

Joint Statement

European Network to Support the Rights of Palestinian Prisoners

All together... Justice for Palestinian prisoners

We have been witness to the injustice done to humanity over the continued detention of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons, and practices that flagrantly violate human rights and international humanitarian law. Currently, 7,000 Palestinian prisoners, including 340 children and 335 administrative detainees are held without charge, imprisoned in substandard conditions, subjected to torture, denied legal counsel, medical treatment and family visits.

In addition, this suffering of thousands of Palestinian in Israeli prisoners does not only include those who are inside prison, but it extends to hundreds of thousands of their families who are deprived of the basic human rights of visiting their sons, fathers, or husbands.

Since the beginning of its occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem in 1967, Israel has detained more than 650,000 Palestinians, making Palestinians one of the most incarcerated populations in the world.

It has become unequivocally unacceptable that the Israeli authorities act as above all laws, because they do not comply with what was stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Not only Israeli authorities failed to respect international humanitarian law, but they always try to evade international responsibility entrusted to them towards the prisoners.

We believe it is the time for the international community and United Nations organizations, to step up and assume their responsibilities towards the Palestinian prisoners by all legitimate means which include:

1. Compelling the Israeli authorities to apply the provisions of the Geneva Conventions in the occupied Palestinian territories.
2. Intervening to stop the continuing arbitrary abuse taking place against the prisoners and their human dignity.
3. Supporting the release and compensation of prisoners.
4. Up to their release, allowing prisoners' family visits and human rights organisations and media to access Israeli prisons and watch closely Prisoners conditions.
5. Criminalising illegal imprisonment by Israeli authorities in Occupied Palestinian Territories.
6. Calling the General Assembly of the United Nations to issue a resolution requesting an advisory opinion on the Palestinian prisoners and Arabs in Israeli prisons to consider them as Prisoners of War (POW) in accordance with the provisions of relevant international law.

We call upon all conscientious people worldwide to support our cause, in an attempt to release the political prisoners and end their suffering and torture.

March 2011