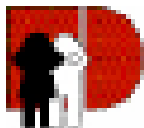




Annual Report 2005



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Palestine Section**

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5	Acknowledgements
6	President's Comments
8	Introduction
12	Five-year review and Strategic Planning Process
14	Monitoring and Documentation Unit
24	Legal Unit
36	Training and Social Mobilisation Unit
54	Research and International Advocacy Unit
64	Administrative & Financial Level
68	Audited Financial Statement





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DCI/PS would like to express its heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to all those who have supported and contributed to our work throughout the year. Without the financial and moral support, as well as the technical assistance and consultancy of our donors and partners we would not have been able to work effectively towards our vision of a Palestinian community fit for all children.

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- Coalition To Stop the Use of Child Soldiers – UK
- Quaker Service- American Friends Service Committee

Additionally, we would like to say a very big thank you to all the individuals who have volunteered their time and effort in the field, in our offices and overseas. Their contribution has been crucial in enabling DCI/PS to fulfill its role as the only Palestinian NGO specializing in monitoring, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian children.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

One more year in the life span of DCI/PS has passed and still its mission is valid. One more year has passed and still the violation of children's rights is one of the most notable signs of oppression. In the absence of justice, these flourishing buds who will lead this world towards a better future are neglected and left to wilt. Child labour in Latin America, child soldiers in Africa and the systematic violation of children's basic rights in occupied Iraq and Palestine are still big issues on the agenda of humanitarian and development organizations all over the world.

And here in Palestine, the Israeli occupation is still the number one violator of Palestinians' human rights, especially the rights of children, who make up more than 50% of the whole population living in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. Fifty-two children, the youngest aged three, were killed by Israeli occupation forces and/or illegal Israeli settler presence in Palestinian territory in 2005. And while these 52 children were stripped of their fundamental right to life, thousands of other Palestinian children suffered a plethora of other child rights' abuses; in 2005 hundreds were denied their right to liberty, to freedom of movement, to education, to health and to adequate housing as a consequence of manifestations of the occupation: checkpoints, the Segregation Wall, house demolitions, arbitrary arrests, military orders, curfews, closures, etc.

These violations, among others, drive us at DCI/PS to constantly develop our performance in our multi-faceted role as child rights defenders and child rights' advocates. The continuation of these violations just hardens our resolve to find ever innovative and creative ways of trying to stop them or mitigate their impact. The huge challenges implied just make DCI/PS' staff, volunteers and partners even more committed to being better at what we do. During the year under review, DCI/PS responded to these challenges by diligently documenting all major child rights' violations, while developing our database to make all of the statistics on violations available for public access on our website by mid-2006.

Over the course of 2005, DCI/PS facilitated training courses, workshops and open discussions on child rights and life skills for 1900 children and helped 1500 adults to become effective duty-bearers of child rights and to act as key figures in creating a supportive environment towards child rights' issues in their communities. It followed up the legal cases of 543 children arrested and brought before the Israeli military courts - 74 of which were 12-14 years of age - and kept the public, at home and abroad, constantly updated of the latest developments concerning the status of child rights through our website and printed newsletters and other publications. These achievements would never have been possible without the tireless work of our staff and volunteers who are considered DCI/PS' most valuable asset and who deserve every appreciation while they practice their work in the midst of very tough political, economic and social circumstances.

And here, we cannot but express our deepest thanks and high appreciation to our partners, friends and funders for their understanding of the importance of the role of DCI/PS as well as for their participation, enthusiasm and readiness to work towards the goal of improving the lives of our children.

While displaying the fruits of the work of this year, we emphasize our determination to continue serving the goals of our movement in Palestine which we consider a Palestinian translation of the goals of DCI as an international movement, and a translation of our promise to our children in Palestine to exert every effort possible so that they can have a better and brighter future.



Nader Abu Amsa,
President, DCI/PS





INTRODUCTION

Against the backdrop of what were hailed as political milestones on the Palestinian-Israeli front – Israel’s unilateral “disengagement” from Gaza in September, local council elections throughout the West Bank and some of the Gaza Strip and large-scale preparations for the first Palestinian Legislative Council election since 1996, DCI/PS accrued some milestones of its own in 2005. The organisation continued to be at the forefront in promoting and protecting the rights of Palestinian children, as the first and largest Palestinian NGO to completely dedicate its activities and efforts to bettering the lives of children through rights’ based programming. In 2005, DCI/PS held no less than three conferences; in January it held the Girl Child Conference in Hebron, followed by its first international conference in June in Bethlehem, with more than 300 participants and many distinguished keynote speakers. “Kids Behind Bars – A Child Rights Perspective” brought together representatives from the UN, DCI sections, human rights activists and experts from around the world to discuss issues of juvenile justice. “Kids Behind Bars” coincided with the second annual DCI/PS children’s conference, which focused on the same theme and brought children from all over the West Bank, Occupied Golan Heights and inside the Green Line for three days of debates, workshops, discussions, etc. Just days prior to the international conference, another landmark event took place in Bethlehem under the auspices of DCI/PS: the ninth DCI International General Assembly, during which the long-standing president of DCI/Palestine, Rifat Odeh Kassis, was elected president of DCI on the international level.

On an internal level, DCI/PS successfully held its annual general assembly in September, during which a new board of trustees and president were elected. In its pursuit of constant evolution on an organisational level, in 2005 DCI/PS underwent a comprehensive review and evaluation of its work in the past five years and embarked on a strategic planning process to map out the organisation's strategy for the coming five years. The recommendations of the aforementioned Girl Child Conference, the "Kids Behind Bars" Children's Conference and the Bethlehem Declaration¹ provided key inputs to the outcome document of the strategic planning process.

Despite these and many more achievements, DCI/PS' vision is far from achieved - Palestinian children's rights continued to be systematically violated by Israeli occupation forces, Israeli occupation authorities and aggressive illegal Israeli settlers in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. Dozens of Palestinian children continued to be killed by Israeli troops and/or settlers, and hundreds were injured, arrested, imprisoned, traumatised and/or left homeless. Vital services including education and health still continued to be intermittently disrupted by the arbitrary oppressive policies and practices of the occupation forces. These and other factors threaten the mental and physical development of Palestinian children, not to mention their integrity, liberty and justice, while reluctance to speak out against crimes against Palestinian children on an international level persists.

While the 38-year old Israeli occupation still presented DCI/PS with its main *raison d'être*, much was also to be done on the domestic level, to ensure that a supportive environment towards child rights is created in local communities and diverse local social actors are capacitated to advocate for children's rights and treat children according to their best interests. While DCI/PS continued to strive to hold Israel accountable for its violations of Palestinian child rights on the one hand and mitigate the negative consequences thereof



on the other, it also aimed in 2005 to strengthen the national legislative framework with regards to child rights. In this field, DCI/PS played a key role not only in the drafting committee of the Palestinian Child Rights Law but also in lobbying for its enactment (January 2005). Whatever may be said about its weaknesses, the Palestinian Child Rights Law is a major achievement providing a strong legal instrument around which it is now possible to lobby locally for the promotion and protection of child rights in the Palestinian community.

With each passing year DCI/PS also becomes stronger in networking and coordination on the local level and the year 2005 saw a continuation of that trend. Spearheading the Palestinian Network for Children's Rights (PNCR), which was initially a group of 18 local NGOs and Italian partner organisations based in Bethlehem, Ramallah and East Jerusalem, DCI/PS initiated a process in 2005 to expand the network to the whole of the West Bank and by the end of the year, the Network had 45 member organisations. In the first few months of 2006, membership had risen to 60. DCI/PS also created a website for the Network (www.pncr.org) with an online forum to enhance participation and exchange between members in diverse towns and cities.

