



Israel: The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, Marking UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture: Statement on the Continuation of Torture and Ill Treatment and on the Abuse of Detainees

"It was on June 26, 1987 that the United Nation's Convention against Torture first came into force and in 1997, to highlight their plight, the UN General Assembly officially proclaimed June 26 as the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture"

The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel (PCATI) reminds the public and Governments in Europe and the Middle East of the absolute prohibition on torture and ill treatment. We call on all States and Official National Parties in the Region to, if they are signatories of the UN Convention Against Torture to reconfirm their support of the Convention and if they are not to sign and ratify the Convention. We similarly call on all parties to sign the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and to implement open and transparent detention and interrogation center monitoring mechanism in their jurisdictions.

We remind all parties holding detainees, whether they are suspected of participation in terrorist activities, young people accused of throwing stones, demonstrators or a single soldier held incommunicado for years that their rights must be scrupulously guarded.

We remain concerned with the ongoing use of torture and ill treatment against detainees in our region and the abject impunity that facilitates it. In recent months we have witnessed legitimate expressions of protest on the part of civilians in our region and the subsequent illegitimate use of excessive and deadly force against these civilians. Civilian demonstrators continue to face violence by the security forces they continue to be arrested and to face physical and psychological abuse in detention, including torture and ill treatment. The arrest of security suspects in our region continues and they continue to be held incommunicado and to face torture or ill treatment.

- We endorse the OMCT International Campaign for the Absolute Prohibition of Torture and Ill-treatment 'Nothing can justify torture under any circumstances.'
- Detainees **MUST** be permitted access to outside visitation be it by attorneys, the Red Cross or by other parties, allowed access to medical treatment and families must be apprised of their condition and status.
- Claims filed by detainees that include allegations of torture or ill treatment must be investigated in an open and reliable manner by the authorities and perpetrators should be held accountable.
- All national medical and health professional associations in our region should clarify that to physicians', psychologists', nurses' or medics' the responsibility to report suspicion of torture to the proper authorities and to take action to prevent any ongoing abuse of their patients.

26 June 2011 serves as a reminder and as a challenge. Let us draw together to meet the challenge and put an end to torture!

Further Information:

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