

When Starvation Is the Only Means Palestinian Prisoners Can Adopt to Challenge Israel

By [Michael Jansen](#)

Global Research, September 01, 2022

[The Jordan Times](#) 31 August 2022

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the “Translate Website” drop down menu on the top banner of our home page (Desktop version).

To receive Global Research’s Daily Newsletter (selected articles), [click here](#).

Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) and subscribe to our [Telegram Channel](#). Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

If he survives until today, Khalil Awawda will have been on hunger strike for 172 days in protest against Israeli administrative detention without charge. On the weekend, his family and lawyer were permitted to visit him in an Israeli hospital where they took and published horrific photos of the starving man. His strike is the longest among scores of fasts staged by Palestinian prisoners over the past 55 years. Starvation is the only means they can adopt to challenge Israel.

The European Union representative in Jerusalem expressed shock over the images, made the point he is striking “in protest against his detention without charges”, and warned, “he is in imminent danger of dying. Unless charged immediately, he has to be released.”

On August 21, the Israeli supreme court rejected his petition to be released. Its decision amounted to a “death sentence”, Palestinian lawyer and former negotiator Diana Buttou told Al Jazeera.

“The supreme court rubber stamps everything that the Israeli security services put forward. It is only in very rare circumstances that we actually see that they are pushing back against what the security services are saying.”

Awawda was arrested in December 2021. Israel claimed he was a member of the Israeli outlawed Islamic Jihad. This was dismissed by his lawyer. Awawdah, who comes from the town of Idna near Al Khalil (Hebron), is among several Palestinian prisoners currently on hunger strike. He suspended his strike after 111 days when he was told his term in detention would not be renewed but resumed his protest after it was renewed for six months.

Israel has retained the policy of administrative detention imposed by Britain during its mandate in Palestine (1920-1948) where Palestinians were struggling against the 1917

British policy of transforming their country into a Jewish homeland. Britain also deported Palestinians who resisted its policy as it did to freedom fighters in other British occupied lands. For some years Israel followed suit.

Palestinian, Israeli and international human rights groups contend the policy violates the right of prisoners to due process and is aimed at crushing Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation. Israel is holding 4,400 prisoners, 680 of them in administrative detention. The recently banned Palestinian prisoners' support organisation, Adameer, launched a campaign against administrative detention last year in the wake of the May attack on Gaza and uprising in East Jerusalem and the West Bank and among Palestinian citizens of Israel. During May and June Israel issued more than 379 administrative detention orders, dramatically surpassing previous years. Over the same period in 2020, 208 orders were issued.

The Israeli rights organisation B'Tselem states,

“In administrative detention, a person is held without trial without having committed an offense, on the grounds that he or she plans to break the law in the future. As this measure is supposed to be preventive, it has no time limit. The person is detained without legal proceedings by order of the regional military commander, based on classified evidence that is not revealed to them. This leaves the detainees helpless...”

Amnesty International brands this policy as a “cruel, unjust practice which helps maintain Israel’s system of apartheid against Palestinians.” Amnesty argues, in general, that administrative detention violates Article 9 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights which states “that no one should be subjected to arbitrary detention and that deprivation of liberty should must be based on grounds and procedures established by law.”

On August 16, Human Rights Watch called on Israel to immediately release the French-Palestinian human rights worker Salah Hamouri from administrative detention and reverse the decision to revoke his residency status in his native Jerusalem.” Hamouri, a lawyer associated with Adameer, was arrested on March 7. HRW said that Hamouri’s Jerusalem residence was revoked for “breaching allegiance to Israel,” justifying his deportation.

HRW stated,

“International humanitarian law expressly forbids an occupying power from compelling people under occupation to pledge loyalty to it.”

In 2014, the UN Human Rights Committee urged Israel to “end the practice of administrative detention and the use of secret evidence in administrative detention proceedings, and ensure that individuals subject of administrative detention orders are either promptly charged with a criminal offense, or released”.

Hisham Abu Hawash, a construction worker from the West Bank town of Dura, ended his 141-day hunger strike in January this year when the Israeli authorities decided to release him from administrative detention. However, the Israelis returned him from the hospital to prison for a month until he had served the entire term of his detention. Gideon Levy and Alex Levac reported in the Israeli liberal daily Haaretz that his doctors at the Shamir Medical Centre where “he spent the final days of his hunger strike, told him that it would take a year-and-a-half for his body to recover”. He vowed to strike again if rearrested. He was the

last of 17 detainees striking since July 2021 over detention without charge or trial. His strike was the third longest in the post-1967 occupation history of Palestinian hunger strikers. In April 2013, Samer Issawi secured release from administrative detention after 166 days. His fast was the second longest.

Palestinians have struck for better conditions, family visits, an end to beatings and abuse, access to television and fresh clothing. Four have died from Israeli forced feeding. Many have been rearrested after release and subjected to several terms of administrative detention, as well as imprisonment. Administration detention is an honourable occupation in Palestine.

Take the case of Faisal Hussein, son of Abdel Qader Hussein, commander of Palestinian forces who was killed fighting Israeli shock troops in the battle for Qastal in April 1948.

Born in 1940 in Baghdad during his father's exile from British-occupied Palestine, Faisal Hussein lived a peripatetic life until settling back in his home city of Jerusalem before the Israeli conquest. He joined Fateh and began his resistance career. He was sentenced to a year in prison in October 1967. In 1979, he and other Palestinian intellectuals established the Arab Studies which was closed down from time to time and finally shuttered by Israel in 2001 after his death. He was placed under administrative detention from 1982-1987. He became a leading figure in the First Intifada (1987-93), and was detained repeatedly during this time as well as being put under house arrest and deported to the West Bank from Jerusalem, where his family can trace its roots for 1,000 years.

*

Note to readers: Please click the share buttons above or below. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter and subscribe to our Telegram Channel. Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

Featured image: Palestinian detainee, Khalil Awawdeh [@HudaFadi9/Twitter]

The original source of this article is [The Jordan Times](#)
Copyright © [Michael Jansen](#), [The Jordan Times](#), 2022

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Michael Jansen](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca
www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance

a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca