



(https://www.prophecynewswatch.com)

Join over **350,000** PNW subscribers.

Enter Your Email

Subscribe to PNW

Ads by Google

[Stop seeing this ad](#) [Why this ad? ⓘ](#)[\(https://www.prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=76\)](https://www.prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=76)

ARTICLE

A Nation Debates The Death Penalty: Why Life In Prison No Longer Works In Israel

**ISRAEL**

Death penalty bill passes first vote

BY ADAM ELIYAHU BERKOWITZ/ISRAEL 365 NEWS FEBRUARY 11, 2026

Share this article:

[Share](#)[Post](#)[Email](#)[Share](#)[Print](#)

The Israel Prison Service has begun operational preparations to implement capital punishment for terrorists following the Knesset's preliminary approval of new death penalty legislation. According to Channel 13 News, the preparations include establishing a dedicated execution facility--internally dubbed the "Israeli Green Mile"--designed specifically for carrying out death sentences by hanging.

The facility will operate with execution teams composed entirely of volunteers who will undergo specialized training. Three prison officers will simultaneously activate the execution mechanism, a design intended to distribute psychological responsibility. The Israel Prison Service plans to carry out executions within 90 days of a final verdict, significantly faster than the often decades-long delays seen in other death penalty jurisdictions. An IPS delegation is scheduled to visit an East Asian country to study the practical, legal, and ethical aspects of implementing capital punishment in a regulated manner.

Discover more[AI Ethics Training](#)[Tech conferences](#)[Cybersecurity software](#)

The proposed law, advanced by the Otzma Yehudit Party and championed by National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, mandates the death penalty for terrorists convicted of murdering Israelis "out of motives of racism or hostility toward the public, and under circumstances in which the act was carried out with the intention of harming the State of Israel and the rebirth of the Jewish people."

The legislation passed its first reading on November 30, 2025, by a vote of 39-16. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Brig. Gen. (res.) Gal Hirsch, Israel's coordinator for captives and missing persons, have both endorsed the measure, though they refrained from public support until after the return of living hostages due to concerns about negotiation impacts.

Initial implementation would target Hamas Nukhba force terrorists who participated in the October 7 massacre, followed by terrorists convicted of severe attacks in Judea and Samaria.

Discover more[Science magazines](#) >[Robot Automation Consulting](#) >[Clock](#) >**Why Life Sentences No Longer Deter Terrorism**

The Bible does not blur moral lines when it comes to those who shed innocent blood. "And you shall not take ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, for he shall surely be put to death" (Numbers 35:31). The Hebrew phrase *dam naki*, innocent blood, is treated with absolute seriousness. The Sages explain that a society which tolerates unpunished murder endangers itself, because violence unrestrained invites more violence. This is not a call for vengeance. It is a demand for justice and for the protection of life. Releasing convicted terrorists with blood on their hands is not a neutral policy; it is a decision with predictable consequences.

In December 1996, Israeli criminologist Anat Berko sat across a small metal table from Hamas founder Ahmed Yassin in an Israeli prison. Five hours later, Yassin, who was convicted on terrorism charges, invited her to continue the conversation outside the prison.

"He told me that if I had more questions, I could ask him in Gaza, wherever he would be," Berko, a former Knesset member, told JNS in late December. "He was convinced that he would be freed."

A few months later, after a failed Israeli assassination attempt on then-Hamas politburo chief Khaled Mashal in Jordan, Yassin was released. His conviction that he wouldn't rot in prison is common among security prisoners in Israel, who rarely see life sentences as permanent in an era defined by hostages-for-prisoners exchanges.

"They know that even if they receive a life sentence, they will not stay in jail for their entire lives," she told JNS, "because Hamas or another terror organization will kidnap soldiers, civilians, or others, and they will be released in a hostage deal."

The release of security prisoners during the current Gaza war has again placed a hard, uncomfortable fact at the center of Israel's national debate. Men convicted of murder and attempted murder, terrorists responsible for Israeli civilian bloodshed, were freed as part of wartime deals and returned to Gaza, Judea, and Samaria. Many were welcomed publicly by Hamas, a terrorist organization, and immediately folded back into the terror infrastructure that Israel has spent years dismantling. This is not theory or speculation. It is a pattern with a long and bloody record.