¹ Outcome document of the "Kids Behind Bars – A Child Rights' Perspective" international conference

During the year under review, DCI/PS also contributed to a number of influential and high-profile reports, and completed research on different issues affecting Palestinian children, including child abuse and neglect, child labour and conducted a needs assessment of support networks available to ex-child detainees. At the same time, DCI/PS consolidated its position as one of the foremost local organisations working directly with children, not least through the launching of two national campaigns in 2005 and early 2006. The awareness raising campaign on child abuse and neglect included 10 televised debates with professionals on various issues related to child abuse and neglect that were broadcast on all major local TV channels. In addition, all preparations were made for the launching of the Campaign to End Corporal Punishment in early 2006.



The year 2005 also saw the official opening on 7 April of its new Child Rights' Centre in Bethlehem, funded by the French Consulate in Jerusalem and the Italian NGO UCODEP (through the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs). In fact, the Bethlehem centre, along with the DCI/PS Child Rights' Centre in Hebron, has been operative since 2004, when both centres were established to facilitate DCI/PS' cross-cutting objectives of enhancing child participation and empowering children, as well as providing a safe space and child-friendly atmosphere for children to come and receive psychosocial support and/or legal advice, if needed.

It is not only locally that DCI/PS has developed an excellent reputation, but also regionally and internationally, through participation by staff and children in conferences, workshops and meetings abroad. Through the production of regular press releases, reports and research, and the continual updating of our website, DCI/PS has worked to ensure that the issue of Palestinian child rights receives appropriate attention in the international arena, while the regular publication DCI/PS' Little Hands as an insert in the Palestinian daily newspaper Al-Ayyam helped re-enforce the advocacy work of the organisation on a local level.

This introduction provides just a brief overview of the vast range of activities and interventions that makes DCI/PS one of the most active of the 40-plus sections comprising the DCI movement worldwide. We hope that our grain of sand this year has brought us one step closer to achieving our vision of "a Palestinian community fit for all children".

George Abu Al Zulof
General Director, DCI/PS



FIVE YEAR REVIEW AND STRATEGIC PLANNING 2006-2010

When DCI/PS was established in 1992, it was a small organisation with just 6 staff members in one office and the capacity to implement only a few programmes. Over the past 13 years it has grown steadily in size, scope of intervention and capacity and the DCI/PS team now comprises 23 employees and 8 full-time volunteers working in three DCI/PS offices, in Ramallah, Bethlehem and Hebron, respectively, with the planned opening of another DCI/PS Child Rights' Centre in Nablus in the near future. In addition, DCI/PS hires 16 fieldworkers throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip to monitor and report child rights' violations. With the aim of investing in the sustainable growth of DCI/PS as an expanding child rights' organisation in Palestine and in enhancing the overall organisational development of the institution, DCI/PS underwent two time-consuming and thorough, but very rewarding processes at the end of 2005 and beginning of 2006.





Firstly a full five-year review of DCI/PS' intervention and capacity was conducted by internal and external consultants. This was followed by a comprehensive strategic planning process in order to map out DCI/PS direction and strategy for the coming five years.

To ensure comprehensiveness, DCI/PS work was evaluated according to a wide range of categories, using different methodological tools such as surveys, focus groups and in-depth interviews, and addressing all DCI/PS stakeholders: staff, volunteers, partners and beneficiaries. The main categories of review were the organization's programme delivery, human resources, management, finance and external relations, as well as an in-depth assessment of the impact of our work on our targeted beneficiaries.

The lessons learnt and recommendations drawn up in the outcome of the five year review very much shaped the strategic planning process, which was designed by a development committee, comprising of DCI/PS general director, accountant, senior staff and two members of the Board of Trustees, including the chairman. Using the findings of the review as a reference framework, a

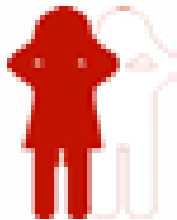
strategic planning session was held on 10-12 December 2005 in Jericho, facilitated by the consultant who carried out the internal review.

The findings were presented to the staff and the board of trustees for discussion and preliminary approval, subsequent to making the necessary modifications. In a workshop that followed, the staff, in their units, developed their strategic objectives for the next five years and drew up a detailed action plan for the coming three years. The drafting committee then integrated their action plans into this document.

