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Weekend Insert

## Desert Hell

*Rape, electric shocks on all parts of the body, burning with white-hot iron bars, confinement, loss of consciousness, and death in sweltering containers / More and more evidence exposes what's going on only dozens of kilometers from the Egyptian-Israeli border, in torture camps built by Bedouin traffickers in the Sinai desert / The situation in the camps is beyond belief: many African migrants report systematic and severe torturing on their way here, with about half the women raped and hundreds subsequently forced to undergo abortions in Israel / Now that the extent of the humanitarian disaster is becoming clear, the UN is trying to put an end to it*

By Einat Fishbein  
Photography by Rami Zerenger  
Translated by Ami Asher

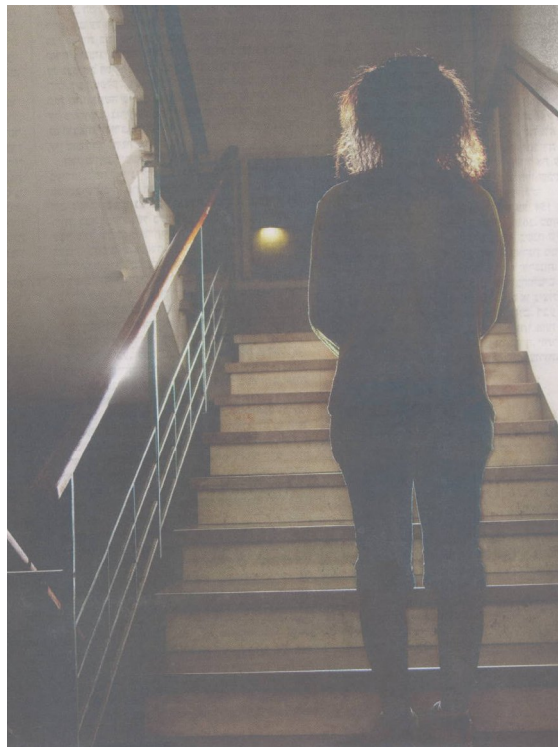


Photo Caption: B, an Eritrean refugee and torture victim. "They told me: now you will get us the money."

Bedouin traffickers entered the room where B was being held together with other Eritreans, including her husband, and they asked her to come out with them. She refused-- she would not go out without her husband. "Which one is your husband?" they asked her, and when she pointed at him the traffickers dragged him out and started beating him with iron bars. Then they took out another man, and another, and

beat them until the people in the room asked B to get out before they would all get killed because of her. She got out. The Eritrean interpreter told her that one of the traffickers wants her to sit next to him and "pass the time" with him. B ran back into the room.

"Three of them came after me," she says. "The told everyone: 'bend over and shut your eyes'. Everyone placed their heads against their knees. They pushed me to the wall and started punching me, my face became bloated, my arms and legs, they didn't leave an inch of my body where they didn't hit me. Then one of them said: 'Now you will get us the money'. He gave me a phone, pushed a gun against my other ear, dialed my friend in Sudan and while I was talking to her, kept on beating and slapping me. I begged her to send me money, because they want to kill me. She said she would get money. It took her two days to sell everything – even her wedding ring – she borrowed money and sent them 500 dollars. But they wanted another thousand.

B age 25: "They pushed me against the wall and started punching me. One of them forced me out of the room and told me in Arabic: 'You better play ball.' I woke up, I don't know after how long, still tied, without clothes, and I realized what had happened."

"They kept on beating both me and my husband and demanded the money. The one who had asked me to go outside with him asked him while he was beating him: 'Do you love your wife?' If he said yes, he would beat him harder. He would ask us how we have sex, and how I love, why he married me, because I was supposed to be his to begin with. After several days they separated us, women and men in separate rooms."

