



**Palestinian Teacher and Union Leader Fatima Nimer Al-Rimawi
Jericho, Palestine
Arrested and Detained 2024- Present**

SITUATION STATEMENT

The purpose of this report is to provide background for a potential humanitarian action.

The following describes the circumstances related to the arrest and detention of Fatima Rimawi, the Jericho leader of the Palestinian General Union of Workers in Kindergarten and Private Schools (GUWKPS), as reported to the AFT and the President of Education International, on July 25, 2024.

Fatima was arrested by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in her home in January 2024. Since then, she has been detained without trial in the notorious Damon military prison for women, near Haifa, without access to needed medical care, or visits from her family or lawyer.



Fatima is not only a union leader but also a dedicated early childhood educator with over 30 years of experience. Throughout her career, she has played a crucial role in nurturing and educating young children in the West Bank, balancing her professional responsibilities with her roles as a wife and mother. Her longstanding commitment to education and her community is reflected in her leadership within the General Union of Workers in Kindergarten and Private Schools. The impact of her arrest and detention has resonated deeply within her family, her students and her community, underscoring the profound personal and societal consequences of her imprisonment.

Fatima, like many other Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, has been arrested on charges of assisting terrorism, based on posts to her Facebook page. She is incarcerated in the notorious Damon women's prison, a place where human rights groups have long criticized the cramped overcrowded conditions, poor ventilation, physical abuse, and inadequate food and water. Survivors have reported the prison's unrelenting isolation, humiliations, and insults fermenting psychological and emotional torture. Ghassan Rimawi, Fatima's husband, has reached out to the international community asking for support for Fatima, and support for the many other women -- mothers, teachers, and housewives -- inside the Damon prison who are suffering like her.

These reports document violation of international human rights law under the third Geneva Convention.



Israel's B'Tselem, an independent, non-partisan and award-winning human rights organization, has chronicled, reported by the BBC, about the horrific conditions of Palestinian detainees in a just-released report called "Welcome to Hell," which documents a system where every inmate is deliberately subjected to "harsh, relentless pain."

Israel's hardline security minister, Itamar Ben Gvir, in overall charge of the prison system, bears a heavy responsibility for the abuses now being reported. Yet he continues to be proud of the fact that under his watch, conditions for Palestinian detainees have deteriorated sharply, even to the point where B'Tselem has declared the facilities -- military and civilian -- to be "a network of suffering, operating as de-facto torture camps."

Even in these times of war, following the brutal attack on October 7 by Hamas on innocent Israeli communities, there is still hope that the rule of law will yet prevail, and activists, arrested without having a fair trial, may still find justice. Despite the right-wing nature of the current Israeli government, the resilience of the judicial system offers a glimmer of hope. The courts continue to uphold principles of justice and human rights, providing a vital counterbalance and adhering to the rule of law. This enduring

commitment to legal standards gives hope that justice for individuals like Fatima may still be achieved.