

December 8, 2025

Marwan Barghouti is NOT the “Palestinian Nelson Mandela”

The Lie:

Israel is torturing Marwan Barghouti, the “Palestinian Nelson Mandela,” who is being unjustly imprisoned.

The Truth:

Marwan Barghouti is a convicted mass murderer and senior terrorist leader who is serving prison time for the killing of civilians. There is no evidence he has been tortured.

Background

- Barghouti, 66, is a senior Palestinian Authority official and member of the powerful Barghouti clan.
- He has been in Israeli prison for 23 years.
- On December 3, 2025, 200 Western celebrities signed a letter alleging “violent mistreatment” of Barghouti and demanding his release. ([Free Marwan Campaign](#))
- Figures like British politician George Galloway and former UN official Francesca Albanese amplified claims that Barghouti is a “symbol of unity” who has been tortured by Israel. (X), (X)

Truth Explained

- In 2004, Barghouti was convicted of murder, attempted murder, and directing terror operations. He received five life sentences + 40 years for the murders of five civilians in three separate terror attacks. ([Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#))
- Father Tsibouktsakis Germanus, 35, was murdered on June 12, 2001, by gunmen using weapons Barghouti supplied near Jericho. ([Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#))
- Yoela Hen, 45, was murdered on January 15, 2002, while stopping for gas outside Jerusalem by terrorists acting on Barghouti’s orders. ([Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#))
- Three civilians were killed and over 30 wounded in the March 5, 2002, Seafood Market suicide bombing in Tel Aviv, which Barghouti ordered and coordinated through the Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades. ([Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#))
- Barghouti admitted he directed terror operations for Yasser Arafat, providing money, weapons, and instructions to militants carrying out shootings and bombings. ([Los Angeles Times](#)), ([Aish](#))
- He founded Tanzim, Fatah’s armed faction, and later created the Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades, responsible for widespread terror attacks on civilians during the Second Intifada. ([Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#))
- Barghouti led the “Nationalist and Islamic Forces,” coordinating Fatah and Islamist groups to carry out shootings and ambushes across the West Bank. These campaigns contributed to the Second Intifada’s toll of more than 1,000 murdered Israeli civilians. ([JCFA](#))
- During his trial, Barghouti expressed no remorse. Entering the courtroom, he flashed a victory sign and declared: “So long as occupation continues, the intifada will not stop.” ([New York Times](#)), ([Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#))
- Barghouti boycotted his own trial, then declared the trial illegitimate when it continued without him. ([Grokikipedia](#))
- Torture accusations are unverified and rely solely on claims by Barghouti’s son, with no independent evidence supporting broken ribs, teeth, fingers, or other injuries. (X)

Quotes:

“So long as occupation continues, the intifada will not stop. As long as Palestinian mothers are weeping, Israeli mothers will also weep.”
— Marwan Barghouti

“Marwan Barghouti is the ‘single-most admired Palestinian leader’ because he’s a serial killer, not despite it.” — Eylon Levy

Takeaway:

Framing Marwan Barghouti as a “Palestinian Mandela” is a deliberate distortion. He is not a political prisoner but a convicted mastermind of lethal terror attacks. Efforts to portray him as a symbol of peace or unity erase the victims of his violence and ignore the extensive evidence documenting his role in orchestrating murder.