

Amnesty Report: Harrowing Torture, Summary Killings In Secret ISIS Detention Centers In Syria

By [Amnesty International](#)
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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)
Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)
In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

We bring to the attention of our readers a report by Amnesty International first published in December 2013 concerning the atrocities committed by the ISIS Al Qaeda affiliated rebels in Syria.

Ironically, while Amnesty International acknowledges that the US sponsored rebels have committed these atrocities, it points its finger at Bashar al Assad and calls upon the Syrian government to “end its violations of human rights and international law, including the use of torture in its own detention centers”,

AI fails to acknowledge that these atrocities were committed by rebel groups which are recruited, trained, armed and financed by the Western military alliance.

The ISIS is a creation of US intelligence. Among its main architects are John Negroponte and the former ambassador to Syria Robert Stephen Ford.

These crimes against humanity were ordered by US-NATO-Israel-Saudi Arabia. These rebel detention centres were set up with their knowledge and support.

While Amnesty International draws up so-called recommendations requesting the terrorists to stop the killings and atrocities, the political handlers of these rebels, including Washington and NATO headquarters in Brussels, which are involved in their training and financing are not explicitly mentioned.

*AI nonetheless calls upon **the governments of the Gulf States** including Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE to cease financing and training the terrorists. This statement on the part of Amnesty , constitutes a tacit acknowledgment that the rebels are supported covertly by the Gulf States, which are allies of US and NATO”*

Publicly renounce the provision of any financial or material support, including arms transfers, to ISIS and all other armed groups alleged to be responsible for committing war crimes or grave human rights abuses in Syria.

□ Take effective measures to prevent the transfer of financial or material support to ISIS and other armed groups alleged to be committing war crimes and serious human rights abuses in Syria.”

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Torture, flogging, and summary killings are rife in secret prisons run by the Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), an armed group that controls large areas of northern Syria, said Amnesty International in a briefing published today.

ISIS, which claims to apply strict Shari'a (Islamic law) in areas it controls, has ruthlessly flouted the rights of local people. In the [18-page briefing, *Rule of fear: ISIS abuses in detention in northern Syria*](#), Amnesty International identifies seven detention facilities that ISIS uses in al-Raqqa governorate and Aleppo.

"Those abducted and detained by ISIS include children as young as eight who are held together with adults in the same cruel and inhuman conditions," said Philip Luther, Amnesty International's Director for the Middle East and North Africa.



Former detainees describe a shocking catalogue of abuses in which they or others were flogged with rubber generator belts or cables, tortured with electric shocks or forced to adopt a painful stress position known as aqrab (scorpion), in which a detainee's wrists are secured together over one shoulder.

Some of those held by ISIS are suspected of theft or other crimes; others are accused of "crimes" against Islam, such as smoking cigarettes or zina, sex outside marriage. Others were seized for challenging ISIS's rule or because they belonged to rival armed groups opposed to the Syrian government. ISIS is also suspected of abducting and detaining foreign nationals, including journalists covering the fighting in Syria.

Several children were among detainees who received severe floggings, according to testimonies obtained by Amnesty International. On one occasion, an anguished father had to endure screams of pain as ISIS captors tormented his son in a nearby room. Two detainees related how they witnessed a child of about 14 receive a flogging of more than 90 lashes during interrogation at Sadd al-Ba'ath, an ISIS prison in al-Raqqa governorate. Another child of about 14 who ISIS accused of stealing a motorbike was repeatedly flogged over several days.

"Flogging anyone, let alone children, is cruel and inhuman, and a gross abuse of human rights," said Philip Luther. "ISIS should cease its use of flogging and other cruel punishments."

Amnesty International is calling on ISIS to end its appalling treatment of detainees and for the group's leaders to instruct their forces to respect human rights and abide by international humanitarian law.

Several former detainees told the organization that they were seized by masked gunmen who took them to undisclosed locations, where they were held for periods of up to 55 days. Some never learnt where they were but Amnesty International has identified ISIS prisons at seven locations: Mabna al-Mohafaza, Idarat al-Markabat and al-Mer'ab, all in al-Raqqa city; Sadd al Ba'ath and al-'Akershi oil facility, both elsewhere in al-Raqqa governorate; and

Mashfa al-Atfal and Maqar Ahmed Qaddour in Aleppo .

The Sadd al-Ba'ath prison is beside a dam on the Euphrates River at al-Mansura, where the local Shari'a court judge, who invariably appeared wearing an explosives belt, has instituted a reign of terror over its detainees.

