



Human Rights Council - 40th Session

Delivered by: Defence for Children International (DCI)

Item 7: Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories

Palestinian children detained by Israeli forces

Defence for Children International (DCI) welcomes the opportunity to speak in this debate.

Israel is the only country in the world that systematically prosecutes children in military courts lacking fundamental fair trial guarantees and protections. Each year, an estimated 500–700 Palestinian children are detained from the occupied West Bank and prosecuted in Israeli military courts.

Defence for Children International – Palestine (DCI-P) has provided legal aid and documented widespread ill-treatment of Palestinian children detained by Israeli forces and prosecuted in Israel's military courts since 1991.

In 2018, DCI-P documented 120 child detention cases from the West Bank. The vast majority of children—over 75 percent—reported physical violence by Israeli forces during their detention, and more than half said that they had experienced verbal abuse, threats, humiliation, or intimidation.

Israeli forces placed at least 22 children in isolation solely for interrogation purposes for a period of 48 hours or more. The longest period of isolation DCI-P documented was 30 days.

In 2018, Israeli forces held six Palestinian children in administrative detention, detaining them without charge or trial, a denial of the most fundamental of due process rights.

In October 2015, and the first time since 2011, Israel renewed the practice of administrative detention against Palestinian children in the West Bank.

DCI-P collected comprehensive data that shows 29 Palestinian children have been placed under administrative detention between October 2015 and December 2018. All were male.

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

- Demand Israeli authorities end the practice of using isolation and solitary confinement on children in Israeli military detention, whether in pretrial detention for interrogation purposes or as a form of punishment, and ensure the prohibition is enshrined in law; and
- Demand that Israeli authorities release all Palestinian children held in administrative detention; immediately stop the practice of administrative detention against Palestinian children; and enshrine this prohibition in law.

Thank you.