuring prisoners have legal representation and medical care.

On the political and economic front, these obligations call for an immediate, comprehensive ban on exporting arms, ammunition, security equipment, and surveillance technology to or from Israel. It also mandates halting military and security cooperation, and implementing targeted measures such as asset freezes, travel bans, and financial sanctions against political and military officials, as well as medical and judicial personnel involved in designing, administering, covering up, or obstructing accountability for these policies.

The roadmap ends with a call for the Israeli army and relevant agencies to be included in United Nations mechanisms that address conflict-related sexual violence, ensuring monitoring, follow-up, and restrictive measures within the UN system. It also emphasises safeguarding victims’ right to effective redress and reparation.

## Introduction

Since the beginning of the Israeli aggression on Gaza on 7 October 2023, Israeli forces have conducted extensive, arbitrary arrests of thousands of Palestinians, including healthcare workers, journalists, women, and children. These arrests involved raiding shelters, hospitals, and corridors that the Israeli army designated as “safe.”

These campaigns relied on a complex system of laws, military directives, and emergency regulations, including activating the “Unlawful Combatants Law” and broadening detention powers without judicial oversight, effectively legitimising enforced disappearances. Prisoners and detainees were confined in legal and physical “black holes,” such as secret detention camps like the Sde Teiman, with information about their fates completely hidden and visits by the Red Cross or lawyers denied. These actions were part of a broader policy of destruction that dehumanised prisoners and detainees, stripping them of their fundamental rights and international legal protections.

Once transferred to detention and interrogation centres, prisoners and detainees encounter a system that functions as state-run torture camps, where they face severe violations that include systematic sexual violence as a means of subjugation and destruction. Based on corroborating testimonies supporting this report, these violations extend beyond sexual harassment to include rape, rape with objects, the use of police dogs in sexual assaults, and ongoing forced nudity. These abuses are accompanied by deliberate starvation and medical neglect, which have, in some cases, caused permanent injuries such as amputation and death under torture. These acts are classified as war crimes and crimes against humanity and are central to ongoing genocide, as they serve to inflict serious physical or mental harm on members of the Palestinian community in the Gaza Strip.

Despite Israel’s persistent efforts to conceal what occurs behind bars by systematically blocking visits from the International Committee of the Red Cross and lawyers to prisons and detention centres, this report has been based on live, direct testimonies from released detainees during confidential sessions conducted with Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor. These testimonies have helped identify patterns and methods of violations within the Israeli torture system, exposing its systematic nature and broad scope.

The documentation process was hindered by complex challenges that obscured the full scope of these crimes. The field research team faced significant obstacles due to the victims’ intense fear. Many released detainees chose not to testify due to fears of security reprisals or re-arrest, especially since several had received direct threats from Israeli intelligence officers before their release, warning that they or their families would be targeted if they discussed their experiences with the media.

Alongside security threats, “social stigma” was a significant barrier, especially for victims of rape and sexual harassment, both female and male. Many chose to stay silent to protect their reputation and out of fear of society, which often made the impact of these crimes “invisible.” The report also included cases where victims experienced severe psychological breakdowns while trying to speak out, with some breaking down into crying fits from

reliving trauma, leading to the suspension of documentation in several instances.

The testimonies in this report are interconnected with other evidence and widely known data, including leaked CCTV footage of gang rapes, such as the shocking incident involving reserve soldiers at Sde Teiman. These facts are supported by rare testimonies from Israeli whistleblowers, including doctors and soldiers, who have admitted to serious medical violations. Preliminary medical reports reveal severe injuries to the rectum and genitals, and stories of bodies returned to Gaza showing signs of torture. Additionally, reports from the United Nations and prominent human rights groups confirm that Palestinians face systematic and widespread sexual violence in Israeli prisons and detention centres.

This cross-referenced, multi-source evidence confirms that the crimes of torture and sexual violence committed by Israeli security forces against Palestinians are not isolated incidents or mere behavioural deviations by soldiers. Instead, they are systematic and widely practised as part of an organised state policy, which receives full protection from the highest political, military, and judicial authorities.

Legislative changes, especially the activation of the Unlawful Combatants Law, have created a legal framework that deprives thousands of Palestinians in Gaza of fundamental procedural rights. They are held in detention without trial, proper legal representation, or genuine judicial oversight, increasing the risk of enforced disappearances, torture, and sexual violence in detention centres. These facilities operate in a closed environment shielded from accountability. Additionally, statements by Israeli government officials, including National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, have openly supported these practices by advocating for harsher detention conditions and reducing detainees' rights. They treat torture as a form of “deserved punishment,” which UN reports describe as “institutionalised violence,” thus providing political and ideological backing.<sup>(2)</sup>

The repetition and similarity of patterns of sexual and physical torture in multiple Israeli

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2 OHCHR. (10 October 2024). UN Commission finds war crimes and crimes against humanity in Israeli attacks on Gaza health facilities and treatment of detainees, hostages. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/202410/un-commission-finds-war-crimes-and-crimes-against-humanity-israeli-attacks> UN General Assembly. (11 September 2024). Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel. (A/79232/). <https://docs.un.org/en/A/79232/>

prisons and detention centres, including Sde Teiman, Ktziot and Megiddo, confirms the conclusions of the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT) that these practices constitute “defacto State policy”.<sup>(3)</sup>

According to the findings of the International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, sexual and other forms of gender-based violence, whether targeting women, men, boys or girls, were not only committed to humiliate the immediate victims and profoundly demean their dignity, but also to punish and destroy the entire Palestinian people, in flagrant violation of the Genocide Convention.<sup>(4)</sup>

This report aims to systematically document crimes of sexual violence and torture committed during detention, including related acts that, depending on their context and elements, qualify as serious international crimes such as war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. It tracks the patterns of violations and their physical and psychological impacts on victims, families, and communities. Moreover, it delves into the ‘structure of institutional collusion,’ emphasising the medical system’s role in ‘legitimising torture’ and erasing criminal evidence, alongside the judicial system’s role in eroding accountability and blocking redress. The report concludes with targeted recommendations for urgent actions and accountability measures at both national and international levels, including avenues before the International Criminal Court, to halt abuses and secure justice for victims.

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3 United Nations Committee against Torture. (22 December 2025). Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Israel. (CAT/C/ISR/CO/6, para. 28). <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4096701>

4 United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel. (13 March 2025). “More than a human can bear”: Israel’s systematic use of sexual, reproductive and other forms of gender-based violence since 7 October 2023. (A/HRC/58/CRP.6 para. 225) <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session58/a-hrc-58-crp-6.pdf>

## Methodology and scope

This report mainly relies on firsthand testimonies from Palestinian detainees from Gaza who were recently released by Israeli forces. The Euro-Med Monitor team conducted these interviews during private documentation sessions, thoroughly explaining the purpose of the report and ensuring confidentiality. No testimony was recorded without each witness’s informed consent and confirmation of their mental readiness to share their experiences.

To ensure accuracy, the methodology employed a cross-referencing approach, continuously reviewing and analysing leaked photos, videos, and documents from military detention sites, and corroborating these with witness accounts. The report also relied on monitoring human rights and media files, along with official statements highlighting the systematic treatment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees.

Due to security concerns and associated risks, the documentation process implemented strict measures to safeguard victims and witnesses. The report ensured the concealment of real identities and the hiding of any details that might identify them, utilising “pseudonyms” for all victims and witnesses. This approach was designed to protect their safety and that of their families from potential retaliation.

This report covers the period from 7 October 2023 to 31 October 2025, a period marked by a drastic and tragic shift in the Israeli detention system. During this time, prisons and military detention centres evolved into a network of systematic torture sites where severe physical and psychological abuses were inflicted on thousands of Palestinian detainees. Despite the significant surge in these crimes, they should not be viewed as isolated incidents or exceptions tied to a specific period. Instead, they represent an extension and escalation of longstanding state policies rooted in the 1967 occupation. Historically, the Israeli detention and imprisonment system has been employed as a tool of repression and control, aimed at dismantling the social and political fabric of Palestinians, with estimates indicating that over one million Palestinians have been detained since then.

The documented patterns of torture and sexual violence in this report reflect a long-standing history of violations monitored over the years by UN committees and human rights groups. However, following 7 October 2023, there was a significant change from occasional incidents to a structured state policy carried out systematically and with full legal and political support.

This report highlights the situation of Palestinian detainees from the Gaza Strip held since 7 October 2023. These detainees come from diverse ages and social groups and have been systematically deprived of legal protections. The report investigates detention sites that lack effective international oversight, encompassing military and secret detention facilities like the Sde Teiman camp, along with official interrogation centres and prisons such as Ktziot, Megiddo, and Ofer. These sites have documented patterns of enforced disappearance and instances of physical and sexual torture, often in environments that fail to meet minimum humanitarian standards.

## Concepts and terminology

In international law, ‘sexual violence’ is a broad term that covers any sexual act committed against a person under coercive, oppressive, or exploitative conditions. This includes acts driven by coercion, abuse of power, or exploitation within a coercive environment. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court recognises various types of sexual violence as crimes against humanity and war crimes, such as rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilisation, and other forms of sexual violence of similar severity.<sup>(5)</sup>

Rape, in contrast, is defined in the International Criminal Court documents under Elements of Crimes as a physical invasion of the victim’s body involving penetration, however slight, whether with a sexual organ or any other object. Article 7 (1) (g)-1 on Crimes against humanity of Rape states in Element 3, “The invasion was committed by force, or by threat of force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress,

5 International Criminal Court, Elements of Crimes, arts. 8(2)(b)(xxii)-1 (War crime of rape) and 8(2)(b)(xxii)-6 (War crime of sexual violence), <https://cilrap-lexsitus.org/en/elements-of-crime/82--b/82--b-xxii>

detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power, against such person or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment, or the invasion was committed against a person incapable of giving genuine consent.”<sup>(6)</sup>

Sexual violence is also associated with torture in medical and legal frameworks, especially when the severity, purpose, and involvement/acceptance of official entities or detention settings produce coercion. The Istanbul Protocol notes that sexual violations can damage a victim’s physical and emotional well-being, potentially destroying their dignity and will. Such practices include forced nudity, threats, sexual insults, humiliation, and sexual assault, such as rape.<sup>(7)</sup>

Acts of sexual violence can be classified as war crimes and crimes against humanity depending on their context and specific elements. In certain cases, these acts may also constitute genocide if they are committed with the intent to destroy, wholly or partially, a particular national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. This is especially relevant when such acts cause severe bodily or mental harm to group members or involve measures aimed at preventing reproduction within the group. When these actions lead to lasting reproductive harm or significant mental and physical damage and are used to target the group’s ongoing existence and survival, they can be considered part of genocidal conduct.

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6 International Criminal Court, Elements of Crimes, arts. 7(1)(g)-1 (Crime against humanity of rape) and 8(2)(b)(xxii)-1 (War crime of rape), <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/Elements-of-Crimes.pdf>

7 OHCHR. Istanbul Protocol: Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Professional Training Series No. 8/Rev. 2) paras. 455-456-. [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/202229-06-/Istanbul-Protocol\\_Rev2\\_EN.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/202229-06-/Istanbul-Protocol_Rev2_EN.pdf)

# First: The architecture of repression: the detention environment and policies of absolute isolation

## 1. Detention patterns since 7 October 2023

Since 7 October 2023, Israeli forces have conducted extensive mass arrest campaigns, targeting thousands of Palestinians from Gaza, including women, children, the elderly, medical personnel, and journalists. The arrests occurred through violent raids on homes, shelters, including schools used as refuges, and hospitals. These places were often surrounded, stormed, or destroyed. Additionally, arrests occurred at checkpoints and so-called “safe corridors” that have been turned into detention traps based on appearance, age, or name.

The detainees were held in a coercive environment marked by “dehumanisation,” a policy supported by public statements from high-ranking Israeli officials, including former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, who referred to Palestinians as “human animals.” Soldiers of different ranks adopted this systematic rhetoric, which manifested in brutal practices from the moment of arrest, including forcing detainees to strip completely, shackling and blindfolding them for extended periods under extremely harsh conditions.

