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## **After six escape, Israel's collective punishment of prisoners and families must cease**

Following the Gilboa prisoners' escape, the international community must prevent the collective punishment of [Palestinian prisoners](#) and their families.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK ([AOHR UK](#)) calls on the international community to take urgent measures to protect the families of the six prisoners who escaped from the Israeli Gilboa prison on Monday (6 September) and Palestinian prisoners generally, after the occupation authorities' imposition of strict, abusive measures against them – a form of collective punishment of the Palestinian people.

[Six Palestinian](#) prisoners succeeded in escaping from Gilboa, where they were all serving life sentences: Zakaria al-Zubaidi (46 years-old), Munadil Yaqoub Nafi'at (26 years-old), Muhammad Qasim al-Ardah (39 years-old), Yaqoub Mahmoud Qadri (49 years-old), Ayham Fouad Kamamji (35 years-old) and Mahmoud Abdullah al-Ardah (46 years old).

AOHR UK reports that since the discovery of their escape – which shocked the occupying force – Israeli security forces have abused [prisoners](#), especially those held in [Gilboa prison](#). Occupation authorities have already announced that approximately 400 prisoners will be transferred from Gilboa in preparation for a comprehensive survey of the prison, in addition to depriving prisoners of [family visits](#) over the next period.

AOHR UK has added that, in the search for the fugitive prisoners, various areas across the occupied West Bank have been stormed by Israeli security services, in particular the hometowns of the escapees.

AOHR UK has underlined that the prisoners' escaping from occupation's grip is not criminalized under international law, since prisoners of war have the right – one which



Palestinian prisoners hold – to achieve their freedom by various means, particularly if the punishment is severe. Indeed, some countries consider escaping a national duty. For example, the US armed forces' Code of Conduct states: "a prisoner of war must be prepared to escape whenever the opportunity presents itself."

Any retaliatory actions against the six prisoners, if they are found, would be in violation of [Article 91 of the Third Geneva Convention](#), which states that:

"Prisoners of war who have made good their escape (...) who are recaptured, shall not be liable to any punishment in respect of their previous escape."

AOHR UK stresses that protecting prisoners, and the six fugitives and their families, is the [international](#) community's responsibility. It must pressure the occupying force to halt its [collective punishment](#) of prisoners and their families, and to cease repressive practices against the Palestinian people – a people who continue to exercise their legitimate right to resist the occupation, and to strive for their freedom.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK)