

Arafat Jaradat: Palestinian Prisoner Tortured to Death in Israel

Since 2003, around 700 torture complaints went unaddressed

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State terrorism is official Israeli policy. Torture and cold-blooded murder define it. Arafat Jaradat is Israel's latest victim. He died wracked in pain Saturday.

Israel attributed it to cardiac arrest. Shin Bet claimed no detectable health problems during interrogation. Accusations of torture were dismissed. Coverup and denial don't wash.

Israel was caught red-handed. Shin Bet interrogators tortured him to death. Autopsy evidence confirmed it. Severe upper body bruising, blisters, and blot clots were visible. Jaradat had multiple broken bones in his neck, spine, arms and legs.

PA Detainee Affairs Minister [Issa Qaraqe](#) said:

"The information we have received so far is shocking and painful."

"The evidence corroborates our suspicion that Mr. Jaradat died as a result of torture, especially since the autopsy clearly proved that the victim's heart was healthy, which disproves the initial alleged account presented by occupation authorities that he died of a heart attack."

Qaraqe's deputy, [Ziyad Au Ain](#), urged anyone doubting Jaradat's torture death to view his body. It was in Hebron's Al-Ahli Hospital. Monday burial followed. Thousands attended. A fallen martyr was honored. He's one of many.

"Jaradat died due to torture and not a stroke or heart attack," said Au Ain. Responsible interrogators must be held accountable.

Jaradat's last hearing was on February 22. Attorney [Kamil Sabbagh](#) represented him.

"When I entered the court room," he said, "I saw (him) sitting on a wooden chair in front of the judge. His back was hunched, and he looked sick and fragile."

"When I sat next to him, he told me that he had serious pains in his back and other parts of his body because he was beaten up and hanged for many long hours while being (interrogated)."

"When (he) heard that the judge postponed his hearing, he seemed extremely afraid and asked me if he was going to spend the time left in the cell."

"I replied to him that he was still in the investigation period and this is possible, and that as a lawyer I couldn't do anything about his whereabouts at this time."

Jaradat's condition was dire. He'd been tortured, injured and in pain. Sabbagh explained in court. The judge was dismissive. He ordered a complicit prison doctor to examine him.

"This didn't happen," Sabbagh said. Torture continued. Jaradat died in severe pain. Dozens of other Palestinians perished the same way. Some did in prison. Others succumbed after release.

Shin Bet killers remain unaccountable. They're embolden to continue cruel and inhuman treatment. Holding them responsible is long overdue.

[Addameer](#)'s February 24 press release mourned a fallen martyr. Jaradat's family said severe beatings began on arrest.

Since 2003, around 700 torture complaints went unaddressed. Whitewash is official Israeli policy.

"Addameer holds the Occupation forces, including the judges in the military courts, the Israeli Prison Service the Shin Bet security services and the medical staff, completely responsible for the death of Arafat Jaradat."

It expressed concern for all Palestinian prisoners. They're brutalized and subjected to medical neglect. Injuries and diseases go untreated.

Addameer demands accountability. It called on Ban Ki-moon to act. It wants an independent international investigation. It wants Israeli torture practices exposed. It wants responsible parties held accountable. Expect whitewash instead.

Jaradat's death is a crime against humanity and/or war crime. Multiple Fourth Geneva articles were violated. So was its 1977 Additional Protocol.

Addameer called on Palestinian human rights organization to act. It urges a unified Palestinian legal strategy. It wants prisoner lives and welfare protected. It demands accountability. Responsible Israelis can't go unpunished.

Do it "all legal ways possible, including boycott, divestment and sanctions," said Addameer.

On February 25, it joined Minister of Prisoner Affairs and Palestine's Prison Club. They boycotted Israel's kangaroo courts. They have no legitimacy whatever. Hanging military judges preside. Guilt by accusation is policy. No justice, no peace follow.

Thousands protested Jaradat's murder. They did so across Gaza and the West Bank. Dozens of Palestinians sustained injuries. Israeli security forces used rubber bullets and live fire. A 13-year old boy was shot in the chest. A 19-year had multiple rubber bullet wounds.

Israel demands PA officials curb protests. It wants them stopped before Obama's March visit. A senior Abbas aide gave no indication either way. He blamed Israel for current unrest.

On Sunday, senior Fatah official Azzam al-Ahmad called "resistance a natural (Palestinian) right, and we agree unanimously on escalating popular resistance."

A Security Council complaint may follow. Doing so is futile. Washington has veto power. It supports Israel's worst crimes. It partners in many of them.

Palestine's popular resistance committee urged more protests and solidarity. Israel murdered Jaradat. "This crime will receive its punishment," a statement said.

Mustafa Barghouti is a prominent Palestinian activist. He's Palestine's National Initiative Secretary-General. In 2005, he contested Abbas for Palestine's presidency. Israel wanted its longtime collaborator to win. It rigged the election to assure it.

On February 25, [Barghouti](#) called protests "a natural development of popular nonviolent resistance into a popular nonviolent Intifada, and there is nothing left for Palestinians but to (resist for) freedom."

Israelis exclude other options. "They killed every possibility for peace during the last 20 years."

"They use settlements and army violence to provoke Palestinians, and suppress them. We counted tens of cases of people hit with live ammunition in the last week."

World leaders ignore Palestinian rights. Their struggle demands self-reliance. Today's atmosphere resembles the first Intifada. It's popular, nonviolent and widespread. What follows remains to be seen.

On February 25, [Haaretz](#) contributor Amira Hass headlined "After Palestinian dies in Shin Bet hands, time to question the interrogators," saying:

"Every week dozens if not hundreds of Palestinians start down the same road" as Jaradat.

"Dozens of Israelis (function) on a parallel track." They include security forces making pre-dawn raids, complicit prison doctors, Shin Bet interrogators, Prison Service guards, prison clinic workers, and hanging judges.

Torture is official Israeli policy. Horrific Palestinian suffering follows. Israel bears full responsibility.

Jaradat was no ticking bomb. He was arrested on suspicion of stone throwing. He was brutally tortured. Israel extracts confessions that way. Implicating others is demanded.

Victims say anything to stop pain. Torturers know it. They take full advantage. They commit high crimes. They do so with impunity.

Jaradat's death proves Israel "routinely uses torture." It's "not only to convict someone, (it's) mainly to deter and subjugate an entire people."

On February 25, a [Haaretz editorial](#) headlined "Last call before next intifada," saying:

Justice is long overdue. "The writing was on the wall for quite some time." Protests shouldn't surprise anyone. Occupation harshness creates "despair and suffering without any political horizon." Recent developments exacerbated conditions.

They include Netanyahu's E1 development plan, failure to address settler vandalism, harassment and other crimes, rearresting released Palestinian prisoners, hunger strikers for

justice, attacking nonviolent protesters, injuring and killing participants, and torturing Jaradat to death.

They're "liable to be the match that lights the fire." Another Intifada could happen any time. Calls are heard to do so. Resistance alone can bring change. Quiescence assures continued occupation harshness.

Haaretz called on Israel to put Palestine atop its agenda. Make it top order of business.

In January, fascism won big. Voters elected Israel's most extremist government in history. Militarism, belligerence, state-sponsored terrorism, occupation ruthlessness, settlement expansions, and neoliberal harshness reflect official policy.

Peace is a non-starter. Palestinians are isolated on their own. If they don't struggle for long denied rights, no one will do it for them. Sustained resistance more than ever is needed. If not now, when?

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