

including 11 former detainees. All former detainees describe the inhuman conditions which led to the death of tens of detainees a day. They said that initially they were only fed once a day, but from late 2013, when the military police became responsible for the detainees, they were fed twice a day. The former detainees consistently described the insanitary conditions in the five overground cells and one underground cell, with no washing or toilet facilities – they used nylon bags for their stools. Only detainees who were privileged to do odd jobs for the soldiers were sometimes allowed to wash themselves.

The biggest cell – the former detainees called it “luxurious cell” – measures approximately 210 square meters and held more than 1,000 men and boys. The other cells were smaller, with up to 500 detainees. The underground cell was, according to former detainees, mainly used for “confirmed” Boko Haram members.¹⁷⁹ In addition to the five cells, there is a cell for women and one for old people. Inside the compound, there is one area reserved for sick and injured detainees, the visually impaired and people living with mental illness.¹⁸⁰

The statistics secured by Amnesty International show that the months of May, June and July 2013 were the most deadly in Giwa barracks, with up to 180 deaths being recorded on some days. **In June 2013 alone, more than 1,400 corpses were taken to one of the mortuaries.**¹⁸¹ The numbers went down from August onwards, and from September there were on average fewer than 10 deaths per day. Military officers, former detainees, hospital staff and human rights defenders confirm that in those peak months, the soldiers from Giwa Barracks would take corpses to the mortuary in trucks and ambulances up to three times a day.¹⁸²

After the Boko Haram attack on the barracks, when most detainees either escaped or were recaptured and executed, the number of detainees decreased significantly, and the number of deaths as well: in April and May 2014, 20 detainees died in Giwa barracks. By early 2015, the military took only three to 10 corpses a week to the mortuary.

Testimonies of former detainees from Giwa obtained by Amnesty International corroborate the data on mass deaths in detention and paint a grim picture of a detention facility where the military either recklessly failed to take any measures to prevent the deaths, or, possibly, deliberately caused the deaths of detainees.

Ahmed Maima (not his real name), a 26-year-old trader and father of two, was detained in Giwa barracks in mid-2013 when the death toll was at its highest. He told Amnesty International that he was arrested on 2 May 2013 in Gwange, Maiduguri, along with 121 other local men.¹⁸³ He said that he was not told why he had been arrested, only that the military said “all of you are Boko Haram”. He described what happened after the detainees were brought to the barracks: “They made us lie face down. They beat us with big sticks.

¹⁷⁹ Former detainees told Amnesty International that the military know who is a Boko Haram member and who is not.

¹⁸⁰ Former detainees told Amnesty International that some privileged detainees were taken out of the cell if they were sick.

¹⁸¹ List with numbers of bodies taken to the mortuary is on file with Amnesty International.

¹⁸² Amnesty International interviews, April and July 2013; March and December 2014, April 2015.

¹⁸³ Ahmed Maima (not his real name) gave Amnesty International a list with the names of the 36 detainees he knew.