



FACTS AND FIGURES

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Torture in Morocco and Western Sahara

Impunity casts a shadow over the Moroccan authorities' pledge to end torture. Torture and other ill-treatment in detention continue to be reported regularly across Morocco and Western Sahara. While few officials are brought to trial for torture, survivors can face jail for speaking out under "false reporting" and slander laws.

Torture can happen from the moment of arrest in broad daylight, behind the tinted windows of vehicles used by security forces or in police stations. Victims include protesters, activists or people suspected of terrorism or common crimes. Courts' reliance on statements to police interrogators is an incentive for them to secure "confessions" at any cost.

Torture by numbers

173 – number of cases of torture and other ill-treatment documented in Amnesty International's new report

21 – years since Morocco ratified the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

8 – number of people prosecuted on charges including "slandering denunciation", "false reporting", "public insult" and "defamation" after complaining about or reporting torture in Morocco since May 2014

5 – years in prison you can be sentenced to for "slandering denunciation" of torture

1 – number of times a court overturned a conviction recognizing it was based on a torture-tainted confession and released the torture victim from prison, in cases documented by Amnesty International

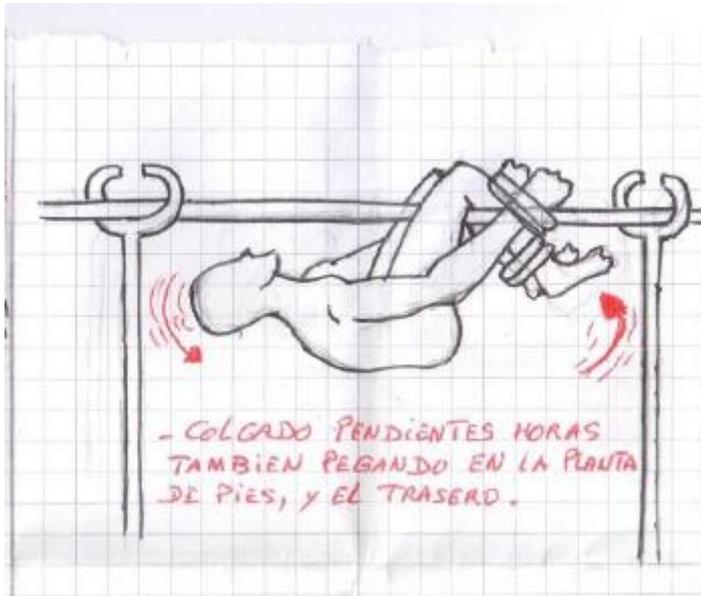
1 – number of torture victims whose medical examination included evaluation of psychological damage or trauma from torture, in cases documented by Amnesty International

0 – number of Moroccan officials convicted of torture during the "years of lead" (1956-1999)

Torture techniques in Morocco

Torture methods documented include:

- Upside-down suspension in the “roast chicken” stress position where victims are hung from a bar by their knees and wrists in a crouching position, placing great strain on knees and shoulders. Also known as the “parrot’s perch”.
- Electric shocks
- Stripping victims naked in conjunction with other forms of abuse and sexual humiliation
- Cigarette burns
- Rape with objects like glass bottles or batons



Sketch of the “roast chicken” technique drawn under the guidance of detainee Ali Aarrass, who described being tortured in this way in 2010.

The most widely reported methods of torture and other ill-treatment are:

- Beatings
- Prolonged slapping on the head and ears
- Prolonged kneeling, often while blindfolded

- Threats of violence including rape with objects

Failing its obligations

By allowing torture and other ill-treatment to go unpunished, the Moroccan authorities are breaching their obligations under international law, notably under the following treaties to which they are party:

- The United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- The UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- The Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Public Document

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