## 2. Places of detention and patterns of management

Detention of individuals occurs across a wide network of facilities, beginning with temporary sites like warehouses or open areas near borders where harsh initial interrogations take place. As Israeli operations grew, military bases and camps became the primary detention sites, notably the Sde Teiman camp in the Negev desert, often called “Israel’s Guantanamo.”

This facility confines hundreds of Palestinians in fenced pens that resemble cages, where detainees are forced to wear diapers and relieve themselves in their sleeping areas while shackled. Additionally, Ofer and Anatot camps serve as detention centres operated directly by the military, outside the jurisdiction of the Israeli Prison Service (Shabas).

Besides military camps, thousands of Palestinian detainees have been moved to official prisons and interrogation centres operated by the Israeli Prison Service, including Megiddo, Nafha, and Gilboa, as well as Damon prison for women. Even more alarming is the use of black sites where hundreds of Palestinians are kept in secret, with no records or identification. These sites become “black holes” where the worst types of torture are carried out, far from any judicial or human rights oversight.

### **3. Isolation, lack of oversight and visits**

Even after more than two years since the beginning of the genocide, the systematic policy of isolating prisoners and detainees persists. The few sporadic and limited measures taken after a long delay have neither ended the isolation nor established independent and effective oversight.

Since 7 October 2023, the International Committee of the Red Cross has been unable to visit any Palestinian prisoners or detainees in Israeli detention centres. This ban has played a crucial role in maintaining isolation and a blackout, enabling Israeli authorities to keep detention conditions hidden from international oversight and facilitating the concealment of violations. Notably, detainees from the Gaza Strip labelled as “unlawful combatants” faced complete isolation, as authorities not only barred visits but also prevented the Red Cross from knowing their detention locations or obtaining a list of their names for a long time. This systematic secrecy effectively removes these detainees from legal protection and meets the criteria of enforced disappearance under international law.

At the same time, Israeli authorities restricted access, permitting only a few lawyers to visit detainees in specific prisons like Damon Prison for women and Ofer Prison. Lawyer Khaled Mahajna was eventually granted permission to visit Sde Teiman, where he relayed distressing testimonies from detained journalist Mohammed Arab and others about abuses there, including rape. Nevertheless, most Gaza detainees still do not have access to their lawyers today.

Under international pressure, the Israeli authorities introduced what they called “alternative monitoring” measures, such as permitting observers from the United Kingdom to visit detention centres, including those linked to Sde Teiman. However, these measures remain largely unclear regarding their execution, as little information has been shared to verify if the visits actually occurred. If they did, no details have been released about their timing, extent, personnel involved, participants, or outcomes.

The Israeli military also formed an internal advisory committee headed by retired judge Ilan Schiff to review detention conditions of Palestinian detainees in Sde Teiman. It submitted its findings to the army chief of staff and military leaders as part of what was described as “reforms” to the detention system. However, this committee did not represent an independent or serious effort to uncover the truth. Rather, it appeared to function as an institutional tool to contain the repercussions of exposing the Israeli torture system. The absence of any public disclosure of its findings, along with the withholding of details concerning its mandate, methodology, and scope of review, not only prevents verification of its credibility but also reveals a lack of genuine will for transparency and accountability.

The recommendations that have emerged from the Ilan Schiff committee are largely limited to transferring detainees from Sde Teiman to the Israeli Prison Service and restricting military detention to 10 to 15 days. This indicates that the committee focused on reorganising the detention system and its oversight, rather than ensuring accountability for grave violations against detainees or dismantling the structures that enabled and sustained them.

This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that the limited information leaked about the committee’s recommendations has not, even within its constrained administrative scope, been translated into any clear implementation pathway, suggesting a lack of institutional or political will to adopt them. As such, the committee appears closer to a mechanism for damage control and pressure containment than to a serious framework for review, reform, or accountability.

Therefore, even if these “alternative” arrangements ever existed, they are incomplete and selective. They do not replace established international oversight mechanisms and fail to address the ongoing isolation or compensate for the absence of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Additionally, their design places control over the scope of access, inspection, and monitoring in the hands of Israeli authorities or their internal systems, thereby compromising the independence and effectiveness of these visits.

In stark irony, although oversight visits have been limited, evidence shows another form of “visits” that have breached legal and humanitarian standards and have been punitive and degrading. Israeli settlers have been permitted to enter detention centres to observe detainees, often naked and shackled, photograph them, and mock them, transforming them into targets of subjugation and shame. Figures like Itamar Ben-Gvir and some Knesset members have also visited, openly showcasing the worsening detention conditions and the denial of basic needs to detainees, engaging in unlawful acts that deliberately humiliate and violate human dignity.

Since the start of the attack on the Gaza Strip, all family visits have been entirely cancelled for detainees labelled as “security prisoners,” including children and women.

#### **4. Detention at military checkpoints and during the ground invasion**

Since their attack began on 7 October 2023, data show that the Israeli army has systematically and violently arrested thousands of Palestinian civilians from the Gaza Strip across various locations and times. The initial wave included widespread arrests in the Gaza envelope areas, targeting civilians, journalists, and individuals suspected of or involved in hostilities who entered those zones after gaps were created in the border fence. The report’s testimonies and evidence reveal that many of these individuals faced enforced disappearances, with no information about their fate or whereabouts for long periods. In certain cases, these disappearances are still ongoing.

Thousands of Palestinian workers from Gaza with official permits, who were working

beyond the Green Line on 7 October, faced harassment and arbitrary arrests at their workplaces or while trying to reach the West Bank. Testimonies reveal they were held in brutal conditions, with many subjected to systematic physical and sexual torture. The authorities released most of them but did not allow the International Committee of the Red Cross access to them or to obtain lists of their names. Even today, reports still show that an unknown number of workers are missing or forcibly disappeared in Israeli prisons, as the Israeli authorities refuse to provide any official information to their families or human rights groups regarding their fate or whereabouts.

Following the Israeli ground invasion on 27 October 2023, arrests expanded to residents in areas targeted by Israeli forces, often during raids that coincided with heavy shelling and live fire. Field reports from Euro-Med Monitor confirm these operations were marked by excessive violence and dangerous tactics, starting with the deployment of military dogs to scare residents, along with sieges of civilians inside their homes or shelters.

During raids on neighbourhoods, the Israeli army conducted mass arrests mainly targeting males, forcibly separating them from their families amid heavy gunfire and shelling. From the moment of arrest, they were forced to strip naked and placed in humiliating positions in front of their families, kept bound and blindfolded for extended periods before being taken to unknown locations. Meanwhile, women and children were ordered to leave their homes and quickly flee to distant areas after their family members were detained. Witnesses also report that detainees were transported in military trucks, often piled on top of each other, to temporary field sites or camps controlled by Israeli forces, which in some cases resulted in deaths due to severe beatings or suffocation during transport.

As for military checkpoints and “safe corridors,” like Salah al-Din Road, they have become sites for targeting civilians through arbitrary arrests and detentions without legal authority or procedural safeguards. Testimonies reveal that occupation soldiers used loudspeakers to call out individuals based on arbitrary and selective criteria such as appearance, age, family name, or even clothing colour, highlighting the lack of objective standards in choosing whom to detain. These arrests have impacted vulnerable groups,

including the sick, elderly, and wounded, who were detained and mistreated despite their health issues. Some of these individuals were later released at the same location after their incapacity was confirmed.

Once Palestinians are detained at these checkpoints, they face a series of immediate violations such as forced stripping, handcuffing with plastic ties, beating, abuse, and prolonged blindfolding. There are frequent reports of soldiers confiscating and looting detainees’ personal belongings, including money, phones, and jewellery, under the guise of “searching,” often not returning these items upon release.

## **Second: Crime breakdown: Systematic sexual violence and physical torture**

Imposed since 7 October 2023, the arrest and detention practices of Israeli forces against Palestinians in Gaza have involved a widespread system of torture, including consistent patterns of systematic sexual violence.

These practices were not isolated incidents or acts in an individual capacity. The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel found that specific forms of sexual and gender-based violence, including forced public nudity, sexual harassment, threats of rape, and sexual assault, were being systematically practised, effectively becoming part of work policies and standard operating procedures.<sup>(8)</sup>

The Commission affirms that these acts, including sexual torture such as rape and deliberate genital mutilation, are carried out as part of a policy supported by senior civilian and military leaders, either through direct orders or by tacit approval and a climate of impunity.

The Commission’s findings reveal a consistent pattern of sexual crimes by members

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8 United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel. (13 March 2025). “More than a human can bear”: Israel’s systematic use of sexual, reproductive and other forms of gender-based violence since 7 October 2023. (A/HRC/58/CRP.6 para. 224) <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session58/a-hrc-58-crp-6.pdf>

of the Israeli army. These acts were primarily used to spread terror and subjugate the civilian population. Sexual and gender-based violence was not solely meant to humiliate, punish, or intimidate individuals but was targeted at the civilian community as a whole. This approach fits into a wider military strategy aimed at subjugating, destroying, and displacing Palestinian society.<sup>(9)</sup>

During detention campaigns at various locations, detainees faced numerous instances of physical and psychological torture. These abusive practices were systematic, repeated, and persisted from the beginning of detention through later periods.

In a previous report, Euro-Med Monitor recorded at least 40 different torture methods used against detainees.<sup>(10)</sup> These included severe and ongoing beatings, forced shackling, deprivation of sleep, food, and water, exposure to degrading and inhumane detention conditions, and persistent threats, along with verbal and psychological abuse.

These practices also encompassed different types of sexual torture and gender-based violence, such as forced nudity, sexual harassment, threats of rape, and direct genital mutilation. They occurred in a systematic context that cannot be separated from a wider policy aimed at eradicating the Palestinian community and are part of acts committed within the framework of genocide.

Recent testimonies documented by Euro-Med Monitor reveal that men and boys have endured extremely brutal sexual abuse designed to violate their dignity and physical integrity. This abuse includes rape with hard objects like metal rods, wooden sticks, and fire extinguisher nozzles, resulting in severe and dangerous anal and intestinal injuries.

Sources also reported disturbing instances where trained military dogs were used to perform anal sexual assaults on detainees openly in front of soldiers. Detainees were

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9 United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel. (13 March 2025). “More than a human can bear”: Israel’s systematic use of sexual, reproductive and other forms of gender-based violence since 7 October 2023. (A/HRC/58/CRP.6 para. 225) <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session58/a-hrc-58-crp-6.pdf>

10 Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor. (21 May 2024). Hostages of Israeli revenge in the Gaza Strip: Testimonies of 100 released Palestinian detainees reveal crimes of torture, cruel treatment. <https://euromedmonitor.org/a/6342>

also subjected to electric shocks and were hit directly in the crotch with hands or military boots. These abuses led to documented cases of permanent physical injuries, including loss of reproductive or excretory functions, removal of testicles, and, in some cases, death under torture.

Since 7 October 2023, Palestinian women and girls from Gaza have faced systematic and institutionalised sexual violence. This pattern includes forced public stripping, physical harassment, threats of rape used as psychological pressure and for extracting confessions, and repeated rapes at gunpoint. One documented case is included in this report.

The testimonies also revealed a targeted pattern against cultural and religious identity, such as forcibly removing the hijab from female detainees, photographing them naked or half-naked, and threatening to share these images online to humiliate and socially blackmail them. These brutal acts included detaining women in wire cages in freezing cold conditions and deliberately denying basic hygiene supplies, including sanitary pads, flagrantly violating their human dignity and fundamental rights.

The following overview highlights the most prominent patterns of sexual torture used by Israeli forces against Palestinian detainees, based on testimonies and available documentation, indicating these practices are recurrent and systematic within detention settings.

## **1. Rape**

In the context of war and armed conflict, rape extends beyond a mere personal assault; it functions as a deliberate political and military instrument to achieve broader collective objectives that affect the whole community. It acts as a weapon of ethnic cleansing and forced displacement, creating profound terror that compels civilians to abandon their homes. Moreover, it undermines their ability to return due to social stigma and long-term mental breakdown.

