

PALESTINE PRISONERS' DAY

THE DEMANDS OF THEIR STRUGGLE

I. Core Themes

- The **centrality** of Palestine Prisoners' Day to the resistance struggle
- Situating the anti-Palestinian **execution law** within the historic **apartheid** Zionist timeline of striking at the core of the Palestinian movement
- The **litmus test of our Islamic morality** & commitment to divine justice rests on how we respond to the pleas of the unjustly imprisoned
- Concentrate efforts in our British '**circle of influence**' to campaign for the release of our local political prisoners – the first six of the **Filton24** are scheduled for their **retrial on Monday 13th April**

II. Supplementary Material

- [The Palestinian Prisoners' Movement](#)
- [Call to action against the "Prisoners' Execution Law"](#)
- [Poster pack highlighting high-profile Palestinian detainees](#)
- [Three-part "Prisoners of War" interview series](#)
- [CAGE press-release on execution law](#)
- [CAGE report on Muslim duties to prisoners](#)
- [Amnesty report on execution law](#)
- [Op-ed on the execution law and Israeli apartheid](#)
- [Middle East Eye pieces on apartheid and execution – H. Abu Hussein & Lubna Masarwa](#)
- [B'tselem \(Israeli HR group\) report on Israeli prisons as 'torture camps'](#)
- [Systematic sexual violence in Israeli prisons](#)

III. First Sermon

إن الحمد لله، نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره، ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا ومن

سيئات أعمالنا، من يهده الله فلا مضل له، ومن يضلل الله فلا هادي له، ونشهد

أن لا إله إلا الله ونشهد أن سيدنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله

أما بعد :

- Today, we gather not only to learn or remember, but to bear witness to the suffering of a people who have lived in a perpetual state of macro and micro imprisonment for almost a century.
- We bear witness to men, women and children who have been stripped of their freedom, dignity and even their humanity.
- We bear witness to the unbending resolve of a nation that refuses to capitulate.
- Those who have been unjustly incarcerated because they dare to speak truth-to-power or take a principled stand against unrepentant oppression
- Today is **Palestine Prisoners' Day**

The Centrality of Palestinian Prisoners:

- The question we pose to ourselves is not simply '*what is happening to them?*', rather, '*what does their condition say about us?*'
- Today is a reminder of a brutal reality that has besieged the Palestinians for decades: a system of incarceration that leaves no Palestinian family unscathed.

- It is estimated that since 1967, over 800k Palestinians have been detained or imprisoned at some point by the apartheid regime, and almost 1 in 5 since the early 2000s.
- The goal of the Jewish supremacists in Israel is to transform prison from an exceptional institution into the norm imposed on an occupied people.
- Our commemoration of this day reinforces the notion that speaking about the Palestinian prisoners is to speak about the entire struggle itself.
- In our conception, a prisoner is a criminal, guilty of transgressing the reasonable limits of the law.
- But for Zionist Israel, imprisonment is designed as a mechanism of settler-colonialism: a draconian system intended to fragment the Palestinians, politically suppress them and smother their aspirations of liberation.
- Repudiate the framing that all Palestinians held in Israeli gulags are hardened, convicted psychopaths: they are students, parliamentarians, journalists, activists, community organisers and resistance figures.
- They are strategically targeted by Israel.
- Leaders are locked up to disrupt movements; students to delay futures; powerful voices to silence narratives and scholars to stifle the word of truth.
- Israel developed an infrastructure of detention to act as blackholes. When a Palestinian enters, the oppressors assume that they are shuttered from the outside world, abandoned by their peers and left to rot in obscurity.
- Many have been detained under 'administrative detention', a repressive vestige of British colonisation in Palestine a century ago that allows imprisonment without charge or trial and often based on secret evidence.
- Palestinians in the West Bank face a parallel legal system to Jews: martial law and military tribunals. These kangaroo courts have a suspiciously high

conviction rate of nearly 99%, using secret evidence and extracting confessions through torture.

- Human rights organisations have documented and lambasted these gross violations for years.
- But the mettle and grit of these brave prisoners remain undaunted, much to the chagrin of their jailors.
- For the Palestinian nation, these prisoners are the backbone of the struggle, not incidental liabilities of the movement.
- Imprisoned resistance leader Ahmed Sa'adat exclaimed:

“The prisoners are the conscience of our people... they are the vanguard of resistance”

- The Palestinians identify Israeli imprisonment as a baptism of fire; a rite of passage that changes an ordinary person into a champion of the freedom cause.
- Those eventually released or freed during prisoner exchanges are hailed as national heroes and lionised as idols of the people.
- Pretentious footballers, vain celebrities, mendacious politicians and vacuous influencers pale in comparison to the Palestinian prisoners exalted by their people.
- Instead of wallowing in self-pity, Palestinians have transformed what the Israelis intended as a site of dislocation and dejection into a school of revolution.
- From behind bars, they organise hunger strikes to demand better treatment, they collectively mobilise, pursued degrees (before Israel banned it) and organised themselves into a strong faction, the ‘Palestinian Prisoners’ Movement’.

- In that sense, these sons of resistance are agents of change, who could not be, and should not be in our discourse, reduced to impotent victims of Israeli aggression.
- They challenged a system that sought to erase them by empowering themselves within its very framework.
- Resistance groups launch operations to free them through prisoner exchanges; external movements seek their sagacious advice and even stall deliberations until the votes collected from the prisoners are collected.
- Far from being relegated into anonymity, the Palestinian prisoners represent the beating heart of the anti-colonial fight.
- These indomitable souls have faithfully responded to Allah's summons when he instructs us in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

O believers! Patiently endure, always persevere, stand on guard, and be mindful of Allah, so you may be successful (3.200)

Execution Law & History of Apartheid

- Recently, the apartheid state passed a craven law escalating their violence against Palestinian prisoners from meticulous micromanagement and incarceration to legalised elimination.
- The execution law allows for Palestinian prisoners found guilty of killing an Israeli Jew to be given the death penalty of hanging, despite indigenous resistance against the occupier enshrined in international law.
- The law, however, does not apply to Israeli Jews who perpetrate the same crimes on Palestinians.

- The gravity of this development cannot be overstated. West Bank Palestinians already face biased military courts which operate in a legal framework that discriminates against Muslim, who have recourse to minimal legal recourse.
- Do not take this as an isolated measure. Israeli 'security officials' have vied with each other for decades to make life more miserable and constricted for Palestinian prisoners as a way of boosting their approval ratings, featuring on national television to boast about the latest policy to brutalise Palestinians hostages.
- Over the years, Palestinians within the Israeli detention system have endured:
 - a) Torture and brutal interrogation techniques
 - b) Prolonged solitary confinement, sometimes lasting years
 - c) Denial of adequate medical treatment and ignoring of hunger strikers
 - d) Collective punishment, restriction on family visits and militarised interventions like blindfolds, submission positions and gun-point threats
 - e) Sexual abuse and emasculating physical violation
- All these measures exist within an apartheid state that polices Palestinians as inconvenient threats with separate rights, and protects Israeli Jews and settlers with privileges, state support and legal safeguards.
- This systematic differential must be exposed when memorialising our Palestinian prisoners.

Prisoners as Our Moral Yardstick:

- Nelson Mandela wrote in his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*:
“No one truly knows a nation until one has been inside its jails. A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens but its lowest ones.”
- In essence, societies are judged by how they treat the most vulnerable, intimidated & persecuted demographic: their political prisoners.

- Our faith places a premium on liberating Muslim captives and raises them to a pedestal.
- In the Qur'an, Allah allows the sacred funds of *zakah* to be expended on freeing prisoners:

﴿ إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَمَلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمَوْلَّاتِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغُرَمِينَ
 وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ ۖ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴾

The alms are only for the poor and the needy, and those who collect them, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and to free the captives and the debtors, and for the cause of Allah, and (for) the wayfarer; a duty imposed by Allah. Allah is Knower, Wise (9.60)

- Our Prophet (peace be upon him), in the same breath as pushing civic duties like feeding the poor and visiting the infirm, advocated the liberating of Muslim political prisoners:

عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَطْعِمُوا الْجَائِعَ وَعُودُوا الْمَرِيضَ
 وَفَكَوْا الْعَانِي . رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ

“Feed the hungry, visit the sick and free the captive” (Bukhari, 5649)

- The gallantry of the Companion ‘Abdullāh Ibn Ḥudhāfah pioneered the self-determination mastered by the Palestinian prisoners today, whilst the response of Caliph ‘Umar sets the benchmark for the dignity our political hostages deserve to be shown.
- As a veteran of Badr and an active soldier in the Byzantine campaign of Syria, the warrior-Companion was captured with his troops by the enemy.

- He was enticed with riches beyond his wildest dreams, in exchange for abandoning his faith and converting to Christianity.
- He **resolutely defied the emperor**. He was threatened with death and then flung into **solitary confinement, with only pork and wine** to eat, a form of psychological torture.
- He **refused to eat or drink**, even though Islam permits this under duress. When pressed by the emperor, he replied: ***“By Allah, this food is permitted because I am compelled, but I did not want to give you the satisfaction of having broken my resolve and seeing a Muslim eating forbidden food”***
- Having been stunned, the emperor offered to release ‘Abdullāh if he would kiss the emperor’s head. A clear breach of Islam and the Arabs’ sense of self-worth.
- ‘Abdullāh agreed **only if the remaining Muslim prisoners be released** . This conscientious demand was accepted, and he returned to Madinan territory triumphant with dozens of freed captives.
- ‘Umar arose to meet this selfless champion with the others in a guard of honour and remarked:

حق على كل مسلم أن يقبل رأس ابن حذافة، وأنا ابدأ

“He kissed the emperor’s head to free his brethren, it is now incumbent on us all to kiss his head. Let me begin...”, and ‘Umar did just that¹.

