

Al-Naqab (Ketziot) Prison – Conditions and Visitation Terms (2002–2007)

1. Overview

Al-Naqab, also known as Ketziot Prison, is located in the Negev Desert, Israel. It is one of the largest detention facilities for Palestinians, primarily housing individuals under administrative detention. The prison was re-opened in 2002 during the Second Intifada to accommodate the surge in arrests. It primarily consisted of tent sections surrounded by high walls, housing hundreds of detainees in harsh desert conditions.

2. Conditions (2002–2007)

- **Overcrowding:** Tents often held more detainees than designed, sometimes double capacity.
- **Harsh Environment:** Extreme desert temperatures with limited shelter; scorching heat in summer, freezing cold in winter.
- **Poor Sanitation and Health Care:** Limited medical support, inadequate hygiene facilities, and infestations of rodents and insects.
- **Isolation:** Prisoners reported restricted communication and severe psychological strain.
- **Violent Raids:** Frequent night raids by guards; notable violent incidents included the October 2007 riot during which detainee Mohammed al-Askar was killed and others injured.

3. Visitation Terms

- **Family Visits:** Limited to immediate family (spouses, parents, children, siblings) with special permits. Many detainees reported months or years without visits due to permit denials or security restrictions.
- **Legal Visits:** Lawyers could visit but access was highly restricted, often just 15–20 minutes with a limited number of clients per day.
- **ICRC Role:** The International Committee of the Red Cross visited regularly, at least weekly, to monitor conditions and facilitate humanitarian contact, though they could not intervene in legal matters.

4. Legal and Human Rights Context

- **Administrative Detention:** Many detainees were held without charge or trial, renewable every six months.
- **Reports of Abuse:** Human rights organizations documented physical abuse, humiliation, and neglect that violated international conventions on the treatment of detainees.
- **International Monitoring:** The ICRC and NGOs reported conditions that could be classified as cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment.

5. References and Sources

- Human Rights Watch, 2002–2007 reports
- International Committee of the Red Cross visit summaries
- B'Tselem publications
- United Nations documents and statements

- Eyewitness accounts and advocacy group reports

Second Intifada – 2002 Context and Connection to Al-Naqab Prison

1. Context of the Second Intifada

The Second Intifada began in late September 2000 after the breakdown of peace negotiations and Ariel Sharon's visit to the Al-Aqsa compound. By 2002, violence and military operations had escalated significantly, with widespread confrontations, curfews, and mass arrests across the West Bank.

2. Major Events in 2002

- **Operation Defensive Shield (March–April 2002):** Israel launched the largest military operation in the West Bank since 1967, placing towns and villages under curfew, including areas near Abu Qash. Thousands were arrested.
- **Mass Arrests and Detentions:** Detainees were transferred to prisons like Al-Naqab, often under administrative detention without trial.

3. Impact on Daily Life

- **Curfews and Blockades:** Villages were isolated, and economic and social life collapsed.
- **Infrastructure Damage:** Utilities, schools, and roads were disrupted or destroyed.
- **Casualties:** Hundreds of Palestinians and dozens of Israelis were killed during the year.

4. Al-Naqab/Ketziot Prison in 2002

- The prison was re-opened in April 2002 to hold the surge of detainees.
- Conditions were extremely harsh, with overcrowded tents, desert heat, poor sanitation, and restricted visitation.
- Human rights groups documented abuse, neglect, and isolation during this period.

5. Legacy of 2002

- Consolidation of Israeli military control over much of the West Bank.
- Beginning of the construction of the separation barrier.
- Long-term detentions and restricted access to farmland left lasting scars on families and communities.

6. References and Sources

- Human Rights Watch and B'Tselem reports (2002–2007)
- International Committee of the Red Cross monitoring reports
- United Nations and NGO publications
- Eyewitness accounts from detainees and families