In a second strategic planning session, held on 23 January 2006, the staff and board members met again in order to review and adjust DCI/PS's vision, mission statement, values and principles and strategic approaches. The strategic plan 2006-2010 was approved by the DCI/PS board of trustees in March 2006. It is currently being implemented and includes a restructuring of DCI/PS management on an internal level and a comprehensive plan to implement a range of appropriate organizational development processes that will make DCI/PS' performance more efficient and their work more effective and sustainable.



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Monitoring & Documentation Unit

Documentation Unit Monitoring & Documentation Unit Monitoring & Documentation Unit Monitoring & Documentation Unit
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Monitoring & Documentation Unit

Documenting child rights' violations in a precise and systematic manner is the first step in advocating effectively for their end. Accurate, verified information is the starting point for all DCI/PS' advocacy work on both the local and international level and it is in this sense that the Monitoring & Documentation Unit (M&D Unit), forms an integral part of the whole organisation.

Unit Main Objective

To monitor and document violations of Palestinian children rights in accordance with international, regional and local standards.

Sub Objective 1:

Producing statistical and analytical reports that reflect the violations of Palestinian children's rights.

Sub Objective 2:

Expanding the unit's mandate to once more include the monitoring and documentation of violations against Palestinian children's rights under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian National Authority¹

Documentation methodology

The unit gathers its data through a team of 16 trained volunteer fieldworkers based in all districts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, supervised by the unit coordinator. DCI/PS uses two approaches for documenting violations to Palestinian child rights. With violations to the right to life, fieldworkers collect comprehensive documentation for every incident of a child killed. This involves recording the testimonies of eyewitnesses, completion of questionnaires, illustrative drawings of the scene of the incident, and the collection of official supporting documents. For other violations – including abuses to the right to education and violations of the right to secure housing – DCI/PS has developed a network of contacts among local community workers, journalists, NGO and governmental organisations, who are able to assist the monitoring and documentation unit, supplying primary information about violations. Armed with such data, the unit fieldworkers are then able to travel to the site of incidents and complete the necessary documentation for a representative sample of cases for use in case studies and analysis.

Distribution of DCI/PS fieldworkers, 2005:

¹ Up to 2000, DCI/PS monitored and documented Palestinian child rights' violations on both the Israeli and PNA level. However with the outbreak of the intifada, the increase and intensity of violations perpetrated by Israel obliged the M&D Unit to dedicate all its efforts and capacities to documenting and reporting all the violations on this level until the beginning of 2005.

West Bank		Gaza Strip	
Jerusalem	1	Rafah	1
Bethlehem	1	Khan Yunis	2
Hebron	1	Central Gaza	1
Jericho	1	Gaza City	1
Ramallah	2	Northern Gaza	1
Jenin	1		
Tulkarem	1		
Qalqiliya + Salfit	1		
Nablus	1		

Volunteer Training

In 2005, DCI/PS organised two workshops (one in the West Bank and one in the Gaza Strip) that aimed to train volunteer fieldworkers in professional documentation techniques. In Gaza 20 volunteer fieldworkers and human rights activists from different human rights organizations participated in this workshop, which was carried out in coordination with the Al-Mezan Centre for Human Rights, while in Ramallah ten volunteers took part in the workshop, carried out in coordination with specialists working in the same field.

The training workshop focused on the following topics:

- International human rights law with special focus on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- UN principles and rules relating to juveniles.
- Raising awareness on unexploded ordnance.
- Research methodology.
- Tools of monitoring and documentation.
- How to reach and interview a victim.
- Collecting and writing affidavits
- Relationship between the field research process and the database.
- Time management

The right to life and physical health:

- Child fatalities
- Child injuries
- Mines and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)



Child fatalities

Since the beginning of the Intifada until the end of 2005, the M&D Unit has documented the deaths of 728 Palestinian children at the hands of the Israeli military or Israeli settlers. In the period between 28 September and 31 December 2000, 94 children were killed, in 2001, 98 children were killed, in 2002, 192 children were killed, in 2003, 130 children were killed while in the year 2004, 162 children were killed.

