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## **SAMPLE LETTER**

### **Instructions:**

**Personalize your letter OR cut, paste, sign-off and email to Minister of Foreign Affairs The Honourable Anita Anand at: [anita.anand@international.gc.ca](mailto:anita.anand@international.gc.ca).**

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## **APRIL 17<sup>th</sup> PALESTINIAN PRISONERS' DAY**

**Our Demand: Publicly acknowledge, condemn and hold the Zionist administration of Israel accountable for ALL war crimes including the documented use of torture and other cruel and inhumane treatment of our Palestinian and Lebanese brothers and sisters.**

Greetings to the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs Anita Anand,

We are writing you today because the Government of Canada's [website](#) states that the Minister of Foreign Affairs is responsible for “**advancing and representing Canada’s interests and values abroad** [...].” Furthermore, “As the country’s chief diplomat, you manage international negotiations on a host of subjects, **advance international law, respond to complex international crises**” – all of which means you have the political power to say and do something meaningful without further delay. While ending Israel’s longstanding war, war crimes and genocide in the Gaza Strip and occupation of the West Bank, and more recently, hostilities against Lebanon and U.S.-Israeli aggression against Iran remains our top priority we demand that you immediately recognize the significance of this day—**Palestinian Prisoners’ Day**—not only in word but more importantly in political deed.

As documented by a number of human rights organizations, Israel has arbitrarily imprisoned one million Palestinians since 1948, uses a completely bias military court system against Palestinians (e.g., more than 99% of the trials end in convictions), incriminates a number of activities that exist within the realm of fundamental civil and political rights, applies unjust administrative detention orders, uses secret evidence and indefinite detention, increasingly detains children under the age of 18 and engages in punishment methods that fit the legal description of torture and other cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment ([Cario Institute for Human Rights Studies 2018](#)), regularly refuses the International Committee of the Red Cross access to Palestinian captives ([Adams 2024](#)) and engages in practices defined as enforced disappearance ([Amnesty International 2024](#)).

It is no secret that Israel systematically uses mass incarceration as a method of shutting down dissent and instituting a climate of fear among the Palestinian population. As noted by [Nashed \(2025\)](#), mass incarceration alongside mass killing, injuring and dispossession of civilians has played a central part in Israel’s illegal settlement and occupation project for an extended period of time. According to [The Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories](#)

(2025), “At the end of December 2024, the Israel Prison Service (IPS) was holding 9,619 Palestinians in detention or in prison on what it defined “security” grounds, including 2,216 from the Gaza Strip.” According to [Defence for Children International – Palestine](#) (2024), “Each year approximately 500-700 Palestinian children, some as young as 12 years old, are detained and prosecuted in the Israeli military court system.”

In addition to these disturbing figures, Israeli captives have testified publicly to the torturous conditions implemented by Israel. As a case in point, Mr. Hassan testified, “We were tied from behind, our eyes blindfolded, beaten severely. Blood was gushing from my face. They kept beating us for 50 minutes. I saw them from under the blindfold. They were filming us while beating us” ([Adams 2024](#)).

In another testimony, Alaa Muhanaa, whose husband was detained in 2023, states, “I assure the children that Ahmad is fine, that he’s coming back soon, but to live through this war, the constant displacement, the bombing and also have to fight to know where your husband is, not to hear his voice, is like a war within the war” ([Amnesty International 2024](#)).

According to [Amnesty International](#) (2024), “In another case, the Israeli army arrested a 14-year-old child from his home in Jabalia, in northern Gaza on 1 January 2024. He was held for 24 days in the Sde Teiman military detention centre with at least 100 adult detainees in one barrack. He told Amnesty International that military interrogators had subjected him to torture, including by kicking him, punching him in the neck and head.”

In yet another case, [Baroud](#) (2021) reports, “Mohammed El-Halabi was [...] subjected to sleep deprivation and frequently physically assaulted by the Israeli officers who slapped him, kicked him, especially in his genitals, and then strangled him until he felt that he was about to die ... At times, they placed him in a small room and played extremely loud music until the pain in his ears became unbearable. In the summer, they would strip him naked, and then blast him with flashes of hot air.”

[Save the Children](#) (2024) reports, “Recently, UN experts said they have received credible allegations of Palestinian women and girls arbitrarily executed in Gaza, and of inhumane and degrading treatment of girls in detention, including being beaten, denied menstruation pads, food and medicine.”

[Save the Children](#) (2024) also reports, “A [...] report in July 2023 showed that even prior to October 7, Palestinian children arrested by Israeli forces faced immense emotional and physical abuse, with four out of five - 86% - of them being beaten, and 69% strip-searched.”

For more examples directly linked to physical and psychological abuse in Israeli prisons, absence and denial of medical treatment in Israeli prisons and food deprivation and starvation in Israeli prisons visit [B’Tselem The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories](#).

With respect to our Lebanese brothers and sisters, [The Legal Agenda](#) (2025) reports, “[...] the issue of Lebanese incarcerated by Israel is no longer just about people deprived of their freedom in a military context or on the battlefield. Rather, a new paradigm has emerged: detention for negotiation purposes.” [The Legal Agenda](#) adds, Israel is holding a number of Lebanese, “[...] including prisoners of war who engaged in combat and civilians abducted from their villages after the occupation army’s withdrawal. Their detention continues under conditions that violate international law and are accompanied by torture, rape threats, and medical neglect of the wounded.” With respect to turning Lebanese prisoners into bargaining chips, [The Legal Agenda](#) reports, “On 26 January 2025, the United States announced that it would mediate negotiations over the detainees. Then, in March 2025, Israel officially declared its intent to negotiate over the issue of prisoners and detainees as part of a package also including the issues of sovereignty and borders, at the same time releasing five detainees. Under international law, this constitutes not only a breach of the conventions of war but also a crime of ‘hostage taking,’ i.e. detaining people in order to extort a third party (the Lebanese state).”

**Unfortunately, there are many more cases like these.**

Given that the [United Nations Convention Against Torture](#) (UNCAT) was implemented on June 26, 1987, and ratified by Israel on October 3, 1991, Israel – by its own account – should **NOT** be committing these human rights violations. At this point in time, Israel is committing these human rights violations with complete impunity, which needs to stop (alongside the active wars, war crimes and genocide and longstanding occupation). According to Article 1(1) of [UNCAT](#) torture is defined as:

***[A]ny act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions.***

Given [Canada’s ratification of UNCAT on June 24, 1987](#), and your responsibilities with respect to “advancing international law” and “responding to complex international crises,” we call upon you to acknowledge, condemn and hold Israel accountable for the documented use of torture and other cruel and inhumane treatment of Palestinians and our Lebanese brothers and sisters on **April 17<sup>th</sup>, Palestinian Prisoners’ Day**. Anything less will render Canada even more complicit in Israel’s longstanding war and genocide in the Gaza Strip, occupation of the West Bank and attacks against Lebanon as well as U.S.-Israeli attacks against our brothers and sisters in Iran.

Sincerely, [Write your name, city and postal code here]