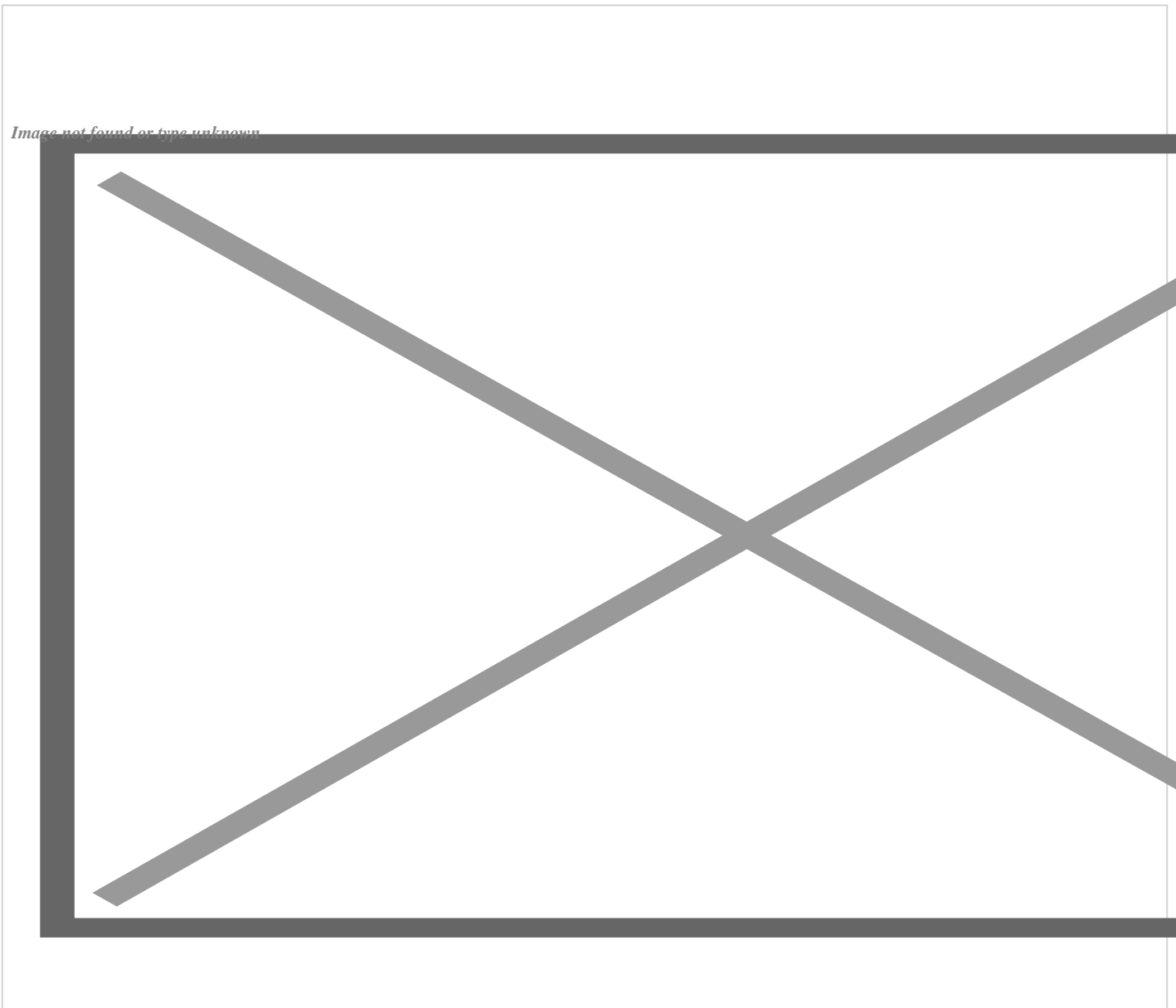# Israel sets new record in number of so-called administrative Palestinian detainees

Tel Aviv, September 6 (RHC)-- Israel has broken a 30-year record for the number of Palestinians kept behind bars under its administrative detention policy, which allows the regime to indefinitely imprison Palestinians without formal charges.

New data obtained by the Israeli human rights group Hamoked from the prison service showed the number of administrative detainees had reached the 1,264 mark. The figure was 1,108 in March 2003, during the Second Intifada.

Jessica Montell Hamoked, executive director of the rights group, condemned the "mass, arbitrary detention." "Israel is holding over 1,200 Palestinians without charge or trial, some for years, with no effective judicial review." Hamoked says the overwhelming majority of "security" prisoners are Palestinians from the occupied territories, which constitutes a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

As of September, Israel is holding 5,088 "security" inmates. Of these, 2,364 have been tried and sentenced; 1,460 are being held on remand; and 1,264 are administrative detainees held without trial.

Many believe the Israeli policy violates the right to due process since evidence is withheld from prisoners while they are held for lengthy periods without being charged, tried, or convicted. Human rights advocates say the administrative detention is a "cruel, unjust practice" which helps maintain Israel's "system of apartheid" against the Palestinians.

The detention takes place on orders from a military commander and on the basis of what the regime describes as secret evidence. Prison authorities keep Palestinian prisoners under deplorable conditions without proper hygienic standards. Palestinian inmates have also been subject to systematic torture, harassment, and repression.

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