In 2005, the M&D Unit documented 52 Palestinian child fatalities caused directly by the Israeli army or illegal Israeli settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The following tables give a breakdown of these deaths according to different categories: month of death, circumstances of death, age group, location of fatal injury and region in which it occurred.

Distribution of Palestinian Child Fatalities by Month:

Month	Number
January	20
February	4
March	2
April	3
May	2
June	1
July	6
August	6
September	3
October	4
November	1
December	0
Total	52

Distribution of Palestinian Child Fatalities by Region:

Region	Number
Rafah	7
Khan Younis	2
Central Gaza	6
Gaza City	1
Northern Gaza	12
Hebron	4
Ramallah	5
Tulkarem	4
Jenin	5
Nablus	3
Qalqilia	1
Salfit	1
Jericho	1
Total	52

Distribution of Child Fatalities by Age Group:

Age Group	Number
0-8	2
9-12	10
13-15	19
16-17	21
Total	52

Distribution of Child Fatalities according to Location of Injury:

Location Of Injury	Number
Head	12
Neck	3
Chest	4
Back	1
Waist	3
Eye	1
More than One Place	28
Total	52

Distribution of Child Fatalities according to Circumstances of Death:

Circumstances	Number
Clashes	6
Air and Ground Attacks	10
Gun Fire Opened Randomly	23
During an assassination attempt	7
Closure	0
UXO	6
Home Demolition	0
Total	52

Child Injuries

The M&D Unit documented 446 injuries to Palestinian children by Israeli forces and/or Israeli settlers in 2005. The following tables give a breakdown of these injuries according to different categories: region in which it occurred, age group and location/type of injury.



Distribution of Palestinian Child injuries by Region:

Region	Number
Gaza Strip	26
Hebron	84
Bethlehem	20
Ramallah	24
Tulkarem	47
Jenin	89
Nablus	146
Qalqilia	7
Salfit	2
Jericho	1
Total	446

Distribution of Child injuries by Age Group:

Age Group	Number
0-8	34
9-12	93
13-15	156
16-17	163
Total	446

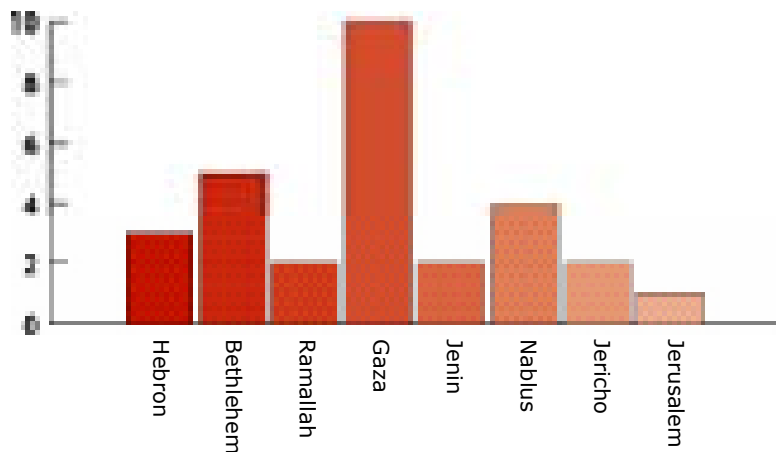
Distribution of Child injuries according to Location/type of Injury:

Location/type Of Injury	Number
Head	72
Neck	5
Chest	14
Back	13
Abdomen	12
Upper limbs	83
Lower limbs	131
Eyes	2
More than One Place	65
Asphyxiation	8
Bruises	24
Other	17
Total	446



Mines and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)

As part of DCI/PS cooperation with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, the M&D unit continued to document all cases in which Palestinians are killed or maimed by mines and UXO. The M&D unit followed up the cases of 29 mine and UXO victims, of whom 25 were children. Of the 29 cases, there were eight fatalities, six of which were children.



