



Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

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Summary record of the 2209th meeting*

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 11 November 2025, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Heller

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* No summary record was issued for the 2208th meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States Parties under article 19 of the Convention

Sixth periodic report of Israel (CAT/C/ISR/6; CAT/C/ISR/QPR/6)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Israel joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Israel** said that the dialogue was taking place after a two-year war that had begun on 7 October 2023 with a horrific massacre and the taking of over 250 hostages by Hamas and its accomplices, who had committed acts of sadistic violence, including torture, rape and other forms of inhuman treatment. The ensuing war in the Gaza Strip was one that Israel had never wanted. However, Israel was facing a terrorist organization that vowed to carry out increasingly more such attacks and instrumentalized Gazan civilians as tools of warfare whom it described as necessary sacrifices.
3. Despite formidable challenges, Israel had taken extensive, at times unprecedented, measures to fulfil its legal obligations and mitigate harm to the civilian population in Gaza. Since 7 October 2023, it had facilitated the entry of over two million tons of humanitarian supplies, the vaccination of children, voluntary medical evacuation of patients to third countries and delivery of medical equipment and anaesthetics.
4. The realities of urban warfare and the unprecedented terrorist labyrinth embedded in Gaza had been lost in the human rights discourse in Geneva. From the outset, there had been a mass disinformation campaign against Israel, involving the echoing of baseless claims and distorted data often originating from Hamas, the omission of context and the generalization of isolated incidents. Human rights bodies had been mostly silent about the plight of the Israeli hostages being held in abhorrent conditions and tortured by Hamas, although the Special Rapporteur on torture had stated that the physical and mental pain and suffering endured by the hostages and their families clearly met the threshold of torture and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict had found clear and convincing evidence that the hostages had been subjected to sexual violence and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. The witness account of recently released hostage Rom Braslavski corroborated that finding. Israel expected the Committee to address the atrocities committed against its citizens in the concluding observations.
5. Lastly, Israel maintained that the applicability of the Convention, pursuant to article 2, to any territory within a State's jurisdiction related to jurisdiction inherent in a State's sovereign territory.
6. **A representative of Israel**, reaffirming the unwavering commitment of Israel to the Convention, said that the dialogue came at a time when Israel and the Jewish people faced an orchestrated campaign of delegitimization. The events of 7 October 2023 had been the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust. Hamas had deliberately broadcast its crimes live to the world. On that day of barbarism, Hamas terrorists had also taken hostage more than 250 people, who had been bound, beaten and dragged through the streets of Gaza as crowds cheered and attempted to lynch them. Hamas had systematically used physical and psychological torture as a method of warfare. During captivity, the hostages had endured sexual torture, extreme starvation and dehydration, prolonged isolation, repeated mock executions, constant threats to their lives and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, while their families suffered unimaginable torment. After two years, Israel had succeeded in bringing home the last 20 living hostages and remained fully committed to bringing home the bodies of the murdered hostages still being held by Hamas.
7. However, the threat to Israel and its people had not ended with Hamas. The 7 October 2023 massacre had been followed by a coordinated, multi-front attack orchestrated by Iran and had unleashed a worldwide wave of antisemitism echoed even at the United Nations. Institutions created to uphold human rights and international law had been weaponized, were deliberately ignoring proven facts and were embracing the propaganda of terrorist organizations. False accusations that Israel was committing genocide, deliberately causing famine and targeting civilians distorted both the facts and the law.

8. For nearly two years, the Committee had neither issued a statement demanding the release of the hostages held by Hamas nor condemned the kidnapping and abuse of women and children. The Committee must clearly condemn Hamas and acknowledge the well-documented and undeniable atrocities it had committed as being among the greatest forms of cruelty prohibited under the Convention. He called upon the Committee to use every means within its mandate to demand the release of all the hostages and urged it to ensure that its statements and reports remained objective, fact-based and free from any political bias.

