SHEER BRUTALITY:
THE BEATINGS CONTINUE

BEATINGS AND MALTREATMENT OF PALESTINIANS BY BORDER POLICE AND POLICE OFFICERS DURING MAY-AUGUST 1997

Information Sheet, August 1997

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Cover: Ahmad Musa, whose leg was broken by Border Police officers

B'Tselem thanks HaMoked: Center for the Defence of the Individual for its assistance in preparing this report.
INTRODUCTION

This report presents testimonies describing the violence and brutality of Border Police and Police officers against Palestinians one year after B'Tselem published a report on this subject. In last year's report - *Beatings, Maltreatment and Degradation of Palestinians by Israeli Authorities during June-July 1996* - ten cases involved incidents in which Border Police and Police officers unjustifiably beat, humiliated and abused Palestinians. The report, published in August 1996, raised the following concern:

Since Palestinians who entered Israel without permits were beaten and returned to the Occupied Territories, the fear exists that there is an unwritten policy to use violence and degradation to deter Palestinians from entering Israel without a permit.

On 18 November 1996, Israeli television's Channel One screened video footage of two Border Police officers beating, kicking, and abusing six Palestinian workers who had been caught within Israel without permits. Police and Border Police commanders sharply condemned the conduct, and government ministers also spoke out vehemently against the police officers behavior in the incident. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated at the time:

Carrying weapons requires compliance with the customary high level of morality found in the IDF, and the two Border Police officers shattered the IDF's customary norms. I will not accept and will not tolerate this... these persons have no place in our security branches... What happened was criminal and immoral. (*Yediot Aharonot*, 20 November 1996)

The Border Police commander, Major General Israel Sadan, did not attempt to hide behind the contention that the occurrence was "unusual." At a special meeting of the Knesset's Interior Committee, held on 20 November 1996, Sadan stated:

The incident in which the Border Police officers beat Palestinian workers is not unusual... This is not a solitary case in this unit. There are not only two rotten apples in this crate of fresh apples. (*Yediot Aharonot*, 21 November 1996)

Following the incident and in order to eradicate such behavior, the authorities made numerous declarations concerning the need for an information and education campaign and for changes in the manner in which the security forces, in general, and the Border Police, in particular, operate.

The current report reveals that, in spite of the condemnations and declarations, the authorities have done nothing to alter the conduct of security forces. Beatings, abuse, and degradation remain a common, almost routine occurrence when Border Police and Police officers deal with Palestinians. The majority of complaints about such treatment, like the majority of cases described in this report, involve Border Police.

B'Tselem's fieldworkers took the testimonies of twelve of the fourteen cases presented in this report. In the other two cases, Palestinians gave affidavits to HaMoked: Center for the Defence of the Individual.

All of the cases involve acts of brutality against the Palestinian victims. Most were punched and beaten, even in the head, with rifle butts and other objects for extended periods of time. The
beatings resulted in broken bones in four instances, and the loss of consciousness in two cases. In two cases, the security forces did not permit the injured victims to receive medical attention. The victims also describe the beating and abuse inflicted on dozens of other Palestinians by Border Police officers at checkpoints.

B'Tselem and HaMoked forwarded most of the testimonies presented in this report, and many others, to the authorities for their handling.

The testimonies are reproduced verbatim, except for minimal deletions intended to facilitate reading.

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Case 1

Date: 5 May 1997
Place: Bethlehem checkpoint
Offenders: Border Police
Persons injured: Khalil Ja’iwi and four others

Testimony of Khalil Yusuf ‘Alayan Ja’iwi, 30,
resident of Beit Jala, single

The testimony was given to Fuad Abu Hamed on 8 July 1997.

Then the red-haired police officer came up to me. He cursed at me and said, "Why are you hanging around here?" He slapped me hard, cursed at me some more, and punched me in the face.

On 5 May 1997, around ten o’clock at night, I returned home from my job at a restaurant in Jerusalem, where I work without a permit. I went around the Gilo checkpoint and walked towards Bethlehem. Two hundred and fifty meters from the checkpoint, in the direction of Bethlehem, a Border Police jeep was stopped with four Border Police officers alongside it. There also was a Peugeot with plates from the Occupied Territories. Four Palestinian men were standing in a line next to the police officers. The police officers checked the car with the plates from the Occupied Territories, and one officer checked the identity cards of the men.

When I approached, the officer who had checked the men's cards came up to me and asked for my identity card. I gave it to him. Then he requested my permit to enter Israel. I said, "I wasn't in Jerusalem. Why do I need a permit to enter Israel?" I was afraid to tell him the truth. I told him that I had been visiting a friend of mine in the Occupied Territories. He kept my identity card and asked me to stand aside, a few meters from the other men. It was dark and no cars passed. I do not know what the police officer said to the men. A few minutes later, he started to slap and kick them. Then he returned their cards and let them pass. I did not know any of the Palestinian men. The police officer was thin and had red hair, and was about 175 centimeters tall.

Then the red-haired police officer came up to me. He cursed me and said, "Why are you hanging around here?" He slapped me hard, cursed at me some more, and punched me in the face. I told him that I am sick and have a large scar on my head from an operation I had undergone at Hadassah Hospital a few years ago, and that I also have an eye disease. He ignored what I said and continued to slap and kick me. I yelled at him, and asked to speak with the commanding officer. He said, "I am the commanding officer," and ordered me to sit down. He assaulted me, kicking me all over my body. I couldn't withstand it anymore, and I grabbed his hand and pushed him away from me. The other three police officers came over and slapped and kicked me all over my body. The beating lasted about five minutes.

Suddenly I heard a voice call out on the radio transmitter. The police officers left, the red-headed officer threw my identity card at me, and they drove towards the checkpoint. I managed to see the license plate on the jeep - it was a red plate with the number 28-235.

My entire body hurt, and I couldn't move. I stayed there until a car from Bethlehem passed by. It
was heading for the checkpoint. I asked the driver to take me to the checkpoint, because I wanted to make a complaint. At the checkpoint, the police officers sat me down and told me they would call the commanding officer. They spoke with him on the transmitter. He said that he would be there within an hour. I sat there for an entire hour. Nobody treated my injuries. The commanding officer did not show up. Then I took a cab from the checkpoint to my home.

Early the next day, I went to the al-Hussein Hospital, in Beit Jala, where they examined me and gave me a medical report. I had bruises on the left side of my back, my eyes were black-and-blue, and my entire body hurt. Later on that day I went to the Palestinian DCO [District Coordination Office] and filed a complaint. On 8 July, I filed a complaint with the investigator Ya'akov, at the Gilo checkpoint, for the Department for the Investigation of Police. The investigator showed me pictures of Border Police officers, but I could not identify the police officer from those pictures. I think that if I saw him, I would recognize him. As a result of the incident, I stayed at home for a week. I couldn't leave the house because the pain was so bad.

Minister of Justice, Tzahi Hanegbi:

*No threat of terror or security exigency can justify the animal-like degradation and beastly maltreatment of those who committed no transgression or wrong.*

_Yedioth Aharonot, 29 November 1996_

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**Case 2**

_June 5, 1997_

**Date:** 5 May 1997  
**Place:** Bethlehem checkpoint  
**Offenders:** Border Police  
**Persons injured:** 'Issam al-Khatib and two others

_He hit me in the face with the stick, and struck my left eye. The stick broke. Then he began to slap me and kick me in the testicles._

Two days ago, at 8:50 p.m., I went with my brother Muhammad, 28, in a Peugeot 104. We were going to a public telephone near the Bethlehem side of the checkpoint, to call my sister in the United States. I used this phone because it takes a Telecard, and Bethlehem does not have a phone like that in working order.

When I finished the call, we started to go home. We had travelled some twenty meters when six Border Police officers suddenly appeared from the trees. They ordered us to stop. We stopped. One of them told us, "I bet you were in Jerusalem." I told them in Hebrew that we had only used the public telephone, and I showed him the Telecard. I saw the other officers holding two
Palestinians. One of the officers beat them. I spoke courteously, hoping they would let us go, because I was afraid they would also beat us. I said, "Happy Holiday, or have a good day." Then the officer told us to get out of the car. He had me stand aside and told my brother to leave. He drove off.