- Thus, our response to the Palestinian prisoners cannot be defined solely by sympathy or exclusively highlighting their victimisation.

¹ *Siyar 'l-A' lām al-Nubalā'*, vol 2, pg. 11

- We participate in the cherished tradition of Caliph Umar by dignifying, humanising and idolising our Palestinian (and all conscientious) detainees, and commemorate their steadfastness and propensity to self-empower.

IV. Second Sermon

الحمد لله رب العالمين، أمر بالعدل والإحسان، ونهى عن الظلم والطغيان
وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، وأشهد أن محمداً عبده ورسوله
بعثه الله رحمةً للعالمين، ونصرةً للمستضعفين، أمّا بعد

- A Muslim's vocabulary should be stocked with phrases of hope and optimism.
- But it is normal to feel overwhelmed by the scale and depth of injustice.
- What is especially crippling is the distance between us and prisoners in Palestine.
- This where the framework of the circles of 'concern' and 'influence' offer us a way to channel our pain and anger into meaningful action.
- While we appreciate the limits of how we can directly challenge global oppression overnight, we still show 'concern' for them by promoting their profiles, as we are today, supplicating for them and refusing to validate the narratives that demonise the oppressed.
- However, where we can make a change is within our 'circle of influence': our immediate contexts and our own back yards in the UK.
- This includes in our workplaces, universities, friend networks, where we shop and bank, and which individuals and corporations we engage with.
- Advocating justice begins at home and emanates outwards.

- Allah commands us all in the Qur'an to become unfailing advocates for divine justice, instructing us to start by holding ourselves accountable, and working outwards, layer by layer, to include our own parents, and then social networks etc:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ

الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ

O you who believe, be upholders of justice - witnesses for Allah, even though against (the interest of) yourselves or the parents, and the kinsmen. (4:135)

- An injustice mirroring the plight of Palestinian prisoners has been unfolding right beneath our noses in the UK: the ordeal of the Filton24.
- These fearless activists responded to the pleas of the oppressed in the Qu'ran who indict others for not doing all they can to alleviate their torment:

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا

أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا

And what is it with you? You do not fight in the cause of Allah and for oppressed men, women, and children who cry out, "Our Lord! Deliver us from this land of oppressors! Appoint for us a saviour; appoint for us a helper—all by Your grace."

(4:75)

- We sometimes take for granted the relative ease of speaking out about global causes and the immense courage required to take a stand in your own country, where the risks are more pronounced and the personal stakes higher.

- In August 2024, these young activists decided that slogans and token solidarity were not enough, especially when Israeli arms firms like Elbit are operating on British soil, arming the genocidal lunatics in places as quaint and uneventful as Filton, in Bristol.
- They reportedly caused millions of pounds of damage to military-equipment facilities with the stated aim of disrupting the flow of weaponry that would be unleashed on innocent Palestinians.
- Much like their interned Palestinian comrades, the Filton heroes were subjected to the ruthless, Islamophobic coercive force of the British state for simply showcasing their humanity:
 - a) Their houses were ransacked in traumatic dawn police raids
 - b) They were arrested under counter-terror powers despite no terrorism charges
 - c) Many were held on remand for more than a year and a half without charge, far exceeding the usual six month custody limits
 - d) From within prison, harsh prison conditions, solitary confinement, dehumanising rhetoric and restricted communications became routine
- Yet, as the first six resolutely stood trial in late 2025 and early 2026, by the grace of Allah, the commonsense of the jury and the tireless campaigning of activists, no charges were brought against any of them, and most were subsequently released on bail, despite the legal proceedings that were stacked against them.
- They are not clear of the woods yet though as their ordeal recommenced on Monday 13th April. The state (CPS) pushed for a retrial on lesser, unresolved charges.
- This brings us to our circle on influence...