9. Turning to the implementation of the Convention in Israel, he was pleased to report that, since 7 October 2023, the Office of the Deputy Attorney General for Criminal Law had been closely following issues related to the Convention, mainly monitoring mechanisms, preventive measures, complaints and data collection, through periodic meetings with senior law enforcement officials. Furthermore, a protocol regulating scheduled and unannounced visits to detention facilities had been issued in October 2024. Dozens of official visits had already taken place, resulting in recommendations concerning detention conditions, staff performance and rehabilitation efforts. Official visitors, including lawyers from the Ministry of Justice and judges, were authorized to visit prisons and detention facilities to observe detention conditions, the treatment of prisoners and prison management; their reports were submitted to the Attorney General, the Minister of National Security and the Prison Service Commissioner. A similar visit mechanism for detention facilities under the Israel Defense Forces had been introduced pursuant to a recent amendment to the Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law. All complaints against Israel Security Agency interrogators were examined by an independent and impartial inspection unit. In addition, in December 2024, the Ministry of Justice had launched an Arabic-language website providing crime victims with clear and concise information in accessible language supported by visual aids.

10. Law enforcement officials and members of the Israel Defense Forces regularly underwent training in international law and human rights, and staff of the refugee status determination unit received extensive training in human rights topics. Israel remained fully committed to the principle of non-refoulement and did not return anyone to a country where he or she might be at risk of torture.

11. **Mr. Kessing** (Country Rapporteur), noting that the international community had strongly condemned the 7 October 2023 attack by Hamas in various forums, said that the Committee was relieved that a ceasefire had been achieved and that the hostages had been released under the peace plan agreed in Sharm el-Sheikh. He wished to stress that the focus of the review would be the Convention against Torture, and the issues of genocide, unlawful occupation, crimes against humanity and war crimes would not be broached unless directly related to torture and ill-treatment. Moreover, the scope of the current review was compliance with the Convention by Israel, not by the State of Palestine. The Committee was aware of and disturbed by the well-documented reports of torture and war crimes, notably the taking and abuse of hostages, committed by Hamas against Israeli soldiers and civilians but would raise them with the State of Palestine when it came before the Committee. He would also stress that neither international humanitarian law nor international human rights law was based on reciprocity: the fact that one party to armed conflict violated its obligations was not an excuse for the other party to do likewise.

12. The Committee had noted with grave concern the conclusion by a number of United Nations bodies that genocide was being committed in Gaza, as well as the issuance by the International Criminal Court of arrest warrants for two high-ranking Israeli officials, notably Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, for their alleged responsibility in the commission of crimes against humanity and war crimes. Against that backdrop, he wished to recall that all States Parties to the Convention had agreed that, in accordance with article 2, the prohibition of torture applied in times of war.

13. The Committee was appalled by the consistent detailed descriptions, by a range of sources, including international bodies, international, Israeli and Palestinian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and released detainees, of what appeared to be systematic and widespread torture and inhuman treatment of Palestinians, including children and other vulnerable groups. Such acts had reportedly escalated sharply since 7 October 2023, becoming a deliberate and widespread tool of State policy employed across all legal, administrative and operational systems and with near total impunity. He wished to know

whether the State Party agreed with that characterization, whether torture and ill-treatment were explicitly banned and condemned at the highest political level, what measures had been or would be taken to prohibit and prevent torture and ill-treatment and whether the State Party was considering establishing an independent inquiry, similar to the Turkel Commission on the 2010 blockade of Gaza, to investigate all allegations of breaches of international law, including torture. He also wished to know whether the State Party agreed with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 22 October 2025, according to which deprivation of the basic necessities of life could amount to torture, and, if so, what measures it had taken or would take to comply with the Court's opinion.