The Border Police officer took a stick and hit me. He told me to put out my hand according to his command: right hand - left hand - right hand - left hand. He hit me in the face with the stick, and struck my left eye. The stick broke. Then he began to slap and kick me in the testicles. I have ulcers, and was in great pain. I began to tremble. I told him, "Give me some water. I am dying." I was dazed and sat down on the ground. After about thirty seconds, another officer came with a water bottle. He shoved it into my mouth and told me to drink the whole thing or he would beat me.

After I drank the water, one of the policemen called to me and said, "Take your identity card and get out of here." They stopped a passing car and demanded the driver to take me to Bethlehem. The driver took me.

I went to the DCO immediately so they could investigate the incident before the patrol left. I gave them the number of the jeep (red plate with license number 28-235). At first, I went into the Palestinian DCO and reported to them. An Israeli officer, who introduced himself as "Amal," was there. After about ten minutes, they forwarded me to the Israeli side to give a statement. After I gave a statement, the Israelis asked me to get into a jeep to try to locate the patrol. That was around 11 o'clock, or almost midnight. We didn't find the patrol. Then I walked to the government hospital in Beit Jala, where I underwent blood tests and X-rays. They bandaged the wounds to my hands and eye.

Nobody from the DCO has contacted me since then, and I do not know if the case is being investigated.

Case 3

Date: 29 May 1997
Place: Sur Baher village
Offenders: Border Police
Person injured: Ra'ed 'Attun

Testimony of Ra'ed Muhammad Ahmad 'Attun, 22, resident of Sur Baher, single

The testimony was given to Fuad Abu Hamed on 3 June 1997.

When we reached the Beit Sahur checkpoint, he ordered me to lie down on the floor of the auto. I refused. He beat me to force me to lie down on the floor. I told him, "Are you taking me to the Occupied Territories, to some desolate location?" I was frightened, and continued to resist lying down, but he took the radio transmitter and gave me a sharp blow to the head with it. My head started to bleed.
Last Friday, 29 May, I was doing some plumbing work in one of the homes in the village, some three hundred meters from my house. I finished at five o'clock and started to walk home. After walking some 150 meters, when I was next to the cemetery, I saw a Border Police vehicle coming from the Sur Baher-Bethlehem road. In the vehicle were three Border Police officers and one person dressed in civilian clothes. The policemen were in the front, and the other person sat in the rear. The vehicle stopped alongside me. The driver asked for my identity card. I took it out and started to give it to him when I realized that I had money in it. I told him that I want to take out the money. I took the money out and then gave the card to the driver.

The policeman sitting next to the driver asked me to go over to him, to his side of the vehicle. He said something like, "You talk pretty fancy considering who you are." He ordered me to get into the vehicle. I refused. I told him that I had not done anything, and that I was not getting into the van. I demanded that he call for the commanding officer. The two policemen who sat next to the driver got out and forced me to get in. The officer who had initially sat next to the window took my identity card from the driver. He sat next to me, and the other sat in the front.

As we moved, the one next to me derided me, saying, "You think you're a man? Pretty soon we'll see," and hit me in the right arm, with which I tried to defend myself. That hurt a lot.

As for descriptions of them, the driver was relatively tall, with short, black hair. The policeman who sat next to me was short and had a dark complexion. He said his name is Nimrod. The one who sat in the front in the middle was tall like the driver, and had short hair. Meir Ben-Baruch was written on his tag. The man dressed in civilian clothes was wearing a white shirt and black pants.

After we travelled about half a kilometer, the driver stopped near the soccer field of Umm Tuba village. Nimrod, who sat next to me, whispered to the driver and the other police officer sitting in the front. Then we drove toward Beit Sahur. I said nothing from the time I got into the van. The man in civilian clothes, who was in the back with me, did not intervene at all. The police officer named Ben-Baruch, who was sitting next to the driver and had not done anything up to this time, called on the radio transmitter to get details on me. He did not receive a response. Nimrod asked me I had ever been arrested. I told him that I had been. He asked me what for, and whether it had been for a security offense. I was afraid to say yes, so I told him it was due to an interfamily squabble in the village. Then they informed him that I had been a security detainee.

Nimrod started to beat me on my right arm harder than before, using the same method. When we reached the Beit Sahur checkpoint, he ordered me to lie down on the floor of the auto. I refused. He beat me to force me to lie down on the floor. I told him, "Are you taking me to the Occupied Territories, to some desolate location?" I was frightened, and continued to resist lying down, but he took the radio transmitter and gave me a sharp blow to the head with it, causing my head to bleed.

I think that the soldiers at the checkpoint did not discern what was happening in the van. The driver turned the van around a couple of meters before the checkpoint and started back because I refused to lie down.

At the Gilo intersection, next to the traffic lights, the man in civilian clothes got out. Nimrod
said goodbye to him, but did not call him by name. Then we went towards Beit Safafa-Tantur. They entered via the main road, and then drove onto a side, dirt road. He [Nimrod] took me out of the van, and everybody got out.

I sat on a boulder, and the driver and Ben-Baruch sat on boulders near me, guarding me. Nimrod walked away and called someone by cellular phone. He spoke for some five minutes, returned, and immediately slapped me hard in the face. He searched my body violently, and ordered me to take off my shoes and socks and to remove everything from my pockets. I removed a tape measure, wallet, and toilet paper. Ben-Baruch held onto them. I was facing the dirt wall [that marks the boundary of the road. F.A.H.]. Someone kicked me in the back and then in the right leg. I turned and saw that it was Nimrod. He kicked me all over my body. I told him that I want him to identify himself, and that I was going to file a complaint. Then he stopped beating me and spoke with the one who had been driving. They ordered me to move further away from the van and returned my things to me. Then they got into the van and drove away, moving from one side to the other so that I couldn't catch the license number. My head was still bleeding, and I was hurting all over.

Throughout the incident, Nimrod cursed at me, using foul and repulsive language.

I walked to the shop at the main road of Beit Safafa, and called my family from there. They came and took me to the Leumit Health Clinic in Sur Baher, where they referred me to Hadassah Hospital, Ein Kerem. I was treated and remained there until 3:00 a.m.

On 1 June, I filed a complaint with the Department for the Investigation of Police. I told them that I am willing and able to identify those involved. When I left the Department's office, I walked to take a bus from the Damascus Gate, where I saw, at 2:30 p.m. exactly, the police van with license number 32-223, in which Ben-Baruch was seated. He was the one sitting next to the driver when they took me.
Case 4

Date: 30 June 1997
Place: Gilo checkpoint
Offenders: Border Police
Person injured: Milad Kidan

From the affidavit of Milad George Jabrah Kidan, 51, resident of Jerusalem, married with one child

The affidavit was given to attorney Hala Khouri, of HaMoked, on 4 July 1997.

Three Border Police officers surrounded me - the same two and another who had joined them. They beat me all over my body, using their hands and rifles. When I fell to the ground from the force of the blows, they kicked me all over, including a sharp blow to the head.

On 30 June, after midnight of the 29th, my wife, brother, son, sister Violet and I were on our way to our home in Jerusalem from a wedding in Bethlehem. We were in my son George's car, a white, 1976 BMW.

There was a long line when we reached the Gilo checkpoint in Bethlehem. George was driving and he honked his horn for some reason. One of the Border Police officers at the checkpoint came to the car, put his hand into where the driver was seated and honked the horn once. Apparently, he wanted to test the sound of the horn that he had heard a few seconds earlier.

The policeman, who was short and had three stripes on his shoulder, ordered my son in Hebrew to stop on the right side, where the checkpoint is. George proceeded forward until he reached the checkpoint and stopped on the right side. The same policeman came to George's window and pointed his weapon at my son so that it was almost touching him, and said to him, "You bastard, you think you are at some Palestinian checkpoint, with Palestinian police?"

My son told the police officer not to curse and insult him, and not to point his weapon at him. Then the policeman opened George's door and removed him from the car. The same policeman came to me, pointed his weapon at me and ordered me in Hebrew not to get out of the car. In spite of what he said, I got out and told the policeman in Arabic, "You want to shoot me, shoot me. I didn't do anything." Then I raised my hands and lowered them.

The policeman pushed me backwards with his hand so hard that I fell to the ground. When I got back onto my feet, I saw another policeman arrive. He was taller and had a lighter complexion. Then I noticed that my wife and sister had gotten out of the car and were coming towards me. I also saw George encircled by four Border Police officers, who were trying to handcuff him.

