

State of Palestine

Prime Minister



دولة فلسطين

رئيس الوزراء

9 May 2013

H.E. Mr. Espen Barth Eide
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Kingdom of Norway

Dear Mr. Foreign Minister,

With reference to your inquiry regarding allowances paid for the families of Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails, I wish to confirm that all funds transferred to the Palestinian Authority by the Kingdom of Norway have been used to pay the salaries of Palestinian Authority civil servants. Allowances for the prisoners' families are part of a social assistance program for the financially and economically disadvantaged and are not part of the civil servants payroll.

I wish to seize this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to you personally and to the Kingdom of Norway for its unwavering support for the cause of achieving justice and peace in our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Salam Fayyad'.

Salam Fayyad
Prime Minister

Prisoners –salaries / Allowance

Tabell 1

(in the official document LAW 19 and all related documents including Cabinet decision 23 for year 2010 the word Salary is used)

From 1998 till end 1999

Marital Status	Basic Allowance / NIS	Wife allowance /NIS	Children /each /NIS	Other Allowance
Single	900	200	40	For Jerusalem prisoner 300 NIS extra
Married	1300	200	40	For Jerusalem prisoner 300 NIS extra
Married to two wives	600 for each	200	40	For Jerusalem prisoner 300 NIS extra

From 1/1/2000 till end 2003

Years in prison	Basic Allowance / NIS	Wife allowance /NIS	Children /each /NIS	Other Allowance
Less than 10 years	900	200	40	For Jerusalem prisoner 300 NIS extra
More than 10 years	1300	200	40	For Jerusalem prisoner 300 NIS extra
Married to two wives	700 for each	200	40	For Jerusalem prisoner 300 NIS extra

Tabell 2

Starting 2004 (new mechanism was adopted based on the period spent in prison) :

Years in prison	Monthly allowance NIS
Single and less than 5 years	1000
In prison from 5 to 10 years	1300
In prison from 10 to 15 years	2000

In prison from 15 to 17 years	2500
In prison from 17 to 20 years	3000
In prison from 20 to 25 years	3300
More than 25 years	4000

Tabell 3

Based on the cabinet meeting number 90 published in the gazette 13/4/2011: (to be implemented starting 1/1/2011)

Years in prison	Monthly allowance NIS	In addition , wife`s allowance 300 NIS , children`s allowances under 18 years 50 NIS each , allowance for Jerusalem prisoners 300 NIS , allowance for the 48 prisoners 500 NIS
In prison from less than 3 years	1400	
In prison from 3 to 5 years	2000	
In prison from 5 to 10 years	4000	
In prison from 10 to 15 years	6000	
In prison from 15 to 20 years	7000	
In prison from 20 to 25 years	8000	
In prison from 25 to 30 years	10000	
In prison 30 years and more	12000	

Tabell 4

Notes :

- Salaries are subject to index
- Free education for males spent more than 5 years in prison and females spent less than 3
- Free school education for children of prisoners
- 80 % discount for university fees for children of male prisoners more than 5 years
- 80 % discount for university fees for children of male prisoners more than 3 years
- Free medical insurance to the family members of all prisoners
- Females and males prisoners are treated equally in payment of salaries and allowances, when paying the children and spouse allowance, it is conditioned that the Man is unemployed.

Tabell 5

According to LAW 19 for 2004 , All **released prisoners** who spent 5 years and more in prison is entitled to a monthly salary from the PA (in accordance with the employment scale salary in force , and depending on the number of years spent in Jail) and according to the following criteria :

Number of years	Rank (position)
5 years and less than 7 years	Head of section
7 years and less than 8 years	Deputy director
8 years and less than 10 years	Director C
10 years and less than 15 years	Director B
15 years and less than 20 years	Director A
20 years and less than 23 years	General Director
23 years and less than 25 years	Assistant Deputy Minister
25 and above	Deputy Minister

Tabell 6

All **released prisoners** are entitled to a one time payment to help in settling down, the last published figure are according to LAW number 19 year 2004:

Number of years	Amount \$
Less than 1 year	500
1 years and less than 3 years	1000
3 years and less than 5 years	2000
5 years and less than 8 years	3000
8 years and less than 11 years	4000
11years and less than 15 years	5000
15 years and less than 18 years	6000
18 years and less than 21 years	7000
21 years and less than 25 years	8000
25 and above	10000

LAWS and decrees:

- Support the prisoners LAW number 4 for the year 2004
 - Support the prisoners LAW number 14 for the year 2004 issued 1/12/2004
 - The Prisoners & the released prisoners LAW number 19 for the year 2004 issued 27/12/2004
 - Palestinian Cabinet decision number 87 for the year 2004 for the increase of the prisoner's allowances
 - Palestinian Cabinet decision number 37 for the year 2006 for the increase of the prisoner's allowances
 - The Palestinian Cabinet decision number 19 for the year 2010 regarding ``the education and medical insurance for the released prisoners ``
 - The Palestinian Cabinet decision number 21 for the year 2010 regarding ``the needs of the prisoners inside Israeli jails ``
 - The Palestinian Cabinet decision number 22 for the year 2010 regarding ``the legal assistance needs for prisoners ``
 - The Palestinian Cabinet decision number 23 for the year 2010 regarding ``payment of monthly salaries to the Prisoners ``
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- 1- Regarding the Cantina, it was the Israeli authorities which asked for this arrangement, and we signed an agreement with the Israeli Prisons' Service (IPS) to provide money for the prisoners, in order for them to get their needs. The reason for that was that the occupation authorities claimed that the source of the money which would be provided individually to the prisoners would be unknown, and they wanted the payments to be done through an official body. A payment of NIS 300 is made for each prisoner through an Israeli company (Dadash) which was chosen by the occupation authority, through a bid. We transfer the money to the Dadash company account in the Israeli "Hapoalim Bank". In order to know the number of detainees, and subsequently know the amount of money to be transferred, we get a monthly letter from the IPS through our lawyer stating the total number of detainees (including common law prisoners), and the needed amount of money, by simple math.

The designated company (Dadash) issues a tax bill concerning the amounts paid for security detainees and the tax returns are then claimed by the Palestinian Ministry of Finance. Common law prisoners are excluded from this arrangement, meaning that no tax returns/ refunds are made for the money paid for them. This is a routine which takes place permanently.

- 2- Concerning the change of terms (Ratib-allowances vs. social security payments). The terminology in the Palestinian society was very delicate concerning this issue. The government tried its best to avoid the sensitivities among the Palestinian population concerning this issue. Your concerns and sensitivities were taken into consideration while changing the term used, but uproar in the Palestinian society, where detainees are perceived as freedom fighters (going inline with international laws), forced the Palestinian government to change the term used back to the old term.

Regarding the questions:

- a. Payments for prisoners are listed under the "social benefits-subsidies" in the Palestinian budget.
- b. Those payments definitely are not equivalent to civil servants salaries, and follow a different scale.

- c. No other benefits are included in those allowances (pensions, special health care, etc...)
 - d. Regarding the term used, it was answered above
- 3- Since in most cases, detainees are the principle breadwinners of the family, money is transferred to the bank accounts of first degree relatives, based on the detainee's social status. The detainee's dependents get the payment. If a detainee were married, his wife and children are the beneficiaries, whereas if a detainee is not married, his elderly parents would be the beneficiaries.
- 4- Despite the fact that the inquiry was directed to the Ministry of Finance, in the aforementioned meeting, we will gladly tackle the issue of the amount of money paid to dependents. There is a scale for the amounts paid depending on the number of years "spent" in prison (not the sentence itself) and the number of dependents. This stems from the fact that needs of those dependents change along the years. Children grow up, families have more needs as time goes by, and children in kindergartens need more money for school and then university. Elderly parents tend to need more money as they grow older. Clothing, food, and all other needs tend to increase over the years, not to mention the depreciating value of money, and the ever increasing cost of living.
- 5-
 - a. The total number of detainees in Israeli occupation prisons is around 4900 at the time of writing this letter; among them are 134 detainees under Administrative Detention. 3153 are sentenced detainees, 1203 are pending trial. Other detainees who are not yet registered would not show in the ministry's database, and this makes for the number difference.
 - b. The total number of detainees' families receiving payments is 3330 households.
 - c. Yes, this is the case for example when the detainee is a government employee, in this case the ministry does not pay any money. Private sector employees, who have a source of income while in prison, are also not paid.
 - d. All payments are made to dependents. As mentioned before, these are individual cases, depending on the marital status, people who depend solely on the detainee (being the principle breadwinner).
 - e. The payments vary according to the scale mentioned earlier

f. Detainees are enrolled in the Ex-Detainees Rehabilitation Program (EDRP), administered by the ministry, including university fees' subsidies, micro projects initial financing, loans, vocational training, as well as a release grant administered by a special law.

g. Again, the payments vary according to the scale mentioned earlier.

Most Respectfully,