

## Jihadists vow to liberate Lebanon's Islamist prisoners

01/06/2014

BEIRUT: An Al-Qaeda-affiliated group's religious guide Sunday vowed that Islamists imprisoned in Lebanon's prisons will be liberated.

"Preach to our prisoners in Lebanon and especially Roumieh Prison, and in the Ministry of Defense, that your liberation is our main aim, and I say to your prisoners: today you arrest our men, tomorrow you will be arrested!" Sheikh Sirajeddine Zuraiqat of the Abdullah Azzam Brigades wrote on his Twitter account.

Some 300 Islamist prisoners have been detained without trial since 2007 on suspicion of engaging the Army in the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr al-Bared in north Lebanon and belonging to Al-Qaeda affiliated Fatah al-Islam.

The inmates have been behind several riots inside Roumieh prison.

Zuraiqat wrote that the group will not forget any of the Muslim prisoners, and that Sunnis do not accept the oppression being exercised against them in the country.

"How many criminal Lebanese leaders have proven to have worked with the Jews [Israel]? Where are the executions? Or are they only for Sunnis?" he asked.

The Abdullah Azzam Brigades have claimed responsibility for a number of attacks in Lebanon, most notably the double suicide attack on the Iranian Embassy in the Beirut suburb of Bir Hasan last November, which claimed the lives of 30 people and wounded scores more.

The group was formed in 2009 with the goal of carrying out attacks against Western interests in the Middle East.

Zuraiqat wrote Sunday that if Lebanon had a "just" criminal law, all of the prominent Lebanese leaders would be imprisoned, naming Speaker Nabih Berri, Hezbollah Secretary-General Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah, Lebanese Forces leader Samir Geagea, Free Patriotic Movement leader Michel Aoun, and Kataeb leader Amin Gemayel as examples.

"The death penalty in Lebanon is for Sunni youths, and innocence for the agents of the Jews and spies," Zuraiqat tweeted. The Sunni spends 10 years in prison over a suspicion! And an agent for the Jews is released within months!"

---