I tried to walk to George, but two policemen did not let me. They beat me in my back and hands with their hands and rifles. They also pushed me backwards. I managed to get away from them, and turned to where my son was standing.
While the two Border Police officers were beating me, they cursed at me. Also, when my wife and sister came towards me and tried to separate the police officers from me and defend me, the two police officers pushed them brutally to the ground.

Three Border Police officers surrounded me - the same two and another who had joined them. They beat me all over my body, using their hands and rifles. When I fell to the ground from the force of the blows, they kicked me all over, including a sharp blow to the head. I tried to defend myself with my hands. They continued to beat and curse me. They also tried to handcuff me, and I resisted. They beat me for around ten minutes, during which I cried out in pain. At some point, they pushed me towards one of the plastic barrels that constitute a barrier. The barrel turned over, and I fell again to the ground.

Then another Border Police officer joined those who were beating me, and the four of them tried to handcuff me. They ultimately succeeded in cuffing my left hand, and were trying to do the same with the right. They pushed my left hand brutally and painfully behind my back, and handcuffed my right hand with the other clip of the handcuffs.

Then they dragged me to the checkpoint station. I sat on a bench there since I couldn't stand any longer because of the beatings and the pain. While I was sitting there, I saw my wife and sister standing some distance in front of me. Border Police officers handcuffed one of my son's hands to a bench.

After about fifteen minutes, I started to feel terrible pain in my left hand, and I started to shout in pain, and requested that they remove the handcuff from my left hand. They refused. My wife also requested them to remove the handcuff from my left hand, but that, too, was in vain.

The pain got worse, and I cried out louder. I cried and shouted. Then one of the Border Police officers came up to me and asked, "You are a man. Why are you crying?" About half an hour later, a blue Police vehicle with two police officers in blue uniforms arrived at the checkpoint. I called to one of them as they got out of the vehicle, asking him to order the Border Police officers to remove the handcuffs, but he did not respond to my call. Only after I begged, cried, and shouted did one of the Border Police officers remove the handcuffs.

The handcuff that was around my left wrist had entered some one-half centimeter into my wrist, mostly because the cuff was too tightly fastened. The pain in my left hand worsened after they removed the handcuffs, and my wrist began to swell. I requested the Border Police officers to call an ambulance for me. The policeman in blue told me that an ambulance would arrive within five minutes.

Thirty minutes passed, but no ambulance appeared. The pain worsened. I begged the police officer in blue to call the ambulance. He did not answer, but rather left in the Police vehicle with the other policeman in blue uniform. I continued to shout and cry out in pain. One of the Border Police officers realized how much pain I was in and brought me some ice. I put the ice cubes in a handkerchief and pressed them to my left wrist. The ice helped a bit.

At no point did the Border Police ask for my identity card. I was later informed that, after they beat me, my wife showed them my identity card, which had been in my jacket she was carrying.

We had gotten to the checkpoint at about 1:00-1:15 a.m., and at about 3:30, the Border Police
put my son and me into their jeep. George's hands were cuffed. They took us to the South Police Station [Jerusalem]. As we drove, I asked the police officers who were sitting in the back with George and me if they could take me to the hospital first. They responded that we are going to the Police station first, and that I would be taken [later] to the hospital.

The two police officers who got into the rear of the jeep with us were the same two who had beaten me at the checkpoint. They did not tell my son or me the reason we were being arrested.

At 5:00 a.m., my son, wife, and sister, who had joined us at the Police station, returned to Jerusalem, to Hanevi'im Street, where I live. From there, my son, wife, and I went to Makassed Hospital, in [East] Jerusalem. The physician there examined my hand, gave me a shot and other medical treatment, and X-rays were taken. The hand was not broken. The physician bandaged my hand, gave me a medication to lessen the pain, and told me to go home.

I did not go to work that day because of the pain. The next day, I went to HaMoked to complain about the incident. Attorney Hala Khouri referred me first to the Department for the Investigation of Police. I went to their offices in Givat Shaul [Jerusalem] the following day and filed a complaint. An investigator named Shlomo Ezra took my testimony.

I am able to identify positively the Border Police officer who threatened me with his weapon at the beginning of the incident and beat me.

Case 5

**Date:** 10 July 1997

**Place:** Tantur junction (near Beit Safafa)

**Offenders:** Border Police

**Person injured:** Ahmad Musa

**Testimony of Ahmad Idris Saleh Musa, aged 21, resident of al-Khader, Bethlehem District, single**

The testimony was given to Fuad Abu Hamed on 14 July 1997.

A few police officers got out of the car. One of them came towards me. He didn't say anything and didn't request a permit or identity card. He slapped me on the head and kicked me hard in the thigh. I immediately felt something had happened to my leg.

On 10 July, around 5:40 in the morning, I left my house to go to Neve Ya'akov, where I work. I avoid the Gilo checkpoint, going through Tantur instead. The Arab contractor from East Jerusalem, with whom I work, drives me to Neve Ya'akov. Two cousins of mine came with me from the village. They work with me, too. I work without a permit. I didn't apply for one because I know that, at my age, they would not issue me a permit.

Around 6:20, I reached the Tantur junction. I climbed over the wall that surrounds the Tantur monastery and walked toward the main road. Lots of people were waiting on the main road, at a
distance of some 250 meters from the checkpoint, for vehicles that transport them to Jerusalem. Among them were others who, like me, avoided the checkpoint by going through Tantur.

Suddenly a Ford van came from the direction of the checkpoint. There were lots of police inside, seven or more, I think. I do not know the license number of the vehicle.

The vehicle moved fast, and the side door opened. My two cousins and I were waiting for the contractor. A few police officers got out of the car. One of them came towards me. He didn't say anything, didn't request a permit or identity card. He slapped me on the head and kicked me hard in the thigh. I immediately felt something had happened to my leg. On one leg, I ran away from him towards the shoulder of the road, where there is a descent. The policeman who had beaten me chased me and pushed me, causing me to fall to the ground. He went back to the vehicle, where the other police officers were, and they drove off towards Jerusalem. I do not know what the other police officers were doing up top, on the road - I didn't pay attention.

The one who beat me was about 170 centimeters tall, had a light complexion, was somewhat thin, and had short hair and a beard. He was about 25-29 years old. If I would see him again, I think I could identify him. I didn't see any weapon or radio transmitter on him. He was wearing the uniform of the Border Police.

Then my two cousins reappeared, picked me up and took me to Makassed Hospital, where I was examined and X-rays were taken. They found that my leg had been broken. A physician cut my pants and put a cast on my leg. I was released the next day at 3:00 p.m.

I subsequently filed a complaint with the Palestinian DCO at Beit Jala.

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Attorney Eran Shender, head of the Department for the Investigation of Police, of the Department of Justice, at a meeting of the Knesset's Interior Affairs Committee, held on 20 November 1996:

*We receive numerous complaints of assault and improper use of force, maltreatment, and degradation from the dividing line [between Israel and the Occupied Territories] and from the Jerusalem district. We are considering various types of punishments and more severe penalties.*

*Ma'ariv*, 21 November 1996
Case 6

Date: 10 July 1997
Place: The tunnel road
Offenders: Border Police
Person injured: Muhammad Salah

Testimony of Muhammad Ali Muhammad Salah, aged 21, resident of al-Khader, Bethlehem District, single

The testimony was given to Fuad Abu Hamed on 21 July 1997.

They placed me in the trailer. Then they slapped and kicked me all over my entire body. The red-headed policeman hit me with his rifle butt, mostly in my head and face, and my head was bleeding profusely. Then they put me in the jeep and again made me put my head between my legs. Each time I raised my head, the policeman sitting next to me slapped me.

My nose was broken, and I had a wound under my eye that required five stitches. My ear also was wounded as a result of the blows, and the wound led to a severe ear infection. My head, legs, and the rest of my body were bruised from the blows I received from the rifle butt.

For the past sixteen months, I have been working for an East Jerusalem contractor on a building in the Givat Shaul neighborhood of Jerusalem. I enter Jerusalem without a permit. I applied once for a permit, but the application was rejected.

On 10 July, at 6:00 a.m., I left my village with six others from the village who work with me. We headed toward the tunnel checkpoint. This is the way we always go, and the contractor waits for us on the other side of the checkpoint. We got out of the car before reaching the checkpoint, went around the checkpoint, got into the contractor's car, and went to work.

We finished work in Givat Shaul around 3:30 p.m., and the contractor took us back to the tunnel road. There were ten of us in the car, not counting the contractor. Four are from Bethlehem and six from al-Khader. We reached the tunnel road around 4:15.