Additionally, rape is employed systematically to humiliate and dismantle collective

identity, serving as a tactic within the rules of engagement to humiliate the targeted group and undermine its national and religious dignity. It also aims to fragment social bonds and disrupt family unity by breaking familial and community ties and socially isolating victims. This process erodes community resilience and hinders recovery. **This topic is examined in greater detail in the fourth section.**

Rape also represents reproductive violence, potentially amounting to genocide. It may involve forcing pregnancy to change demographic composition, violate bloodline integrity, harm reproductive abilities within the community, disrupt fertilisation means, or deny pregnant women medical treatment, leading to miscarriage or death.

Rape and direct sexual assault are among the most severe forms of torture experienced by Palestinian detainees. Documented testimonies reveal these violations involved rape, including cases of serial rape under threat of death, affecting both women and men. In certain instances, soldiers took turns sexually assaulting the same victim.

These practices also involved forced anal and vaginal penetration, including with penises and various hard objects, such as metal rods, wooden sticks, bottles, and even fire extinguisher nozzles, with the extinguishers' contents discharged into the victims' bodies, resulting in severe intestinal lacerations, fractures, and permanent physical injuries.

Additionally, testimonies documented the use of trained military dogs to commit anal sexual assaults against detainees. These acts occurred in a context of public defamation and humiliation, with soldiers intentionally filming these violations and mocking the victims. This reveals a systematic pattern of sexual violence used as a form of torture and subjugation.

The testimonies confirm that the sexual crimes occurred within a well-equipped institutional and logistical setting, as seen in the Sde Teiman camp. Detainees described detention spaces with small rooms featuring metal tables fixed to the ground, chains hanging from the ceiling, and surveillance cameras. This spatial and functional setup appears intentionally designed to enable torture and sexual violence. Soldiers also

deliberately recorded the assaults by photographing the victims while naked or during the attacks, using mobile phones and surveillance cameras. This material was then employed as psychological blackmail, with threats to publish the images. This reveals an organised system that uses sexual violence as a method of torture, subjugation, and systematic control.

Many rapes were also carried out publicly in front of groups of other detainees and soldiers, both male and female. This was a calculated attempt to intensify social stigma, break collective morale, and use the crime as a means of collective humiliation. Documented facts and press reports show that Israeli forces systematically employ rape and sexual torture to humiliate Palestinian female detainees, physically and psychologically destroy them, and transform their bodies into instruments of revenge and blackmail.

**In this context, a former detainee’s testimony is particularly noteworthy.** She is a 42-year-old woman from North Gaza, who was arrested in late October 2024 during her forced displacement from Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip. She reported that abuse started at the moment of her arrest, involving deliberate humiliation such as forcibly removing her hijab and leaving her exposed in freezing conditions, while being the only woman among dozens of male detainees.

The woman recounted that she was later transferred to the Sde Teiman camp, where she was forced at gunpoint to strip completely. Soldiers deliberately uncovered her eyes for brief moments so she could witness two soldiers photographing her naked with their phones, combining humiliation with coerced documentation and the attendant risks of public shaming and blackmail. She added that the abuse peaked on the third day of detention, when four masked soldiers took her to a small room containing a metal table fixed to the floor and equipped with surveillance cameras. There, she was shackled to the table and stripped, while two soldiers took turns violently raping her, and the other two documented the assault on film.

The rape and sexual violence were repeated. The detainee stated that she was left bound, naked, and bleeding throughout the night, before the soldiers returned the following

day and repeated the assault. She confirmed that she was raped four times over two consecutive days, twice on each day, before being left completely naked in the room, still watched and filmed through the door.

She further testified that the torture later intensified, involving humiliation, coercion, and blackmail. She was moved to another interrogation room, suspended by her hands, and subjected to repeated electric shocks until she lost consciousness, while being shown photos of her rapes and nude images, and threatened with their publication if she did not “cooperate” with Israeli intelligence. This account from the victim suggests that sexual violence was employed as a means to subjugate and break her spirit. Non-consensual recordings were used for blackmail and threats of exposure, aiming to silence her, deter reporting or seeking justice, and create fear both within and outside the detention setting.

Describing the systematic terror she faced, the victim explained that she used to scream unheard, wished for death rather than remaining bound within their reach, and called her experience “another genocide behind walls.” She mentioned losing track of time in prison, recognising only the number “101,” given by the soldiers instead of her name, symbolising the erasure of identity and the dehumanisation within the detention system.

**In his testimony to Euro-Med Monitor, 43-year-old Wajdi, who spent a year in detention, recounted being repeatedly raped by soldiers and a dog during interrogation.**



*“During interrogation, they tied me naked to a metal bed, and one of the soldiers asked me how many Israeli women I had raped in Israel. I denied that I had even entered Israel. Then a soldier raped me. I felt severe pain in my anus and screamed, but every time I screamed, I was beaten. This continued for several minutes, while soldiers filmed and mocked me.*

*The soldier left after ejaculating inside me. I was left in a humiliating position. I wished for death. I was bleeding.*

*Later, they untied me and brought a dog, which also raped me. On the same day, I was raped at least twice more after being tied to the bed. One of the soldiers put his penis in my mouth and then urinated on me. The rape was repeated two days later by three soldiers. I was in very poor physical and mental health.”*

**In another testimony to Euro-Med Monitor, Hassan, who was detained by Israeli forces on 25 October 2024 in northern Gaza, describes the details of being raped with a wooden stick.**



*“I was taken to a detention camp, which I later found out was Sde Teiman. About a month and a half after my arrest, I was raped by female soldiers. I was completely stripped naked and not blindfolded.*

*There were four female soldiers dressed in Israeli army uniforms. After stripping me, they mockingly laughed at me while I was handcuffed and shackled. Then, one of them pushed me, and I fell to the ground. Another grabbed a stick and inserted it into my anus.*

*I cried out in pain as they laughed. This continued for roughly two minutes before they left, spitting on me and shouting obscenities. I was in pain for over two weeks after the incident.”*

**In his testimony, 37-year-old Hamada, a released detainee who spent nine months in Israeli prisons, recounts his experience.**



*“During one of the interrogation sessions, I was completely naked, and they removed my blindfold. They forced me to sit on an artificial penis fixed to the ground until it penetrated my anus. I felt terrible pain and screamed loudly, after which I was severely beaten.”*

In a testimony to Euro-Med Monitor, a released detainee, Murad, stated that he witnessed two rape incidents in Sde Teiman, occurring in December 2023 and January 2024.



*In early December 2023, I witnessed a rape incident in Sde Teiman. We were handcuffed and blindfolded on an underground floor, but I could still see because the blindfold didn't fully cover my eyes.*

*We were forcibly placed on our backs in a stressed suspension position, causing intense pain in our backs and feet. Six soldiers in Israeli army uniforms then arrived and dragged one detainee to the far end of the large room.*

*“They stripped him of his underwear and took turns raping him for more than 40 minutes, amid his screams, to which they responded by beating him. When they finished, they brought him back to us, and he was screaming. Then he completely broke down and cried hysterically because of what had happened.”*

*“In another incident at the same detention centre, in another room in January (we did not know the exact date), two soldiers came and took one of the prisoners, raped him in the same place for more than 15 minutes amid foul words and laughter, and forced him to repeat these words.*

*When they brought him back, he told me in a low voice that he was being raped repeatedly every two or three days and that he was suffering from severe pain in his anus as a result.”*

Israeli forces have also employed animals, particularly trained dogs, to sexually assault Palestinian detainees, aiming to violate their dignity.

In a testimony revealing the Israeli army's use of trained dogs to sexually assault detainees, 35-year-old Amir talks about the use of a trained dog to rape him.



*“I was detained in Sde Teiman. They took a group of detainees and me to a corridor between the sections and forced us to strip completely naked. The soldiers brought in several dogs. One of them urinated on me. One of the dogs then raped me, penetrated my anus in a trained manner while I was being beaten. This continued for several minutes. I felt profoundly humiliated and violated.”*

**In a separate testimony, 35-year-old A.S. shared his experience during detention at the Sde Teiman camp.**



*“We heard dogs barking in the area, and from time to time, the dogs would urinate on us while we were detained in the metal cages. The shock came when they forced me to lie down, and a dog climbed on top of me and tried to insert its penis into me. At first, I did not understand what was happening, but then I realised that I was being raped.*

*I was completely naked, with no clothes on. I felt the dog’s fluids on my body. I tried to resist, but I was handcuffed, and the space was so small that I could not move. Two of them were holding me down tightly. This went on for three to four minutes.”*

In a statement reflecting an extreme level of brutality, Khaled Mahajna, an attorney with the Commission of Detainees’ Affairs, reported a sexual assault incident in the Sde Teiman camp. He described how a soldier inserted a fire extinguisher hose into a Palestinian prisoner’s anus and then pumped chemical extinguishing agent into him, resulting in severe internal injuries and intense pain.<sup>(11)</sup>

11 Anadolu Agency. (29 July 2025). [حقوقى فلسطينى: هكذا اغتصبت سجّانة إسرائيلية أسيرا من غزة]. <http://v.aa.com.tr/3644965>

Mahajna also reported an incident where an Israeli female prison guard stripped a Palestinian prisoner in his thirties, labelled as an “unlawful combatant,” in the courtyard of a detention centre. She then pulled him by his genitals in a degrading and violent way, before sexually assaulting him and mocking him. Despite his hands being tied, the prisoner tried to defend himself. Attempts by other prisoners to stop the assault failed as it continued for several minutes, displaying extreme sadism.<sup>(12)</sup>

## 2. Forced nudity

The Israeli army has systematically used forced nudity during arrests and detention. Testimonies indicate it serves as a “constant tool” for sexual and psychological torture, aiming to destroy dignity, instil fear, and create a sense of complete helplessness and total submission among Palestinian detainees.

This illegal practice affects men, women, and children alike. In military camps like Sde Teiman, checkpoints, and during arrests, male detainees are forced to strip completely or stay in underwear for days, usually while handcuffed and blindfolded. This is often combined with severe beatings, particularly to the genitals, sexual harassment, and deliberate filming in humiliating positions for blackmail and defamation.

For women, the stripping took on even harsher forms, such as forcibly removing headscarves and conducting strip searches at gunpoint, sometimes in front of their children or male soldiers, a clear violation of privacy and human dignity that exacerbated long-term psychological and social effects.

Furthermore, stripping was often combined with exposing detainees to extreme weather conditions as a form of torture, causing severe physical and psychological harm. Detainees were left naked in freezing temperatures or deliberately exposed to cold air or air conditioning for extended periods.

**In a testimony to Euro-Med Monitor, 43-year-old Radwan, who was arrested by Israeli forces from Beit Lahia Project in northern Gaza, said:**

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



*On 11 December 2023, Israeli vehicles surrounded the house we were in, and the army addressed us through loudspeakers, ordering us to come down and gather at Kamal Adwan Hospital. We came down and surrendered, and the soldiers handcuffed us and ordered us to strip naked and go to a nearby plot of land. They then took me to a house adjacent to the plot, where I was interrogated and suspended by the arms while kneeling. I remember that my triceps were torn due to the severity of the suspension. The same thing happened to my son and other members of my family who were detained with me under the same conditions.”*

**In another testimony to Euro-Med Monitor, 35-year-old Osama, a resident of the Tel Al-Hawa neighbourhood in south-western Gaza City, described his detention in the Gaza Strip and his transfer to an Israeli detention centre.**



*“We arrived at what I believe was a detention centre in the Sderot settlement north of the Gaza Strip. I learned this from the soldiers’ conversations. There, new soldiers greeted us with severe beatings that left my entire body covered in blood. I was interrogated there three times, twice by the Shin Bet and once by military intelligence.”*

*“I remember that before the interrogations began, I was stripped naked, and they turned large fans on us and played loud music. During the interrogation, the soldiers tied me to the chair with my feet shackled.”*

Testimonies gathered by Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor for this and past reports reveal that every interviewed detainee was subjected to forced nudity at some point during arrest or detention. To keep the report concise, only a select few testimonies are included, which do not fully represent how widespread or common this practice truly is.

### 3. Assault on genitals

Documented testimonies obtained by Euro-Med Monitor indicate that the targeting of detainees’ genitals formed part of a systematic policy of sexual violence and torture aimed at deliberate humiliation, the infliction of permanent physical and psychological harm, and the impairment of reproductive capacity.

