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## **AOHR UK's Webinar on New Israeli Bill to Legitimise the Killing of Palestinians**

On Friday evening, March 3, 2023, Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK) held a webinar discussing the approval of the Israeli Ministerial Committee for Legislative Affairs of a bill to reinstate the death penalty for Palestinian prisoners, which will soon come up for a preliminary reading in the Knesset.

The speakers included Roba Salibi, Postdoctoral Fellow at Oxford University, Father Issa Musleh, The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate's Spokesman, Loay Elbasyouni, Palestinian Electronics Engineer at NASA, Diala Shehadeh, International Lawyer, and Gilles Devers, French Lawyer and Academic.

Roba Salibi started her speech by emphasizing that Palestinian prisoners are granted protection by International law, as resisting occupation is considered a legitimate right for occupied people. However, since the creation of Israel, it continuously kept violating the international laws and is never held accountable for the violence and terrorism it practices on Palestinians.

She pointed out that the new punitive measures taken against Palestinian prisoners forms part and parcel of Israel's broader structural violence against Palestinians since its creation in 1948.

These new policies will include a death penalty legislation for individuals accused of 'terrorism'.

Salibi stressed that there are currently 4,765 Palestinians incarcerated in Israeli prisons and detention centres, who already suffer from harsh detention conditions and medical neglect.



Salibi also stated that on March 1, 2023, Israel held 967 administrative detainees, 5 of them are children and one woman, compared to 489 Palestinians last year). It will also include imposition of harsher conditions, denial of medical treatment and revocation of citizenship and residency of Palestinian citizens of Israel and residents of Jerusalem. All of these measures violate international law and international prohibitions on the collective punishment of protected persons as stated in the Geneva convention.

Diala Shahadeh opened her speech by stressing that the new law adopted in Israel this week is particularly controversial for a state that has executed the death penalty only once, exactly 61 years ago, when the [Holocaust](#) architect [Adolf Eichmann](#) was hanged in 1962 for genocide and crimes against humanity. So, according to this law, the Palestinian defending their lives against the crimes committed by the Israeli state are equal to the Nazis who committed the holocaust 70 years ago!

Shahadeh also wondered about the nature of the Israeli citizen this law was tailored for; is it the Israeli soldier shooting unarmed civilians or destroying and burning their houses? Is it the fanatic Israeli expressing open racism and hate against Palestinians, calling them a “cancer” that should be “removed from the Jewish state” by any means and participating in the military crimes committed against them?

Shahadeh emphasised that this outlaw status of Israel towards the international laws and the UN would not have existed without the support of the United States, which vetoed at least 53 United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions against Israel since 1972.

In his speech, Father Issa Musleh stressed that the Israeli draft law designed for the execution of Palestinian prisoners will never lead to peace, but it would rather fuel violence and may result in a third and fourth intifada. He stressed his rejection of this law that eliminates any possibility of peace in the region.

Loay Elbasyouni, Palestinian Electronics Engineer at NASA, highlighted that is abnormal that countries are still legalising the death penalty in the 21st century, which has been lifted in the majority of the world's countries.

He criticised the oppression practised by the occupying authorities against the Palestinian citizens and the international silence towards it.



As for the international French lawyer Gilles Devers, he stressed that Palestine was an independent state before the establishment of the Israeli state, and that Israel was made after a massive attack on Palestinian villages and not by law.

Devers also emphasised that no one has the right to deny the existence of the Palestinian state and the Palestinian people.

Dever criticised the inability of the United Nations to do anything and stated that the most important legal ways to find a solution for these ongoing Israeli violations is through the International Criminal Court and the European Court of Justice.

He clarified that these are the most effective ways as it could result in cutting the economic ties between the Israeli occupation and the European Union.

He pointed out that in May 2018, after Palestine ratified the treaty of the ICC became a member state in the General Assembly, a file against the Israeli aggression on Palestinians was opened and the then Public Prosecutor Bensouda opened an inquiry of investigations into the file.

Devers finished his speech stressing that the Palestinian sovereignty must be respected over the Palestinian territories.

## **Arab Organisation for Human Right in UK**

**Webinar link:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7b7KOC8jbME>