The vehicle we were in, a Ford van, stopped about half a kilometer before the tunnel checkpoint, at a place where we get out every day. We started to get out of the vehicle. Suddenly a Border Police jeep coming from Jerusalem pulled up by us. Two police officers were inside. The jeep stopped opposite our car, and the policemen got out. All the workers, except for two others and me, fled. One of them came towards me and demanded my identity card. He was reddish in complexion, about 180 centimeters tall, and thin. He did not have a mustache or beard, and he wore sunglasses. He was carrying an M-16 rifle, and had a pistol and radio transmitter. He also demanded our permits, and we told him that we do not have any. He got into the jeep and called somebody on the radio transmitter.

The second police officer was shorter, had a dark complexion, was average weight, and also had an M-16 rifle. He guarded us until the other police officer returned from the jeep after a couple
of minutes. They gave my two friends their identity cards and told them to leave. The second police officer grabbed my arm and ordered me to get into the jeep. I got in.

The short, dark-skinned policeman sat in the rear next to me. The redhead drove. The two of them started to curse at me. The one sitting next to me did not let me raise my head, but I knew they were going toward the tunnel checkpoint. When we reached the checkpoint, they took me out and put me in a trailer. Lots of soldiers were at the checkpoint, but they did not intervene. No soldier was inside the room. Soldiers use the trailer, which was situated in the middle of the road, to observe the vehicles.

Inside the trailer, the same two Border Police officers assaulted and beat me. They didn't beat me at the same time, but rather one after the other. One looked outside while the other hit me. They did that for about ten minutes. They put me in the trailer. Then they slapped and kicked me all over my entire body. The red-headed policeman hit me with his rifle butt, mostly in my head and face, and my head was bleeding profusely. Then they put me in the jeep and again made me put my head between my legs. Each time I raised my head, the policeman sitting next to me slapped me. They drove to another checkpoint, Walaja checkpoint, which is situated on the old Bethlehem bypass road. There was a jeep with soldiers at that checkpoint. The Border Police officers cursed and beat me as they took me out of the jeep when we got near the checkpoint. The soldiers in the other jeep looked at me, laughed, and did nothing.

They took me into a trailer again, and this time the two of them assaulted me at the same time. For about five minutes, they beat and kicked me all over my entire body, as if they were practicing their karate. They took me outside and ordered me to stand on the side of the road. Later, the redhead slapped me hard about ten times. Then the two of them tried to shove me down into some wadi [nearby is a long slope leading down into a wadi. F.A.H.]. I resisted and fled. I began to descend into the wadi. I reached the bottom and stayed there for about thirty minutes. I couldn't move.

Then I moved slowly from field to field until I reached Walaja village. From there, a woman took me home in her car. Then I was taken to al-Hussein Hospital, in Beit Jala, arriving around 5:30. The physicians examined and X-rayed me. My nose was broken, and I had a wound under my eye that required five stitches. My ear also was wounded as a result of the blows, and the wound led to a severe ear infection. My head, legs, and the rest of my body were bruised from the blows I had received from the rifle butt.

The next day, I filed a complaint with the Palestinian DCO. I am still in pain, and have not yet returned to work. I have never been arrested.
From the affidavit of Wail 'Abd al-Fattah 'Awad a-Sharif, 25, resident of al-'Ayzariyah, single

The affidavit was given to attorney Hala Khouri, of HaMoked, on 24 July 1997.

While I was standing there getting beaten, a fourth Border Police officer joined in, and hit me in the head with his rifle butt. I felt extremely weak and tired. They knocked me to the ground. The short, dark-skinned policeman kicked me in the back and head several times, causing me to vomit.

The men with me stood there and watched me. The first Border Police officer yelled at them, "You bastards, sit down. I'll screw the bunch of you. Keep your mouths shut and God help you if he gets away." He was talking about me. I was on the ground, and he kicked me all over my body and then real hard in the head. After that, I lost consciousness.

On 14 July, around seven o'clock in the evening, I was on my way home from Jerusalem. I was in a taxi with Israeli license plates, and my good friend Anwar Ahmad Jawabri, who also lives in 'Ayzariyah, was with me.

When we got to the Ras el-Ammud checkpoint, a Border Police officer ordered the taxi to stop and asked for the identity card of all the passengers. The policeman was about twenty-five years old, tall, had a light complexion, was very thin, and had light-colored - greenish blue - eyes.

I did not have my identity card with me, but I had my birth certificate, which I carried because I thought that I had lost my identity card a week earlier, on the day I was engaged to be married. I gave the birth certificate to the policeman and told him my identity card number.

The same policeman subsequently told the three passengers who had West Bank identity cards, which included my friend Anwar and me, to get out of the taxi. "Get out of the car, you bastards from the Territories," he said. I asked him not to curse at us, and that we would get out without his curses. "Son of a bitch, you and him stand over there," he responded.

He told us to stand facing the fence of the house situated opposite the checkpoint, to the left of which, in the direction of Jerusalem, is a health clinic. The same policeman ordered other men from the Occupied Territories who had reached the checkpoint in various vehicles to get out and join us. He slapped the faces of the children he stopped, and told them, "Sons of a bitch, go home."

The same policeman took seven of us, including Anwar, a five-year-old child who stayed close
to his uncle, and me. He ordered us to stand next to the wall alongside the metal structure used as a station for the Border Police officers at the checkpoint. We crossed to the other side of the checkpoint and joined another four or five men from the West Bank. Our number ultimately rose to more than twenty.

He told us to stand facing the wall, and ordered another Border Police officer to make sure we didn't run away. The second policeman was short, dark, thin, and had brown eyes.

Then the first policeman returned and ordered us to get on our knees in a line, our hands touching the wall and heads bent over. The policeman spoke to us in Hebrew, "God help you if any of you take your hands off the wall. Anyone who does will learn something from me." We stayed in that position for about fifteen to twenty minutes. All of us were tired, so we stood up. The two policemen shouted at us to get back into the same position on the ground. Some of the others said they didn't have the strength to do it any longer.

Then the two policemen forced them, one after the other, to get down. When a sixteen-year-old youth told them he couldn't, they took him into the metal structure and beat him. I saw them kick him all over his body and punch him in the stomach. Everybody heard the youth cry out in pain. A third Border Police officer - heavyset, tall, dark - appeared and ordered the youth to shut up and stop shouting.

Ten minutes later, the first policeman ordered me to bend my head further down. I told him that I couldn't, and that he should treat me in a more humane manner, that I am a person just like him, and not an animal. Then he said, "You, with the big mouth, come with me." He grabbed me by the shirt, lifted me off the ground, and cursed my mother and me.

I asked him not to curse me, and told him that, by law, he was forbidden to treat me that way, and that there are courts. I also told him that I come from an educated family, and that I understand very well what was happening, and all he had to do was give me a bit of time to rest, and I would get back into the position. He said, "I'll do what I want, and no law or lawyer, or your father, or nothing will stop me." Then he bashed me in the head with his head.

I asked him not to hit me, and then he punched my shoulder real hard. I tried to use my hands to protect my head from his blows. He punched me again in the eye, and then he hit me with another punch. I tried to protect my face all the time. Then the short, dark-skinned policeman joined in. They tried to knock me to the ground. They did not succeed at first, but then the third policeman - the one who is dark and tall - came and grabbed me by the neck from behind and tried to knock me down. Then the first policeman beat me all over, including punches to the head. The two others beat me in the arms and legs.

While I was standing there getting beaten, a fourth Border Police officer joined in, and hit me in the head with his rifle butt. I felt extremely weak and tired. They knocked me to the ground. The short, dark-skinned policeman kicked me in the back and head several times, causing me to vomit. Then the first policeman drew his weapon and came at me, telling the other policeman, "Leave me alone, I want to shoot him." Then the tall, dark policeman told him, "Let him be. He is about to pass out."

The first policeman, the one with the light complexion, kicked me hard and said, "If he wasn't about to pass out, I would shoot him." Then the short, dark one tried to calm the first one down,
saying that, "If he hadn't been beaten enough, like he was, I would shoot him too."

Then I heard the one with the light complexion speak into the radio transmitter. He reported that there was one who, when being body searched, had punched him, and that the same policeman and the other policemen had everything under control. He then requested that a Police van be sent.

The Border Police at the checkpoint did not search me or any of the others, except for my friend Anwar.