Consistent testimonies describe soldiers forcing detainees to strip naked and spread their legs before assaulting their genitals with hard objects, including metal rods, rifle butts, and other tools, in addition to punching and kicking them directly in the testicles. Reports also reveal that soldiers repeatedly assaulted detainees’ sensitive body parts. This included squeezing testicles with excessive force during interrogations, using clamps, attaching weights to genitals for prolonged periods, and electrocuting them in sensitive areas.

These practices have led to catastrophic medical consequences in documented cases, including severe bleeding, haematuria, chronic pain that hinders movement and sitting, and, in some instances, severe rupture requiring the surgical removal of a testicle, loss of consciousness, and other serious complications. This targeted violence is often accompanied by other sexually humiliating practices, most notably forced nudity during searches or interrogations, as well as verbal and physical harassment using obscene language, which deepens the victim’s sense of helplessness and humiliation.

**In his testimony to the Euro-Med Monitor, 48-year-old Khalil said:**



*“In March 2024, Israeli forces detained me in the Gaza Strip and transferred me to a military prison I did not recognise. I was subjected to numerous rounds of interrogation combined with severe torture. During one of the sessions, a soldier pressed forcefully on one of my testicles, and I screamed in pain until I lost consciousness. When I regained consciousness, I found myself on a hospital bed with my genitals wrapped in gauze, and I realised that one of my testicles had been removed as a result of the violent pressure.”*

**Additionally, 48-year-old A.J., who was also arrested in the Gaza Strip and detained for over a year, reported the following:**



*“During my interrogation, I was beaten, including on my testicles. When I answered questions with ‘I don’t know’, the interrogator pressed hard on my testicles and attempted to insert an object into my penis. I experienced intense pain. On one occasion, when he pressed on my testicles, I lost consciousness. When I regained consciousness, I found myself in a hospital, handcuffed. I later learned that my testicles had been removed, leaving me in a severe psychological state.”*

**A 35-year-old detainee from the Gaza Strip, transferred to Ofer Prison on 23 June 2024 and detained for about 30 days, also reported experiencing severe sexual assault.**



*“In another incident at Ofer Prison, I was completely stripped naked. I was not blindfolded. Two black men with muscular builds beat me severely. One of them then restrained me while the other gripped my penis and made a cut in it with a ‘scalpel.’ I suffered from this wound for more than two months.”*

**Furthermore, 39-year-old J.A., a former detainee, described the severe torture he and other detainees endured at Sde Teiman.**



*“The repression squad, composed of 20 to 30 soldiers armed with metal batons, beat detainees all over their bodies, focusing on the head, chest, groin, and the area between the pelvic bones, especially the testicles. The purpose of these tortures was to cause intense pain and serious injuries. As a result of these practices, some detainees had their testicles removed. These are just some of the systematic methods used in this prison. There is no one to stop them; everything was permitted.”*

## 4. Verbal and physical harassment

The collected documents and testimonies indicate that verbal and physical harassment in Israeli detention centres has become systematic, forming part of a “daily routine” aimed at destroying detainees’ dignity and subjugating them psychologically and physically. Verbal abuse extends beyond general insults and functions as a tool of sustained sexual humiliation, marked by the repeated use of obscene and degrading language that dehumanises victims, attacks their family honour, and targets their mothers and sisters with sexually explicit remarks.

In cases involving women, testimonies reported derogatory comments about their bodies during searches or interrogations, mockery of their appearance, and language used to dehumanise them. There were also incidents involving threats of digital defamation through the display or circulation of images and materials.

On a physical level, testimonies confirm that detainees were deliberately touched in sensitive areas and subjected to violations of bodily privacy during transport, interrogation, and searches. This included touching the breasts of blindfolded female detainees under broad pretexts, as well as grabbing the genitals of male detainees and violently squeezing, striking, or pulling them, at times causing wounds with fingernails or search tools. These acts occurred in a context of intentional humiliation, unrelated to any legitimate security purpose, compounding the psychological harm and leaving victims unable to protect themselves or object.

In several cases, these practices were carried out deliberately in front of others within detention facilities to intensify humiliation. Sexual abuse was used as a public display, including harassment, forced nudity, or degradation in front of other detainees, in order to deepen stigmatisation and fracture group cohesion. Taken together, these acts form part of an integrated system of torture designed to humiliate victims, break their will, and assert control over them.

Said, a 36-year-old former detainee from Gaza City, told Euro-Med Monitor:



*“I was held in an interrogation room after undergoing an extremely harsh interrogation, during which I was sexually assaulted by having a stick inserted into my anus, being repeatedly beaten on my penis, and having my testicles squeezed.*

*Two female soldiers then entered and began making sexually suggestive movements. One of them removed her top and approached me, attempting to arouse me. I was in a severely distressed state as a result of what I had endured. She grabbed my penis and tried to stimulate me further, but nothing happened. She then slapped me and hurled insults at me. Hours later, she repeated the attempt, but I did not respond again. A male soldier subsequently entered the room and engaged in sexual intercourse with her in front of me.”*

The former detainee, Hadeel Al-Dahdouh, 24, reported that the Israeli army forcibly removed her hijab during her detention. She said:



*“One of the occupation soldiers stood behind me; he struck my back hard with the butt of his weapon and insulted me with extremely obscene language, saying: ‘You are a whore, a bitch, a Hamas elite.’ Another soldier said: ‘Sit down, whore, sit down, bitch.’ They pulled off my head covering while I was crying and begging them to cover my hair, laughing and refusing to put it back on me.”*

The 70-year-old former detainee S. M. reported that during her time in Shikma Prison, she faced sexual insults, accusations of adultery and slander, and explicit threats targeting her daughters, who were detained with her. The woman said the investigator told her: ‘I want to rape your daughters...’

**She continued,** *“He accused me of having borne my five sons illegitimately, claiming that each of them was fathered by a different man. He said to me, ‘Your first son is from so and so, your second son is from so and so, your third son is from so and so, and your fourth son is from so and so.’ As he spoke, saliva sprayed onto my face, and his words consisted entirely of accusations of adultery and slander. The severity of his insults caused me to break down.”*

## **5. Threats of rape**

Testimonies documented by Euro-Med Monitor confirm that threats of rape were used inside Israeli detention facilities as a form of sexualised psychological torture, within a deliberate strategy aimed at breaking detainees’ will by targeting notions of honour and family relationships and exploiting the social stigma associated with sexual violence. The collected data records explicit threats made to male detainees to assault their first-degree relatives, including mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters, as well as threats to bring a wife to the place of detention and assault her in front of her husband to subdue and break him.

In the case of women, testimonies indicate that threats of rape were accompanied by additional threats targeting motherhood and family protection, such as denying female detainees access to their children or using children as leverage to force “cooperation” or coerced statements, alongside obscene verbal threats directed at the entire family.

Taken together, these findings confirm that the threat of sexual violence was systematically and deliberately used within the detention system to humiliate victims, instil fear, break their will, and force compliance by exploiting their closest family ties. This practice constitutes cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment and amounts to torture when combined with detention, the intent to coerce, and the severe psychological impact inflicted.

**In her testimony to Euro-Med Monitor, former detainee N. A. from the Mukhabarat neighbourhood in north-western Gaza City said:**



*“My family and I were displaced to the Amr ibn al-As government school in the Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood, where we stayed for 24 days. The day after we arrived there, my brothers returned to our home to fetch blankets and mattresses, but when they reached the house’s door, they were struck by a missile from a reconnaissance aircraft. Two of them were killed, including two children belonging to one of them.*

*On 10 December 2023, an Israeli sniper targeted my third brother in his home in Sheikh Radwan, killing him. On 24 December, tanks surrounded the school, and we heard soldiers storming the adjacent houses, gunfire, and the screams of the residents.*

*At 10 a.m., Israeli vehicles bulldozed the school’s outer wall and stormed inside. Soldiers called to us through loudspeakers, ordering us to gather in the schoolyard. The women were lined up and taken to the Taqwa Mosque (not to be confused with the one in Bureij).*

*A soldier asked me to hand over my five-year-old son to the person behind me and confiscated our identity cards. I was interrogated inside the mosque regarding the 7 October incident. During the interrogations, soldiers and officers repeatedly threatened that if we did not provide information about Hamas, we would be raped. These threats were made throughout the interrogations and had a devastating effect on the other female detainees and me. We were also threatened that we would not see our children if we did not comply. The threat of rape was repeated to me and most of the female detainees during the majority of the interrogations.”*

## Former detainee M. W. told Euro-Med Monitor:



*“They arrested me in Beit Lahia and forced me to take off all my clothes. They detained me in the open air and beat me severely. They groped me with their hands. I was severely beaten with boots and rifle butts. They hung me by my legs from the ceiling. I was suspended for 46- hours [every day].*

*“They threatened to rape my family and demanded information that I did not possess. They forced us to curse certain factions and individuals, to cheer for Israel, and to say that the dog allowed to bite us was ‘the crown on our heads’.”*

## 6. Coerced exposure to rape and other sexual assaults

Testimonies documented by Euro-Med Monitor confirm that forcing prisoners and detainees to witness sexual violence against others in Israeli detention centres was a frequent and deliberate practice. This formed part of psychological abuse and complex torture, designed to create a collective impact, turn the victim’s body into a tool for terrorising detainees, break their will, and produce collective helplessness. In this context, rape and sexual assault were not only committed in secret but, in documented cases, were staged as a “public spectacle” in courtyards and shared cells. Detainees were forced to line up or remain within direct view while others were assaulted, making the act of witnessing itself a structural component of the crime, rather than a mere circumstance.

This practice consisted of repeated collective humiliation rituals designed to dehumanise detainees in front of each other. Techniques included collective forced nudity, crowding detainees naked, using obscenities, and breaching social norms, such as stripping men in front of women and children or threatening women with rape while their husbands watched. The goal was to break family bonds and create a sense of helplessness, impacting both the victims and the witnesses.

Some testimonies indicate that the “audience” for torture extended beyond the

detainees themselves, either by allowing civilians or public figures to enter and observe detainees in humiliating positions, mocking and photographing them, or by soldiers documenting assaults and nudity on their phones for display and defamation. This practice does not merely add a secondary element but reinforces the systematic nature of the acts, amplifying their public impact. It transforms sexual violence from an assault on an individual into a tool of mass terror, constituting systematic sexual torture within a coercive detention environment and supporting its classification as an international crime based on context and elements.

**In his testimony, Firas, who was arrested by the Israeli army in the Gaza Strip and subjected to various forms of torture, states:**



*“During my detention in Sde Teiman, they called me and two other detainees I did not know and took us to a concrete courtyard. They removed our blindfolds, took one detainee, stripped him of his clothes, and brought in a huge dog that raped him in front of us. The dog appeared to have been trained to do so. The young man screamed loudly for two minutes, after which they took the other detainee and me to another location. I do not know what happened to the detainee who was raped.”*

**In a shocking statement relayed by lawyer Khaled Mahajna, imprisoned journalist Mohammed Arab said: <sup>(13)</sup>**



*“Six prisoners were forced to strip naked and stand against the wall. One of them was then raped with a stick in front of us, and we were crying in terror.”*

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13 International Foundation for Solidarity with Prisoners. (18 November 2025). [العنف الجنسي والاغتصاب الممنهج بحق الأسرى والأسيرات]. [https://www.solidarity-ps.org/ar/category\\_details/7292](https://www.solidarity-ps.org/ar/category_details/7292) [الفلسطينيين في سجون الاحتلال الإسرائيلي]

## 43-year-old A. A. told Euro-Med Monitor:



*“I was arrested at the checkpoint near the Kuwait roundabout, which separates Gaza City from Central Gaza, as part of a campaign of random arrests based on appearance and physique.*

*During my detention, which lasted approximately 52 days, I was tortured and abused. Israeli soldiers brought Israeli civilians to witness the abuse while we were naked and beaten. This occurred five times: once at [Kibbutz] Zikim, where we were blindfolded.*

*One detainee who spoke Hebrew informed us that the soldiers were speaking to the civilians and claiming that we were captured combatants. It happened four more times at the Negev detention centre, where successive groups of Israelis were brought into the tents to watch us being tortured.”*

## 7. Filming sexual assaults

Testimonies show that filming sexual assaults of Palestinian men and women, particularly after 7 October 2023, was used as a multifunctional tool within a system of repression, persecution, and destruction. It intensified psychological torture by turning the assault into a recorded event that extended beyond the incident itself, served as a means of blackmail to defame victims and destroy their family lives, and perpetuated humiliation by documenting nudity and coercion into degrading positions.

