



Even eyesight is restricted for Palestinian prisoners in Israel's torturous prisons

## Description

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israel prison

Even eyesight is not taken for granted in [the prisons](#) of Israel.

I am a human rights lawyer. I have had a client for four years now, and we have become good friends. I try to visit him as often as possible, sometimes without payment, sometimes for a tiny payment from his family. I have filed many petitions on his behalf without charging for them. I love him and he loves me.

This client has been in prison since the days of the Second Intifada. Back then, he was a 22-year-old young man who helped his friends buy a pistol – a pistol that later, without his knowledge, was used in an act of killing that the ridiculous military court defined as murder on “ideological grounds,” meaning “terrorism.”

## Israel has notorious prisons

The Israel colonial [military courts are not exactly among the finest courts](#) and this friend of mine received no less than 30 years of actual imprisonment for his reckless act, meaning “aiding murder.” It is all nonsense from a colonial legal system in which the natives of this land are always guilty and are imprisoned for long years.

I took his case in 2022 and tried to work for his early release from prison. On the face of it, he was the perfect prisoner for early release after serving two-thirds of his sentence: he had no significant disciplinary offenses for about 15 years. He was a gentle prisoner who had never “made trouble” in prison, and even [Shin Bet](#) in could not find one good reason to prevent his early release – so they used a generic objection to the release of “all security prisoners,” since all Palestinians supposedly pose a danger to the state.

Obviously, this is complete nonsense. Beyond what was required, I provided the parole board with an individual rehabilitation plan, which stated that even after my friend's release, he would participate every week in designated groups for a year and would be under supervision.

Remember! This is conditional release, so if any new information were discovered in his case, the state could return him to their torture camps in a second. Of course, nothing helped, and both the parole board and the court refused to release him, thereby proving that, in practice, the Early Release from Imprisonment Law is a dead letter when it comes to security prisoners. This specific prisoner abandoned, decades ago, any desire whatsoever for violent resistance activity, and any conversation with him would immediately reveal that to anyone who cared to know.

## Intensification of Israeli torture

Since October 7 2023, the severe torture by the Israel Prison Service (IPS) has intensified in the security prisons. On that very day, IPS guards entered, beat all the prisoners, and confiscated all their personal belongings. Since then, they have not been allowed to meet or communicate with their families, not even with the children. Such a move is in violation of the Geneva Convention, to which Israel is a signatory. They are subjected to extremely severe torture, and food and medical treatment are denied to them. Until the petition I filed in 2019, my friend of mine had been wearing the same pair of underwear for two years – the same pair of underwear I was wearing on October 7 2023.

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This friend of mine has vision problems. He has only one eye, and the sight in the other has also deteriorated over 24 years of imprisonment. And remember: the only item the prisoners possess is a single copy of the Qur'an, and reading its verses is the only comfort these tormented souls have. During a visit I held with him in November, my friend asked me to get him reading glasses. This is, of course, not my job; it is the job of the prison authorities to provide basic medical care to the people they imprison.

I contacted the prisoners' officer and asked to bring in reading glasses for him. The prisoners' officer informed me that only an optometrist who comes to the prison could give such approval. And when will an optometrist arrive, I asked? He will arrive when he arrives, she answered. Several more months passed, and an optometrist came to the prison, examined my friend, and found that he did indeed need new glasses.

Excellent! Now can we bring in glasses for him? I asked the prisoners' officer, but she replied that "there is a problem with that." And so more months passed, letters were sent, threats of petitions were made, but nothing helped. Finally, in April, I filed a petition on the matter, demanding that he be allowed to receive glasses. The state delayed for another month and a half, and a few days before it was required to submit its response, the Southern District Attorney's Office announced that approval had been given to bring in glasses.

## Punishment for telling the truth

Obviously, a state of affairs like this – which forced a lawyer to approach the authorities many times and eventually even file a petition with the court – requires an award of costs in favour of the diligent

lawyer who worked night and day to oppose the state's plainly illegal actions. So what do you think, did I receive costs?

Not only did I not receive costs, but the honorable judge decided that I was the one who had to pay costs "in favor of the state treasury" of Israel because I had "slandered" the IPS guards by telling the truth: that Palestinian prisoners are beaten and tortured every time they are brought to court, which is why I asked that he not be brought to court.

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1. News

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1. even
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9. restricted
10. tortorous

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