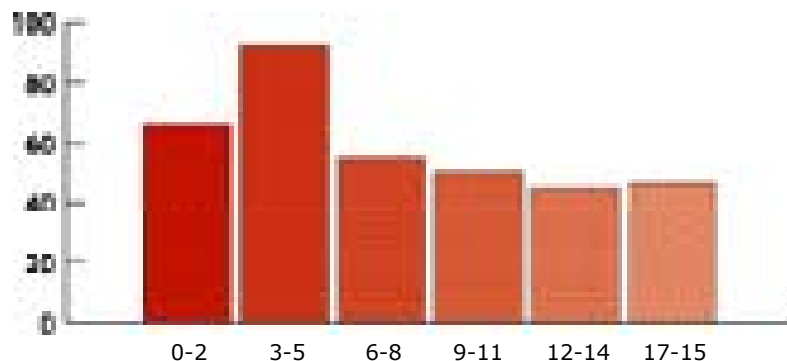
Area	Number
Hebron	3
Bethlehem	5
Ramallah	2
Gaza	10
Jenin	2
Nablus	4
Jericho	2
Jerusalem	1
Total	29

The right to adequate and secure housing

House Demolitions

Throughout 2005, homes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip continued to be razed to the ground by Israeli forces, sometimes for alleged administrative or deterrence purposes, other times during the course of military incursions and in many cases to make room for the Segregation Wall. The M&D unit recorded the cases of 95 families who lost their homes as a result of these Israeli occupation policies. Among these were 355 cases of children left homeless- stripped of their right to adequate housing.

The following chart shows the distribution of children deprived of their right to adequate housing according to age.

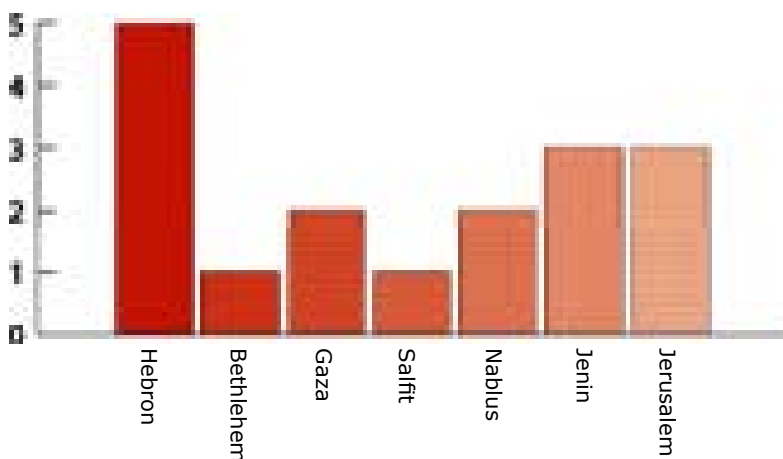


Age Group	Number
0-2	66
3-5	92
6-8	55
9-11	50
12-14	45
17-15	47
Total	355

The right to education

The M&D Unit recorded many violations to the right to education over the course of 2005, as Israeli forces continued to directly target educational facilities – attacking schools, closing them by military order, forcibly entering them unexpectedly and/or evacuating them to use as military bases. Moreover and as a result of building the Segregation Wall, curfews and closure, children and teachers are regularly prevented from reaching their schools, or arrive late for the school day. A total numbers of 17 schools were exposed to violations by Israeli occupation forces during 2005.

Distribution of the violation to the right education according to geographical area:



Area	Number
Hebron	5
Bethlehem	1
Gaza	2
Salfit	1
Jenin	3
Nablus	2
Jerusalem	3
Total	17



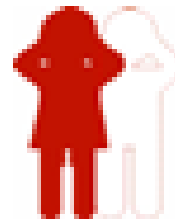
Research

During the year under review, the M&D Unit, in coordination with the Research and International Advocacy Unit followed up –administratively and technically- the process of data gathering regarding 123 cases of Palestinian children in a street situation, in order to provide the statistical basis for a research paper to be published by DCI/PS in 2006 on street children.