The record of recidivism among released terrorists is extensive and well-documented by Israel's security establishment. After the Shalit deal in 2011, Israeli intelligence assessed that a significant percentage of released prisoners returned to terror activity, including senior Hamas operatives who later planned attacks, recruited cells, and directed violence from Gaza and abroad.



(https://www.prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=77)

During the current war, similar dynamics have already emerged. Terrorists freed in exchanges have appeared in Hamas propaganda videos, resumed command roles, and in some cases, were later eliminated by the IDF after returning to operational activity. Israeli officials have repeatedly stated that releases are not acts of mercy but calculated risks taken under extreme pressure, with full awareness that many of those freed will return to violence.

Israel's enemies understand this dynamic clearly. Hamas celebrates prisoner releases not as humanitarian gestures but as strategic victories. Each freed terrorist is proof, in their worldview, that kidnapping and mass murder work. Each return to terror reinforces that lesson. Israeli security officials have acknowledged that prisoner releases strengthen Hamas politically and operationally, even when carried out under wartime duress. This is why terror groups invest enormous effort in abducting Israelis alive rather than killing them outright. Prisoner exchanges are not peripheral to terror strategy. They are central to it.

That assumption--and its implications for Israeli national security--has resurfaced as Israel again weighs the death penalty for terrorists. After October 7, Israel released almost 2,000 Palestinian prisoners and detainees during hostage exchanges, many convicted of terrorism. Berko, who opposed the death penalty before the attacks, changed her position.

"As a criminologist, I was against it," Berko said. "But I believed at least that if somebody received punishment, they would stay in jail."

Berko has since concluded that prison is no longer a sufficient deterrent. Inside Israeli jails, terrorists can earn academic degrees, eat regular meals, and receive extensive medical care--living for years in regimented routines that, Berko said, do little to deter future violence.

"Many times, prison becomes a place to study, to improve abilities, to socialize with other terrorists, to coordinate attacks outside jail, and to prepare for the next step," she told JNS. "Their ideology is very clear. It's not about borders or having a state. It's about killing the last Jew in Israel."

Berko challenged one of the most persistent myths about terrorist motivation. Terrorists "value their lives very much," she told JNS, "and the lives of their families."

Contrary to widespread belief that many Islamist terrorists seek martyrdom, leaders of terrorist groups refuse to send their own children to attack Israelis or confront Israeli troops, according to Berko.

"Ismail Haniyeh did not send his children even to demonstrations near the border," she said. "Many terrorists surrender. They raise their hands. They don't want to die. The idea that everyone wants to be a shahid is a legend."

Her observations strike at the heart of the deterrence debate. If terrorists genuinely believed death would follow conviction, the calculation changes. If prison means eventual release, comfortable conditions, and the opportunity to continue the fight from behind bars, there is no reason not to murder Jews.

Can Jewish law accommodate the execution of terrorists who murder Jews?

The question of capital punishment under Jewish law presents complexities that Israeli rabbinical authorities have debated for decades. Israeli law currently permits the death penalty only under exceptional circumstances--genocide, crimes against humanity, and wartime treason--but the state has executed only two individuals: IDF officer Meir Tobianski in 1948 following a field court-martial on treason charges during the War of Independence (he was posthumously exonerated), and Nazi official Adolf Eichmann in 1962 for his role in orchestrating the Holocaust.

Rabbi Daniel Feldman, Rosh Yeshiva at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary at Yeshiva University, explained that Jewish law distinguishes between ideal legal systems and emergency measures necessary to protect society. Historically, rabbinic authorities viewed capital punishment as a last resort, arguing that if life imprisonment could adequately protect the public, execution was unnecessary. "The feeling of the rabbis at that time was that if life imprisonment could protect society in the same way, then it wouldn't be appropriate to have the death penalty," Feldman said.

That calculation has shifted. With life imprisonment no longer carrying significant weight, he said that Jewish legal discussions about the death penalty have become "more serious," as rabbis weigh concerns such as potential reciprocal attacks against Jews or Israelis in response to executions.

Another central question, he said, is whether Israeli society can be adequately protected without capital punishment.

"It's a very severe question, a very grave question--how to properly address that," Feldman told JNS. "It has to be looked at very, very carefully. With an eye toward both justice and fairness, and protecting the innocence of society overall!"

