

I am writing to express my grave concern on female detainees at Gabiley prison who have complained of sexual violence, including rape, and other forms of torture and ill-treatment by the male guards at the prison. Female guards that report these incidents to prison authorities fear reprisals. The female detainees risk further torture and other ill-treatment during their detention.

In the past month, four female detainees at Gabiley prison in Hargeisa, Somaliland have reported to Amnesty International several instances of sexual violence amounting to torture, including rape and other ill-treatment by male prison guards working during the prison's evening shifts. These detainees have also reported other, specific instances of torture such as severe beatings, and extreme deprivation of food and water for between two and four days.

I am calling on Somaliland authorities to order an immediate impartial investigation into allegations of rape, other sexual violence, and other forms of torture and ill treatment of female detainees at Gabiley prison. Wherever sufficient evidence is found against individuals, including those in positions of command, they must be immediately suspended, and prosecuted in trials that meet international fair trial standards .

I am also calling on them to immediately take steps to enhance female detainees' security at Gabiley Prison to prevent further sexual violence and other forms of torture and ill-treatment, including by ensuring that all contact with female detainees is done either by or under the supervision of female staff .

They should ensure that anyone who reports any incident of sexual violence and other forms of torture or ill-treatment is adequately protected from reprisals.

Your attention on this matter would be highly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,