B's friend in Sudan kept in contact with the traffickers and begged them not to touch her, because she was collecting and sending another one thousand dollars. But by this point the first and relatively less terrible part of the journey had ended. "After two or three days one of them forced me out of the room," tells B, "and told me in Arabic: 'you better play ball with me.' He was not at all interested in my reply. I managed to punch him once before two more came and tied me with a piece of cloth, hands behind my back, and also the legs. I kept resisting them even though I was tied, and then they injected something in my rear. They blindfolded me and took me elsewhere. I felt I was beginning to lose consciousness. I woke up, I don't know after how long, still tied, without clothes, naked, and I realized what had happened. I was bleeding a lot. They told one of the other girls to get me some water and untie me. When she saw me, she started crying."

At this point, B begins to weep quietly, for the first time during our conversation. She covers her head with her t-shirt and pulls it out only after wiping off the last of her tears. "They left me in this house for a week. Every night he would come, and I had lost the power to resist. I don't know what they gave me. He would blindfold me, take me somewhere in his car and rape me.

"After a week my friend sent money. He went and told my husband that even now that he has the money he wants me to stay, to be his wife. My husband started crying, so he beat him. And I fell ill. I was bleeding constantly and had no control over my bowels. This was last November, it was already cold, I had just one piece of clothing and a pair of pants that he had torn up, full of blood. When he saw me in that

condition, he probably decided he didn't want me anymore. I looked so terrible, that he found other clothes for me. One of the girls washed and dressed me; they gave me something to eat and drove us to the border. The minute I crossed into Israel, I fainted."

Twenty-five year-old B is beautiful. Her eyes are sad, but full of life, and she is uncommonly courageous and strong. The moment they crossed the border, her husband denied her, probably due to what she had been through, and declared himself unmarried. After having been treated in an ambulance on the border she was confined to Saharonim Prison and started looking for someone to talk to about what she had gone through. She showed the clothes she carried in a bag to the social worker and told her everything. Attorney Osnat Cohen-Lifshitz from the Hotline for Migrant Workers sent an application for her release on the grounds that she had been held under slavery conditions, but only after obtaining psychiatric confirmation that her continued confinement compromised her mental health did Cohen-Lifshitz manage to have her released. She was transferred to a shelter for victims of human trafficking supervised by the Ministry of Welfare. Today, after she has become stronger, her husband wants her back, but she will not even see him.

"I went through the first period with tranquilizers and psychiatric treatment," says B. "Now I only take sleeping pills, because otherwise I cannot sleep at night. I started writing about all my experiences in the shelter. I've always wanted, and I'm still dreaming of becoming a journalist. I don't know what the future holds for me, where I belong, so I'm concentrating on feeling better, studying, and saving the money they give us at the shelter to send back to my friend, the one who had tried to save my life."

### **Israel as a default**

Sinai – a tourist paradise for Israelis – has become a living hell for thousands. Thanks to energetic efforts by Israeli and international aid organizations, the extent of the atrocities taking place across the border with Egypt is now becoming clear. The situation has worsened considerably over the past year: at every given moment, hundreds of African migrants are somewhere on their way to Israel. During the voyage, the Eritreans and Ethiopians among them are being held in camps designated for that purpose, where they are being blackmailed for large – and growing – sums of money. They are subjected to cruel torture, some of the women are systematically raped, and by the time they finally cross the border many of them are half humans.

The torture camps in the Sinai desert are an international affair. It is already clear that immediate international intervention is required to shut them down. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Israel are currently devoting most of their energy to investigating the matter. Although no formal reports have been published as yet, some American embassies and European countries are already aware of the situation, and intervention is just a matter of time. It is Egypt that would be required to solve this problem, in a territory that is under effective Bedouin control, where a huge crime organization operates beyond the scope of the law.

The ICRC and the UNHCR are currently devoting most of their energy to investigating the matter. Some American embassies and European countries are already aware of the situation and intervention is just a matter of time.

"Sinai is becoming one of the main human trafficking routes from Africa to the Western world," says William Tall, UNHCR Director in Israel. "Among the well-known routes from Morocco to Spain, Libya to Italy, and Turkey and North Africa to Greece, the route from Eritrea and Sudan to Israel is gradually becoming more significant. Over the past three or four months, we have begun to receive systematic and disturbing reports about what goes on in the Egyptian section of the route, in Sinai."

Recent, unpublished reports on human trafficking routes reveal a sophisticated and well-connected global organization. The number of Sudanese refugees in is decline, with most refugees in recent years arriving from Eritrea. Thousands cross the Eritrean-Sudanese border illegally and on foot, because there is almost no legal way of leaving their country. From the border they arrive to the Shagrab Eritrean refugee camp run by the UNHCR, and from there they proceed – usually after some time – to the city Kassala, which is the main point of departure north to Libya, Saudi Arabia or Egypt. This is also where they are "recruited" by agents – usually Eritrean – who charge \$2,500 for crossing into Israel, to be paid only in Sinai.

Some of the people interviewed for this story said they arrived at Kassala in order to cross into Libya and from there to Italy, but because the Italians have made this route difficult to complete in recent years, Israel has become their default choice. UNHCR reports several relatively recent cases of people abducted from Sudan without having intended to arrive in Israel, forced on trucks and then required to pay for the trip and their freedom. This week alone, custody court officials at Saharonim Prison – who are regularly exposed to shocking testimonies – documented two such cases.

The traffickers from Sudan to Egypt are members of the local Rashaida Bedouins. Most of the voyage is made in pickup or larger trucks, with dozens people crowded under canvas covering and told to keep quiet when driving through busy thoroughfares. Sometimes they are instructed to lie on top of each other, and the canvas covering is tightened above them. The trip takes between seven days and several weeks, with the delays caused by police border patrols, which require waiting in the desert. Food and water supplies last only one week, so that each such delay means hunger and thirst, and even death. At this stage, refugees are being treated comparatively decently, but many die en route and their bodies are thrown out in the desert.

While Israel used to be one of several options refugees chose to go from Egypt, today Israel is their final destination, decided even before they set out. Those leaving from Eritrea do not pass through Cairo but continue through the Suez Canal directly into Sinai, mostly on boats, and sometimes on fuel tankers where up to 95 people can be crammed in, with a single air vent in the roof.

The parallel, Sudanese route, is run by other traffickers, and is much easier and cheaper (\$300-\$500 per person). The two routes converge only on the Israeli border. Based on the evidence collected, it seems that the torture described are reserved for

Eritreans and Ethiopians, while the Sudanese – perhaps because they are Muslim and Arab-speaking like their traffickers – suffer only from the hardships of the trip. The others, mostly the Eritreans, undergo a process of systematic dehumanization, which enables their traffickers to do almost everything to them.

The precise location of the Eritrean and Ethiopian camps is still not known. According to migrant testimonies, they are located in a level area – making it possible to infer that they are located in northern Sinai – and nearby a certain town, probably El-Arish. Last April, Egyptian daily *Al-Masri Al-Youm* reported the arrest of 50 human traffickers, headed by Bedouins from the Al-Manaba clan, who according to Egyptian police reports have turned the village of Mahdia in central Sinai into a base of operations. Refugee testimonies describe several compounds, some of which are made up of large tents, others with sheds and still others with metal containers. According to more recent evidence, there are two large camps with hundreds of migrants who are even forced to build them at night.

The refugees describe camps with large tents, sheds, or metal containers. New evidence refers to two camps populated by hundreds—refugees are even forced to build them at night.

Initially, the refugees are mostly treated well. The price at this stage usually increases a little, to \$3,000, and most migrants manage to pay it. However, recently there has been a growing tendency to move them to another camp using some pretext, and this has become a strikingly well-organized operation. Despite refugee claims to have been sold by one group to another, it seems that a single network coordinates all of these transfers.

### **154 abortions this year alone**

Everything changes in the second camp. The men's feet are bound together, three to five on a single chain gang, and remain bound for most of the day. This way, four or five armed guards can control up to a hundred people. At this stage, the demands for money rise up to 7,000 or to even 10,000 dollars. This is also when the torture starts. Women are sexually abused, sometimes recurrently. They are led blindfolded to remote sheds, where they are kept for hours and even days, during which they are raped by one or several men. Sometimes they are taken there each and every night. Often women are offered by the traffickers' as their "friends." Men have testified to hearing the womens' screams at night.

