

Sleep Deprivation

85% of complaints



Sleep deprivation is a severe form of torture. While it leaves no physical marks, it leads to terrible physiological and mental harm. It is exceedingly difficult to quantify: the interrogatee is isolated from the external world, sometimes with no way of estimating hours and days. Data documented by the ISA tend to be spotty and there is no tracking of what happens in ISA facilities outside the interrogation room.

Such interrogations can last many weeks; the longest such interrogation brought to PCATI's attention lasted **51 days**, during which the interrogatee was kept in brightly lit rooms and extremely cold temperatures 24/7.

Refusal of Lavatory Access:

8.3% of complaints



"I asked to go to the bathroom at the camp and was refused. I repeated my request several times. Mostly, they didn't answer, but sometimes they'd ask me **'Why do you need the bathroom?'**... They would take me to be interrogated at ten in the morning and would bring me back at seven at night... The investigator did not allow me to leave more than once, even though I asked... I was forced to hold it in for that one occasion he'd let me to use the bathroom." (R.A.)

Threats:

58% of complaints



"They told me that if I didn't admit to the accusation **they would kill my wife and children...**" (M.H.)
 "They threatened they'd arrest my father, tear down our home... they threatened to detain my sister and **break my family apart.**" (R.A.)

"The interrogator told me I had to admit the charges to receive a term of less than a year. He said, 'If you don't confess, you won't see your family again and you won't see a lawyer... **If you don't say you did it, you'll never see your mother again.**'" (A.G., a minor at the time of interrogation)

Positional Torture

36% of complaints



Positional torture is a physical measure of torture that does not leave marks or evidence to the untrained eye, but nevertheless cause damage and severe pain and suffering. The torture victim is forced into an unnatural position that exerts much pressure on the muscles and bends limbs and joints in inhuman angles.

A.K. describes the "banana" method: "My legs were cuffed to the chair legs and my arms were cuffed behind me, but my back wasn't against the chairback. They would push my back out so that it was bent and the pressure was all on my stomach and muscles in front. They kept me in this position for about half an hour. **The pain is indescribable.** Afterwards, I couldn't even stand up." (A.K.)

Harsh Physical Violence:

27% of complaints



"At the beginning of the interrogation, there was only violence – **hitting, punching, slapping** – on my back, my legs, all over my body. When they saw they weren't getting what they wanted, they started on more aggressive interrogation." (M.A.)

"There were three interrogators in front of me and two on my sides. The one next to me used his knee to kick the front of my thigh muscle. **I doubled down to the floor.** Then another interrogator stood in front of me and picked me up by my nipples... This was repeated several times. At least six." (A.K.)

"The interrogators hit me in the face and my right side... I felt them kicking me with a sharp object; **I bled profusely from my mouth and gums.**" (A.A.)

Sexual Humiliation and Assault:

12% of complaints



S. was arrested during a routine checkpoint crossing; there were no specific suspicions pending against her. Her interrogation lasted many days. At no point was she informed of the point of the interrogation, which included sexual threats, both verbal and physical. "[The interrogator] sat really close to me and started yelling... I tried to move my head away so that he wouldn't be touching me, but then **he put his hand on top of my thigh...** I was scared, I could hardly breathe..."

The complaint was rejected without ever being investigated.

Use of Family Members:

19% of complaints



A.E.'s wife was arrested without her having committed any crime. During one interrogation, he was told she had been detained. The interrogators accused him of having caused her arrest and said that if he admitted the charges against him she would be released.

This is hardly an isolated incident: "The whole time they threatened me that if I didn't say I did it... they would prevent my mother and sister, who require medical care, **from leaving the West Bank and getting to the hospital.**" (M.H.)

"They told me they would arrest my father, demolish our house, take my brothers' work permits away. And they did in fact **cancel their work permits** in the Jewish settlements. They now have no permits." (R.A.)

*Based on PCATI data from the last five years [120 cases of ISA complaints].

THE PUBLIC COMMITTEE AGAINST

TORTURE
IN ISRAEL

Torture and Cruel, Inhumane and Degrading Treatment Situation Report – Israel 2018

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34.7 Months: Average Handling of Torture Complaint

From the moment a torture victim's complaint is submitted to the ISA Interrogee Complaint Comptroller (ICC), an average of **two years, ten months, and twenty-one days** will pass until a decision on the case is made. Some of the cases are suspended pending the completion of other proceedings. Some of the cases are on indefinite hold. At present, the ICC has **157 cases whose status is "under review."*** The ICC has a staff of merely three people.

