

# **"I Never Told What Happened to Me in Sinai"**

## **On the Difficulties of Identifying Survivors of the Torture Camps and the Conduct of the Immigration Authority toward Them**

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### **Abstract**

The article focuses on the conduct of the Israeli Immigration Authority regarding the 5,000 survivors of the torture camps in Sinai, most of whom had fled Eritrea. The essay reviews the changes in policy and legislation from 2009 to the present.

The essay is based on information and data collected by the Hotline for Refugees and Migrants through thousands of interviews with asylum-seekers in detention facilities between 2009 and 2015, reports published on the matter by the Hotline for Refugees and Migrants and by Physicians for Human Rights – Israel, and protocols of Knesset hearings as well as hearings of asylum-seekers before Border Control Officers of the Immigration Authority and the Detention Review Tribunal.

The essay clarifies the scope of the torture camps, examines the difference between a torture victim and a human-trafficking victim held in conditions of slavery, explains the difficulties in identifying slavery victims, reviews the mechanisms of identifying slavery survivors in Israel, and analyzes why many of these testimonies do not appear in protocols of hearings before Israeli authorities. The article reviews the changes in legislation, which allows incarceration and prevents release of survivors of torture from Saharonim prison and the Holot detention facility.