G arrived in Saharonim prison several days ago. She spoke of smuggler guards coming every evening to choose a woman to pass the time with. She said that after she refused a guard, he left her in the camp even though she had paid, and while her friends were being smuggled across the border, he locked her in an abandoned building for 14 days and raped her daily, until finally he let her go when a new "shipment" of new women arrived. "He made me do all sorts of things," she told UNHCR representatives and would not elaborate.

The men are beaten with sticks, cords, or weapons. They are electrocuted – usually by attaching an electric cord to the chain they are tied to – burned with cigarettes and white-hot iron rods. They also report *falaka* (foot whipping) and being ordered to lay

their hands on the floors so that they could be beaten. New evidence reports "whipping rituals," and this week UNHCR representatives saw deep scars on the backs of some asylum seekers, with wounds still not healed. Some refugees detained in those camps suffer from humiliation, such as being urinated on or forced to drink urine. They are restrained in painful positions, mainly hanging on doorposts. We know of one case of finger severing. There are also executions, particularly after it is clear that the victim really has no way of getting the money.

Torture is often performed when the refugee is talking to relatives on the traffickers' satellite phone, to make it absolutely clear to them that they better get the money, and quick. It works, and people manage to scrape off some cash even in seemingly impossible situations, as in B's case. The money is quickly transferred to contact persons along the way from Eritrea to Tel Aviv through wiring services in each of the countries along the route, and sometimes deposited in bank accounts.

The refugees in the torture camp sometimes remain locked in their sweltering container without food or water for days on end. Some men are forced to work in construction or cleaning to repay the money they "owe," and they report an economic boom in the trafficker communities, with SUVs, laptops with Internet connection, GPS devices and villas in the middle of the desert. This week, recent arrivals in Saharonim said they were subjected to forced labor in the camps for five to six months.

According to testimonies by migrants who have arrived in Israel and reports in the international press, on August 18 refugees confined in one of the camps rebelled, and one of them managed to grab a gun from one of the guards. After the ensuing firefight, the traffickers managed to overcome them, and four Eritreans were shot to death. The survivors of this shootout, who are now beginning to arrive in Israel, report even more extreme violence against them after the uprising. One young woman, whose father had managed to send the money for her, was released to continue her journey. On that very day, she was shot to death by Egyptian soldiers on the border. Her body disappeared.

Most camp dwellers are driven to the Israeli border after coming up with the money. Few of them are released after several months, if at all. These are mainly women that some traffickers decide to "keep" as sex slaves.

Such was the case of 25 year-old H who was raped for a month by three men, every night in a shed outside the compound, together with other women taken along with her. After one month, one of her assailants, about 50 years old, took her to an isolated house, locked her inside for three months and came every evening to rape her. She hardly got any food and did not shower even once throughout that period. Eventually he took her back to the camp and had her join a group leaving for the border, without providing any explanation.

D fell into the hands of a trafficker who told her: "you're mine forever." Together with two others, he would rape her on a regular basis with no intent of letting her go. While she was imprisoned, many groups passed through the camp. She managed to get out only by mistake, when one night the rapist fell ill and a trafficker who was not aware of her special status took her to the border in his truck. Both D and H were released

from Israeli prison and transferred directly to the Shelter for Human Trafficking Victims by Attorney Sigalit Zohar of the Ministry of Justice's Legal Aid Department.

Nineteen year-old N was in advanced pregnancy when she was arrived from Saharonim Prison to the Physicians for Human Rights (PHR-Israel) clinic. She had been raped in the desert by traffickers. She came to the clinic to have an abortion. Using very few words, she said that she cannot give birth to a baby conceived out of rape. When told that it is illegal in Israel to terminate a healthy pregnancy at the end of the sixth month, she made it clear that this baby will not be born, even if this means she would have to kill herself to end its life. Two psychiatrists confirmed that the woman was incapable of giving birth and her pregnancy was terminated. The woman subsequently disappeared.

N, age 19½ arrived to the PHR-Israel clinic in advanced pregnancy as a result of rape. When told that it is illegal in Israel to terminate a healthy pregnancy at the end of the sixth month, she made it clear that this baby will not be born, even if this meant she would have to kill herself to end its life.