Development of the DCI/PS violations database

In 2005, the M&D unit continued to work on developing the DCI/PS violations database, almost completing second phase implementation of the initiative to make the entire database publicly available on the DCI/PS website in both English and Arabic. The official launch of the online database is planned for mid-2006. In 2005, the M&D Unit also helped set up a separate database for the Legal Unit of all cases of the arrest and detention of children, enhancing the crosscutting work of the different DCI/PS units.





Legal Unit

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Legal Unit

The Legal Unit of DCI/PS is committed to defending the rights of Palestinian children in all arenas. The unit operates on two levels – defending Palestinian children before the Israeli military authorities and protecting the rights of children on the Palestinian jurisdictional level, whether through law reform or by representing children, victims of crime, or children who find themselves in conflict with Palestinian law.

Three full-time lawyers provide legal services and representation to children whose rights have been violated by Israeli occupation forces. These include lawyers with Israeli ID, who are thus able to circumvent Israeli restrictions designed to impede the access of Palestinian lawyers to their Palestinian clients held illegally inside Israel. Other lawyers are employed on a contract basis to take on extra cases when necessary. The unit's work on the issue of juvenile justice in PA areas is undertaken by two full-time lawyers/researchers and one part-time lawyer, who represents children before Palestinian courts. The legal assistant is responsible for the unit's administrative affairs and for passing information collected by the unit on to other departments within DCI/PS for follow-up work including documentation and advocacy.

Unit Main Objective

To defend the rights of Palestinian children and provide them with legal protection in accordance with international, regional and local standards.

Unit Sub Objectives

Sub-objective 1:

To provide legal support for children whose rights are being violated.

Sub-objective 2:

To improve Palestinian children's legislative and policy framework in accordance with regional and international related standards.

Sub-objective 3:

To monitor and document and report on the Israeli military legislative and policy framework that Palestinian children are subject to in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Sub-objective 4:

To empower the legal capacity and knowledge of personnel responsible for law enforcement related to children.

Sub-objective 5:

To monitor child detention conditions, child protection centres and court procedures and decisions.

On the Israeli Level

General background

In spite of a raft of international regulations safeguarding the rights of juveniles deprived of their liberty, detained Palestinian children suffer routine violations of their basic rights. Children arrested in the West Bank or Gaza Strip are brought before Israeli Military Courts - there are no juvenile courts, no specifically trained juvenile judges, no probation officers, and no special police officers to deal with the interrogation and detention of children. Besides these institutionalised rights' infringements, Palestinian child prisoners are frequently subjected to other abuses which severely impede their lawyers from developing an adequate defence:

- Israeli General Security Services (also known as Shabak or Shin Bet) frequently prevent children from meeting their lawyers for the duration of their interrogation, which can last more than three weeks.
- Israeli interrogators and guards usually subject child detainees to intense physical and mental abuse – often amounting to torture, in order to obtain confessions or as a form of punishment and humiliation. Practices include beating, threats, sleep deprivation and preventing detainees from going to the toilet during the interrogation.
- Many children are held in inhumane conditions in interrogation centres for prolonged periods even after their interrogation has finished, and in some cases even after they have been sentenced.

In 2005, the Legal Unit provided the following services:

- Providing legal representation for Palestinian children who have been arrested and are taken before Israeli military courts.
- Visiting imprisoned children in Israeli jails to provide necessary services, to the greatest extent possible. Also, providing psychological support to children with a focus on children whose families have been prevented from visiting them while in detention.
- Representing Palestinian children who have served two-thirds of their sentence, to request their parole from the relevant Israeli prison committee.
- Providing legal defence for Palestinian children who have been placed in administrative detention (imprisonment without trial) in front of pertinent courts.
- Providing legal counsel to children and their families regarding their rights during trial and imprisonment.
- Devoting special attention to the arrest and imprisonment cases of girl-children, with careful and intense follow-up and monitoring of their conditions.
- Following up cases with the relevant authorities in order to arrange family visits.
- Representing detained Palestinian children in applications for transfer to more suitable prison facilities.