14. Notwithstanding the State Party's long-standing position that the Convention was inapplicable beyond its territory, namely, in Gaza and the West Bank, article 2 established that the Convention applied to any territory under the jurisdiction of a State Party, which included occupied territories to which a State did not have legal title. That stance on applicability was supported by the Committee's general comment No. 2 (2007), other human rights treaty bodies, regional human rights courts and the International Court of Justice, which held that Israel was bound by the Convention when operating in occupied Palestinian territory and in times of armed conflict and that international humanitarian law was not *lex specialis* in times of occupation or armed conflict. Therefore, the Committee was interested to hear whether the State Party maintained its position that it was not bound by the Convention in Gaza and the West Bank, what the State Party's position was on the applicability of the Convention in times of armed conflict and whether it agreed that many of the obligations under the Convention were also found in the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and customary international law, which clearly applied in times of occupation or armed conflict.

15. The Committee was also interested to hear whether the State Party was considering making torture a stand-alone criminal offence and, if so, within what time frame, whether it was accurate that, under current applicable national legislation, torture could be punished by a maximum of 3 years' imprisonment and was subject to a statute of limitation, whether cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment was criminalized in Israeli law and whether the Penal Law provided for the responsibility of hierarchical superiors for acts of torture and ill-treatment committed by those under their command.

16. He was curious to learn about Israeli case law concerning the ban on the use of evidence obtained under torture, any court cases where evidence had been excluded for having been extracted by torture or ill-treatment and the burden of proof in the event of allegations of coerced evidence. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations, he would welcome information on whether the bill to ban evidence obtained under torture had been adopted, whether the ban extended to evidence obtained through cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and how a detainee who lodged a complaint of torture before a judge was protected from retaliation in practice.

17. Recalling that no exceptional circumstances whatsoever could be invoked as a justification for torture or inhuman treatment, it would be helpful to know whether it was accurate that, pursuant to two judgments of the High Court of Justice, Israel Security Agency interrogators were immune from investigation and prosecution if they subjected a person merely to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and the person posed a real and substantial threat to life. It would also be helpful to know how many criminal investigations against Israel Security Agency interrogators had been suspended in the past three years owing to the so-called necessity defence, how and on what basis an individual was determined to be a real and substantial threat to life and whether the simple fact of being a young Palestinian male from Gaza was sufficient for that purpose. Since the necessity defence could not be invoked in relation to torture allegations, he would welcome information on the official definition of torture, including what acts were considered to cause severe pain or suffering within the meaning of article 1 of the Convention.

18. Noting that application of legal safeguards appeared to vary among categories of detained persons, the Committee wished to know, in relation to detainees suspected of an ordinary offence, how long a habeas corpus hearing could be postponed, whether they were entitled to contact a family member and undergo an independent medical examination, whether all such detainees, including Palestinians, enjoyed the same legal safeguards, how

many people had been arrested and held in pretrial detention in the past three years and what exceptions, if any, there were to legal safeguards.

19. With regard to unlawful combatants, the Committee wished to know whether it was accurate that, pursuant to amendments introduced since the outbreak of the war in Gaza, such detainees could be held for up to 45 days without a detention order, up to 75 days without judicial review and up to 90 days without access to a lawyer. It also wished to know how many unlawful combatants had been detained in the past three years and for how long, whether individuals could be detained as unlawful combatants only during armed conflict and whether, in the light of the ceasefire, the State Party intended to release Palestinians being detained as unlawful combatants or to establish another legal basis for their detention. In addition, it would be useful to know who could be designated as an unlawful combatant, what the process was for making such a designation, whether reports that an 82-year-old ill woman had been detained for two months as an unlawful combatant were true and, if so, how her detention was justified. Information would be welcome regarding the State Party's position on whether unlawful combatants were protected by the fundamental guarantees contained in common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and article 75 of Protocol I Additional thereto. Information would also be welcome regarding the legal safeguards to which unlawful combatants were entitled in law and in practice, including the right to challenge their detention.

20. The Committee would welcome data, disaggregated by gender, age and place and duration of detention, on the number of individuals who had been taken into administrative detention since 7 October 2023, as well as information on the legal safeguards afforded to that category of detainees, in law and in practice, and on the measures to ensure the independence and impartiality of military judges who reviewed administrative detentions and the access of detainees to evidence held by the military court. It invited the State Party to explain why only Palestinians could be placed in administrative detention.

