



CHILD RIGHTS BULLETIN

(for the period 1 September – 31 October 2020)

Key incidents outlined in this LPHR's Child Rights Bulletin covering 1 September – 31 October 2020:

- On 25 October a Palestinian boy, Amer Abdel-Rahim Snobar, aged 16, died after allegedly being held in a chokehold and beaten by Israeli forces during an Israeli search-and-arrest operation in Turmus'ayya village in Ramallah, as reported by Defence for Children International-Palestine
- 33 Palestinian children were injured by Israeli forces, including one 15-year-old shot in the head by live ammunition
- A one-year-old Palestinian was injured when the car he was travelling in was hit by stones in the Bethlehem governorate in a reported settler-violence incident
- 13 children in the Al-Issawiya neighbourhood of East Jerusalem were arrested by Israeli authorities during search and arrest operations that are endemic in this specific area
- A 14-year-old Palestinian boy tested positive for COVID-19 after spending two days in Israeli military detention
- The demolition of 123 structures caused the displacement of 89 children

The key incidents and statistics outlined in this bulletin span a range of violation categories: **'Fatalities', 'Injuries', 'Settler Violence', 'Arrests and Detention', 'Interference against Education', 'Displacement and Demolitions'**. They are collated from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (**UN OCHA**) and local human rights organisations: Defence for Children International-Palestine (**DCIP**), Yesh Din, Military Court Watch, B'Tselem and Save the Children.

This bulletin outlines the specific rights of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#) that apply to the key incidents affecting Palestinian children in the occupied Palestinian territory (**oPt**). As the occupying power, Israel has legal responsibilities under

international conventions, including the UNCRC, for the safety, welfare and human rights protection of civilians living in the oPt. This bulletin concludes with a *Further Reading* section which outlines two topics: **the continuation of home demolitions during the pandemic, and the long-term impact of Israeli military detention of Palestinian child detainees based on the findings of a new Save the Children report.**

LPHR gives special thanks to Elena Christaki-Hedrick for her excellent work preparing this bulletin.

FATALITIES

Data collected by [UN OCHA](#) records that one Palestinian child was killed by Israeli forces in the oPt during the reporting period. Since the start of the 2020, LPHR Child Rights Bulletins have recorded that a total of 10 Palestinian children have been killed as a result of Israeli military and settler presence in the oPt.

The child fatality in the reporting period is:

- [UN OCHA](#) reports that on 25 October, a 16-year-old Palestinian boy, Amer Abdel-Rahim Snobar, died during an Israeli search-and-arrest operation in Turmus'ayya village (Ramallah). Palestinian eyewitnesses indicated that he was severely beaten by Israeli forces and, according to the hospital where he was admitted, his body showed signs of violence. UN OCHA reports that according to the Israeli authorities, the boy fell and hit his head on the ground while being chased by soldiers. [DCIP](#) provides further details of the incident, reporting that Amer was helping his friend move his broken-down car around 22:00 on 24 October near the village of Turmus'ayya, when Israeli forces arrived at the scene. Amer's friend managed to flee on foot to some nearby trees where he became an eyewitness to Amer's killing. Amer was surrounded by Israeli forces and placed in a chokehold before being beaten and killed by Israeli forces, according to the eyewitness. An autopsy was later conducted. Doctors found Amer likely died from asphyxiation as a result of strangulation. The initial autopsy report also noted substantial bruising and wounds on Amer's chest and abdominal area.

Article 6(1) of the UNCRC provides that every child has the inherent right to life. The above-mentioned death of a child strongly suggests that Israel's authorities have seriously violated



their legal duty under Article 6(1). Under international law, lethal application of force can only be used as a last resort when there is a direct and imminent threat to life or serious injury. The apparent unlawful killing of a child as reported above raises serious questions as to whether the Israeli military forces involved violated the right to life by using excessive lethal force when the child did not pose an imminent threat to life or serious injury. Violations of this legal requirement should entail individual criminal responsibility.