The Sages established that Jewish law permits--and in certain circumstances requires--execution to protect society from murderers. "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God He made man" (Genesis 9:6). This verse applies to all humanity, not exclusively to Jews, establishing a universal principle predating the giving of the Torah at Sinai.

Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu, Chief Rabbi of Safed and a prominent religious-Zionist authority, has argued forcefully that Jewish law forbids leaving murderers alive. "It is forbidden to leave a murderer alive," he stated. Responding to a question about whether terrorists should be kept alive for interrogation, Eliyahu wrote, "If you leave him alive, there is a fear that he will be released and kill other people." He added that interrogation is permissible only when no alternative exists and when there is an immediate threat--a ticking bomb scenario--after which the terrorist should be "sent to hell as quickly as possible."

Former IDF Chief Rabbi Avichai Ronsky articulated two reasons for applying the death penalty to terrorist murderers. First, removing evil from the world improves it. Second, the existence of capital punishment alters terrorist calculations, creating genuine deterrence. Rabbi Ronsky warned that failing to apply the death penalty increases bloodshed by providing Hamas and other terrorist organizations with experienced operatives through prisoner exchanges, making future attacks more likely to succeed. He also noted the danger of vigilantism when victims' families see killers released. The rabbi noted that he does not personally support vigilante acts, but can understand those who turn to extrajudicial action out of despair.

The UN's Selective Outrage

UN experts issued a statement condemning the Israeli legislation, warning it would violate the right to life and discriminate against Palestinians. "Mandatory death sentences are contrary to the right to life," a dozen independent UN rights experts declared. "By removing judicial and prosecutorial discretion, they prevent a court from considering the individual circumstances, including mitigating factors, and from imposing a proportionate sentence that fits the crime."

Among the signatories was Francesca Albanese, the special rapporteur who has been accused of anti-Israel and antisemitic bias. Albanese claimed that unintentional killings were not among the "most serious" crimes to which the death penalty can be applied under international

law. While refusing to accuse Hamas of war crimes and crimes against humanity, she condemned executing terrorists. "Denial of a fair trial is also a war crime," she stated, ignoring that the death penalty would result from a full trial in Israeli courts.

The UN experts also warned that "the bill makes matters worse by allowing death sentences to be imposed by a simple majority vote of military judges." Hamas responded by calling the proposed law an embodiment of "the ugly fascist face of the rogue Zionist occupation" and a violation of international law. The Hamas charter calls for murdering every Jew, presumably without trials.

The selective nature of this criticism becomes clear when examining the global landscape of capital punishment. Globally, capital punishment remains legal in 55 countries. China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and several U.S. states carry out the majority of executions worldwide. Iran executes hundreds annually, including for crimes such as adultery, apostasy, and homosexuality. Saudi Arabia beheads dozens each year for offenses including drug trafficking and sorcery. The Palestinian Authority has executed prisoners, and Hamas has executed accused collaborators in Gaza, in many cases without trials.

No UN statement has condemned these executions. No special rapporteurs have traveled to East Asian countries to investigate their death penalty procedures. No warnings about violations of the right to life have been issued to Iran for hanging political dissidents. The silence is deafening and deliberate.

The double standard reveals itself starkly: Israel faces international condemnation for proposing to execute terrorists who murdered Jews after full trials in civilian or military courts with appeals processes, while regimes that execute political opponents, religious minorities, and women for moral offenses receive no comparable scrutiny. The UN's moral credibility on this issue collapsed long before Albanese signed her name to the latest denunciation of the Jewish state.

Capital Punishment and Counterterrorism Strategy

Maurice Hirsch framed capital punishment as one component of a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy. "The war on terror has to be fought on every level," he said. "It's not just the death sentence, it's revoking citizenship, seizing terrorist payments, forfeiting assets, and imposing real prison sentences."

He compared terrorism to organized crime, arguing Israel should employ the same tools to dismantle terrorist infrastructure. "Terrorism is a form of organized crime," he said. "There's no reason we shouldn't use the same tools, asset seizure, forfeiture, mandatory sentencing, to dismantle it."

