

LA Jews for Peace Policy Statement

Los Angeles, CA. July 2, 2024 Contact: info@LAJewsforPeace.org

Sde Teiman is Israel's Abu Ghraib

Israel held more than 4,000 Palestinians it arrested in Gaza after Oct.7 2023, at the Sde Teiman military base. **LA Jews for Peace** is appalled by reports from released prisoners and a few Israeli whistleblowers of widespread torture, beatings, sexual assault, and inhumane conditions. It is worse than Abu Ghraib.

Sde Teiman is less than 10 km northwest of Be'er Sheva in the Negev desert. It is a makeshift interrogation site and a major focus of accusations that the Israeli military has mistreated detainees including people later determined to have no ties to Hamas or other armed Palestinian groups. In fact, Hamas members are not in Sde Teiman because they are in the hands of the *Shabas* [Israeli Prison Service].

The New York Times quotes a UNRWA report¹: "*Palestinian detainees described being made to sit on their knees for hours on end with their hands tied while blindfolded, being deprived of food and water and being urinated on, among other humiliations.*" Others described being "badly beaten with metal bars or the butts of guns and boots, according to the report, or forced into cages and attacked by dogs." But Israeli officials said that the "*rights of detainees are respected.*"

Israel's *+972 magazine* reported² that Muhammad Arab, a detained Palestinian journalist, said, "*Detainees are continually blindfolded and tied up with their hands behind their backs, forced to sleep hunched over on the floor without any bedding. Iron handcuffs are removed only during a weekly, minute-long shower.*" Arab said he saw Israeli guards sexually assault/rape, six prisoners with a stick in front of the other detainees; claiming they had violated prison orders. At least 26 prisoners died in captivity. Arab's report comes was relayed by a Palestinian citizen of Israel attorney who was allowed a 45-minute visit.

CNN World reported³ that Israeli whistleblowers who worked at Sde Teiman "*paint a picture of a facility where doctors sometimes amputated prisoners' limbs due to injuries sustained from constant handcuffing, of medical procedures performed by underqualified medics, and where the air is filled with the smell of neglected wounds left to rot.*"

LA Jews for Peace deplores this mistreatment, a case of collective punishment that is illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 33. Thousands of detainees are being tortured simply because of who they are, Palestinian residents of Gaza. Few if any have been implicated in Hamas' Oct.7 attack. The IDF must close Sde Teiman.

As Americans, **LA Jews for Peace** demands accountability from our own elected officials who have looked away, or actively funded a military establishment in Israel that allows such disgraceful treatment to occur.

¹ *NYTimes*, April 17, 2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/17/world/middleeast/un-report-israel-detainees-abuse.html>.

² *+972*, June 27, 2024. <https://www.972mag.com/sde-teiman-prisoners-lawyer-mahajneh/>.

³ *CNN World*, May 11, 2024 <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/05/10/middleeast/israel-sde-teiman-detention-whistleblowers-intl-cmd/index.html>.