

## **An Update on the Arrests Campaign until May 19, 2021**

Since the start of protests in the occupied lands of 1948, on Sunday (May 9, 2021) until Wednesday evening (May 19, 2021), Israel has arrested around 1200 Palestinians. In the last few days, human rights advocates have witnessed a dangerous escalation in targeting detainees and an increase in requests by the police and the Public Prosecution to remand custody, as a terrorizing policy aimed at keeping the largest number of Palestinian youth in detention and deterring them from participating in protests.

### **Abuse of Minors and their Families:**

The police and the Public Prosecution insisted on rejecting the decisions of the Magistrates' Courts, which had ordered the release of minors, appealed to the District Court to remand custody, and filed requests for appeals to the Supreme Court, despite previous Supreme Court decisions ordering the release of minors as a first option. These court appeals take several days during which 14 and 15 years old minors age remain in custody, suffering physical injuries and psychological distress, as a result of violent interrogations and threats. Additionally, the Public Prosecution brought to court numerous indictments and requests to remand custody until the end of the procedures against minors, which means that they might remain in custody for months, at least.

In addition to the horrific assaults while in custody, the rights of the majority of the minor detainees have been violated. They have experienced horrific physical and psychological violence, received threats and were denied from basic rights granted by law, such as depriving them of their right to legal counsel prior to investigation, refusing to conduct the investigation in the detainees' mother tongue, and preventing the presence of a parent during investigation. Additionally, the majority of interrogations of minors took place in the early morning hours in violation of the law. Furthermore, deceptive interrogation practices were used against the children in order to induce coerced confessions.

### **Instructions to Keep the Largest Number of Detainees in cells:**

At the beginning of the uprising, most of the detainees were released with restrictive conditions by court rulings or from police stations. However, in the last few days, there has been a change in policy. The Public Prosecution stated that they will file appeals against the release of those arrested for participating in what it calls "riots", even in absence of evidence against them. The assumption of the prosecution is that every Palestinian who was arrested following their participation in the protests is a source of danger, and that their release and return to their homes and streets is a return to an environment of "incitement", therefore, quelling the uprising will not be achieved without keeping them in the cells.

This development is accompanied with an Israeli insistence to issue indictments and requests for arrest until the end of the procedures against the detainees, and the Public Prosecution's recommendation to insist on the seriousness of the charges in light of what they called "riot and disturbance of public order". Instructions were also given to accuse Palestinian detainees of having racist motives. As of May 19, 2021, the Public Prosecution issued indictments against 155 Palestinians in the 1948 territories and Jerusalem. While only 15 Israelis face indictments, despite the Zionist mobs' attacks on Palestinian cities, neighborhoods and any Palestinian they encountered in the streets, all under police protection.

Volunteer lawyers are gathering information about detainees, counselling them at police stations, and advocating for them at court on remand custody requests and in the face of indictments.

Lawyers for Defending the Uprising Detainees

Haifa, Palestine - 19 May 2021