

Palestinian Women Prisoners Bolster Resistance, Launch New Protests



Ramallah, June 8 (RHC)-- Just days after Palestinian prisoners in Israeli cells ended their 40-day hunger strike, women prisoners have launched a new protest. Responding to the announcement of prisoner transfers, as well as other abuses, the women began a number of protest actions, including refusing their dinner, as well as refusing to stand up for roll call.

The prisoners are also protesting ongoing humiliating and invasive strip searches, verbal harassment by prison guards and the continued ban on visitors -- touching on many of the demands raised by hunger strikers.

Their actions began the same day those hunger-striking prisoners were scheduled to hold a meeting with the Israeli Prison Administration on the implementation of their agreement to end the strike in both the Hadarim and Ashkelon prisons.

While negotiations between prisoners and the IPS had resulted in the agreement that met 80 percent of the prisoners' demands, implementation has been slow. In fact, the mothers of several women prisoners report that their daughters have seen worse treatment since then, as possible retaliation for the hunger

strike.

According to Addameer, a Palestinian prisoners' rights group, the majority of Palestinian women detainees have been subjected to "psychological torture" and "ill-treatment" by Israeli authorities, including "various forms of sexual violence that occur such as beatings, insults, threats, body searches and sexually explicit harassment."

The Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network expressed solidarity with the women prisoners, saying, "Palestinian women prisoners have a long legacy of organizing and leading struggles within the prison and at the forefront of the Palestinian prisoners' movement."

"International solidarity with the prisoners is important in supporting their ongoing struggle for justice and liberation, for all Palestinian prisoners and for the land and people of Palestine," they added.

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