While I was on the ground in the middle of the road, I heard the first policeman tell the other Border Police that if anyone asks what happened or investigates the incident, they should say that I punched him while I was being searched.

The men with me stood there and watched me. The first Border Police officer yelled at them, "You bastards, sit down. I'll screw the bunch of you. Keep your mouths shut and God help you if he gets away." He was talking about me. I was on the ground, and he kicked me all over my body and then real hard in the head. After that, I lost consciousness.

Afterwards, I learned from the other Palestinians who had been held with me and from others who were present when I was beaten - a man named Dandis, the shopkeeper across from the checkpoint, the physician whose clinic is situated facing the checkpoint, and my friend Anwar - that the Border Police officers had dragged me from the road, put me alongside the metal building, and handcuffed my hands behind me with plastic handcuffs. They beat me all over my body while they dragged me, even though I was unconscious.

I lay there on the ground unconscious for about twenty-five minutes. They did not let anyone approach or help me. Dandis, who is from Jerusalem, tried to help me, but they didn't let him, nor did they let the physician from the clinic help me.

Anwar managed to call an ambulance from Makassed Hospital, in [East] Jerusalem, for me. When the ambulance arrived, my friend Anwar later told me, the Border Police officers tried to prevent me from getting in. Finally, the ambulance personnel put me and the sixteen-year old youth, who had been beaten in the metal building, into the ambulance and took us to Makassed Hospital.

When I arrived at the hospital, they put me on a respirator, and I subsequently regained consciousness. I was hospitalized for several hours, during which they X-rayed my neck, head, shoulder, arm, and back, and gave me medication to lessen the terrible pain I had.

My entire body was swollen and black-and-blue from the blows. I vomited the first few days after the incident, and I still get severe headaches. The area around my waist and my back still hurt a lot. My left hand swelled, and I can't lift anything with it. I have not worked since the incident. I still receive massages and treatment for my back.

I earn an average of NIS 4,000 - NIS 6000 per month. I can identify the four Border Police officers who beat me.
Is this the way to treat a person?

Border Police and Police officers "handling" of 'Azzam Marakah, who filmed Border Police abusing Palestinians at the a-Ram checkpoint

In October 1996, 'Azzam Marakah videotaped the Border Police officers beating and abusing Palestinians at the a-Ram checkpoint. Israeli television broadcast this videotape footage, which led to the public furor mentioned in this report's introduction.

After the broadcast, Border Police, Police, and Jerusalem Municipality inspectors harassed Marakah and his two brothers. As far as B'Tselem is aware, neither he nor his brothers had been previously involved in criminal or "security" offenses, and had never been arrested prior to the broadcast.

On 28 November, inspectors and Border Police officers assaulted 'Azzam's brother Husam. When 'Azzam went to defend his brother, he too was beaten and then arrested. He was charged with interfering with the inspectors and police officers in the course of their duties.

On 19 December, 'Azzam's brother Ghasan was arrested for allegedly pushing a municipal inspector. When 'Azzam attempted to help his brother, he was arrested. In 'Azzam's testimony, given to Najib Abu Rokaya, of B'Tselem, on 21 December, 'Azzam stated, in part, the following:

One policeman took me and said I was going to be searched. He put me in a room and told me to undress. I took off my shoes, socks, shirt, and pants. Then he said, "Take off your underpants." I said, "Why do I have to take my underpants off?" He said, "You filmed the faces of Border Policemen, and we are going to film your ass, to see how pretty it is, and whether you have balls." I argued with him, and he threatened to throw me into a cell and break my bones. I took off my underwear to save myself the suffering, and stood there totally naked. Four or five policemen came into the room while I was naked and laughed at me.

On 1 January 1997, B'Tselem complained about the incident to the Inspector General of the Police, Commissioner Asaf Hefetz. Copies were sent to the Minister for Public Security and the Border Police Commander. B'Tselem did not receive a reply. However, the harassment and arrests of 'Azzam and his brothers ceased.
Case 8

Date: 20 July 1997
Place: Refuse dump near Netanya
Offenders: Israel Police Force officers
Person injured: 'Arsan Abu Mazen

Testimony of 'Arsan Yusuf 'Ali Abu Mazen, aged 21, resident of Beta al-Fuqa, Nablus District, single

The testimony was given to Najib Abu Rokaya on 23 July 1997.

They moved me to a place near some refuse dump, which was full of junk and wrecked cars. They took me out of the car and beat me all over my body. They beat me with their hands and feet for some twenty minutes.

On 20 July I left my village around 3:45 a.m., going in the direction of Netanya. I was a passenger in a white car with yellow [Israeli] license plates, and we travelled via Nablus and Tulkarm and crossed the Tulkarm-Taybeh checkpoint. I reached the Netanya junction on the Haifa-Tel Aviv road, and I stood there with seven workers, all of us from Beta.

At about 5:50, a Police jeep pulled up from the Netanya industrial area and stopped alongside us. Two persons were in the jeep, one dressed in the blue police uniform without any officers stripes, and the other, the driver, wore a dark blue T-shirt. They demanded our identity cards. One of them told me, "Stand by the window on the other side of the jeep." They had me get into the jeep, and they drove along a dirt road. On the way, the one in uniform hit me in the neck and ordered me to lie on the floor of the jeep. Along the way, they radioed my name in and were told in reply that I had been in the Palestinian Police navy.

They moved me to a place near some refuse dump, which was full of junk and wrecked cars. They took me out of the car and beat me all over my body. They beat me with their hands and feet for some twenty minutes. They said, "Why are you looking for work among us? The salary you got from the Palestinian Police wasn't good enough for you?" They asked if I had been involved, while I was with the Palestinian Police, in the events that took place in September near Joseph's Tomb. I told them that I hadn't been involved, that I was on vacation at the time, and that I had resigned from the Palestinian Police two months ago, on 20 May.

After they beat me, the policemen ordered me to run in front of the jeep back to the junction from which they had taken me. They chased me with the jeep and got so close that they hit me from behind and knocked me down twice. I was frightened that they would run me over. I ran along the shoulder of the road, among the thorns. When I reached the intersection, they treated me normally and didn't bother me because there were lots of people and cars were passing by. They gave me back my identity card and put me into a white van. I think the driver was an Israeli Arab. They ordered him to take me to the Tulkarm-Taybeh checkpoint. The police jeep followed the vehicle I was in as far as the checkpoint. When I got out and crossed the checkpoint, the jeep left.

From Tulkarm, I went to the hospital in Nablus, where I was examined and released. I filed a
complaint with the Palestinian Police in Nablus. I am certain that I could identify the policemen in a line-up.

**Case 9**

**Date:** 21 July 1997  
**Place:** Gilo checkpoint  
**Offenders:** Border Police officers  
**Person injured:** Jamal Sukkar

Testimony of Jamal 'Ali Mahmud Sukkar, 26, resident of Deheisheh refugee camp, Bethlehem District, single

The testimony was given to Fuad Abu Hamed on 21 July 1997.

*He immediately began to beat me, not asking me anything about an identity card or permit. He slapped and kicked me. He kicked me mostly in the right leg. It lasted for about fifteen minutes.*

*At the hospital, they cleaned the blood off me, and gave me first-aid. Then they took X-rays and found my right ankle was fractured. They put my leg in a cast.*

For a month, I have been working for a contractor as a painter in Neve Ya'akov. I do not have a permit to enter Israel. I applied three times, but each application was rejected.

Around six in the morning on 21 July, I went around the Gilo checkpoint. I do that everyday so that I can get to Musrara [a neighborhood in Jerusalem], where the contractor picks me up.

I went to the main road behind the Gilo checkpoint. A few meters from the checkpoint, towards Jerusalem, there was a Police van to handle the traffic. Nobody paid any attention to the van, and lots of workers without permits passed by on their way to work. I stood there waiting for a ride to Jerusalem. After about ten minutes, a Border Police jeep pulled up from the direction of Gilo. I was on the other side of the road. The other workers and I ran into the wadi. The four or five police in the jeep got out and chased us. Suddenly I saw a policeman two meters from me. I tried to get away, but failed.

The policeman caught me. He had a very dark complexion, and was about 170 centimeters tall and thin, with dark hair and eyes. He had an M-16 rifle with him. He immediately began to beat me, not asking me anything about an identity card or permit. He slapped and kicked me. He kicked me mostly in the right leg. It lasted for about fifteen minutes. At the same time, the other police officers chased the other workers.

Then he pushed me down a sharp and stony slope. I fell several meters down the side, and flipped over several times. I couldn't stop until my head hit a rock. When I fell, I injured my nose, ear, left shoulder, and left leg. [I saw the bruises and wounds to which Sukkar referred. F.A.H.] Then I tried to get up. The policeman threw a large stone at me, but he missed. He
started to fire tear gas at the other workers. The other policemen also fired tear gas.

I tried to walk but couldn't. Some workers picked me up and took me to a warehouse of the Bethlehem Municipality, which is near the checkpoint. Someone there called an ambulance, which took me to al-Hussein Hospital, in Beit Jala. At the hospital, they cleaned the blood off me, and gave me first-aid. Then they took X-rays and found my right ankle was broken. They put my leg in a cast. I stayed at the hospital until 11:00 in the morning. Officials from the [Palestinian] DCO came to the hospital, and I gave them my testimony.

Case 10

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Testimony of Anas Muhammad Fannun, 19, resident of Nahalin, Bethlehem District, single

The testimony was given to Fuad Abu Hamed on 23 July 1997.

After an hour or so, they let us go. One of the Border Police officers had the identity cards and called the men one after the other. He cursed them, kicked them, gave them their identity card, and then let them go.

He ordered me to lean my head on the wall of the military bunker and to put my hands on my head. I thought he wanted to search me. He punched me hard in the back. I didn't say anything, and he continued to punch me in the same place. I turned around and asked him why he was punching me. He punched me hard in the abdomen. That hurt a lot because it hit my stomach. I bent over in pain, and he hit me hard in the back with his hand.

I work as an independent construction worker in the Jerusalem area. Over the past six months, I have worked in various locations. The last work I did was in Talpiot [a Jerusalem neighborhood].

Two days ago, I left my house around 7:00 a.m. Around eight o'clock, I went around the [Gilo] checkpoint via Tantur, just like I do every day. My cousin Bassem was with me. I do not have a permit to enter Israel. I applied for a permit twice, and each time it was rejected. I received an entry permit a few times for medical treatment, but not for work.

After we went around the checkpoint, we went to the main road, about one hundred meters after the checkpoint. A Border Police jeep was moving from the direction of the checkpoint towards Jerusalem. We started to walk along the Tantur wall. The jeep, whose number I couldn't read, turned around at the Gilo intersection and came towards us.
It stopped alongside us. There were three Border Police officers inside, two in the front and one in the back. The one sitting next to the driver ordered us to give him our identity cards and to walk to the checkpoint. When we got there, Border Police officers ordered us to sit on the ground with our head down and our bodies turned toward an asbestos wall. The jeep had arrived before us, and the policeman in it had given our identity cards to one of the Border Police officers there, and left. When we reached the checkpoint, there were more than thirty men there.

For more than an hour we all sat in the sun, our heads bent over. From time to time, soldiers came by and cursed us and said things like, "Bastard, I'll bust your head, or your hands."

After an hour or so, they let us go. One of the Border Police officers had the identity cards and called the men one after the other. He cursed them, kicked them, gave them their identity card, and then let them go. My cousin was let go in this way.

Then the soldier said, "The names I am going to read now will stay at the checkpoint." My name was among the ones read. All of us who had to stay were under twenty years old. The policeman who called our names, and cursed and beat us was about 175 centimeters tall, average weight, had a dark complexion and short hair. He was wearing glasses and had a rifle and pistol. I don't know his name. Nobody called him by name. He apparently was in charge of the checkpoint, because all the soldiers there turned to him for orders.

Of those who had to stay, I was the first he called to come to him. He called my name and I answered, "Yes." He said, "Come here, fool." He began to curse at me. I told him that I was on my way to work. He ordered me to lean my head on the wall of the military bunker and to put my hands on my head. I thought he wanted to search me. He punched me hard in the back. I didn't say anything, and he continued to punch me in the same place. I turned around and asked him why he was punching me. He punched me hard in the abdomen. That hurt a lot because it hit my stomach. I bent over in pain, and he hit me hard in the back with his hand. He grabbed me, stood me up and ordered me to lean against the bunker again. He kicked my legs apart and hit me real hard in the lower part of my back with his hand. I turned around again, and he started to beat me all over my body, mostly my left shoulder and genitals. Then he started to pound my hand. He said, "I'll break your hand so that you won't come back another time." He spoke to me in Arabic. My hand hurt a lot - I thought it was broken. My stomach also started to hurt from the blows. Each time I bent over from pain he pulled me up by my hair. He started to beat me at 9:20, and it lasted for twenty-five minutes. I know because I looked at a watch.

Afterwards, he gave me back my identity card and punched me real hard in the back. I felt as if I couldn't breathe. I started to walk towards Bethlehem. My cousin, who had waited for me, and other men there lifted me up and took me to the hospital.

I was at the hospital until 12:30. They examined me. Nothing was broken, but I had bruises on my back, shoulder, and hand, and pain all over. That same day, I gave a testimony to persons from the Palestinian DCO, who had come to the hospital. They also took the original medical report I had received.

I have been resting at home for a week because I can't move my hand and shoulder. I intend to go back to work when I feel better.

I can easily identify the policeman who beat me.
Case 11

**Date:** 21 July 1997  
**Place:** Gilo checkpoint  
**Offenders:** Border Police officers  
**Persons injured:** Bilal Abu ‘Ayyash and two others

**Testimony of Bilal Muhammad Musa Abu ‘Ayyash, 21,**  
resident of Beit Umar, Hebron District, single

The testimony was given to Najib Abu Rokaya on 4 August 1997.

They slapped and punched and clubbed me for about fifteen minutes. Even now, two weeks after the beating, my back and stomach hurt. I passed out from the blows and only woke up in the ambulance…

I go to Jerusalem to study German at the Goethe Institute in the city. I tried to get an entry permit, but the authorities rejected my application. I am studying German so that I can go to Germany to study civil engineering.

Today I came to the IDF checkpoint near Gilo, on the Bethlehem-Jerusalem road. I showed the Border Police officer at the checkpoint a letter from the Goethe Institute to the Civil Administration. The letter confirms that I am studying there. They did not let me pass. I returned and then circumvented the checkpoint from the right, from the direction of Jabel Abu Ghneim (Har Homa). Another ten to twelve persons whom I don't know did the same.

Suddenly, a jeep of Border Police appeared. We ran towards Bethlehem. The policemen chased us with the jeep, and when they got close, they got out and ran after us. They caught me and two others. They beat the three of us. There were six Border Policemen. One of them was black and two were tall and strong. They slapped and punched and clubbed me for about fifteen minutes. Even now, two weeks after the beating, my back and stomach hurt.

I passed out from the blows and only woke up in the ambulance that took me to the al-Hussein Hospital, in Beit Jala. They treated me and took X-rays. I was there for about three hours. The two others whom the Border Police had beaten also came to the emergency room at the hospital.

Case 12

**Date:** 23 July 1997  
**Place:** Ras el-Ammud checkpoint  
**Offenders:** Border Police officers
The testimony was given to Mazen Dandis on 24 July 1997.

The first police officer, who had beaten me, brought a broom and hit me hard in the back while I was standing with my face towards the wall. The two policemen grabbed me, each one taking an arm, and the first officer hit me in the head with an iron dust pan. My head started to bleed and blood flowed down my face.

Yesterday, around 8:30 in the evening, I was going home in my car. A relative of mine, Muhammad 'Alkam, and a neighbor, Rami Daqaidaq, who is fourteen, were with me. When we got to the Ras el-Ammud checkpoint, I saw two Border Police officers checking passengers' documents. That was unusual because the police generally ask to see the documents of those entering Jerusalem, and not those leaving the city. When I reached the policemen, I stopped the car. They requested Muhammad's and my identity card. Muhammad was sitting next to me, and Rami was sitting in the back. They also asked for his identity card. The child told them that he does not have an identity card, and that he only has a Health Fund card. The policeman said that it wasn't sufficient, and that he wants an identity card. I told the policeman that the child doesn't have an identity card because he is fourteen years old. He cursed me, saying, "Shut up, you bastard." He hit me in the head with a flashlight he was holding.