Part of providing meaningful protection under the UNCRC involves review of and accountability for child deaths. To fulfil its obligations under international law, it is necessary that the Government of Israel thoroughly and transparently investigate the circumstances of the above-mentioned child fatality and ensure legal accountability and justice is delivered where there is criminal wrongdoing. However, there is strong evidence indicating that Israel is failing to provide accountability for child deaths, with data collected by [B'Tselem](#) and Israeli human rights organisation [Yesh Din](#) suggesting that soldiers who harm or kill Palestinians or damage their property are very rarely indicted.

INJURIES

Data collected by [UN OCHA](#) records that at least 33 Palestinian children were injured by Israeli forces during the reporting period. The injuries were caused by rubber bullets, live ammunition, stone throwing, physical assault, tear gas and other unspecified weapons. Injury incidents from 1 September - 31 October 2020 include:

- [UN OCHA](#) reports that during the period 8 – 21 September, three children aged 13, 14 and 16 years-old were hit by rubber bullets shot during clashes in Hebron city and the nearby Al Arrub refugee camp.
- [UN OCHA](#) reports that during the period 22 September – 5 October, a 15-year-old boy was injured after Israeli soldiers shot him in the head with live ammunition in unclear circumstances, in Hizma (East Jerusalem).

- [UN OCHA](#) reports that during the period 6 – 19 October, a one-year-old Palestinian was injured when the car he was travelling in was hit by stones in the Bethlehem governorate in a reported settler-violence incident.
- [UN OCHA](#) reports that during the period 6 – 19 October, 11 children were injured in clashes across the West Bank. The vast majority of the injuries were recorded in the refugee camps of Al Am'ari, Al Jalazun, Al Arrub and Balata.
- [UN OCHA](#) reports that during the period 20 October – 2 November a boy was injured during clashes in Hebron city with Israeli forces.
- [UN OCHA](#) reports that on 30 October, three children aged 13, 15 and 16 years-old were injured by shrapnel when Israeli soldiers opened fire at a Palestinian vehicle travelling near Qabatiya village (Jenin).

Article 3(2) of the UNCRC provides that states shall ensure children the protection and care necessary for their well-being. The excessive use of force by Israeli authorities against children in some of the above-cited incidents who were unarmed or otherwise not posing an imminent threat constitutes a serious violation of this important legal protection.

SETTLER VIOLENCE

Data collected by [UN OCHA](#) records that two Palestinian children were injured by Israeli settlers during the reporting period. The injuries were sustained in Al Khadr (Bethlehem) and Hebron.

Settler-related injury incidents between 1 September- 31 October include:

- [UN OCHA](#) reports that in October a one-year-old Palestinian was injured when the car he was travelling in was hit by stones thrown by people believed to be settlers, in the Bethlehem governorate.
- [B'Tselem](#) reports that on 9 October, a seven-year-old Palestinian child fainted during an incident in which settlers attacked his family home. About 20 settlers arrived at the neighbourhood of Burin, a village in Nablus District. Some started throwing stones at the home of one family. Five soldiers escorting the settlers hurled stun grenades and fired tear gas canisters at neighbours who came to the family's defence.



Article 3(2) of the UNCRC provides that states should ensure the protection and care of children, as is necessary for their well-being. The Israeli human rights organisation [Yesh Din](#) reports that incidents of violence by Israeli civilians against Palestinians and their property are a daily occurrence throughout the West Bank and that these incidents are rarely investigated properly by Israeli law enforcement, making the above-mentioned conviction of an Israeli settler for murder highly unusual. Only 3% of investigations into complaints filed by Palestinians hurt by settlers lead to convictions.

The low rate of investigations into attacks by Israeli settlers suggests that Israel is in violation of its obligations under **Article 39 of the UNCRC**, which stipulates that states should take all appropriate measures to promote the physical and psychological recovery of a child victim of abuse, and that such recovery should take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child. As the occupying power, Israel has the obligation to protect Palestinian civilians from all acts or threats of violence, including by Israeli settlers, and to ensure that attacks are investigated effectively and perpetrators held accountable.

ARRESTS AND DETENTION

Between 1 September - 31 October, UN OCHA reports that Israeli forces conducted more than 513 search and arrest operations, arresting more than 312 Palestinians (including an unknown number of children).