PHR-Israel reported facilitating 154 abortions through its clinic since the beginning of 2010. About half of these women were refugees raped by Bedouin traffickers. Last year, 163 pregnancies were terminated, with a similar ratio of rape cases. Last month, PHR-Israel began asking patients to fill out special questionnaires to identify victims of human trafficking, torture, and abuse. Among women treated over the past few months alone, more than a hundred had probably been raped or sexually abused along the way, and only 18 reported that nothing had happened to them. A quarter of the refugees interviewed reported having been beaten or tortured, with the same number reporting having seen people tortured, killed, or murdered along the way. More than half reported denial of food and water. Their testimonies are hesitant and fragmentary. Many prefer to keep silent.



Photo Caption: Nurse Aziza Kidane interviewing a refugee at the PHR clinic.  
"They treated us like animals." | Photograph by Tal Shahr

**"People were burned"**

This week on Tuesday afternoon, Aziza Kidane, an Eritrean nun and nurse, carried out the interviews at the PHR-Israel clinic. A young man in a sky blue t-shirt reports that his hands were whipped because the traffickers were angry at a previous group who did not pay and jammed him and his friends into the same container. Twenty of his fellow travelers died even before getting into Sinai. He was famished and scared. "I paid the money, so they beat me only once," he said.

An older man arrives, his entire body hunched over. "For ten days they kept me bound to three other people with an iron chain," he told the nurse. "They treated us like animals. As they burned people, they told them to talk on the phone so that their families would hear them scream. I kept silent, so I only got beaten, also with a stick [he shows the beating marks on his foot – E.F.] I saw women being taken outside four times and I think they were sexually abused, but they would not talk about it."

A tall young man in a hooded jacket says the Rashaida Bedouins abandoned his group in the desert without water or food for three weeks. Three died at the beginning, 15 perished over the following days, and the rest went in different directions. Out of the original 60, only seven managed to reach the border, where one of them was shot to death by Egyptian soldiers. "I was almost dead," he says, his eyes hollow. "He requires urgent psychotherapy," says Aziza, who occasionally covers her face with her hands in disbelief. Apart from one Sudanese young man who smiled, none of the ten random interviewees that day spared her stories of torture.

"After a month of interviews, it is apparent that the humanitarian situation in Sinai is extremely severe," says Ran Cohen, Director of the Migrants and Asylum Seekers Department at PHR-Israel. "Rape is just one aspect. Abuse, extreme violence against asylum seekers, confinement under terrible conditions for weeks and even months. We intend to raise the issue on the international level and demand international intervention in Sinai, as well as the Israeli recognition of the Eritreans as refugees, as they are recognized worldwide."

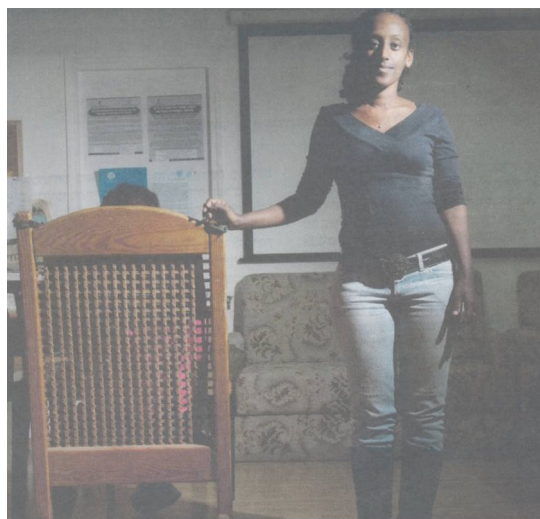


Photo Caption: Interpreter Messarat Psahia with one of the victims. "The men are tortured just as severely."