He opened the car door, pulled me out and took me from the right side of the road to the other side, where the police have a room. As we crossed the road, he hit me in the head again with the flashlight. Another police officer searched me. The first policeman, who had beaten me, brought a broom and hit me hard in the back while I was standing with my face towards the wall. The two policemen grabbed me, each one taking an arm, and the first officer hit me in the head with an iron dust pan. My head started to bleed and blood flowed down my face. The policeman stood there with the dust pan in his hand. I took it from him and hit him on the hand with it. Two policemen next to me took it from me.

Another Police jeep pulled up. Six police officers got out, encircled me and separated me and the policeman who had beaten me. They took me by jeep to the Russian Compound [in Jerusalem]. One of the police officers bandaged my head and told me I was under arrest. I asked him to call for an ambulance because the head wound was open and still bleeding. He called for an ambulance, and they took me to Hadassah Hospital, Ein Kerem. While I was there, a Border Police commanding officer, whose name is 'Ataf, threatened me. He said, "I'll get you a year in prison and I'll screw you good." I asked the nurse to remove him. She was afraid to say anything to him.

At the hospital, I received eleven stitches in my head. They put my arm in a sling because of a shoulder fracture. The a Border Police officer took me back to the Russian Compound, where I gave a statement and they had me sign a bond. At 1:30 the following morning they let me go.
Case 13

Date: 1 August 1997
Place: Sur Baher village
Offenders: Masked security forces and police
Persons injured: Members of the 'Attun family - Muhammad, 'Azizah, 'Imad, Iman, Islam, Majed, and Marwan

Testimony of Muhammad Ahmad Ali 'Attun, aged 50, resident of Sur Baher, married with ten children

All these testimonies were given to Fuad Abu Hamed on 3 August 1997.

I saw four or five persons with their faces covered with stockings come into the house. After my wife opened the door, I saw one of them hit her hard on her shoulder with his rifle. She moved into the corridor and the guy hit her again, this time on her side. My wife began to yell, and she fell to the floor. When I went towards her, one of them hit me hard in the face twice, wounding me, and pounded the inner side of my left thigh with his weapon.

Four of them jumped on 'Imad, beat him in the head, and kicked him. When my wife saw them beating 'Imad, she passed out. 'Imad's face was full of blood. I shouted, "Who is in charge here?" One of the masked persons said, "I am." Then I said, "What do you want from us? Why are you treating us like this?" I asked him to summon an ambulance for my wife. He said, "Let her die." He refused to summon an ambulance.

The ones with the stockings covering their heads began to beat Majed. They slapped and kicked him. Then they beat Marwan. They said nothing as they did this. They hit Marwan in the head and face with their weapons. He became dazed as a result of the blows. They beat Majed over all his body. His face was bleeding terribly.

On Thursday, 31 July, we were having a party in the yard. The celebration was for my son, Ra'ed, who was getting married the next day. The party ended at 10:30 at night. Afterwards, we were arranging the site for the wedding. We finished around 1:00 a.m. and went inside to sleep. My two sisters were visiting from Jordan and my four daughters and one of their husbands, Ibrahim, who lives in Beit Safafa, were also at my home. I live on the first floor of the house with my wife, 'Azizah, and our children. My son Ahmad lives on the second floor.

Around 1:50 a.m., my wife woke me and said that someone was knocking on the door on the east side of the house. [The house has two entrances, one on the east side and the other on the west. F.A.H.] I got up and started to dress. Someone pounded the door with a heavy hammer. I opened the bedroom window. I was startled when I saw several persons dressed in khaki uniforms. They stood opposite the window and were wearing stockings that covered their faces. They had small rifles, about 30-40 centimeters long, with a small light on top.

One of them put his rifle through the window and said, "Open up!" He cursed at me. The
pounding on the door continued. I kept telling them, "Just a second, wait until I get dressed." My wife dressed and opened the door. I, too, went to the door. I saw four or five persons with their faces covered with stockings come into the house. After my wife opened the door, I saw one of them hit her hard on her shoulder with his rifle. She moved into the corridor and the guy hit her again, this time on her side. My wife began to yell, and she fell to the floor. When I went towards her, one of them hit me hard in the face twice, wounding me, and pounded the inner side of my left thigh with his weapon. That hurt a lot. I shouted out, "Why are you beating us? What do you want? We opened the door!" Our children heard the shouts and came to us.

When our daughters saw their mother lying on the floor, they started to scream. The masked persons saw my twenty-two year old son, 'Imad, who had come into the room with our daughters. Four of them jumped on 'Imad, beat him in the head, and kicked him. When my wife saw them beating 'Imad, she passed out. 'Imad's face was full of blood. I shouted, "Who is in charge here?" One of the masked persons said, "I am." Then I said, "What do you want from us? Why are you treating us like this?" I asked him to summon an ambulance for my wife. He said, "Let her die." He refused to summon an ambulance.

My daughter-in-law Nesrin, who is three months pregnant, and I went to call a doctor. One of the masked persons entered the house behind us and pushed her. My sister came towards us and shouted at him, "Don't hit her. She is pregnant." The guy pulled the telephone cord out of the socket. We couldn't call for help. When my daughters went to help their mother, the masked persons pushed them away brutally, 'Iman and Islam among them, both of whom are pregnant.

When I went back to my wife, I saw that she had lost consciousness, and her face was blue. I again asked the masked persons to call for an ambulance, but they didn't. We started to yell so that my brothers, who live next door, would summon an ambulance. My two nephews, Marwan, 47, and Majed, 45, came running to our house. They thought someone had died. Marwan started to speak with them, and said, "Tell us what you want. If you want to arrest somebody or conduct a search, come in, but don't do what you are doing." The ones with the stockings covering their heads began to beat Majed. They slapped and kicked him. Then they beat Marwan. They said nothing as they did this. They hit Marwan in the head and face with their weapons. He became dazed as a result of the blows. They beat Majed over all his body. His face was bleeding terribly. Then they took us into the house and arrested Marwan and Majed.

My daughters and I lifted my wife up and took her into the bedroom. She was still unconscious and in poor condition. She has a heart problem and is diabetic. Great excitement can kill her, and what occurred affected her a lot. The masked persons did nothing to help her, even though I told them she has a heart problem and they saw the condition she was in.

Around 3:00 a.m., about an hour to an hour and a quarter after the incident started, four General Security Service agents came to the house. One of them I know. They were in civilian dress.

My wife was still unconscious. I asked one of the GSS agents to let one of my brothers go to bring back a doctor. He agreed to let my brother Ali go to get a doctor who lives in the village. I called my brother and asked him to do that. Ali told me later that when he left his house to go to the main road, there were lots of Police vehicles and security forces, and that a checkpoint had been set up on the road, so that people couldn't leave. He had to wait at the checkpoint when he crossed in both directions.
It took a long time for the doctor to reach the house - it was already 3:45 by the time he arrived, just after the masked persons and the GSS agents had left. After he examined my wife, he said that she should have been taken to the hospital a couple of hours earlier. He asked me why no one called for an ambulance, and said that her heart was in extremely poor condition. He said she should go immediately to the hospital, and that it was impossible to treat her at home. My children took her to Makassed Hospital.

When the GSS agents left, they took some objects from the house. They had me sign a list of the items they took. They arrested my sons 'Iyad and 'Imad and my two nephews, Marwan and Majed. Before going, one of the GSS agents said, "You have no conscience, so it makes no difference what is done to you."

I went to my family doctor because of the blow I had received on my left thigh. I suffered from a sharp pain in that area, and the doctor prescribed medication.

Testimony of 'Azizah Muhammad Ahmad 'Attun, aged 49, resident of Sur Baher, married with ten children

Around 1:50 a.m., I heard heavy pounding of hammers on the main door of the house. I woke up my husband. He started to get dressed, and I went to the door to open it. There was pounding on the door all the time. I asked who was there. Someone answered, "Open up the door, bitch." I opened the door and saw four persons, all of them with black stockings covering their faces and dressed in khaki uniforms. Each had a short rifle, about 30-40 centimeters, with a light on top. All of them had pistols and radio transmitters, and other equipment, Ninja knives, and grenades.

One of them cursed at me all the time. He was more than 180 centimeters tall and of average weight. I am too embarrassed to repeat what he said. He hit my left shoulder real hard with his rifle. At that moment, my husband had come to the front door. He said to the one who had hit me, "Why are you beating my wife? What do you want?"