If Israeli law prescribes ten years for rock-throwing but terrorists receive six-month sentences, "you don't deter anyone," he said. "Israel has never put together a full terror-fighting package without wavering, and that wavering is exactly what terrorists exploit."

Hirsch rejected framing the issue as Jews versus Palestinians. "This is the Jewish state saying that anyone who murders Jews for being Jews will pay that price," he said. "If a Japanese terrorist or a German Hezbollah operative committed the same acts, they would be treated exactly the same."

"This isn't about vengeance," he added. "It's about deterrence and about finally taking terrorism seriously."

The death penalty debate in Israel forces a reckoning with the failure of life imprisonment to protect Jewish lives. When terrorists view prison as temporary, when they use incarceration to plan future massacres, when they expect release through hostage exchanges, the Jewish state confronts an obligation older than the modern prison system itself. The verse commands it plainly: justice demands that those who spill innocent blood forfeit their own. What remains is whether Israel will enforce that ancient standard or continue releasing murderers who will kill again.

Originally published at Israel 365 News (<https://israel365news.com/415964/israel-advances-death-penalty-plans-for-oct-7-terrorists-as-nation-weighs-biblical-command-by-man-shall-his-blood-be-shed>)

Liked this article? Don't miss an urgent PNW update.

Enter Your Email

Subscribe to PNW

Back to home page (<https://www.prophecynewswatch.com>)

PNW SHOP



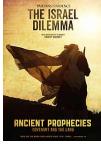
Standing Against the World (https://prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=88)

1

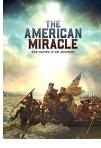
(https://prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=88)

The Israel Dilemma (https://prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=78)

2



(https://prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=78)



The American Miracle (https://prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=77) 3

(https://prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=77)



Before the Wrath (https://prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=67) 4

(https://prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=67)



Patterns of Evidence: Exodus (https://prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=87) 5

(https://prophecynewswatch.com/product.cfm?product_id=87)

OTHER NEWS

FEBRUARY 26, 2026 **Death On Demand: Canada Now Offering Same-Day Assisted Suicide** (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9602)

Canada's assisted dying system, known as Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD), is no longer just expanding who can qualify. Increasingly, it...

[Read Full Story](#) (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9602)

FEBRUARY 26, 2026 **Mamdani & The Mahdi - A Reminder Of What Radical Islam Wants To Do With Infidels** (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9601)

New York mayor Zohran Mamdani and his recent appearance at the Al-Khoei Islamic Center have ignited concern among those who recognize that...

[Read Full Story](#) (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9601)

FEBRUARY 26, 2026 **Important Victory: Foster Parents No Longer Have To Adhere To LGBT Ideology** (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9600)

Vermont has adopted new guidance eliminating a requirement that foster parents embrace LGBT ideology and has restored the licenses of fost...

[Read Full Story](#) (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9600)

FEBRUARY 24, 2026 **The Price Of Conviction: One Man's \$750K Warning To Christians Everywhere** (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9592)

A former elected school trustee has been hit with a staggering \$750,000 penalty after a human rights tribunal ruled that his public statem...

[Read Full Story](#) (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9592)

FEBRUARY 24, 2026 **The Sound Of Power: Islam's Rising Influence Echoes Across New York** (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9591)

A new sound is rising over New York City--and it is not just a sound. It is a signal. The adhan, or call to prayer in Islam, is not merely...

[Read Full Story](#) (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9591)

FEBRUARY 24, 2026 **Americans Are Continuing To Flee Blue States For Red States** (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9590)

Newly released census data has revealed that the trend of a mass exodus from states controlled by Democrats to states run by Republicans i...

[Read Full Story](#) (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9590)

FEBRUARY 24, 2026 **Conform Or Be Fired: Teacher Removed After Refusing To Promote Same-Sex Marriage** (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9589)

The principal indicated that the belief in same-sex marriage is so fundamental to the language arts unit that Mr. Rivera could not possibl...

[Read Full Story](#) (article.cfm?recent_news_id=9589)

GET BREAKING NEWS

Enter Your Email

Submit



© 2026 Prophecy News Watch. All Rights Reserved.

Located in Coeur D Alene, Idaho - USA.

Call Toll Free: 1-877-561-4442

Email: Info@ProphecyNewsWatch.com

Visit us on social media.