As of 30 September 2020 (latest figures available) [Military Court Watch](#) documents 157 Palestinian children (12 – 17 years old) in Israeli military detention facilities. Two of these children are held under [administrative detention](#), meaning they are being detained without charge or trial based on secret evidence. Of the 157 detained children, 115 are held in prisons inside Israel. It is a grave breach of international humanitarian law to transfer detainees outside of occupied territory.

Arrest and detention incidents in the reporting period include:

- [DCIP](#) reports that in September, a 14-year-old Palestinian boy tested positive for COVID-19 after spending two days in Israeli military detention.

- [UN OCHA](#) reports that during the period 6 – 19 October, Israeli forces arrested 13 children in the Al-Issawiya neighbourhood of East Jerusalem that are that are endemic in this specific area. Please see LPHR's blog published in July 2020 on this specific issue [here](#).
- Data collected by [MCW](#) shows that the number of Palestinian children strip searched when detained by Israeli forces continues to rise: 72% of children were strip searched on arrival at an Israeli Prison Service facility in 2020, compared to 60% in 2018 and 69% in 2019.
- [MCW](#) reports that the overwhelming majority of Palestinian children continue to be interrogated in the absence of a parent or close family member, with 0% of children being afforded access to a parent in 2020, down from 2% of children given access to a parent in 2019.

Article 3(1) of the UNCRC obliges states to ensure that: ‘In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration’. In addition, **Article 24(1) of the UNCRC** provides that states recognise children’s right to the highest attainable standard of health, this includes taking appropriate measures to diminish infant and child mortality (**Article 24(2)(a)**) and combat disease (**Article 24(2)(c)**). Further, **Article 37(b) of the UNCRC** states that no child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily and that it shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time. The above-mentioned arrest and detention of a child who has tested positive for COVID-19, is deeply concerning and indicates an apparent breach of Articles 3(1), Article 24, and 37(b) of the UNCRC.

Please see the further reading section for information about a report published by Save the Children on the impact of Israeli military detention on Palestinian children.

INTERFERENCE AGAINST EDUCATION

Infringements on education in the reporting period of 1 September – 31 October include:

- [B’Tselem](#) reports that twice in September, Israeli forces confiscated classroom chairs and tables at elementary school in the Palestinian community of Ras al-Tin. In one of these incidents, the school’s roof panels were also confiscated, leaving children without shade from the sun. In October, reports from Save the Children and the Norwegian Refugee Council warned of the school's imminent demolition. Please see LPHR's urgent



action letter to the Foreign Office on the imminent demolition of the Ras al-Tin school [here](#). A response from Minister James Cleverly to LPHR's urgent action letter is [here](#).

- [UN OCHA](#) reports that in October, during clashes in the refugee camp of Al Jalazun (Ramallah) Israeli soldiers shot large amounts of tear gas canisters at school children, who reportedly threw stones, following which the soldiers entered the school and locked students in classrooms. UN OCHA reports that the clashes followed search and arrest operations and stone throwing incidents.

Article 28 of the UNCRC stipulates that education should be accessible to all children on the basis of equal opportunity, obliging Israel to ensure that children in the oPt have unrestricted access to education. The above-mentioned repeated confiscation of an elementary school's classroom chairs and tables indicates a violation of this important access to education right provided by the UNCRC.

DEMOLITIONS & DISPLACEMENT

Demolitions and displacement remain a matter of huge concern. **Data collected by [UN OCHA](#) records that 177 people, including 89 children (37 girls and 52 boys) have been displaced by the demolition of 123 structures during the reporting period.** Please refer to LPHR's [Demolitions and Displacement bulletin](#) for information on incidents affecting children in September and October 2020.

Article 27 of the UNCRC protects children's right to a standard of living and seeks to ensure that this standard is adequate with respect to the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. The UNCRC further adds that State Parties are responsible for taking appropriate measures to provide assistance in respect to nutrition, clothing and housing. The actions of the Government of Israel in rendering children and their parents homeless and disrupting families' livelihoods through demolitions of homes clearly violates both the letter and the spirit of the UNCRC.

Article 18(2) of the UNCRC obliges State Parties to give appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities. Demolitions and

subsequent forced displacement violate this right as it harms parents and legal guardians' ability to fulfil their responsibilities of looking after and providing shelter for their children.

