



1st October 2021

Defence for Children International (DCI) statement before the 48th session of the UN Human Rights Council

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

Madam President/Mr. Vice-President,

2021 has been the deadliest year for Palestinian children since 2014, according to documentation gathered by Defense for Children International – Palestine. This year, Israeli forces have killed 73 Palestinian children in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Israeli forces killed 60 children during the 11-day military assault on the Gaza Strip. Israeli forces have shot and killed 12 children in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. 13-year-old Omar Hasan Mousa Abu al-Nil succumbed to his wounds on August 28, a week after Israeli forces shot him in the neck while participating in a protest east of Gaza City, according to DCIP's documentation.

During Israel's military assault on the Gaza Strip in May, Israeli warplanes and weaponized drones bombarded densely populated civilian areas killing Palestinian children sleeping in their beds, playing in their neighborhoods, shopping at stores near their homes, and celebrating Eid Al-Fitr with their families, according to DCIP's investigations.

At least eight children in the OPT were shot and 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.

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 persons alleged to have committed, or who ordered to have committed, the international crimes described in the Commission's report;
- Cease all financial and diplomatic aid which supports Israel's apartheid regime; and
- Call for an arms embargo on the purchase and sale of Israeli weapons.

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