Additionally, testimonies cite cases in which rape and severe sexual assaults were filmed, with victims hearing the sounds of filming, laughter, and mockery during the assaults. This added an intentional element of humiliation and domination, prolonging the psychological impact of the crimes. The testimonies also indicate that the photos and videos were used as a means of threat and blackmail, with perpetrators threatening

to publish them on social media or share them with the victims’ families to coerce compliance under the threat of scandal and stigma.

**Former detainee N. A., who was repeatedly raped by members of the Israeli army at Sde Teiman, reported:**



*“They showed me pictures of me naked and pictures of my rape and the officers threatened to publish them if I didn’t cooperate. When I refused, they repeatedly electrocuted me with electric wires they attached to my body until I lost consciousness.”*

## **Third: Collusion of state institutions: Medical and judicial complicity in creating impunity**

Systematic crimes of torture and sexual violence extend beyond the direct perpetrators, relying on a structure of institutional collusion that facilitates the acts, provides cover, and obstructs documentation and accountability. This section examines the mechanisms of institutional complicity, including a medical system that participates in the militarisation of medicine by undermining the duty of care and destroying evidence, and a judicial system that fails in its oversight and accountability roles, instead acting as a protective mechanism that obstructs justice. Even low-level perpetrators are seldom convicted or punished, and policymakers, as well as the chain of command, are less likely to face consequences. Tracing these interconnected paths reveals how roles are coordinated to ensure impunity, rendering torture and sexual violence a protected practice within state policy.

### **1. Militarisation of medicine and the complicity of the Israeli medical system**

Repeated evidence reveals an unprecedented moral and professional collapse within the Israeli medical system, as some medical staff and military health facilities have

transformed from entities that are supposed to provide care into actors that play an active role in the system of oppression. This is not limited to deliberate medical negligence, but extends to providing professional and procedural cover for serious violations and contributing to the obstruction of documentation, in flagrant violation of the duties of the medical profession and the principles of medical ethics, and a violation of international standards prohibiting the participation of health workers in torture or condoning it, and of relevant obligations under international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions.

Confirming this professional collapse, Israeli medical elites abandoned their oath, playing the role of ‘instigators’ of genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. In November 2023, approximately 100 Israeli doctors signed an open letter urging the Israeli army to bomb hospitals in Gaza,<sup>(14)</sup> calling them ‘legitimate targets.’ This was a clear and documented call to commit war crimes and violate the Geneva Conventions, which grant special protection to medical facilities. This incitement was supported by institutional cover from the Israeli Medical Association (IMA), which not only failed to condemn the targeting of the health system<sup>(15)</sup> but also lobbied to block international ceasefire calls,<sup>(16)</sup> prioritising military alignment over its humanitarian duty to protect life.

The matter went beyond incitement and escalated into direct participation in torture. In an unusual departure from the prevailing silence, a letter leaked by an Israeli doctor working at the Sde Teiman field hospital to ministers and the attorney general exposed the atrocities committed by medical staff. The letter acknowledged that all the patients at the hospital set up at Sde Teiman are handcuffed by all four limbs, regardless of how dangerous they are deemed. “Just this week, two prisoners had their legs amputated due to handcuff injuries, which, unfortunately, is a routine

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14 Middle East Monitor. (6 November 2023) 100 Israel doctors calls for bombing Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza. <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20231106100--israel-doctors-calls-for-bombing-al-shifa-hospital-in-gaza/>

15 Physicians for Human Rights - Israel. [2023 تقرير النشاطات السنوي] Annual Report 2023. pages. 1213-. [https://www.phr.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2024/02//AR-PHRI-2023-Annual-Report\\_C.pdf](https://www.phr.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2024/02//AR-PHRI-2023-Annual-Report_C.pdf)

16 Israel Medical Association. (15 November 2023). IMA Response to Italian Academics Call for Ceasefire. <https://ima-contentfiles.s3.amazonaws.com/0164.pdf>

event,” stated the doctor in the letter.<sup>(17)</sup>

The doctor also issued a stark warning to officials about the legal consequences of these practices, stressing that they not only violate medical ethics but also the law. He emphasised that the continued shackling of patients in this cruel and medically unjustified manner “makes all of us – the medical teams and you, those in charge of us in the health and defence ministries, complicit in the violation of Israeli law, and perhaps worse for me as a doctor, in the violation of my basic commitment to patients, wherever they are.” The amputation of detainees’ limbs due to handcuffs cannot be justified as a security or medical necessity; it is, instead, torture and deliberate neglect, amounting to a war crime.

This grim picture is compounded by consistent eyewitness accounts from Palestinian detainees who reported undergoing painful medical and surgical procedures without adequate anaesthesia or painkillers, in clear violation of basic humanitarian rules and medical ethics.

These practices went beyond merely “stitching deep cuts” without anaesthesia, extending to amputations, often necessitated by gangrene resulting from restraints and abusive conditions, in an environment that lacked basic health standards. In many cases, these cruel procedures were performed without anaesthesia, with the detainee fully conscious, and without postoperative medical care.<sup>(18)</sup> Such actions fall outside any medical or humanitarian context, constituting acts of torture and cruel treatment.

Subjecting a person to amputation while fully conscious and without anaesthesia is not “treatment” by any standard, but rather an act of deliberate cruelty that intentionally inflicts severe pain and suffering, while perpetuating and irreversibly consolidating the damage caused by torture.

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17 Haaretz. (4 April 2024) Doctor at Israeli Field Hospital for Detained Gazans: ‘We Are All Complicit in Breaking the Law’. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/202404-04/-ty-article/premium/doctor-at-idf-field-hospital-for-detained-gazans-we-are-all-complicit-in-breaking-law/0000018e-a59c-dfed-ad9f-afdfb5ce0000>

18 Palestine News and Info Agency (Wafa). (2 July 2024) [إنفاي الأسيير: بعض المعتقلين من قطاع غزة بترت أطرافهم دون تخدير]. <https://www.wafa.ps/pages/details/98631>

Physicians for Human Rights - Israel has affirmed that the situation at the Sde Teiman facility, particularly regarding the so-called “medical treatment” provided there, reflects a serious moral and professional collapse. The organisation believes that the continued operation of the detention facility perpetuates an environment that allows for inhumane treatment that may amount to torture.<sup>(19)</sup> It further points out that since the beginning of the war, the Israeli Ministry of Health has decided not to treat Gaza detainees in public hospitals and to transfer them to facilities run by the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) or the military. The Ministry then issued treatment guidelines that the organisation considers to be contrary to medical ethics and disregard the principles of basic care. According to the organisation’s assessment, these guidelines open the door for medical staff to participate in practices that constitute inhuman treatment or torture, as confirmed by the testimony of a doctor working in the field hospital inside Sde Teiman, who spoke of the involvement of the authorities in legal and ethical violations. Based on this, the organisation calls for the immediate closure of the facility and the transfer of detainees requiring medical care to civilian facilities that meet ethical and professional standards.

The facts also point to a systematic policy of “concealing perpetrators” and protecting them from international accountability, as military instructions were issued requiring medical staff to “obscure their identities” and replace names and signatures with obscure codes and numbers, in a precautionary measure aimed at shielding perpetrators from international criminal prosecution and preventing any future accountability.<sup>(20)</sup> Some doctors also played a role in providing procedural cover for violent interrogations by examining detainees and issuing certificates confirming their “fitness” to undergo interrogation, while failing or refraining from documenting the effects of torture in medical records, thereby obscuring criminal evidence and providing medical cover that

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19 Physicians for Human Rights - Israel. (18 April 2024) Shut Down the Sde Teiman Facility Now. <https://www.phr.org.il/en/shut-down-the-sde-teiman-facility-now/>

20 Physicians for Human Rights - Israel. (April 2024) [אתיקה רפואית ועצורי עזה מאז תחילת המלחמה 2023]. [https://www.phr.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2024/5954/04/\\_medical\\_ethics\\_Report\\_Heb-1.pdf](https://www.phr.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2024/5954/04/_medical_ethics_Report_Heb-1.pdf)

enables the continuation of torture.<sup>(21)</sup>

In public prisons, prison clinics implemented a policy of “punitive medical deprivation,” which involved stopping treatment for chronic and serious illnesses and only providing basic painkillers, such as paracetamol, for all cases regardless of severity.<sup>(22)</sup> Testimonies revealed that medication was denied to diabetes and cancer patients, and wounded prisoners were left without bandages for weeks until their wounds festered.<sup>(23)</sup> Some medical staff even engaged in extortion, demanding cooperation with investigators in exchange for treatment, or exploiting their medical knowledge of prisoners’ vulnerabilities to cause more pain instead of providing care.<sup>(24)</sup>

The collusion is reinforced by the silence of trade unions and official bodies, as the Israeli Medical Association (IMA) and the Ministry of Health respond to warnings of violations with indifference or excuses, failing to act to uphold the “duty of care.” This institutional silence has effectively made the Israeli health system complicit in these crimes, a reality tragically highlighted by the death of prominent Palestinian doctors like Dr Adnan Al-Bursh, who died under torture and detention conditions that lacked the minimum humanitarian standards, without the Israeli medical community taking any action.

Based on the foregoing, the available data indicate that the documented medical practices within Israeli detention centres and prisons, including painful medical procedures without adequate anaesthesia or painkillers and the management of medical records in a manner that hinders tracking and determining responsibility, cannot be reduced to “medical negligence” or isolated professional misconduct. Rather, they raise serious allegations that medical personnel, either directly or by facilitating procedures, are

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21 Joint Submission to the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment on Israel’s Crimes of Sexual Torture against Palestinians. (24 April 2024). [https://www.alhaq.org/cached\\_uploads/download/202522/03//joint-submission-to-the-special-rapporteur-on-torture-and-other-cruel-inhuman-or-degrading-treatment-24-april-2024-redacted-for-publication-1742664950.pdf](https://www.alhaq.org/cached_uploads/download/202522/03//joint-submission-to-the-special-rapporteur-on-torture-and-other-cruel-inhuman-or-degrading-treatment-24-april-2024-redacted-for-publication-1742664950.pdf)

22 Btselem. (August 2024) Welcome to Hell: The Israeli Prison System as a Network of Torture Camps, pages 6566-. [https://www.btselem.org/sites/default/files/publications/202408\\_welcome\\_to\\_hell\\_eng.pdf](https://www.btselem.org/sites/default/files/publications/202408_welcome_to_hell_eng.pdf)

23 Ibid, pages 6872-

24 Ibid, page 65

involved in acts that clearly constitute torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. This requires an independent criminal investigation into the direct perpetrators and all those who facilitated the violations or prevented their documentation or reporting.

In this context, the role attributed to some members of the medical staff and supervisory authorities is not limited to “negligence” or “abstention” but may constitute a contribution to facilitating or continuing the crime, where it is established that they provided practical assistance or procedural cover that enabled the torture, deliberately refrained from documenting or reporting the effects of torture, or took measures to conceal identities and obstruct accountability.

Accordingly, criminal responsibility focuses primarily on individuals based on their roles and knowledge of the context. This does not absolve the institutional responsibilities of entities such as the Ministry of Health and the Israeli Medical Association, which are tasked with regulating medical practice, upholding standards of care, and preventing the use of medicine in cruel treatment.

The Ministry of Health is responsible for decisions, policies, and guidelines governing where and how care is provided to prisoners and detainees, as well as for oversight, inspections, and responding to complaints, including ensuring complete professional medical documentation and preventing arrangements that obscure the perpetrator or turn “propriety” into a cover for perpetuating abuse. Meanwhile, the Association is responsible for its disciplinary duty to protect professional ethics and enforce accountability when serious allegations arise of doctors’ involvement in torture or deliberate failure to document and report.