"Personally, I was told of more than 30 women raped in the desert over the past 18 months," says Messarat Psahia of the Hotline for Migrant Workers, a Tigre-speaking Israeli who accompanies many of the Eritrean asylum seekers and trafficking victims. "From what I've seen, even those who were too frightened to speak up, I believe that about every second woman is being raped. I also got to meet single mothers whose children had been conceived this way. The men are tortured just as severely, with more severe beating and various forms of torture. I met someone who had been cut with a razor in the genital area, and handcuffed for several months over there."

"In the past, women trafficked for prostitution have often been abused on their way through Sinai, but I've never heard of torture camps such as these new ones," says Attorney Rachel Gershony of the Ministry of Justice, Inter-Ministerial Coordinator of the Against Human Trafficking. "The evidence shows that the more we allow this to go on, the worse it gets. Since December last year, I see that the torture is becoming more severe. Based on information received from various sources, people arrive in Israel with wounds, burns, and at least some of them seem severely traumatized. I heard of a woman who arrived at Saharonim Prison in Ktsiot in a catatonic condition, and of one who could not stop crying. They seem to have been through hell."

The Ministry of Justice's Legal Aid Department which is not formally required to provide any assistance to migrant workers or asylum seekers, agreed to help human trafficking victims. Attorney Sigalit Zohar managed to have five women and one man admitted to trafficking victims shelters. She continues to interview refugees held in Saharonim in order to help the victims who meet the formal criteria obtain residence status in Israel, so that they could be rehabilitated here.

The Legal Aid Department stated as follows: "Based on the evidence we have collected, it seems that many asylum seekers on their way to Israel are held hostage by their Bedouin traffickers in torture camps in Sinai. They fall victim to severe violence, repeated tortures, chain-ganging, starvation (one piece of bread per day and water with gasoline traces), beating, threats to sell their lungs, forced labor, sexual abuse and severe sexual assault. This goes on for months in return for additional sums of money required in return for crossing into Israel. They arrive in Israel in terrible physical condition, with burns on their body, whipping scars and sometimes barefoot. Many women arrive pregnant as a result of being raped on the way here. Although many testimonies have been heard, the Legal Aid Department believes that only few of the infiltrators report their experiences in the desert and many victims of severe abuse simply do not talk."

### **How is a victim defined?**

What happens in Sinai is not Israel's business, but Sinai's victims definitely are. When they arrive in Israel, most of them are taken to the Saharonim facility near Ktsiot. This facility does not provide dedicated treatment for their conditions, but it so happens that the women among them do find someone to talk to there, like B-- the first Eritrean in Israel transferred to a trafficking victims' shelter after a court official heard her story and realized the severity of her victimization. "In prison I feel alive," said a former forced laborer in an interview this week, "I was already dead." On the other hand, there is D's case, the one the trafficker had never intended to let go, a severely

traumatized trafficking victim who had spent 18 months in the Israeli prison only due to difficulty ascertaining her country of origin, and was released about a month ago.

The Saharonim authorities are well aware of the condition of their detainees, but claim they have no way of helping them. Pregnant women, for example, are released quickly so that the prison would not be required to deal with their abortions. Court officials who question detainees often seek creative solutions, and sometimes have them remain in Saharonim without a release date. Only those proven to be Eritrean or Sudanese are released in Israel – protected from deportation by international guarantees, but without visas or any state aid.

"We all know what's going on", says PHR-Israel's Ran Cohen. "A doctor and a complete medical staff are employed in the facility, and its authorities are totally and outrageously silent about it. People are not properly screened, and not asked relevant questions. They have to establish a procedure for identifying torture and trafficking victims, formulate recommendations and start doing something about it. They simply release people in difficult conditions."

The Knesset Subcommittee on Trafficking, chaired by Member of Knesset Orit Zo'aretz, holds committee discussions about the Sinai refugees and demands answers from the Ministries of Health and the Interior. In January this year, police arrested two suspects allegedly involved in human trafficking – Eritrean citizens indicted for extorting money from families in Israel for their loved ones confined, tortured, and raped in the desert. According to the indictment, the two have extorted ransom money by describing the abuses and transferred it to the kidnappers using bank transfers and other ways, and then authorized them to release the refugees. In return, they kept part of the ransom money.