Article 16(1) of the UNCRC protects children's rights to not be subject to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family and home and **Article 16(2)** entitles children to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Please see our Further Reading section below for more information on demolitions during the pandemic.

Further Reading

Home demolitions during the COVID-19 emergency

During COVID-19, the Israeli authorities have continued ordering the demolition of Palestinian owned homes and structures. Families, including children, have been left homeless during a time when they are already vulnerable to COVID-19. [Defence for Children International-Palestine](#) reports data from B'Tselem that in East Jerusalem alone, 278 people, including 141 children, have been displaced by demolitions between 1 January 2020 and 17 October 2020.

Defence for Children International-Palestine reports the story of the Tahan family (including seven children) who had their home demolished in mid-August this year. After receiving a demolition order in 1992, Wael Tahan battled the order in court for 27 years. They report:

"For decades, Tahan faced significant fines and the persistent threat of demolition. An Israeli court imposed a 280,000 Israeli new shekel (\$81,000) fine in 1992 or 1993, according to Tahan, and he paid it in full in 2010. However, in December 2019, an Israeli court issued another 100,000 ILS fine (\$29,000) and ordered the demolition of the home. Six months later, the municipality ordered Tahan and his family to evacuate their home."

Despite Tahan's efforts, the Tahan family home was forcibly demolished on August 11 2020. According to Defence for Children International-Palestine:

"Around 7 a.m. on August 11, 2020, Tahan's son called to tell him the house was surrounded by Israeli police forces and two bulldozers... At 9 a.m. two Israeli bulldozers began to tear down the house. "It was a painful scene," he recalled. "The house was turned into large rubble. It broke me.""



Save the Children’s important new report on the impact of the Israeli military detention system on Palestinian children

[Save the Children](#) has published an important new report entitled, “[Defenceless: The impact of the Israeli military detention system on Palestinian children](#)”. The report documents the experiences of 470 Palestinian children held in Israeli military detention and the impact their detention has had on their lives after release. It identifies the damage done to children’s mental health, physical wellbeing, relationships and education as a result of the ill-treatment they experience during military detention. Key statistics include:

- 81% of the children consulted were physically beaten at least once, and 43% were beaten numerous times;
- 46% were deprived of food and water, and almost all of these children (93%) said that this happened more than once; others reported being given ‘inedible’ food including raw meat;
- 88% of children reported that they did not receive adequate health care during detention.
- 60% of children think that they are treated differently by family and friends following release from detention;
- 76% of children think about the details of their experience every day, despite attempting avoidance; and
- 85% of children said that they have irreversibly changed after being detained.

The report concludes by stating:

“It is worth noting that the abuse, ill-treatment and rights’ violations that children outlined for this report are not ‘new’ insights. Instead, their valuable testimonies re-affirm and support the wealth of evidence that has been collected for many years, much of which is referenced in this report. They also highlight the severe and foreseeable consequences for children of Israel’s

failure to implement necessary human rights and due process protections. Many of the recommendations set out in this report have also been published by a range of organisations including UNICEF, Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights, DCI-P, B'Tselem, and Save the Children, before. The Government of Israel has failed to implement these recommendations. For example, in 2013, UNICEF made 38 recommendations for action. Military Court Watch estimates that 1 out of 38 recommendations has been substantially implemented – this gives an implementation rate of just 2.6%. The military arrest and detention of Palestinian children is a major and long-standing human rights concern. Children should no longer be prosecuted in military courts. Only when these changes have been made, can we prevent irrevocable damage being inflicted on generations of Palestinian children.

“Save the Children believes that no child should be prosecuted in a military court, or any court that lacks comprehensive fair trial rights and juvenile justice standards. Save the Children is calling on the Government of Israel to respect international law and to end the detention of children under military law and their prosecution in military courts. In the interests of taking immediate action to improve the protection of children currently under military detention, Save the Children is calling on all duty bearers in the oPt to take concrete and immediate steps to proactively protect Palestinian children in line with their obligations under international law, end the systemic ill-treatment of Palestinian children in the detention system, and help girls and boys to recover from their experiences.”

Please do read the report and the full list of its recommendations [here](#).