To the extent that it is proven that the Israeli Ministry of Health and the Israeli Medical Association have adopted and/or maintained policies and arrangements that enabled violations against Palestinian prisoners and detainees by denying adequate care, condoning cruel medical practices, or weakening documentation in ways that obscure perpetrators and conceal evidence, in the absence of serious professional oversight and accountability, these acts are not limited to administrative negligence. They establish

institutional responsibility and provide a serious basis for considering international criminal responsibility for individuals who formulated, approved, or implemented these policies, when it is proven that they were aware that the results would enable torture, facilitate its continuation, or hinder its documentation and the accountability of perpetrators.

## **2. Israeli judicial complicity and the absence of ‘state will’ for accountability: The case of Sde Teiman**

The systematic crimes of torture and sexual violence committed against Palestinian prisoners and detainees cannot be separated from the legal and institutional cover provided by the Israeli ‘justice’ system.

The available data do not point to an incidental procedural failure or a lack of capacity, but rather a structural failure in the ‘will’ to conduct serious investigations and effective prosecutions, turning internal investigations into formal procedures designed to create the appearance of accountability while preventing any real consequences and ensuring the practical protection of the perpetrators and the chain of command, rather than seeking the truth or justice for the victims.

Historically, data indicate that indictments against soldiers in cases of crimes against Palestinians have not exceeded 0.81 per cent of all complaints filed,<sup>(25)</sup> a pattern that has been exacerbated during the ongoing genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The superficial nature of the judicial process is evident in shocking data revealed by investigative reports. During the first 18 months of the genocide, the military prosecution filed only three indictments related to crimes committed in Gaza, despite the documentation of thousands of violations. These indictments resulted in only one conviction, which was the sentencing of a reserve soldier to only seven months in prison

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25 Yesh Din. (2 January 2023) [-2005 (عنف المستوطنين) في الضفة الغربية (عنف المستوطنين) 2022: تطبيق القانون على المواطنين الإسرائيليين في الضفة الغربية (عنف المستوطنين) 2022]. <https://s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/files.yesh-din.org/law+data+dec+22/Law+data+22+ARB.pdf>

for mistreating detainees at Sde Teiman detention camp.<sup>(26)</sup>

This single, lenient sentence, in light of the documented deaths of 98 detainees under torture and thousands of cases of torture and sexual violence, is not evidence of an effective judiciary, but rather proof of its function as a smokescreen. This rare measure is used to give a false appearance of accountability for ‘individual behaviours’, while systematic policies and the senior leaders responsible for them remain completely immune from prosecution.

The Israeli response to soldiers’ gang rape of a Palestinian detainee from the Gaza Strip at Sde Teiman exemplifies what can be termed the “structural immunity” of Israeli perpetrators of crimes against the Palestinians. This case highlights how the judicial and military systems are often employed to contain damage, suppress the crime’s repercussions, and minimise responsibility rather than uncovering the truth and ensuring justice that results in accountability and redress for victims.

The matter did not end with delays in prosecution or alterations to the charges. It culminated in the dismissal of the indictment against five reserve soldiers, despite the gravity of the acts and the existence of substantial material and visual evidence. The original indictment, referred in February 2025, was itself based on evidence the military described as extensive, including medical documentation and surveillance footage.

This outcome was not incidental. It reflects a trajectory and an official and societal environment that did not treat the crime as a serious violation requiring truth, justice for the victim, and criminal accountability. Instead, it was handled as an institutional and political burden, gradually contained and stripped of its legal substance until the case was dropped.

Although there is substantial evidence, such as surveillance footage and medical reports showing severe injuries like rectal lacerations and gastrointestinal perforation, the

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26 Anadolu Agency. (14 November 2025) Only 3 criminal indictments filed against Israeli soldiers in first 18 months of Gaza genocide: Report. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/only-3-criminal-indictments-filed-against-israeli-soldiers-in-first-18-months-of-gaza-genocide-report/3743757>

Israeli authorities ultimately justified the dismissal of the indictment on procedural and evidentiary grounds, including the return of the victim to the Gaza Strip and claims of “justice defence”. These justifications do not indicate the absence of a crime; rather, they reveal that the prosecution was hollowed out to the point that the case was dropped without any genuine accountability.

This is evident first in the way the arrest is treated as a politicised measure rather than a necessary step in the course of strict justice. Instead of addressing the incident as a serious criminal offence requiring immediate arrest and decisive action, the arrest proceedings have been turned into a spectacle. The soldiers’ arrest was accompanied by a widespread incitement campaign led by government ministers and Knesset members, who publicly defended the accused and described them as “heroes.” Some participated in storming the military court to disrupt the proceedings. This effectively undermines the requirements of independence and impartiality and indicates that the judicial process is subject to political considerations that provide cover for torture and protect it as a practice.

The subsequent official endorsement of the dismissal of the charges marked the clearest sign of the success of this pressure in achieving its ultimate goal, including stripping the defendants’ acts of criminal liability and their redefinition within a discourse of heroism and national duty, thus placing them beyond the scope of legal censure and framing them as lawful acts of national service.

Second, this pattern is reinforced by narrowing the scope of accountability to the direct perpetrators at lower levels, without parallel responsibility for the leadership managing detention facilities and providing the conditions of control, oversight, and resources that enabled these violations to occur and recur. The absence of serious summonses or investigations of leaders with supervisory and managerial responsibilities, who effectively allowed a closed detention environment immune from oversight, perpetuates a selective approach that isolates the act from its institutional context. In practice, internal procedures serve to contain legal and political damage rather than enforce

effective accountability, preventing the facts from reaching independent international investigation and accountability mechanisms.

Third, the military prosecution did not pursue a course of action commensurate with the gravity of the facts, but instead engaged in procrastination and procedural delays from the outset. It then progressively mitigated the measures taken against the suspects, transferring most of them to house arrest rather than actual detention, which was warranted given the seriousness of the acts and the risk of tampering with evidence. At the same time, strong indications emerged of an effort to downgrade the legal characterisation of the charges from “rape” to minor offences such as “inappropriate behaviour” or “ultra vires.” This methodology of altering charges clearly aims to diminish the severity of the crime under both domestic and international criminal law, confining it to a less serious internal category, preventing its recognition as a felony or war crime, and limiting the potential consequences in terms of liability, stigma, and accountability. The dismissal of the indictment should therefore not be understood as an isolated incident but as a consistent outcome of a procedural trajectory characterised by a lack of seriousness, an absence of genuine intent to hold perpetrators accountable, and structural discrimination against Palestinians, making it part of a broader system that provides impunity for perpetrators and forms part of an overarching framework of repression.

Fourth, the procedural justifications cited by the Israeli military to justify the dismissal of the charges do not negate the existence of the crime nor diminish the substantial material evidence, including surveillance footage, medical documentation, and the findings of the Israeli doctors who treated the victim. All of this constitutes an independent and sufficient evidentiary basis for establishing the offence. Furthermore, relying on the defendant’s alleged right to a fair trial to justify dropping the case inverts the legal standard. Procedural issues, if they exist, cannot serve to dismiss the case; they should instead have been addressed in a manner that ensured the investigation could continue and lead to genuine judicial accountability for a crime of extreme gravity, without undermining the State’s primary obligation to conduct a serious and effective

investigation into acts of torture, sexual violence, and cruel treatment, and to prosecute and hold perpetrators accountable.

This is particularly evident in the Israeli decision to release the victim, considering he is a complainant and a key witness, back to the Gaza Strip abruptly before the completion of judicial proceedings and without enabling him to testify in court. A State cannot benefit from obstacles it has itself created. Removing the principal witness from the reach of the court, the prosecution, and the defence at this sensitive procedural moment not only weakens the chances of verification but also directly disrupts the collection and evaluation of evidence, amounting to deliberate sabotage of the case and undermining the prospects for accountability. This measure undermines the fundamental basis of testimony, effectively pushing the case toward dismissal under the pretext of “insufficient evidence” or “inability to proceed to trial,” as indeed occurred. This reveals that the goal was not to protect the victim or uphold the requirements of the investigation, but rather to achieve the outcome most conducive to obscuring the crime and securing impunity.

Finally, the Sde Teiman case, considered alongside data showing a chronic decline in indictments, a lack of accountability for serious crimes, and the narrow scope of proceedings that exclude the chain of command, provides compelling evidence for the International Criminal Court that the Israeli judicial system is unwilling or unable to conduct genuine investigations and prosecutions. This satisfies the admissibility criteria of Article 17 of the Rome Statute and precludes any defence based on complementarity.

This is reinforced by accumulated evidence of overt political interference, the reduction of investigations to sham proceedings, the use of mitigating measures such as plea bargains or amended charges, and, eventually, the dropping of the indictment in a case supported by extensive medical and visual evidence. These practices show that national proceedings are not aimed at establishing the truth or ensuring punishment, but rather at hindering accountability and shielding those responsible, as contemplated under Article 17.

According to the above, the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court is activated

under Article 17 of the Rome Statute when a State is “unwilling or unable genuinely to carry out the investigation or prosecution.” This also applies if national proceedings shield the accused or are not sufficiently independent and impartial, rendering them inadequate to ensure accountability at both the perpetrator and command levels.

## **Fourth: Effects of crime: systematic destruction of the body and identity**

Within the system of subjugation and destruction in Israeli detention centres, sexual violence against Palestinians cannot be seen as punishment, isolated incidents or mere “collateral damage.” It is a fundamental pillar of a strategy aimed at the moral and physical destruction of detainees, deliberately engineered to inflict pain, destroy individual identity and collective consciousness, and keep victims in a state of helplessness and constant stigmatisation, preventing them from reclaiming their life or social role even after release.

This strategy progressed from planning to implementation by targeting the body’s “vital functions.” Its aim extended beyond causing immediate pain during interrogation to inflict “permanent disabilities” and systematically destroying the body’s biological structure. In doing so, the Palestinian was transformed from a “living human being” into a “vessel of chronic pain,” constituting a complex violation of the right to life and physical integrity, with injuries becoming lifelong disabilities for the victim.

### **1. Direct physical effects (Biological and functional destruction)**

Available evidence, including medical findings, confirms a pattern of systematic destruction of the bodies of Palestinian detainees in Israeli prisons and detention centres through injuries that can only be explained by deliberate, brutal violence. Documented cases include internal tissue destruction and deep rectal lacerations resulting from rape with sharp objects, leading to permanent functional disabilities such as urinary incontinence. In some instances, the violence has caused life-threatening injuries,

including gastrointestinal perforation and lung damage requiring emergency surgery. These facts negate any security justification and clearly demonstrate criminal intent to inflict serious bodily harm and lasting physical damage.

The crime of sexual violence is compounded by additional repressive measures that strike at the core of the rights to health and life, foremost among them the policy of “continuous shackling” with plastic and iron restraints for prolonged periods. This practice is not merely intended to restrict movement but operates as a form of slow torture, compounded by the systematic denial of medical care. The resulting aggravation of deep wounds, severe infections, and gangrene has, in many cases, led to amputation. In this way, “restraint” is transformed from a method of detention into a means of inflicting permanent disability.

The cruelty is most apparent when it assaults detainees’ “biological existence.” Documented cases reveal direct attacks on the genitals that cause organ removal or loss of function, resulting in lifelong infertility and serious hormonal issues. Such targeting of reproductive capacity is not incidental but constitutes material evidence of specific intent to impose measures aimed at preventing reproduction within the group, thereby satisfying the material element of genocide.

In the same context, female prisoners were subjected to a pattern of “hygienic abuse” through the deliberate deprivation of personal hygiene supplies, causing serious reproductive complications, increasing the risk of compulsory sterilisation, and exposing detainees to sexually transmitted diseases and chronic infections.

The cycle of brutality is completed by “medical torture,” which represents a complete moral and legal breakdown of medical practice within Israeli detention centres and prisons. Medical staff were not only “silent accomplices,” but became active partners and perpetrators of torture. This professional decline is exemplified by the “militarisation of medicine,” where scientific knowledge and anatomy were used to exacerbate the victims’ pain rather than treat it, through precise surgical interventions, such as stitching deep wounds and amputating limbs in a humiliating manner and without anaesthesia, with

the systematic denial of painkillers, thereby turning treatable injuries into permanent disabilities, in flagrant violation of the Hippocratic Oath and international conventions prohibiting medical participation in acts of torture.