Later on, that same person pushed me and my husband and hit me hard in the back. I was dazed, but had not lost consciousness. I heard my daughters screaming, and I saw the masked person grab my son 'Imad, 20, who had come from elsewhere in the house. Four or five of them began to beat him. His right ear and mouth started to bleed. I heard one of them tell my husband to remove everything from the house, and then I passed out.

Shortly before 4:00 I started to come to. I saw a masked person with a bag look at me. By the look of the bag, I think he was a medic, but when I saw his eyes, I thought he was the one who had hit me in the beginning.

At about that time, they left, and my children brought a doctor who lives in the village. He examined me and told me my heart was in poor condition. I was taken to the hospital and stayed there until 8:00 in the morning. The hospital physician wanted to hospitalize me, but I steadfastly refused because my son was getting married. I thought they would postpone the wedding because of the incident. I took full responsibility for leaving the hospital. I have a heart problem and am not supposed to get excited. In the past, I was hospitalized in the cardiac intensive care unit at Makassed Hospital.
I still have pains from the beating I received, particularly in my left shoulder.

Case 14

Date: 12 August 1997
Place: Near the Tunnel Road
Offenders: Border Police
Persons injured: Mahmud Ghneim and Ahmad Musa

Testimony of Mahmud Da'ud Muhammad Ghneim, 27, resident of al-Khader/Bethlehem, married with one child

_The testimony was given to Najib Abu Rokaya on 13 August 1997 at the hospital in Beit Jala._

_Three Border Police started to beat me with clubs. I fell down. The driver walked on my chest and stomach while I was lying on the ground and beat me around the waist with his shoes. They beat me for about ten minutes all over my body._

_Afterwards, the police officer who spoke Arabic brought a rope and tied it around my left leg. He tied the other end to the jeep and told the driver to drive. He started to move the jeep slowly, and then he drove fast._

Yesterday, my cousin Ahmad and I went to Jerusalem. We went around the Bethlehem checkpoint via Tantur and made our way to Beit Safafa. It was around 9:00 a.m. When we were in Beit Safafa, a Border Police jeep, with four Border Police officers inside, stopped alongside us. One of them spoke good Arabic. I spoke in English, and he told me to speak Arabic. He asked us for our identity cards and permits. We showed him the identity cards and permits that we had, which had been valid prior to the closure. The police officer asked, "Why did you enter [Israel]? Don't you know there is a closure?" I told him that I was on my way to work in Talpiot [an industrial area in Jerusalem]. Ahmad told them that he was going to Makassed Hospital [in East Jerusalem] for a examination dealing with a heart problem he has. We had intended to go to my place of work first, take my pay check, and then go together to the hospital.

The police argued among themselves what to do with us, whether to let us go or not. After about ten minutes, the one who spoke Arabic decided not to let us go. They told us to get into the jeep. When we got to the traffic light near Tantur, the jeep stopped alongside some persons in uniform. They used their radio transmitter to call, I don't know where to. Ahmad, who understands Hebrew, heard what was said, and he told me that the person on the other side of the transmission had told them to release us, that they had checked us and had found nothing against us. The officers in the jeep continued to argue over what to do with us. Ahmad told me that one of the officers said, "We don't have anything else to do. We want something to entertain us."

The police officers told us to cover our faces with our shirts, and they pushed our heads between our legs. The jeep began to move, I think along the tunnel road, because we had stopped near...
Tantur, at the beginning of the tunnel road.

We travelled for about ten minutes. I felt we had gone onto a dirt road, because it was bumpy, not like a paved road. While we were on the dirt road, the police officer alongside me said to the driver, "No, here is no good." And then he said, "It's better here. Stop here." The driver stopped. As we were moving, I heard Ahmad request permission to remove the shirt from his head, because it was hard for him to breathe. Later I heard them beat him.

When the jeep stopped, the police told Ahmad to get out. I remained in the jeep. At first, when they took him out of the jeep, I heard them slap him twice. After that, I heard nothing. One officer stayed with me in the jeep. He did not beat me.

After about twenty minutes, the others came back and took me out of the jeep. My shirt still covered my head. One of them hit me on the head with a stick. I took my shirt off my head. Three Border Police started to beat me with clubs. I fell down. The driver walked on my chest and stomach while I was lying on the ground and beat me around the waist with his shoes. They beat me for about ten minutes all over my body. I was covered with blood. Lots of blood flowed from by head and nose. My arms and legs hurt tremendously. I felt as if I were about to faint.

Afterwards, the police officer who spoke Arabic brought a rope and tied it around my left leg. He tied the other to the jeep and told the driver to drive. The driver started to move the jeep slowly, and then he drove fast. After about two hundred meters, the jeep stopped, and the officer who spoke Arabic told me to get up. I couldn't, and he clubbed me in my right arm. He said, "Why do you come to Israel? Let Arafat find work for you, and the Hamas feed your children. Get up before I shoot you."

He went to the jeep, took out his weapon, and said to me: "I am going to count to three. If you don't stand up, I'll shoot you." He counted - one, two, two and a half, and moved his weapon towards me. I thought he was going to shoot me, and I forced myself to get up. He began to hit me with a stick on the face, head, and right hand. I was dizzy. I fell backwards, and rolled down the slope.

The police yelled at me, "Come here, come here." I ran away - I don't know how God gave me the power. My whole body was aching and covered with blood, but I ran. They ran after me. I continued to run. A long way off I saw an asphalt road, and I ran towards it. I threw myself onto the asphalt. I was aroused when someone threw water on me. I heard the persons who threw the water on me say, "Hadassah, Ein Kerem." I felt them lift me up. I fainted time after time. I don't recall the trip to the hospital. I woke up in the hospital when the doctors ripped my clothes. At 11:30 p.m., I was taken to the hospital in Beit Jala.

Three Israeli investigators questioned me separately at Hadassah. The last one spoke Arabic, and I gave him the main testimony.

**Najib Abu Rokaya adds:** Mahmud Ghneim continues to be hospitalized in Beit Jala. He still suffers severe pain and injuries all over his body. His left elbow is swollen, and his right hand is bandaged. The hospital staff iced his legs to lessen the pain. His clothes were lying on the side, full of blood stains. Ahmad Musa is also a patient at the same hospital. He is unable to talk. His left eye is black-and-blue and swollen. He was injured in various parts of his body, and breathes with the assistance of an oxygen mask.
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Israeli law, like international law, permits security forces to use reasonable force in cases of self-defense and for certain other purposes related to their duties, like dispersing riots, making arrests (where there is resistance), and preventing a person under arrest from fleeing. However, the law does not allow beatings, degradation, or maltreatment of persons who do not come within the aforementioned categories.

In all of the cases presented in this report, Border Police and Police officers acted violently - at times brutally. Their actions were unnecessary and without justification, and were directed against unarmed, non-violent, and helpless Palestinians. In acting in this manner, the Border Police officers and the other security forces violated the law and blatantly abused of their position as law enforcement officials.

Unfortunately, these cases are not unique or unusual. Furthermore, the phenomenon of such beatings and degradation is well known to commanders of forces operating in the Occupied Territories and to the political echelon. Human rights organizations and the media have reported on this phenomenon. Indeed, the authorities unequivocally condemned past beatings and degradation, and promised to take the measures necessary to eradicate the phenomenon.

The gloomy picture presented in this report leads to the conclusion that, even if measures were taken to improve the situation, they were insufficient and ineffective, and were, in fact, no more than lip service paid while the issue received media attention.

B'Tselem once again urges the security forces, in general, and the Border Police, in particular, to eradicate the violence and brutality. To achieve this, B'Tselem urges the authorities to take the following measures:

* Instill in all levels of command the understanding of the categorical prohibition on physical and mental injury, even as regards lawbreakers;

* Investigate thoroughly the cases presented above and every other case brought to the attention of the authorities;

* Suspend, until the completion of the investigation against them, those suspected of brutality;

* Where the allegations are found to be justified, indict and try those responsible for non-justified violence;

* The Police must fully implement the recommendations of the Kremnitzer Commission, of June 1994, dealing with police brutality, including dismissal of police officers found guilty of using illegal force more than once, even where the force was not found to be grossly violent. The Police must also direct their personnel involved in law enforcement to refrain from using force unless necessary, and to make it clear that the use of force arbitrarily - even where employed against lawbreakers - is illegal and will result in actions being taken against them. Commanders and officers who order the use of violence or ignore the use of violence by persons under their command should be punished particularly harshly.
To direct those involved in law enforcement to wear Hebrew and Arabic identification tags.