#MeToo

On one sexual harassment complaint, the victim testified that the interrogator put his hand on her thigh, told her she was very beautiful and that she was reminded him of his daughter, as he brought his face close to hers.

The response from the ICC Director stated: "Such conduct does not... constitute cause for initiating judicial procedures against the investigators; it is consistent with ISA procedures."

The case was closed because **sexual harassment is a legitimate form of ISA investigation.**

0 Indictments

To date, there has been only one* criminal investigation resulting from ICC recommendation. Based on PCATI's data, out of the over 1,100 complaints submitted, **not a single indictment has been filed.**

11 Years of Delayed Justice

M.W. suffered severe abuse, including brutal violence and sexual humiliation, while detained at an Israel Police station. **His complaint was filed in December 2007.** Two years later the case was closed due to lack of sufficient evidence. PCATI sought to appeal the decision. We were not given access to the evidentiary materials, and after repeated refusals and delays, we turned to the High Court of Justice in 2010.

At the end of a long and arduous proceeding, lasting five years, **in February 2012, the High Court of Justice, ordered the PIID to try the investigators.** It was only then that this dire affair, which has not yet ended, received appropriate attention.

14 Requests for Investigation Materials

Racheli was just returning from a day of studies when she walked past a demonstration. With no warning, she was slammed to the ground by a powerful jet of water shot from an Israel Police water cannon. In addition to severe injury to her arm, her eye was badly damaged, and Racheli was forced to undergo surgery. The PIID [Police Internal Investigation Department] file was closed without any explanation. PCATI submitted the request to photocopy the investigation materials **14 times**; nobody could tell us where the materials were located. The PIID referred us to the Disciplinary Board, the Board to the Ombudsman, the Ombudsman to the Legal Department, Legal to the PIID, and so on. Since August 2017, to date, **the file has not yet been located.**

25% of Investigations Concluded with Disciplinary Measures Only**

Maisam was taking a cigarette break outside his workplace in central Tel Aviv. A group of policemen started to harass him and demanded identification. Security cameras clearly show nine policemen attacking Maisam with vicious blows; eye witnesses say that the policemen instigated the attack. Nonetheless, Maisam was accused of assaulting a police officer, **while none of the policemen was tried.**

Only one single policeman will go before a disciplinary board, an internal police procedure of trivial importance, far from the public eye, and without the victim of the crime seeing justice.

11 Months of Foot-dragging

In order to obtain a psychological evaluation in support of his complaint, prisoner E.A. and his representatives in PCATI requested authorization for medical personnel entry into the facility he was held in. The initial request was submitted in November 2015. A second request was made in February 2016. Between March and August, endless correspondence took place with myriad excuses given on the part of the IPS, receiving no answer of substance. For **11 months**, our requests were lost, refused, or ignored. An evaluation was scheduled only following the submission of a special prisoner's petition.

1700 Prisoners a Day: "Posta" A Torment Saga

"The 'Posta' is just a truck. The large compartment holds 26 or so detainees and convicts. Everything is metal, including the seats; there is no upholstery anywhere. Your hands and feet are in chains throughout the entire ride. I had a hearing at the Tel Aviv District Court... During the ride, one of the men asked to go to the bathroom. They kept him waiting for an hour, an hour and a half, two hours from the time he first asked. The A/C was malfunctioning; in the summer it's broiling, in the winter it's freezing. You don't get to shower for three days of travel... **Finally, that guy wet himself,** and because of the horrible heat everything stank. We just wanted to die." (D.T.)

"I've made more than 400 trips among the various facilities, each consisting of 7-8 hours of being handcuffed inside a vehicle without food, without water, without being able to go to the bathroom, to the point that you're forced to evacuate in the vehicle and then get written up for a disciplinary infraction... **It harms the possibility of real due process.**" (A.K.)

44 Hours— The Long Journey to Nowhere

Fares began his journey of torment at Ketziot Prison in the south. The final destination – Megiddo Prison, a **two-and-a-half-hour drive away.**

He was transported by a vehicle that travelled from prison to prison (including a return to the starting point at Ketziot some 14 hours after he left), without stopping to rest and with no consecutive sleep, no regular meals or bathroom breaks, in an overcrowded vehicle, on an unpadded metal seat, with his hands and feet chained together.

Did you now? In 44 hours, you can drive from Tel Aviv to Berlin.

* Based on the ICC's response from May 21, 2018, to a freedom of information request submitted by the PCATI and the Movement for Freedom of Information.

** 2017 Summary Report of the PIID.