



## Knesset vote against ICRC ban for political prisoners in Palestine

### Description

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A leaked photograph of the Sde Teiman detention facility shows a blindfolded Palestinian man with his arms

A law to [ban visits](#) from the humanitarian organisation, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), to prisoners in Palestine is now off the table for the Knesset.

The legislation was unexpectedly defeated by 41-36 votes yesterday, meaning it has been removed from Israel's political agenda for at least six months.

The defeat was in part because the ultra-orthodox parties, United Torah Judaism and Shas, boycotted the vote in protest against the government's failure to pass other laws important to their own community. These included [military draft-related bills](#).

National security minister and illegal settler, Itamar Ben-Gvir, blamed the Haredi Shas party leader, Aryeh Deri, for the bill's defeat.

He [wrote](#)

Thank you, Aryeh! Thanks to you, the women will get Red Cross visits in prison. How will you sleep at night?

## Knesset tensions escalate to physical confrontation

The coalition chairman of the occupation's Likud party, Ofir Katz, had urged the Haredi parties to vote for the bill.

He said:

Do not vote against it. Do not harm the security of the State of Israel because of politics. If the law does not pass today, it will not be able to pass at all, and the Nukhba terrorists will receive assistance.

The Knesset debate became heated. It led to a physical confrontation between Katz and Palestinian politician Ayman Odeh, leader of the Hadash-Ta'ah party.

Katz accused Odeh of "serving the [Nukhba terrorists](#) against the people of Israel".

Odeh then responded by calling Katz a "Judeo-Nazi" to which Katz shouted: "Terrorist".

In a statement, Abdullah al-Zighari, of the Palestinian Prisoners Society (PPS), has demanded the ICRC use this development to immediately resume prison visits.

## Israeli occupation of Palestinian detainees

Conditions are rapidly worsening in Israeli occupation and other places of detention. The ban on ICRC prison visits means a lack of information when it comes to the conditions Palestinian detainees face. But, according to the PPS, testimonies from recently released prisoners reveal:

A shocking and alarming pattern of abuse, exposing a systematic campaign of physical and psychological destruction.

The occupation's Supreme Court ruling found the continued banning of ICRC visits to be unlawful. But this is of no practical value if it is not implemented on the ground.

Al-Zighari accuses the Israeli occupation judicial establishment of complicity, calling it "an integral part of the broader colonial system". This system has given legal cover, for decades, for crimes committed against the Palestinian people.

It is not only the ICRC that has been affected by restrictions or bans imposed by the Israeli occupation. Numerous organisations operating in the occupied territory are also being targeted. These include [Euro-Med Monitor](#), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees ([UNRWA](#)), [Doctors Without Borders](#) and many [international NGOs](#) working in Gaza.

Since 7 October 2023, the Israeli occupation has barred the ICRC from accessing Palestinian detainees or receiving details about their status under a sweeping government ban. However, the occupation's Supreme Court recently found the policy unlawful under both domestic and international law, and instructed the government to reinstate Red Cross access.

Featured image via [CNN](#)

By [Charlie Jaay](#)

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