21. In the light of reports that Israel Security Agency interrogators had increasingly resorted to interrogation methods contrary to the Convention since 7 October 2023, the Committee wished to know whether interrogators were banned, in law and in practice, from using torture or other forms of ill-treatment during interrogation and what measures were in place to prevent torture and ill-treatment in that context. It also wished to know why 1,450 complaints of torture and ill-treatment against interrogators had resulted in only three investigations and no indictments, what the outcome had been of complaints examined by the competent inspection unit, how many interrogators had received criminal or disciplinary sanctions in the past three years for using interrogation methods that amounted to torture or inhuman treatment and how the State Party ensured that the inspection unit's investigations into allegations of torture and ill-treatment were prompt, impartial and independent given that it was part of the Ministry of Justice. Furthermore, the Committee was curious to know how many hours of interrogations by the Israel Security Agency had been supervised in 2024 and 2025, how many times supervisors had witnessed detainees being subjected to torture or inhuman treatment, whether video recordings of interrogations were stored and alleged victims of torture could access them, how many cases had been referred by supervisors to the inspection unit for investigation and possible prosecution and what the outcome of those cases had been.

22. He would welcome information on the measures taken, following the July 2024 report by the external advisory committee on military detention, to prevent torture and ill-treatment, including of children, by the Israel Defense Forces; on the number of complaints in the past three years against the Israel Defense Forces for torture and inhuman treatment, the length and outcomes of the investigations and the number of Israeli soldiers held to account for torture and ill-treatment of Palestinians; and on the manner in which the State Party ensured that the investigations by the Military Police Criminal Investigation Division into allegations of torture and ill-treatment were prompt, impartial and independent and that there was no institutional or hierarchical relationship between the investigators and the soldiers under investigation.

23. Concerning the leaked video allegedly showing five Israel Defense Forces soldiers beating and sexually assaulting a Palestinian detainee at the Sde Teiman camp, the Committee would appreciate information on the status of the criminal investigation into the

soldiers, the manner in which the victim's statement would be taken given that he had been released and returned to Gaza without first being interviewed about the incident and any redress that the victim would receive. Lastly, was the Committee correct in understanding that a State official could be prosecuted for leaking evidence of torture committed by the military, or were there whistle-blower protections in place?

24. **Ms. Racu** (Country Rapporteur), acknowledging the State Party's particularly tense situation in recent years and the impact on families, communities and society as a whole, said that, since its previous review in 2016, the State Party had taken significant steps to enhance its legal and institutional framework for the prevention of torture and ill-treatment, including through improved detention conditions and procedural safeguards. However, concerns and challenges persisted.

25. The Committee would welcome information on the content, frequency and practical evaluation of human rights and anti-torture training programmes for law enforcement officials, including whether training was systematically provided to all categories of officials. Information would also be welcome on the consistent implementation across institutions of the modules on tolerance, human rights conventions and the elimination of prejudice and on any oversight mechanisms ensuring that officers were properly trained and held accountable for any misconduct, particularly regarding the use of force or ill-treatment during arrest, detention or transportation of detainees. It would be helpful to know whether training for Israel Security Agency personnel included information about safeguards and guidance derived from the Convention, whether training in the absolute prohibition of torture and the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol) was included in the professional development of medical, legal and law enforcement personnel and what steps were envisaged to make such training or capacity-building activities mandatory, practical and sustainable.

26. She invited the State Party to clarify how it ensured that minors aged 12 to 14 years who were handed custodial sentences for aggravated or attempted murder in the context of terrorism were fully protected, in law and in practice, from any form of ill-treatment or abuse and that they enjoyed contact with their family and continuous access to legal assistance and appropriate medical care. Did the State Party intend to review the necessity and proportionality of the temporary amendment to the Youth Law permitting such sentences in the light of the principle of the best interests of the child?

