



29 September 2020

Item 7 General Debate

On behalf of Defence for Children International (DCI) - Palestine

Madam President,

At the end of June, 151 Palestinian children were detained in Israeli prisons and detention centers, an increase of six percent from May, according to data released by the Israel Prison Service (IPS). Data from a headcount on June 30 shows that 48 percent of Palestinian child detainees were held in pretrial detention. Israeli authorities held at least 120 Palestinian children—more than 79 percent of Palestinian child detainees—at prisons and detention centers inside Israel, which amounts to unlawful transfer in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

In late July, a Palestinian child prisoner detained by Israeli forces during a night raid on his home tested positive for COVID-19, the first known case involving a Palestinian child detainee confirmed by Defense for Children International - Palestine. Israeli authorities repeatedly extended the boy's detention because he could not be interrogated due to the coronavirus. He was held in detention for 40 days, before Israeli authorities finally released him on bail on September 1.

Palestinian children imprisoned by Israeli authorities live in close proximity to each other, often in compromised sanitary conditions, with limited access to resources to maintain minimum hygiene routines, according to documentation collected by DCIP.

On 11 May, over four months ago, the Humanitarian Coordinator in the Occupied Palestinian Territory; the UNICEF Special Representative in the State of Palestine; and the Head of the United Nations Human Rights Office in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, called on Israeli and Palestinian authorities to release all children in detention and put a moratorium on arrests.

While international law demands that children only be detained as a measure of last resort, custodial pre-trial detention is the norm for Palestinian children detained by Israeli forces from the occupied West Bank even while facing an unprecedented global health pandemic.

We strongly urge all member states to:



DEFENCE FOR CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL
DÉFENSE DES ENFANTS INTERNACIONAL
DEFENSA DE NIÑAS Y NIÑOS INTERNACIONAL



THE WORLDWIDE MOVEMENT FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

DEFENCE FOR CHILDREN
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Exposing grave violations against children and holding their abusers accountable.

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- Demand that Israeli authorities immediately end detention and prosecution of Palestinian children in the Israeli military court system; and
- Call for the release of all Palestinian children currently detained in Israeli prisons and detention centers.