

# *Hamas condemns Israel's imprisonment of Palestinian minors*

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Gaza City, June 18 (RHC)-- The resistance movement Hamas has condemned attempts by the Israeli regime to approve a bill aimed at handing down prison sentences to Palestinian minors aged 12 or older. The group said in a statement on Saturday that the bill was a “reflection of the occupying regime’s racist and brutal nature.”

Hamas called upon the international community to take practical measures and hold Israel accountable for its crimes against Palestinian children. “The Palestinian children have always been exposed to the most heinous crimes by the Israeli machine of aggression and terrorism, which has to do with killing, arrest, abuse and torture,” the statement said.

On Sunday, the Ministerial Committee for Legislative Affairs in the Israeli Knesset (parliament) is expected to debate the bill put forward by Yitzhak Kreuzer of Otzma Yehudit party. The bill allows the imprisonment of the abovementioned minors on charges of involvement in retaliatory operations in occupied al-Quds.

On January 28, a Palestinian teenager purportedly shot and seriously wounded an off-duty Israeli officer and his father in al-Quds earlier this year. Thirteen-year-old Muhammad Aliwat from Silwan opened fire at a group of settlers on Ma'alot Ir David Street, just outside the Old City of al-Quds.

One of the victims, an off-duty officer in the Paratroopers Brigade, allegedly managed to shoot and hit the attacker despite his wounds. Aliwat was wounded and arrested.

There are reportedly more than 7,000 Palestinians held in Israeli jails. Hundreds of inmates have been incarcerated under so-called administrative detention, without trial or charge. Palestinian detainees have continuously resorted to open-ended hunger strikes in an attempt to express outrage at their illegal detention.

Israeli prison authorities keep Palestinian prisoners under deplorable conditions without proper hygienic standards. Palestinian inmates have also been subject to systematic torture, harassment, and repression.

Human rights organizations say Israel continues to violate all rights and freedoms granted to prisoners by the Fourth Geneva Convention and international laws.

According to the Palestine Detainees Studies Center, virtually 60 percent of the Palestinian prisoners detained in Israeli jails suffer from chronic diseases, a number of whom died in detention or after being released due to the severity of their cases.

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