27. She would welcome the State Party's comments on allegations of torture and ill-treatment of minors in administrative detention, as well as information on the steps taken to ensure that they were protected from torture and violent interrogation, were held separately from adults in all circumstances and had regular confidential contact with family and access to lawyers and medical care. In the case of minors detained under the Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law, she would welcome an explanation of how procedural safeguards and conditions of detention aligned with international standards and were applied equally to all children, regardless of nationality, religion or place of residence. Protecting all children was not only a duty under the law, it was also a reminder of the values that bound humankind.

28. With reference to persistent concerns as to discrepancies in the application of legal safeguards to pretrial detainees, it would be useful to know how many people were currently held in pretrial and administrative detention, what the average length of such detention was and how many people had been held beyond statutory limits. It would also be useful to know what measures were in place to ensure that all detainees, regardless of nationality or the nature of the alleged offence, were brought promptly before a judge, ideally within 24 hours of arrest, and that they had immediate, confidential access to legal counsel and contact with family. Information would also be useful on the independent bodies overseeing pretrial detention facilities, the extent to which their findings were used to strengthen accountability and improve conditions and the concrete steps taken to reduce prolonged pretrial detention and promote non-custodial alternatives, in line with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules) and with the principle that detention should be a measure of last resort.

29. Given, in particular, the potential impact of the events of the past two years on the penitentiary system, she would appreciate up-to-date information on the conditions of detention and measures taken to address reported issues with overcrowding, sanitation, ventilation and access to natural light in detention facilities, especially in older buildings. She wondered what independent monitoring and complaints mechanisms were operated within the prison system and how they were used to ensure accountability and remedy violations. She would welcome information on the use of alternatives to detention, such as electronic monitoring and conditional release arrangements, and wondered whether they were available to minors, non-citizens and Palestinian detainees on the same terms. Given reports that Palestinian detainees from Gaza had been held in overcrowded, unsanitary environments, with limited access to food, clean water and medical care and severe restrictions on, or even total denial of, access to family visits and legal counsel, and that scabies was spreading among them, she would appreciate clarification as to what steps had been taken to ensure that all detainees were held in conditions consistent with humane treatment standards and whether regular access to family, legal representatives and medical care had been restored for them. It would be helpful to receive information on the conditions in migration detention centres, particularly at Saharonim prison and Yahalom detention facility at Ben Gurion Airport. Recent data on occupancy, average duration of detention and steps taken to improve healthcare, hygiene and independent monitoring at those facilities would be appreciated.

30. The Committee had received reports that the conditions of solitary confinement were particularly harsh, with detainees often held in small, restrictive cells, provided with limited or no meaningful human contact and permitted only one hour of outdoor exercise per day, typically alone and in restraints; that solitary confinement was at times applied primarily as a disciplinary measure, including for minors; and that periods of solitary confinement were often extended by courts on the basis of classified submissions from security agencies. She would welcome information on any legislative or regulatory measures adopted to limit or clarify the duration and purpose of solitary confinement and its applicability to minors and vulnerable groups and wondered to what extent such measures were aligned with international human rights standards. She wished to know what mechanisms were in place to ensure that decisions to impose solitary confinement were reviewed regularly and independently and that detainees had effective avenues to challenge them. She wished to know whether the list of disciplinary sanctions applicable in detention facilities had been assessed or modified recently with a view to ensuring full alignment with international standards, including the absolute prohibition of measures that might amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, particularly in the case of minors.

31. She would welcome information on the implementation of recent reforms aimed at improving access to healthcare in places of detention. It would be helpful to receive clarification as to how timely and confidential access to healthcare was ensured in practice, whether detainees could promptly see a doctor and have private consultations at their own expense and whether, if necessary, they were referred to hospitals without delay. She would appreciate information on the safeguards that protected the independence of medical staff, enabling them to act in line with professional ethics and without interference by custodial authorities. She wondered whether detainees could be examined by a doctor of their choice, at their own expense, and how second opinions were obtained in cases of alleged ill-treatment. It would be useful to know how the State Party ensured a steady supply of essential medication and medication for chronic diseases, including during transfers between facilities and to hospitals.

