28th February 2025

58th session of the UN Human Rights Council

Item 2 – Interactive Dialogue on High Commissioner's report on the Occupied Palestinian Territory (res. 55/28)

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

Mr. President/Madam Vice-President,

The lack of accountability is a core reason why the State of Israel has been able to carry out its campaign of genocide against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and pursue its project of annexation in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. For decades, Israeli forces have systematically killed Palestinian children in huge numbers without consequence. The end of this systemic impunity will save the lives of countless Palestinian children and their families.

As a Palestinian human rights organisation, and the only local organisation focused exclusively on children's rights, we have thoroughly documented violations of Palestinian children's rights for decades, since the onset of the Second Intifada in the early 2000s. In that time, we have continuously advocated for justice and accountability for these rights violations, and we can say with confidence that there have been no meaningful measures of accountability for perpetrators.

Israeli soldiers know that they can kill Palestinian children with impunity and not face any professional or legal consequences. Now, as Israel and its officials are finally facing the beginning of justice at the world's highest courts, some countries are choosing to continue to embolden impunity.

Israeli forces will continue to kill Palestinian children without limit until world leaders support and enact strong measures of justice and accountability.

We strongly urge all member states to:

- Protect the integrity of investigations by the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court that aim to hold perpetrators accountable, including condemning sanctions and other punitive threats or actions toward members of the Court; and
- Use all available means, including those above, to demand Israeli authorities to uphold Palestinian children's rights as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which the State of Israel has ratified.

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