## **2. Profound psychological effects (Psyche fragmentation and identity erasure)**

In parallel with physical destruction, torture against Palestinians seeks to inflict comprehensive “psychological destruction” that strikes at the foundations of the human personality. In this context, sexual violence is medically and legally recognised as one of the most severe causes of complex post-traumatic stress disorder (C-PTSD). Through this practice, the perpetrator seeks to engineer a state of “complete dissociation,” compelling the victim to escape unbearable pain through acute defence mechanisms such as shock, panic attacks, and emotional detachment, resulting in fragmentation of consciousness and perception and a profound insecurity.

Over time, this trauma becomes entrenched, developing into chronic psychotic and behavioural symptoms that impede the resumption of normal life. Survivors remain burdened by “intrusive memories” that relive moments of torture as if occurring in the present, accompanied by acute depression, severe insomnia, and suicidal thoughts perceived as the only escape from a persistent sense of guilt and shame.

This destruction extends beyond the individual to erode social and gender identity, as victims live in a state of “chronic fear” of renewed abuse even after release. This fear paralyses them, restricts their ability to work or study, and drives them into forced isolation. For men, sexual violence is used to “de-masculinise” them and instil helplessness, while for women it seeks to impose “social stigma,” leading to the breakdown of family relationships and withdrawal from society.

## **3. Social stigma and policies of forceful silencing**

The Israeli torture system deliberately widens the circle of harm through a strategy of

“psychological warfare” that exploits the high value placed on “dignity” and “privacy” in Palestinian collective consciousness, turning them from protective norms into instruments of coercion. Instead of society functioning as a protective space, victims are led to believe that disclosing sexual abuse would constitute a second violation of their privacy and their family’s reputation. This fosters a cycle of emotional isolation that discourages reporting or seeking assistance for fear of further compromising their personal and familial dignity, already eroded by the torture.

This policy deprives victims of access to justice and medical care, as the burden of the abuse and the desire to protect their family environment deter them from seeking support or providing full disclosure. It has been observed that, following release and initial medical examinations in Gaza hospitals, many survivors avoided detailing sexual violence and confined themselves to brief references. This reflects the impact of a coercive environment that enforces silence, obstructs documentation, and impedes the pursuit of redress, with consequences that persist beyond release.

This silence is not confined to psychological pressure but is reinforced by direct “Israeli security intimidation,” as released detainees report explicit threats from intelligence officers of retaliation, re-arrest, or even death if they disclose what they endured. This strategy is designed to conceal the nature of the crimes, prevent the emergence of a collective narrative condemning violations against Palestinian prisoners and detainees, and confine each victim to isolated suffering.

This silencing method is clear from the testimony of F. B., a detainee released after his arrest on 5 January 2024. His account exposes direct intelligence efforts to cover up facts.



*“Before my release, an occupation intelligence officer threatened me not to speak about what happened during my detention, as I had witnessed the rape of one of the detainees. After I left prison and spoke to the media about what had occurred, I received calls from an unknown number warning me not to speak to the media, after which the call was disconnected.”*

These facts demonstrate that the “silence” surrounding sexual violence is not voluntary, but the direct product of a coercive environment engineered and exploited by the Israeli authorities. It results from the convergence of “security intimidation” aimed at erasing criminal evidence and the “systematic exploitation” of social taboos. This silencing regime amounts to psychological torture and persecution, obstructing the exercise of fundamental rights and exposing victims to continuing harm long after their physical detention has ended.

#### **4. Undermining family structure**

The devastating effects of sexual violence extend beyond the individual victim to erode “familial unity” protected under international law. Survivors experience what may be described as “forced social alienation,” as profound psychological trauma and loss of trust hinder reintegration into the family environment. In this systematic context, the psychological burden, compounded by the inability to disclose the abuse inflicted by Israeli jailers, contributes to the breakdown of family and marital relationships, transforming the home from a place of safety into one of chronic tension and estrangement.

From a human rights perspective, the families of detainees become “secondary victims,” experiencing a form of “vicarious trauma.” Persistent existential anxiety for their loved ones and the profound helplessness in shielding them from the brutality of the Israeli military and official apparatus erode the family’s psychological stability. This strain may also contribute to heightened domestic tensions and violence as an expression of external pressure, amounting to a violation of the family’s safety and dignity.

This tragedy is vividly depicted through the testimony of a woman whose husband was released from detention, highlighting the drastic change in his personality:



*“My husband’s behaviour and attitude changed after his release. After three weeks, I realised that he had been raped with an object. He became isolated and avoided socialising with anyone, which was unusual for him. He even withdrew from physical intimacy with me.”*

This testimony shows that the impact extends beyond the individual, creating intergenerational trauma passed on to families and children. In a besieged, resource-poor setting like the Gaza Strip, the lack of specialised psychological support turns these invisible scars into a sustained burden that is tearing apart the Palestinian social fabric from within.

These effects are intensified by the coercive context of the Gaza Strip, where the Israeli blockade, combined with ongoing genocidal aggression, creates an environment hostile to any possibility of recovery. The systematic destruction of infrastructure, social safety nets, and therapeutic institutions by Israeli forces deprives victims and their families of their right to rehabilitation, leaving them isolated in the face of severe psychological and social repercussions. This compounds their suffering and makes it nearly impossible to restore family cohesion.

## **5. Targeting the social fabric and undermining collective security**

The facts show that sexual violence in detention not only harms direct victims but also serves as a tool of collective repression against Palestinian society in the Gaza Strip. Committed in closed facilities shielded from oversight, and accompanied by denial of communication, legal representation, and medical care, these crimes create a broad deterrent effect: a clear message that detention may involve sexual abuse and degradation, and that the body is treated as a canvas for punishment and subjugation. This effect stems not only from the violence itself, but from its systematic, cost-free repetition in a coercive environment, undermining the rights to physical integrity, human dignity, personal security, and ultimately collective security.

This impact extends to the social level through two interrelated mechanisms. First, it entrenches fear and uncertainty, as arrest is collectively redefined as a threat to dignity and safety, not just freedom, creating a constant sense of danger and eroding the sense of protection in society. Second, it silences victims by weaponising social stigma. The nature of these crimes, along with intimidation, threats, and blackmail, creates structural barriers to reporting and seeking redress. The violation becomes an ongoing constraint

that strains family relationships and social ties, weakens families’ capacity to provide support, and undermines cohesion in a society already under siege and aggression.

In the Palestinian context, this targeting takes on existential significance: prisoners and detainees are not just detainees, but the “backbone” of the national movement for liberation and resilience. Sexual targeting thus serves a colonial function that goes beyond physical pain to attempt to “assassinate their symbolism.” It seeks to strip prisoners of the aura of “heroism” and “resilience” they hold in the collective consciousness, transforming their bodies from sites of resistance into sites of violation and broken spirit. This “engineering of pain and shame” aims to weaken the social incubator of prisoners by exploiting cultural sensitivities around “honour” and “dignity,” turning them from icons of pride into objects of silence or pity, and thereby undermining the “doctrine of steadfastness” that sustains Palestinian cohesion in the face of Israeli settler colonialism.

## **Fifth: Legal adaptation and scope of criminal responsibility**

Based on documented facts and testimonies, analysed in light of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and international criminal law, it is clear that the sexual violence and torture carried out by the Israeli authorities against Palestinian prisoners and detainees are not accidental or isolated acts. They constitute a systematic pattern of grave international violations and crimes that meet the material and mental elements of multiple offences under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the four Geneva Conventions, and other relevant international instruments.

- I. The documented practices, including the infliction of severe physical or mental pain or suffering, systematic humiliation, forced nudity, and sexual assault, constitute acts that fall within the scope of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as defined in the Convention against Torture. They also constitute the crime of torture under the Rome Statute when its elements are met. This

characterisation is based on the absolute nature of the prohibition of torture as a peremptory norm that cannot be derogated from under any circumstances related to conflict or security, and on the fact that these violations serve purposes such as punishment, intimidation, coerced confessions, or discrimination, and occur in an official context where the perpetrators’ official capacity and the authorities’ consent or acquiescence are established. The United Nations Committee against Torture (CAT) reinforced this in its landmark report of November 2025, concluding that these practices amount to “de facto state policy” and place criminal and political responsibility at the highest levels of authority in Israel.

- II. The practices committed against Palestinian prisoners and detainees, when all elements are met, constitute rape and other forms of sexual violence as defined in international criminal law, including Articles 7 and 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Legally, rape is not limited to traditional biological intercourse but includes any invasion of a sexual nature of the victim’s body in a coercive context that negates consent, whether through penetration with any part of the body or with an instrument. This follows the Elements of Crimes attached to the Rome Statute and established international precedents, including *Prosecutor v. Akayesu* before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

Accordingly, documented testimonies describing the insertion of sharp or hard objects, such as wooden sticks, bottles, iron bars and gun barrels, into the anuses of detainees (as in the testimonies of Hassan and Hamada), or the use of trained dogs to carry out forced penetration (as in the testimonies of Firas and Wajdi), go beyond mere “assaults” and should be legally classified as crimes of rape. They meet the element of “penetration, however slight, of any part of the body of the victim or of the perpetrator with a sexual organ, or of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body” in a coercive environment that deprived victims of free will, negated any possibility of consent, and demonstrated the criminal intent to commit the offence.

- III. In the context of armed conflict and occupation, these acts also constitute war crimes. They are grave violations that include torture, inhuman treatment, the intentional infliction of severe pain or serious injury to body or health, and attacks on personal dignity through degrading and humiliating treatment, such as non-consensual filming in humiliating positions or the use of sexual humiliation as a means of control and subjugation. The protection owed to persons in captivity or detention applies regardless of their status, since international humanitarian law covers not only civilians but also combatants who are out of action (*hors de combat*) due to surrender, injury or capture. Common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions affirms the obligation of humane treatment and prohibits violence, torture and attacks on personal dignity against those who have laid down their arms or are unable to fight because of injury, illness or detention. Accordingly, attacks on prisoners in detention facilities are strictly prohibited and, when committed, constitute war crimes under the Rome Statute.
- IV. Given their widespread and systematic nature, these violations also constitute crimes against humanity, as they were committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population and were committed in implementation of or in furtherance of a state policy. This includes, in addition to torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence, the crime of persecution as the severe and deliberate denial of fundamental rights on the basis of identity, through a system of detention and exceptional measures that deprive Palestinian detainees, particularly those from the Gaza Strip, of fundamental guarantees and rights.

Also prominent in this context is the pattern of enforced disappearance when detention is accompanied by a refusal to disclose the fate or whereabouts of the detainee, placing victims outside the protection of the law and increasing the risk of torture and ill-treatment. When placed in their broader institutional context, these acts also constitute apartheid as a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute, as they are linked to the commission of inhumane acts within an institutional system of systematic oppression and domination by Israel over Palestinians, with the intention of maintaining and perpetuating that regime. Legislative, administrative, judicial and

detention tools are integrated to perpetuate the treatment of Palestinians as a group excluded from protection and rights, and detention centre practices, including sexual violence and torture, are used as a mechanism of control and subjugation within this regime.

- V. In the most serious legal characterisation, these practices cannot be viewed in isolation from the general context of the attack on the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. Data indicates that some documented patterns of sexual violence and torture exceed their traditional description and fall within the scope of genocide, affecting the physical existence of the Palestinian community in the Gaza Strip through two interrelated material elements: The element relating to causing serious bodily or mental harm, which has been achieved through acts that go beyond cruel treatment and lead to serious harm and the actual destruction of the physical and mental integrity of members of the group. Cases of forced amputation of limbs in conditions that do not provide adequate anaesthesia, combined with incidents of sexual violence, rape and systematic physical torture, constitute a pattern of deliberate harm that leaves permanent disabilities and deep and long-lasting health and psychological effects that cannot be repaired.

The element relating to the imposition of measures aimed at preventing reproduction within the group, which was achieved through attacks on the genitals and associated sexual violence, directly targeted reproductive capacity and, by its nature or consequences, led to permanent reproductive incapacity. Given their severity and destructive nature, these practices constitute acts aimed at effectively eliminating the biological capacity of the victims, contributing to the physical and moral destruction of the group as a whole.