32. Information on the availability of mental health services in detention, the use of non-coercive measures for prisoners in psychological distress and the mechanisms for preventing and investigating incidents of violence among prisoners would also be appreciated. She wondered how the Government planned to ensure the continuation and possible expansion of the mental health support programme launched jointly by the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization to protect the mental health and well-being of front-line healthcare workers, and what measures were in place to monitor and reduce the psychological impact of the ongoing conflict on medical personnel and civilians and ensure access to mental health services in line with the human rights obligations assumed by Israel.

33. Given continuing reports of deaths of both Palestinian and other detainees as a result of delayed or inadequate medical care, suicide, self-harm and possible ill-treatment, she would appreciate more detailed information on the manner in which mechanisms introduced to prevent such deaths were being implemented and evaluated in practice, in addition to clarification as to what systems were in place for reporting and documenting deaths, injuries and incidents of self-harm and how accountability was ensured when negligence or misconduct might have contributed to fatal outcomes. It would be helpful to receive disaggregated data on deaths in custody over the past five years, including on causes, location and the number of cases that had been subject to independent investigation. She would like to know what legal and operational measures had been taken to prevent suicides and self-harm and how the effectiveness of those mechanisms was monitored in practice. Since the Committee had noted discrepancies in figures provided on deaths in custody, she would appreciate precise statistics in that regard. Information on the current screening procedures for identifying at-risk detainees, the availability of safe cells or specialized facilities and the training provided to staff on the prevention and management of such incidents would also be welcome.

34. The Committee was concerned about reports of persistent intimate partner violence, femicide, including so-called honour crimes, widespread sexual and domestic violence and high levels of sexual harassment. It was also concerned about credible and consistent reports that women and girls were arbitrarily arrested, denied legal safeguards and subjected to threats of sexual violence, degrading and humiliating treatment and that female detainees lacked access to medical care, including for those who were pregnant or breastfeeding. It was further concerned about findings that there had been serious and recurring incidents of sexual and gender-based violence against Palestinian women and girls, including during arrest, transfer and detention, in addition to widespread use of sexualized threats, intimidation and humiliation against women and girls in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. It therefore wished to receive disaggregated data on criminal complaints, investigations, prosecutions and sanctions related to acts of gender-based and sexual violence covering all women and girls under the State Party's jurisdiction or effective control, including those living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and information on steps taken to ensure victims' access to justice, protection and reparation.

35. She would appreciate detailed information on recent legal, policy and institutional measures adopted to prevent, investigate and punish acts of gender-based violence, including in contexts of deprivation of liberty and armed conflict. She would welcome clarification as to the safeguards in place for women and girls in detention, including measures to prevent sexual and gender-based violence, ensure access to gender-sensitive medical care and legal assistance, provide confidential complaint mechanisms and guarantee independent oversight and accountability for perpetrators. She would like the State Party to elaborate on its political will, coordination efforts and allocation of resources to combat gender-based violence against all women and girls, Israeli and Palestinian alike, citizens and non-citizens, without distinction of race, origin or belief.

36. The Committee had received reports that the fragmentation of efforts to investigate torture and ill-treatment in Israel undermined the effectiveness and promptness of investigations, that only a fraction of the complaints made against members of the Israel Security Agency and military personnel, including in cases of alleged abuse or fatalities involving Palestinian detainees, had led to prosecution, contributing to a prevailing climate of impunity, that appeals against dismissals of complaints were rarely, if ever, upheld and that there was a similar situation in the penitentiary system. Accordingly, she would welcome further information on the current functioning and coordination of investigative mechanisms and on measures taken to ensure independence, impartiality and accountability in addressing allegations of torture and ill-treatment. She would appreciate disaggregated data for the past five years on complaints of torture and ill-treatment submitted against members of the Israel Security Agency, the Israel Defense Forces, the Israel Prison Service and the police, indicating how many had led to criminal investigations, prosecutions, convictions and disciplinary action. She wondered what steps had been taken to address the structural fragmentation of investigative systems across security agencies, to ensure that all complaints of torture and ill-treatment were investigated promptly, impartially and by an independent body and to improve timeliness, transparency and communication with complainants. She

wished to know whether any recent evaluations, reforms or oversight initiatives, such as the special advisory committee established by the chief of staff of the Israel Defense Forces in 2024, had led to tangible changes in practice, including in the accountability of personnel responsible for the treatment of detainees.

