

Palestinian Bar Association
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القدس عاصمة فلسطين الأبدية

نقابة المحامين الفلسطينيين
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Date: April . 1st . 2026

To: All Bar Associations and Law societies around the world

Dear Colleagues

Subject: Urgent Legal Appeal: Israeli Knesset Death Penalty Legislation as a Grave Breach of International Law

We write to urgently raise concern regarding the enactment by the Israeli Knesset of the Death Penalty 2026, which establishes a regime of capital punishment targeting Palestinian residents in the occupied Palestinian territory.

The legislation enacted by the Israeli Knesset mandates the death penalty as the primary punishment, permits its imposition by military courts without unanimity or prosecutorial request, and provides for execution within 90 days, with no effective possibility of pardon or commutation. This framework underscores the extreme gravity of the measure and its departure from minimum international safeguards.

The extension by the Israeli Knesset of such legislation to the occupied Palestinian territory constitutes an exercise of legislative authority ultra vires, contrary to the law of occupation. Under the Fourth Geneva Convention (Articles 64–75), the occupying power is strictly limited in its penal authority and must preserve existing laws while ensuring full judicial guarantees. The present law represents a serious violation of these constraints.

Furthermore, the law enacted by the Israeli Knesset applies predominantly to Palestinians as non-citizen protected persons, thereby establishing a regime of discriminatory and differential treatment on the basis of nationality and status, in violation of Article 2 and Article 26 of the ICCPR.

09-2579917: طوباس / 09-2519559: سلفيت / 09-2943977: قلقيلية / 09-2687775: طولكرم / 04-2430061: جنين / 09-2342145: نابلس

02-2270066: يطا / 02-2282631: دورا / 02-2225032: حلحول / 02-2312080: اريحا / 02-2746744: بيت لحم / 02-2253790: الخليل



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The removal of essential safeguards, combined with expedited execution procedures, creates a substantial risk of arbitrary deprivation of life, prohibited under Article 6 of the ICCPR, and may amount to unlawful sentencing and execution, contrary to Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions.

In light of the above, the legislation enacted by the Israeli Knesset may constitute a grave breach of international humanitarian law, engaging individual criminal responsibility.

We therefore call upon your bar to:

- Publicly denounce the legislation enacted by the Israeli Knesset as incompatible with international law;
- Mobilize bar associations worldwide to oppose this grave violation and defend fundamental legal protections.

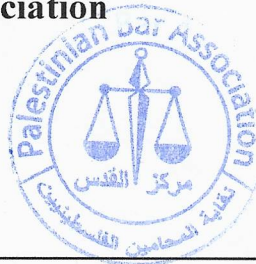
Immediate and decisive action is required in response to this dangerous legislative development.

Dear Colleagues

In line with our shared professional responsibilities in defending human rights and upholding the rule of law, we expect and urge u to take a principled position consistent with the values of justice and humanity that unite the global legal community.

Respectfully,

Fadi Abbas
President
Palestinian Bar Association



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