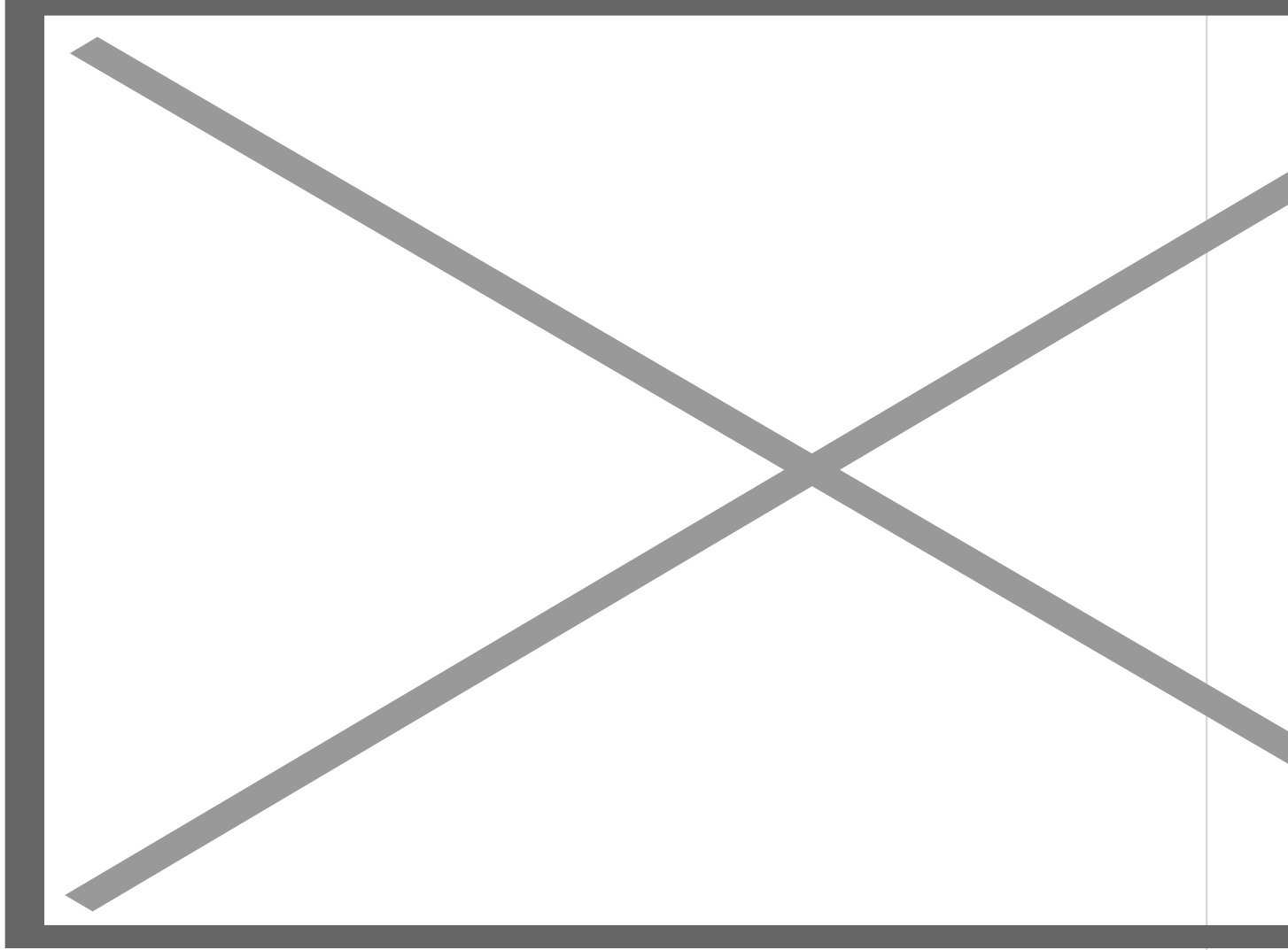


Israel scuttles UN rape probe fearing investigation into forces' abuse of Palestinians

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Undated photo shows illegal Israeli settlers' hailing abusive prison guards at the Israeli regime's notorious Sde Teiman prison.

Tel Aviv, January 10 (RHC)-- The Israeli regime has prevented taking place of a probe by the United Nations into alleged claims of “rape” against the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, fearing its own forces’ inviting an investigation into their widespread sexual abuse and torture of Palestinian inmates.

Israeli paper Ha’aretz said the regime’s officials had scuttled the probe by rejecting a request from Pramila Patten, the UN special representative of the secretary-general on sexual violence in conflict, to investigate the allegations against Hamas.

Patten had previously established that a necessary condition for implementation of the probe would be access to Israeli detention centers to probe claims against Israeli troops.

"The clear concern is that Israel will be the one to be added to the blacklist of entities and countries that engage in sexual violence in conflicts, while... Hamas will actually remain off the list," Mia Schocken, director of the international department of the Israeli Women's Lobby, told the daily.

Earlier this week, Israeli prosecutor Moran Gaz confirmed during an interview with the Yediot Ahronoth daily that no allegations of “rape or sexual assault” by Hamas had been filed.

“In the end, we don’t have any complainants. What was presented in the media compared to what will eventually come together will be entirely different,” she said, adding that her office “approached women’s rights organizations and asked for cooperation. They told us that no one had approached them.”

Various media outlets have also refuted such claims against the resistance movement.

However, news agencies and human rights bodies have documented dozens of accounts of rampant sexual violence inflicted on Palestinians inside Israeli detention centers.

Earlier this year, Israeli NGO B’Tselem published a report titled “Welcome to Hell,” containing testimonies from 55 Palestinians detailing incidents of torture, rape, violence, humiliation, starvation, and denial of adequate medical treatment.

The Israeli regime’s military police has also arrested eight Israeli prison guards on suspicion of raping a male Palestinian prisoner at the notorious Sde Teiman camp in the Negev Desert.

Illegal Israeli settlers and officials, though, stormed the facility in the aftermath of the arrests in support of the abusers, who thanked the police for treating them kindly.

A doctor at the army detention facility at Sde Teiman, Professor Yoel Donchin, said that after seeing the Palestinian detainee, who was gang raped, he “couldn’t believe an Israeli prison guard could do such a thing.”

“If they maintain a hospital only for the sake of defending ourselves at [the International Criminal Court at] The Hague, that’s no good,” the doctor said.

Last July, the UN Human Rights Office also issued a report saying Palestinians detained in Israeli detention centers since faced waterboarding, sleep deprivation, electric shocks, dog attacks, and other brutal acts of torture.

“The testimonies gathered by my office and other entities indicate a range of appalling acts, such as waterboarding and the release of dogs on detainees, amongst other acts, in flagrant violation of international human rights law and international humanitarian law,” UN Human Rights Chief Volker Türk said in a statement.



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