37. Lastly, she would be grateful to hear how the State Party intended to guarantee, through concrete legal, administrative and operational measures, the full implementation of its obligations under the ceasefire agreement of 13 October 2025, ensuring that peace was maintained and no acts of violence or reprisal occurred. She would welcome details of its vision for establishing credible mechanisms of accountability for all alleged violations committed during the conflict with a view to ensuring that those responsible were held to account and that victims and their families received justice and support.

38. **Mr. Contesse** said that there were reports that violence perpetrated by settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory had increased dramatically in scale and frequency, with the support and, in many cases, the participation of the Israeli security forces, that a record 264 attacks had taken place in October 2025 alone and that, thus far in 2025, 42 Palestinian children had been killed in the West Bank by Israeli forces. Accordingly, he wished to know how many investigations into violence perpetrated by settlers the State Party had conducted, what their results had been and what steps the State Party would take to effectively prevent and punish acts of violence committed by Israeli settlers against Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. He would invite the State Party to revise its position on the applicability of the Convention in occupied territories, which was contrary to international law, the jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice and statements by the Committee.

39. **Mr. Iscan** said that it was an established international norm that the prohibition of torture was an absolute human right applicable at all times and without territorial limits and permitting no temporal limits on prosecution, amnesty or immunity. Therefore, he wondered whether the State Party would consider reviewing its position that it was permissible for the Israel Security Agency to use so-called special measures in some interrogations under the necessity defence.

40. **Mr. Tuzmukhamedov** said that he would welcome the delegation's comments on the bill, recently approved in its first reading by the parliament, to permit the execution of terrorists, which would mark a significant change in the Israeli position on the death penalty and would target a particular group. He wished to know whether the Government had officially designated the current violence as an international armed conflict or as a non-international armed conflict and what steps were being taken to ensure that members of the security forces complied fully with the Geneva Conventions and the Protocols Additional thereto as they related to the prohibition of torture.

41. **Mr. Buchwald** said that he wished to know how, in the State Party's view, its human rights obligations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory were affected by the question of whether the Convention was applicable therein and by the events of 7 October 2023.

42. **Mr. Liu** said that, in the light of the establishment of a police unit responsible for gender equality and cultural diversity in 2019, he wondered whether due consideration was given to those matters in detention facilities. He would welcome the delegation's comments on the pager bombings carried out in Lebanon in September 2024, in which thousands of booby-trapped devices had been detonated simultaneously without knowledge of who was in possession of them, their location or their surroundings, and which the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights had described as a violation of international human rights law and, to the extent applicable, of international humanitarian law. It might also comment on the alleged use by Israel of artificial intelligence to select bombing targets in Gaza, which had taken an unprecedented toll on civilian populations, housing, essential services and infrastructure and had been criticized by four United Nations special rapporteurs.

The meeting was suspended at 12.15 p.m. and resumed at 12.30 p.m.