One of the main problems asylum seekers have to deal with is obtaining residence status in Israel. "In the case of victims of enslavement the local policy is 'no double discounts'," says Hotline's Attorney Cohen-Lifshitz. "Either you are protected under the collective umbrella of Eritrean asylum seekers, or you are entitled to asylum as a trafficking victim. What happens if you are both? We are now trying to secure one year's institutionalized rehabilitation for the victims, as well as extra provisions given the current situation, which is that even at the end of this year it is doubtful whether the woman could return to her country."

"The authority has a unique procedure for dealing with the entire issue of victims of trafficking in women and in humans in general, and this procedure is one of the most advanced of its kind in the world," says Sabine Haddad, spokeswoman for the Ministry of the Interior's Population and Immigration Authority. "There is no procedure dedicated to Eritrean civilians, but every relevant case brought to our attention is examined specifically and systematically, and if we find the woman has been victimized, she is entitled to all the rights afforded by the procedure. Note that these are severe offenses that we are well aware of, despite the fact that they are committed outside Israel and not by Israeli citizens."

"The definition of human trafficking victims is very narrow," says Sharon Harel of UNHCR, "and the Sinai victims have nowhere to turn to. People can undergo severe and traumatic tortures without meeting the precise definition of enslavement."

Turning the Sinai torture camps into a stated fact will make the "Hot Return" procedure – in which Israel Defense Forces soldiers force asylum seekers back across the border without making any inquiries about them – from problematic to patently illegal. Just think of D having to return defenseless to where she was raped for three months.

H, a tall and pretty young woman, talks with a whisper. She has left her baby boy with her parents after his father had disappeared in the armed forces, and went to look for a job in nearby Sudan. She never intended to arrive in Israel. "You will be a wife to us all," said the traffickers. She was forced to cook and clean for them. One of them, a driver, would arrive every few days and rape her. Occasionally, the others would beat her, and when she said she has and will no longer have any more money, one of them beat her ear until she bled. After arriving in Israel, Attorney Zohar managed to transfer her to the shelter. The custody court does not recognize her Eritrean descent, so that the minute she leaves the shelter she would be liable to go back to prison or be deported. H cries when she remembers her daily fear that her captors might never let her go, and she would remain enslaved in Sinai for the rest of her life. Then she cries for her son, with whom she has never talked to since she left. And then she cries simply because she has learned the harsh lesson of Sinai – that some people's lives simply do not matter to anyone, and that she is one of those people.

**Egyptian Foreign Ministry:  
"We have received no complaint of rape"**

**By: Smadar Peri**

How does Egypt view what is going on in Sinai, in the great territory under its control? "We are well aware of the illegal trafficking across the Egyptian-Israeli border, and are deeply concerned by this," says Hussam Zaki, spokesman for the Egyptian Foreign Ministry. "Recently, this issue has also been raised on the agenda of the Joint Israeli-Egyptian Liaison Committee. This is the first time I've heard about rape and violence against the illegal immigrants. It is also important to make it clear that it would be incorrect to define these people as refugees since they do not meet the UN criteria for this status. You are talking about illegal immigrants. Thus, when engaged in illegal activity, bad things can happen.

"These immigrants arrive as individuals or in small groups, after receiving information about gang leaders in Sinai. Note that not all of them are running for their lives, and that many of them arrive for other reasons. We are also unaware of any camps where the illegal immigrants are held. My impression is that traffickers and criminal gang leaders in the Sinai are playing cat and mouse with the Egyptian police forces. If indeed there are such camps, they must be located deep in the Sinai desert, out of the policemen's sight. Remember, Sinai covers a large area.

"Never, to the best of my knowledge, have we received any complaints of abuse or rape. If such things have happened, I can only express my regret. But since we have received no complaints, I suspect that the people complain to win sympathy for the illegal immigrants to prevent them from being tried for infiltrating into Israel. We cannot indict suspects as long as we receive no complaints. You have to distinguish between reporting human stories in the media, to win headlines and sympathy, and

submitting a detailed formal complaint. If you want Egyptian authorities to intervene, you have to follow the rules applicable to criminal law."