The Call to Action

- We always end with squaring up to ourselves and interrogating our options moving forward, because raising awareness without substantial action risks becoming tokenistic and performative.
- **Firstly**, for Palestinian Prisoners Day:
 1. Familiarise yourself with the names of the most high-profile detainees like Marwan Barghouti (resistance director), Ahmad Sa'adat (resistance leader), Mohammed Abu Salmiyah (director of Al-Shifa Hospital, Gaza) & Abdullah Barghouti (senior resistance engineer)
 2. Take a leaf from their grit and the spirit they display in the face of Israeli repression. They would rather suppress their pain than allow the settlers to relish in their suffering.
 3. If you have not linked yourself with an advocacy or activism organisations like CAGE, Samidoun.net or Prisoners for Palestine, that holds systems of oppression accountable, then make this a priority. You can amplify their messaging, participate in campaigns and volunteer.
 4. Finally, one of the most effective tools in isolating and uprooting the architecture of apartheid that enables their molestation is BDS: Boycotting Israeli goods, pushing your employers, universities and local councils to divest from companies complicit in Israeli's racist programme and sanctioning/isolating those who dare to normalise with oppressors.
- **Secondly**, and more urgently connected to our home turf, do not ignore the Filton24:

1. Before asking what we can do for them, ask what they have demonstrated for us. They have exemplified the prophetic framework for justice, taking matters into their hands without abdicating their duty by instantly deferring to the third base or being paralysed by fear:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: "مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ". رَوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ

"Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart – and that is the weakest of faith."

2. Embrace the ethic of ethical risk-taking when the need arises and avoid the stranglehold of cowardice. If you need to confront your employer for not complying with BDS, or voice reservations to someone in authority about their framing of the crisis, or buck the family trend by not buying boycotted products for a gatherings, then do so without fear of reprisal or loss of material assets, because prosperity and honour are granted by Allah alone.
3. Understand the significance of this trial: it is a test case to see how far counter-terror legislation can go to stifle pro-Palestine activism, whether the state acknowledges its wrongdoing in not ejecting Israeli weapons companies and whether due process and civil liberties will be snatched away for those morally courageous enough to take action.
4. Finally, support the Filton24 campaign.

- On the Day of Judgement, Allah will not ask us whether we were miracle workers solving every problem, but whether we responded to the cries that reached our ears.
- May Allah bring relief to the prisoners, patience to their families and allow us to moisten our tongues with Prophet Yusuf's heartfelt supplication for the cellmates he left behind:

اللهم لا تُعَمِّ عليهم الأخبار وهَوِّن عليهم مر الأيام

“O Allah, do not let news be hidden from them (do not let them feel like the outside world is off limits and they have been abandoned), and gently ease the weight of passing days upon them.”²

V. Catalogue of Supplications

اللهم فرِّجْ همَّ المهمومين من المسلمين، ونفِّسْ كربَ المكروبين، وفُكِّ أسْرَ المأسورين، وردِّهم إلى أهلهم سالمين غانمين.

O Allah, relieve the pain of the distressed among the Muslims, lift the hardship of the afflicted, free the imprisoned, and return them safely to their families.

اللهم إنا نسألك للمظلومين في السجون فرجًا قريبًا، ونصرًا عاجلاً، فإنك قلتَ وقولك الحقُّ: وما ربُّك بظلامٍ للعبيد

O Allah, we ask You to grant the oppressed in prisons a nearness of relief and a swift victory. For You have said, and Your word is the Truth, *“Your Lord is never unjust to His servants.”*

معينا اللهم كن للمستضعفين حيثما كانوا في السجون والمعتقلات، وتحت القيود والأغلال

اللهم لا ناصرَ لهم إلا أنت

O Allah, be the Protector of the oppressed wherever they may be, in prisons and detention cells, beneath chains and iron restraints. O Allah, they have no helper but You.

² *Mawsū'ah Tafsīr al-Ma'thūr* vol. 8, pg. 252

اللهم اربط على قلوبهم، وخفف عنهم ما نزل بهم، وكن لهم أنيسًا في وحدتهم، وقوة في ضعفهم، وأملًا في ليلهم الطويل

O Allah, bind their hearts with steadfastness. Lighten the burden that has descended upon them. Be their companion in loneliness, their strength in weakness, and their hope in the long night that surrounds them.

اللهم احفظ كرامتهم، واشف جراحهم، واجبر كسرهم، ولا تجعل للظالمين عليهم سبيلًا

O Allah, preserve their dignity. Heal their wounds. Mend what has been broken. And grant no dominion to the oppressors over them.

اللهم عليك بمن ظلم عبادك، وسفك الدماء، وانتهك الحرمات، فإنهم لا يعجزونك، ولا يفوتونك

O Allah, take to account those who have wronged Your servants, who have spilled blood and violated sanctities. They cannot escape You, nor can they elude Your grasp.

اللهم أخرجهم من ضيق السجون إلى سعة الحرية، ومن الذل إلى العز، ومن القهر إلى العافية، يا رب العالمين

O Allah, bring them forth from the constriction of prison into the vastness of freedom, from humiliation to honour, from subjugation to wholeness and peace, O Lord of all the worlds.