Based on the foregoing, this systematic pattern of violations requires the activation of international criminal accountability mechanisms that extend beyond direct perpetrators to the highest levels of command, in accordance with the principle of command responsibility set forth in Article 28 of the Rome Statute. This responsibility arises when military commanders or civilian leaders knew, or, owing to the circumstances, should

have known, that such crimes were being committed, and failed to take the necessary and reasonable measures to prevent or suppress them, or to submit the perpetrators to competent authorities for investigation and prosecution. In this context, the availability of frequent reports and human rights alerts, extensive media coverage, and visits or direct knowledge of detention conditions attributed to some officials, supports the presumption of knowledge, and makes the failure to intervene effectively or the perpetuation of impunity arrangements a course of action that constitutes the element of “failure” on which leadership responsibility is based under Article 28.

Furthermore, the conduct of some officials at the political level goes beyond failure to prevent or suppress, establishing direct individual criminal responsibility under Article 25 of the Rome Statute, in particular through incitement, encouragement, and aiding and abetting in the commission or continuation of crimes. In this context, public statements by government ministers describing soldiers accused of rape as “heroes” and calling for them to be awarded medals instead of being investigated, along with pushing for legal or procedural arrangements that weaken prosecution and entrench immunity, constitute acts that enable impunity and encourage the repetition of crimes within detention centres and prisons. Accordingly, the scope of responsibility is not limited to “command responsibility” but extends, according to the established facts, to holding accountable individuals who ordered, contributed to, or participated in decisions, statements, or actions that enabled, incited, or assisted in the commission of crimes throughout the relevant political and military chain of command.

Similarly, the circle of accountability is not limited to the political and military levels but extends to ‘institutional facilitators’ in the medical and judicial systems, who provided the necessary cover for the commission and continuation of these crimes, thereby placing them under criminal liability as accomplices and instigators under Article 25(3)(c) of the Rome Statute, **as explained in the third section.**

## **Sixth: Recommendations and urgent measures**

Based on the available evidence and legal analysis of the facts, which show that the Israeli occupation forces have committed systematic international crimes, including torture, sexual violence, enforced disappearance and acts of genocide, and that there is domestic institutional collusion through formalities that entrench impunity and undermine documentation and accountability.

At a minimum, Israel and third States are required under international law to prevent such violations, refrain from aiding them, and ensure accountability, including the following measures:

### **1. Immediate measures to stop violations and protect Palestinian prisoners and detainees**

#### **a. Immediate closure of field detention facilities and black sites**

The international community must pressure Israel to immediately and unconditionally close Sde Teiman and all other field detention facilities and black sites implicated in repeated torture, sexual violence, enforced disappearance and other serious crimes against Palestinian prisoners and detainees, and to permanently cease their operation. Israel must also grant independent international monitoring bodies access to these facilities to preserve evidence and prevent its destruction. In parallel, all prisoners and detainees should be transferred to officially recognised detention facilities subject to independent oversight and international standards, including formal registration, independent medical examinations, injury documentation, and access to visits and legal counsel.

#### **b. Ending enforced disappearances and securing the release of arbitrarily detained persons**

The international community must pressure Israel to immediately and unconditionally release all persons held arbitrarily, particularly those detained under the Unlawful

Combatants Law and administrative detention orders, and to end the use of these exceptional frameworks that strip Palestinian detainees of basic procedural safeguards. Detention may continue only where the detainee is promptly brought before an independent judicial authority for an effective and timely review that guarantees the rights to defence and appeal and enables lawyers to act effectively; otherwise, the person must be released without delay. Israel must also immediately disclose the fate and whereabouts of all persons deprived of their liberty, allow unrestricted communication with families and lawyers, and ensure urgent and specialised medical care.

### **c. Abolishing regulatory isolation and permitting independent international visits**

The international community must compel Israel to end the isolation system imposed on Palestinian prisoners and detainees, particularly those from the Gaza Strip, and to open all detention sites to regular, unrestricted access by the International Committee of the Red Cross, relevant United Nations mechanisms, and independent medical and forensic teams. This includes confidential, individual interviews with detainees without guards present, independent medical assessment and documentation of injuries, and preservation of evidence without interference or tampering.

At the same time, every detainee from Gaza must have access to a lawyer and effective legal representation from the moment of detention. Lawyers should be allowed regular, unmonitored visits and access to arrest warrants, investigation materials, medical records and injury documentation. Any “alternative” arrangements or selective visits that do not ensure meaningful independent oversight and real safeguards should be invalidated. International actors denied access should treat this as a serious indication of ongoing crimes and respond with public statements and formal measures, including briefings to relevant UN bodies and the activation of available accountability mechanisms.

## 2. International criminal accountability and ending impunity

### a. Before the International Criminal Court

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor urgently calls on the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to explicitly include the crime of genocide within the scope of its ongoing investigation into the situation in the State of Palestine as the primary legal framework for the Gaza Strip, and to open an expedited, dedicated investigation into the specific intent to destroy Palestinians in Gaza, in whole or in part. This requires building a case for intent based on cumulative patterns, policies and acts, including killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm, and imposing conditions of life intended to bring about destruction, and prioritising the issuance of arrest warrants wherever there are reasonable grounds to believe that individuals along the chain of command, including those who designed and implemented the policies, bear responsibility for genocide and related crimes.

In this context, the Office should accelerate its investigations and give operational priority to torture and sexual violence in detention centres and prisons, including the implementation of its 2014 Policy Paper on Sexual and Gender-Based Crimes, treating rape and other forms of sexual violence as substantive crimes and as key evidence of criminal intent in broader crimes where the context and pattern show their use to destroy the Palestinian community and inflict serious physical or mental harm.

In parallel, States Parties to the Rome Statute must fully cooperate with the Court by facilitating the collection of evidence, protecting witnesses, and executing arrest warrants. Since international crimes are not shielded by official capacity, functional or personal immunities, and are not subject to statutes of limitations, States must prosecute anyone who contributed to or facilitated their commission, including through direct perpetration, issuing orders, incitement, providing means, or wilful failure to prevent or punish within the chain of command.

## **b. Activation of national and universal jurisdiction**

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor urges States Parties to the Rome Statute to activate their national jurisdiction to hold suspects who are their nationals or residents, including Israelis with dual nationality, accountable for crimes committed outside their territory.

In parallel, States that apply the principle of universal jurisdiction should immediately initiate independent, structured criminal investigations into crimes of torture and sexual violence against Palestinian detainees and allocate adequate resources to prosecution teams to collect and preserve evidence in line with international standards. This should lead to the issuance of national and international arrest warrants against direct perpetrators and those in the chain of command whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe they are responsible, alongside preventive and precautionary measures and strengthened mutual judicial cooperation to ensure that perpetrators do not escape punishment in the absence of domestic accountability.

## **3. Boycott and sanction Israel**

### **a. Imposing sanctions and arms embargoes**

All states, individually and collectively, must comply with their obligations to ensure respect for international humanitarian law and to exercise due diligence to prevent genocide by imposing an immediate, comprehensive ban on the export and import of all arms and ammunition to and from Israel. This ban must explicitly include spare parts, maintenance components, security equipment, surveillance and digital espionage technologies, and any dual-use materials that could be used in crimes against Palestinians.

States must also completely halt all forms of military and security cooperation, including joint training and transfers of operational or intelligence information, in line with the prohibition on aiding or assisting internationally unlawful acts where there are reasonable grounds to believe that such supplies or services are being, or are likely to be, used to commit war crimes, crimes against humanity or acts of genocide. Formal controls and

procedural exceptions should be replaced with effective, decisive preventive measures that bar any collusion and lead to the immediate suspension of supplies once the risk of illicit use is identified.

## **b. Application of individual sanctions, modelled after the Magnitsky Act**

States with appropriate national legislation should impose targeted and decisive measures such as asset freezes, travel bans, and financial restrictions against officials involved in crimes against Palestinians. These sanctions should not be limited to direct perpetrators, but must also cover the leadership and political hierarchy, including security ministers and officials responsible for managing the prison system, as well as “institutional facilitators” such as judges, military prosecutors, and doctors who have provided legal or medical cover for the crimes or obstructed investigations and concealed evidence. By enabling and shielding these violations, they are complicit in ensuring perpetrators’ impunity.

## **c. Inclusion on relevant United Nations lists**

The United Nations must list the Israeli army and its security agencies in the annex to the UN Secretary-General’s annual report on conflict-related sexual violence, in line with relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly 1820 and 1960. This is warranted by reliable information and documentary evidence of systematic sexual violence in detention and operational contexts, requiring activation of monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence and ensuring that these violations are recorded in the UN system as a distinct pattern, not merely as a by-product of other abuses.

This measure is crucial to filling a classification gap. Previous UN listings of the Israeli army under the children and armed conflict agenda focused on killing, maiming and attacks on facilities, without explicitly recognising sexual violence as a separate criterion. The scope of inclusion should therefore be expanded to explicitly cover sexual violence, ensuring

that Israeli forces are subject to the relevant requirements on monitoring, transparency, and preventive and restrictive measures, thereby strengthening accountability and preventing recurrence.

## **4. Professional responsibility and sectoral boycott**

### **a. Accountability and suspension of membership in the medical sector**

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor formally calls on the World Medical Association and relevant international federations to immediately suspend the Israeli Medical Association’s membership for serious and ongoing breaches of its supervisory and ethical duties. This demand is based on reliable evidence of Israeli doctors’ involvement in facilitating torture and ill-treatment, in violation of the principle of non-maleficence and the Tokyo Declaration, which prohibits any medical role in torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

It also reflects patterns of institutional cover-up, including medical reports that misrepresent injuries, deliberate failure to document the effects of torture, and failure to report or initiate professional and disciplinary procedures when serious allegations arise. These practices undermine evidence preservation and fundamental safeguards for Palestinian detainees, providing professional cover that enables the continued use of torture and sexual violence in detention facilities.

### **b. Cessation of judicial and legal cooperation and “capacity-building” programmes**

The European Union and international donor institutions must immediately and fully suspend all funding, training and technical cooperation programmes directed to the Israeli judicial system, particularly the military prosecution. Documented practices show that these programmes, presented as “capacity-building”, do not promote justice or accountability but instead provide technical and material support to institutions

systematically used to manage damage, obscure responsibility, whitewash crimes and provide a procedural shield for impunity.

Therefore, continuing this support is not only a grave policy error but also carries serious legal risks in light of the duty not to aid or contribute to internationally wrongful acts, as these resources help entrench systems that justify torture and sexual violence and protect perpetrators from prosecution, potentially implicating donors in aiding, assisting or contributing to the continuation of the oppressive structure.

## **5. Reparations and rehabilitation**

### **a. Reparation and rehabilitation programmes**

The international community must compel Israel, as the party responsible for these serious crimes, to provide full and effective reparation to victims and their families. This includes compensation, rehabilitation, restoration of dignity, official acknowledgement of responsibility and apology, and guarantees of non-repetition through legislative, institutional and regulatory reforms that dismantle the structures and policies that enabled these crimes.

### **b. Social support programmes**

The international community, including the United Nations, must urgently mobilise funding to establish comprehensive medical, psychological and social treatment programmes for survivors, designed and implemented in line with international standards on the documentation of torture and rehabilitation, including the Istanbul Protocol. These programmes should be gender- and culturally-sensitive and tailored to the needs of the most vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, to ensure safe and dignified recovery and reintegration.

Organised community and media initiatives are also needed to dismantle the stigma surrounding sexual violence and to promote a rights- and dignity-based discourse that counters victim-blaming, social stigma, and exclusion.

In parallel, safe, confidential, and effective referral pathways must be established to ensure access to medical, psychological, legal, and social support without exposing victims to further risk, with clear protocols for confidentiality and data protection. The capacities of local actors, including service providers, community leaders and protection institutions, should be strengthened through training, coordination and support to create a protective environment that fosters recovery and reduces the risk of re-victimisation of survivors and their families.

#### Protection of victims and witnesses

The international community, including the United Nations, must establish effective mechanisms to protect victims, witnesses and their families from threats and reprisals. This includes confidential communication and referral channels, as well as strict identity and data protection measures, to ensure that testimonies can be documented and shared with international accountability bodies without exposing those involved to further risks to their lives or safety.



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