Former detainees accuse him of presiding over grotesquely unfair "trials" lasting no more than a few minutes as other detainees look on, and handing down death penalties which are subsequently carried out. At his direction, detainees have been mercilessly flogged; on at least one occasion, he is said to have personally joined in the flogging.

At al-'Akershi oil facility, which ISIS also appears to use as a military training ground, detainees were subjected to the aqrab as a means of torture, according to the testimonies of two men who were held there in recent months. One spent 40 days in solitary confinement, for part of which he was chained up in a tiny room full of electrical equipment with fuel on the floor.

"After years in which they were prey to the brutality of the al-Assad regime, the people of al-Raqqa and Aleppo are now suffering under a new form of tyranny imposed on them by ISIS , in which arbitrary detention, torture and executions have become the order of the day," said Philip Luther.

Amnesty International is calling on the international community to take concrete steps to block the flow of arms and other support to ISIS and other armed groups implicated in committing war crimes and other serious human rights abuses.

"The Turkish government, in particular, should prevent its territory being used by ISIS to bring in arms and recruits to Syria ," said Philip Luther.

"As well, Gulf states that have voiced support for the armed groups fighting against the Syrian government should take action to prevent arms flows, equipment or other support reaching ISIS in view of its appalling human rights record."

Amnesty International also renews its call to the Syrian government to allow unfettered access to Syria by the independent international Commission of Inquiry and by international humanitarian and **human rights organizations, and to end its violations of human rights and international law, including the use of torture in its own detention centers.**

Recommendations

Amnesty International makes the following recommendations:

TO THE ISLAMIC STATE IN IRAQ AND AL-SHAM

- Publicly condemn, from the highest level of leadership, all human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law committed by ISIS forces, including abductions, arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, unfair "trials", summary killings, and the use of cruel and inhuman punishments such as flogging.
- Instruct all ISIS fighters and officials that such abuses will not be tolerated under any

circumstances and those who commit such abuses will be held fully accountable.□

Allow independent international inspection of all places of detention and ensure that conditions and the treatment of detainees at all places conform to relevant international standards, such as the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, and that all detainees are fully protected against torture or other ill-treatment in custody.

□ End the use of punishments, such as flogging, that violate the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.□

Immediately and unconditionally release all detainees held on account of their peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of expression or other human rights.

□ Issue clear instructions to ISIS members to treat all detainees humanely, including captured fighters from rival armed groups and other armed forces, including the FSA and Syrian government forces, and afford all detainees the protection due to them under international humanitarian law.□

Inform families about the fate of missing relatives, including those who have died, disclosing the circumstances of their deaths, and the location of their burial place.

□ Remove from the ranks ISIS fighters and officials suspected of responsibility for ordering or committing serious violations of international humanitarian law, including possible war crimes.□

Co-operate with independent and impartial investigations into violations of international humanitarian, including by the independent international Commission of Inquiry.

TO THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY

□ Investigate and prosecute members of ISIS suspected of committing, being complicit in or having command responsibility for war crimes in al-Raqqa, Aleppo and elsewhere in Syria.□

Prevent the entry of fighters and arms flows to ISIS forces in Syria and to other armed groups believed to be responsible for committing war crimes in Syria.

TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE GULF STATES□

Publicly renounce the provision of any financial or material support, including arms transfers, to ISIS and all other armed groups alleged to be responsible for committing war crimes or grave human rights abuses in Syria.

□ Take effective measures to prevent the transfer of financial or material support to ISIS and other armed groups alleged to be committing war crimes and serious human rights abuses in Syria.

TO THE GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA□

Cease government violations of human rights and grant prompt and unfettered access to the independent international Commission of Inquiry, humanitarian and human rights organizations, and to international media to visit areas all of Syria, including access to all government-controlled places of detention by international humanitarian organizations with relevant expertise.

TO THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL

- Refer the situation in Syria to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.
- Call on states to suspend arms transfers to ISIS and other armed groups implicated in the commission of war crimes and serious human rights abuses.

TO ALL GOVERNMENTS

□ Accept a shared responsibility to investigate and prosecute war crimes and other crimes under international law committed in Syria and elsewhere in the world. In particular, seek to exercise universal jurisdiction over these crimes before national courts in fair trials and without recourse to the death penalty.

□ As part of this shared responsibility, establish joint international investigation and prosecution teams to investigate crimes under international law committed in Syria to improve the effectiveness of investigation, improve the chances of arrest and co-ordinate prosecutions.

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