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Joint Public Statement

DCI-Palestine and LPHR launch “Know Your Rights” campaign for children on detainee rights

International and Palestinian organizations to distribute information cards and conduct trainings for children on detainee rights under Israeli military law and international human rights law

Ramallah, December 23, 2013—Defence for Children International Palestine (DCI-Palestine) launched a “Know Your Rights” campaign for Palestinian children with partner, Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights (LPHR), on Monday. The campaign focuses on empowering and educating Palestinian children to secure their basic rights while detained in the Israeli military detention system.

DCI-Palestine will distribute more than 5,000 “Know Your Rights” information cards over the next several weeks to Palestinian children between the ages of 12 and 17 years old living in West Bank communities where children appear to be targeted by Israeli forces for arrest.

DCI-Palestine will conduct training sessions for Palestinian children in schools to raise awareness on what to expect during the arrest and detention process. The trainings will focus on understanding relevant international human rights law concerning arrest, transfer and interrogation practices. Additionally, trainers will discuss rights found in Israeli military law and how these rights are systematically denied to Palestinian child detainees.

“Israeli military law denies basic and fundamental rights to Palestinian children detained by Israeli forces in the West Bank,” said Ayed Abu Eqtaish, Accountability Programme Director at DCI-Palestine. “Despite this, it is important to empower our youth through human rights training and information, particularly in communities targeted by Israeli forces for arrest near the separation barrier and illegal settlements.”

Israel is the only nation to automatically and systematically prosecute children in military courts that lack basic and fundamental fair trial guarantees. Around 500-700 Palestinian children, some as young as 12 years old, are arrested, detained and prosecuted in the Israeli military detention system each year. The majority of Palestinian child detainees are [charged with throwing stones](#), and [74 percent](#) experience physical violence during arrest, transfer or interrogation, according to evidence collected by [Defence for Children International Palestine](#). No Israeli children come into contact with the military court system.

Palestinian children are not properly informed of their right to silence, are denied access to an attorney before and during interrogations, and are not accompanied by a parent during questioning. The “Know Your Rights” information card emphasises awareness of these fundamental rights, which if implemented could protect children from practices involving verbal abuse, threats and physical violence used during interrogations to coerce confessions from Palestinian children.

An easy to remember telephone number is included on the card so Palestinian children can contact a DCI-Palestine lawyer 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, if they are allowed access to a telephone by Israeli authorities.

“We are seriously concerned by the glaring gaps in basic human rights protections within the Israeli military detention process and its isolating effects for Palestinian children,” said Tareq Shrourou, Director at LPHR. “Empowering Palestinian young people through clear and concise information on their fundamental rights provided by law is consequently critical.”

For more information related to the widespread and systematic ill-treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system, read the following reports:

- UNICEF, *Children in Israeli Military Detention*, February 2013, <http://uni.cf/ly3q8V>
- Independent report by a delegation of British lawyers, *Children in Military Custody*, June 2012, <http://bit.ly/1fBe3TU>
- DCI-Palestine, *Bound, Blindfolded and Convicted*, April 2012, <http://bit.ly/VP9GfC>

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About Defence for Children International Palestine

[Defence for Children International Palestine](#) (DCI-Palestine), an independent child rights organization, is dedicated to defending and promoting the rights of children living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. For over 20 years, we have investigated, documented and pursued accountability for grave human rights violations against children; held Israeli and Palestinian authorities accountable to universal human rights principles; advocated at the international and national levels to advance access to justice and protections for children; and provided direct legal aid to children in distress.

About Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights

[Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights](#) (LPHR) is a lawyer-based human rights organisation with charitable status in the UK which runs legal projects focused on protecting and promoting Palestinian human rights.