

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

30th Regular Session

September 2015

29 September 2015

Israel's armed forces and grave violations of children's rights

Statement on behalf of Defence for Children International (DCI)

Mr. President,

Children represent nearly 50 percent of Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. Instability and violence define much of their lives.

Since 2000, Israeli forces and extremists have killed more than 1,991 Palestinian children, including 551 in 2014 alone. Displacement, access to education and healthcare, and psychological trauma remain significant areas of concern particularly in the wake of Israel's 2014 assault on Gaza.

In the aftermath of Israel's summer offensive, 100,000 Palestinians, including many children, remain internally displaced. Most families with destroyed or partially damaged homes have been unable to rebuild their homes because they lack funds and Israel's siege of Gaza restricts the import of construction materials.

With massive destruction to civilian infrastructure, including schools and hospitals, many children in Gaza face limits on access to education and healthcare.

Palestinian children in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continue to endure heightened levels of violence as Israeli soldiers and police increasingly use excessive force to quash protests. Twelve Palestinian children died at the hands of Israeli forces in 2014, all except one with live ammunition. Only one incident resulted in both an investigation and indictment. In 2015, Israeli forces have so far killed three Palestinian children with live ammunition.

As tensions increase in East Jerusalem and Israeli officials call for the increased use of live ammunition against stone-throwing Palestinian youth, it is clear that the status quo is not sustainable. The need for justice and accountability is urgent.

Defence for Children International urges all members of the Human Rights Council:

- To condemn Israeli forces' use of excessive force in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, against unarmed Palestinians; and
- To demand that Israeli forces at all times act in accordance with the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.