



World Press Freedom Day: A War on Truth — Palestinian Journalists Face Genocide: Killings, Arrest, and Forced Disappearance

Report by Commission of Detainees' Affairs, the Palestinian Prisoner's Society, and Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association.

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Ramallah, occupied Palestine — Over nearly three years of the ongoing crime of genocide against the Palestinian people, the Israeli occupation has escalated its systematic targeting of Palestinian journalists as part of a systematic policy aimed at silencing the Palestinian voice and erasing the narrative. This targeting has included direct assassinations, arbitrary arrests, systematic persecution, and threats, making this one of the most violent periods in the history of Palestinian journalism.

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day — marked annually on May 3 — the Commission of Detainees' Affairs, the Palestinian Prisoner's Society (PPS), and the Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association — present this report highlighting the severe crimes and violations being committed against Palestinian journalists.

Since the beginning of the genocide in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli occupation has killed more than 260 Palestinian journalists in a systematic mass killing campaign targeting witnesses to the crime. It has also arrested and detained more than 240 journalists, with over 40 still behind bars in Israeli occupation prisons, including 20 people held under administrative detention without any trial or charges. Among those detained are four female journalists. The latest to be arrested is journalist Islam Amarneh, arrested this morning from Dheisheh refugee camp in Bethlehem in the southern occupied West Bank, in a continued clear policy of targeting journalists. She is the sister of journalist Osayd Amarneh, who is held without trial or charge.

At least 14 journalists abducted from Gaza remain in detention, while two journalists from Gaza — Nidal Al-Wahidi and Haitham Abdel Wahed — remain forcibly disappeared, in an ongoing crime constituting a grave violation of international law and international humanitarian law, reflecting a pattern of concealing their fate.

Meanwhile, journalist Marwan Hirzallah was killed in March 2026 in Megiddo prison as a result of a policy of slow killing through deliberate denial of medical treatment, despite his known health condition, as he had previously suffered an injury that led to the amputation of one of his legs.

The policy of enforced house arrest imposed on a number of journalists also intensified significantly after the genocide. Among them are journalist Somaya Jawabra from Nablus and journalist Bayan Al-Jaaba from Jerusalem. Additionally, dozens of journalists in occupied



Jerusalem have been subjected to systematic bans, particularly from Al-Aqsa Mosque, prevented from reporting, subjected to heightened restrictions, threats, and intimidation.

What Palestinian journalists are facing cannot be separated from a longstanding systematic policy targeting the Palestinian narrative. It has, however, reached its peak in the context of the ongoing genocide. The occupation seeks to eliminate witnesses to its crimes after Palestinian journalists have played a central role in exposing, documenting, and conveying them to the world, reinforcing a policy of impunity.

Prisoner institutions, through lawyers' visits, have gathered dozens of testimonies from Palestinian journalists who were detained, revealing a structural system of torture in Israeli occupation prisons and camps. This includes physical and psychological torture, systematic starvation, physical and sexual assaults including rape, as well as humiliation, abuse, and deprivation of basic necessities, most notably medical care. Detainees are held in harsh conditions and double isolation, with continued denial of family visits and prevention of access by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The conditions of released journalists reveal the scale of crimes committed against them, as many emerged with catastrophic physical and psychological health conditions due to torture and starvation. Among them is journalist Mujahid Bani Mufleh from Nablus, who suffered a brain hemorrhage days after his release. Journalist Ali Al-Samoudi from Jenin was released in deteriorating health after losing about 60 kilograms during one year of administrative detention, clearly demonstrating the use of starvation as a tool of slow killing against detainees.

The unprecedented spike in the use of administrative detention against journalists, under the pretext of "secret files," alongside arrests based on freedom of opinion and expression under accusations of "incitement," represents an extension of a systematic policy aimed at suppressing fundamental freedoms and turning the digital space into a tool of surveillance and punishment.

In this context, our institutions stress that targeting journalists for their work and opinions constitutes a blatant violation of the right to freedom of opinion and expression as guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, particularly Article 19, as well as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which guarantees freedom of expression including the right to seek, receive, and impart information. The use of vague charges such as "incitement" or administrative detention based on "secret files" undermines fair trial guarantees and is used as a tool to suppress journalism and restrict public space.

Targeting journalists — whether through killing, arrest, or enforced disappearance — constitutes a violation of the Geneva Conventions, which provide protection for civilians including journalists. The institutions affirm that these violations, including deliberate killing and direct targeting of journalists, may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, particularly when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.



For Palestinian prisoners institutions, these actions rise to the level of war crimes and crimes against humanity requiring immediate international accountability. We renew our call for the urgent release of all detained journalists and the immediate disclosure of the fate of Gaza journalists subjected to enforced disappearance.

The institutions also call on the United Nations and the broader international system to assume their legal responsibilities, move beyond inaction and complicity, and take urgent and concrete measures to stop the crime of genocide and hold the leaders of the occupation accountable for crimes committed against journalists and the Palestinian people.

Together Against Execution and Genocide.