
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL29th Regular Session

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Israel's armed forces and grave violations of children's rights

Statement on behalf of Defence for Children International (DCI)

Mr. President,

During Israel's most recent military offensive on Gaza, Israeli armed forces carried out direct attacks on civilian homes and other civilian buildings, including schools, [killing over 500 Palestinian children](#) and injuring over 3,000 others.

Today, the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the 2014 Gaza Conflict presented its report, which painstakingly details the degree to which Palestinian children were savagely affected by Israel's military assault on Gaza.

On June 8, the Secretary-General released his annual report on children and armed conflict. It too methodically details the devastating impact Israel's prolonged military occupation had on Palestinian children in 2014.

While Mr. Ban Ki-moon expressed deep alarm "at the extent of grave violations suffered by children as a result of Israeli military operations in 2014" and recognized the "unprecedented and unacceptable scale" of Israel's military violence, he decided to remove Israel's armed forces from his draft "list of shame."

The UN Security Council has set clear, evidence-based standards to determine what conduct triggers listing for killing and maiming children and carrying out attacks on schools. The standard for "listing" is not whether an armed force or group acts as heinously as the Islamic State group or Al Qaeda.

In a context where systemic impunity is the status quo, the need for justice and accountability is urgent.

By removing Israel's armed forces from the children's "list of shame," the Secretary-General has provided tacit approval for Israeli forces to continue carrying out grave violations against Palestinian children with impunity.

This was reaffirmed just days later when Israeli authorities absolved Israeli forces of any wrongdoing in the killing of the four Bakr boys on a Gaza City beach.

While we welcome the report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry, concrete action must be taken by this council to challenge the status quo of systemic impunity enjoyed by Israeli forces.

Defence for Children International urges all members of the Human Rights Council

- To demand that Israel end its prolonged military occupation of Palestinians living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and its eight-year siege on the Gaza Strip, a form of collective punishment prohibited under international law; and
- To actively support all duty bearers and United Nations bodies to ensure the full and immediate implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the 2014 Gaza Conflict.