43. **A representative of Israel** said that, on 7 October 2023, Hamas terrorists had abducted him and his wife, who would also speak before the Committee, from their home and had held them in captivity for 484 days and 51 days, respectively. During their abduction, they had been threatened with weapons and subjected to brutal treatment, as a result of which

he had suffered broken ribs and a bullet wound to his wrist and she had suffered a torn meniscus. While in captivity, they had encountered fellow hostages who had been badly injured and whose family members had been murdered. He had been made to urge a woman who was being beaten with rods and threatened at gunpoint to confess to being a member of the Israel Defense Forces. After his wife had been released, he had not known whether she had returned home in safety. He had been made to lie motionless on the floor for five days, during which time a terrorist had spat on him and kicked him in the ribs, causing him pain that had lasted for more than a month, and he had been threatened with weapons. During his remaining time in captivity, he had been starved, denied water and permitted to use the toilet only twice a day. He had been made to strip together with other hostages and had been threatened and humiliated. He had also been held in isolation for a total of six months. After his release, he had discovered that his mother had died two months previously.

44. **A representative of Israel** said that, for more than 20 years before the attack launched by Hamas on 7 October 2023, frequent missile attacks launched from Gaza had regularly caused her to fear for the safety of her loved ones. During her time in captivity, unable to find out whether her son was safe, she had been convinced that he had been killed. She and her fellow hostages had been starved – causing her to lose 10 kg in weight – and deprived of water, while their captors had frequently eaten in front of them. Girls, including a 16-year-old, who had been held captive with them had told her that, in various incidents, their captors had made them strip, had molested them and had forced them to perform oral sex on them. Each night, she and her fellow captives had been forced to lie still and had been berated if they had moved even slightly. Even though the dirty water given to her to drink had caused her to have diarrhoea, she had been scared to ask her captors for permission to use the toilet. She had been screamed at if she cried and had been forced to pray to Allah. Following her release, she and her family, including her young grandson, had not known whether they would see her husband again. A total of 64 people from her community had been murdered by members of Hamas.

45. **A representative of Israel** said that the inspection unit responsible for handling complaints against Israel Security Agency interrogators was an independent body that was also responsible for monitoring interrogations conducted by the Agency. The unit had eight members, including its head and three investigators, two of whom, including one woman, were lawyers. All investigators had completed training in criminal and internal affairs investigation, additional training in investigating cases involving sexual offences, persons with disabilities and trafficking in persons and training in the review of asylum applications by alleged victims of torture. The unit operated around the clock, in accordance with investigative needs.

46. Prison directors, lawyers, human rights organizations and other official visitors could submit complaints to the unit on detainees' behalf; court findings indicating that a criminal offence might have been committed by a member of the Israel Security Agency must also be forwarded to the unit for investigation. When a complaint was received, an investigation team from the unit was sent to the relevant detention facility to collect a statement from the detainee in question. The preliminary examination process included reviewing all relevant documents, including medical findings, collecting evidence from witnesses, reviewing available security camera footage and, where necessary, investigating the interrogators concerned.

47. The audiovisual monitoring system was regularly upgraded to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness. All members of the unit who carried out monitoring – none of whom had previously served in the Israel Security Agency, to avoid conflicts of interest – had extensive experience in investigation, were fluent in Arabic and had received specialized training. Monitoring was conducted on the basis of random sampling around the clock, with a total of 1,000 hours of material monitored every year. Members of the unit had been instructed to report all incidents, including those not involving divergences from interrogation procedure, such as acts of self-harm and violence against interrogators, and to prioritize monitoring of interrogations of members of vulnerable groups, such as minors and women. He knew of no other security agency in the world that broadcast its interrogations live to an external oversight body.

48. Since the events of 7 October 2023, the unit had continued to operate as normal, had received 152 complaints and had collected statements from 150 detainees, some of whom had submitted 2 or more complaints. Thus far in 2025, the unit had opened 69 cases, compared with 70 in 2022, 71 in 2023 and 127 in 2024, and 27 incidents had been reported under the audiovisual monitoring mechanism, compared with 35 incidents in 2023 and 42 in 2024. In the period since 7 October 2023, 18 cases involving minors had been investigated by the unit, including 10 cases in 2023, in which the youngest minor had been aged 16 years, 6 cases in 2024, in which the youngest minor had been aged 16 years, and 2 cases thus far in 2025, in which the youngest minor had been aged 15 years. There had been one case involving a woman, who had been aged 37 years.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.