



9th July 2021

Defence for Children International (DCI) statement before the 47th session of the UN Human Rights Council

Item 7 – Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967

Madam President,

Since May 8, Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank have shot and killed eight Palestinian children with live ammunition, according to evidence collected by Defense for Children International – Palestine. In the first six months of this year, Israeli forces have killed nine Palestinian children in the West Bank, surpassing the number of child killings that DCIP documented there in all of 2020.

Seven of these children were killed in the context of demonstrations or confrontations with Israeli forces and did not present a direct threat to life or of serious injury when they were shot, according to DCIP's investigations. Israeli forces routinely fire live ammunition killing Palestinian children with impunity in situations where intentional lethal force is not justified. The international community's lack of political will to hold Israeli officials accountable, guarantees that Israeli soldiers will continue to unlawfully kill Palestinian children.

Four Palestinian children are currently detained by Israeli authorities under administrative detention orders, 17-year-old Amal Nakhleh who suffers from myasthenia gravis, a rare chronic

autoimmune, neuromuscular disease that causes muscle weakness. Amal was imprisoned without charge pursuant to a six-month administrative detention order issued by Israeli authorities on January 25. That order was later reduced by two months on appeal and expired on May 20. An Israeli military court judge approved a new four-month administrative detention order against 17-year-old Amal Nakhleh on May 20.

Administrative detention is permitted in strictly limited circumstances in only the most exceptional cases for "imperative reasons of security" when there is no other alternative. UN bodies, including the Committee against Torture, the Human Rights Committee, and the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention have expressed concern and called on Israel to refrain from using the procedure.

We strongly urge all member states:

- Demand Israeli forces refrain from using lethal force against civilians, including children, who pose no imminent threat to life;
- Take urgent action to ensure accountability for violations by supporting efforts by the International Criminal Court to hold perpetrators accountable and by carrying out obligations under the Geneva Conventions or Rome Statute to exercise criminal jurisdiction and arrest

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persons alleged to have committed, or who ordered to have committed, the international crimes described in the Commission's report; and

- Demand that Israel immediately end its practice of detaining Palestinian children under administrative detention orders and immediately release Amal Nakhleh and the three other boys currently held under administrative detention orders.

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