Over the course of 2005:

- More than 700 Palestinian children were arrested and detained by Israeli occupation forces.
- DCI/PS' Legal Unit followed up the cases of 660 children, including the unclosed cases of 117 children carried over from 2004.
- DCI/PS' Legal Unit represented 491 children, closing a total of 526 files corresponding to these children, as DCI/PS often represents the same child in more than one file – i.e. before the military court, at his/her appeal hearing and then for his/her release on bail.
- Cases of demands for improved living conditions in Israeli prisons (related to, for example, children's requests for medical treatment, improved food quality, etc.) were followed up.
- Cases of group violations of children's rights (such as prison administration's denial of education) were followed up.
- Legal counsel and services for the families of imprisoned children were provided.
- DCI/PS' Legal Unit carried out 10 appeal cases.



The unclosed files relating to 169 children are carried over into 2006. Among the children whose cases were followed by DCI/PS were five girl children, two of whom were sentenced while the other three were still being held pending trial.

The following table presents the children's cases according to the file type:

Type of file	Number of cases closed, 2005	Percentage 2005	Percentage 2004
Lawsuit before military court	483	91.8	88.3
Administrative detention	4	0.8	2.2
Parole (Shleish Lawsuit)	8	1.6	1.2
Cases before military appeal court	10	1.9	3.0
Release on bail	7	1.3	0.8
Other	14	2.6	4.5
Total	526	100	100

The following table shows the geographical distribution of children represented by DCI/PS in 2005:

Area	Number of children	Percentage 2005	Percentage 2004
Jericho	0	0	0
Jenin	71	14.5	14.2
Nablus	149	30.4	21.3
Salfit	0	0	0
Tulkarem/Qalqilia	89	18.1	10.6
Ramallah	27	5.5	9.8
Jerusalem	30	6.1	6.7
Bethlehem	59	15.6	11.9
Hebron	24	12	24.4
Gaza	3	0.6	1.0
Total	491	100	100



Distribution of DCI/PS cases according to charge:

The following chart lists the different charges usually brought against Palestinian children who are arrested by Israeli forces and their rate of occurrence in 2005. However, it warrants mention that, according to DCI/PS's longstanding experience and research done in this field, charges levelled against Palestinian children are often based on confessions that are coerced out of them following notoriously prolonged and brutal interrogations by Israeli forces. Children have to sign "confessions" in Hebrew, a language they do not understand, making the legitimacy of the confession, and in turn, the fairness of the charge, all the more dubious. Moreover, charge sheets cannot be taken as a reliable indicator of the actual deeds of the child, as Israeli military prosecutors often fill these in with exaggerated charges, in order to minimize the effects of subsequent plea bargains. In addition, children are very often sentenced disproportionately in court, whether the charges are exaggerated or not.

Charge	Number of cases	Percentage 2005	Percentage 2004
Stone throwing	107	22.2	31.0
Possession and/or throwing Molotov cocktail	69	14.3	14.2
Membership of banned militant organization	47	9.7	15.3
Attempted killing of Israelis	103	21.3	18.3
Possession of explosives	59	12.2	7.3
Possession of weapons	70	14.5	13.9
Others	28t	5.8	0
Total	483	100	100

In 2005 there was a slight increase in the number of children being charged with more serious offences. However it remains a fact that stone-throwing is still the single most common charge for which Palestinian children are convicted in Israeli military courts.

Distribution of DCI/PS cases according to sentence:

Period	Number	Percentage 2005	Percentage 2004
Less than 6 months	168	34.8%	42%
6 - 12 months	67	13.9%	9.8%
12 - 36 months	176	36.4%	28.5%
More than 36 months	72	14.9%	19.7%
Total	483	100%	100%

The year 2005 witnessed an increase in the number of child detainees sentenced for long periods; some detainees were sentenced for three years, others for more than three years and some were even sentenced for 5-20 years.

Distribution of DCI/PS cases according to age:

Age	Number	Percentage 2005	Percentage 2004
12-14	74	15%	15.7%
15-16	157	32%	33.4%
17	260	53%	50.9%
Total	491	100%	100%

Prison Visits

During 2005, DCI/PS succeeded in visiting all the Israeli military detention centres, prisons and civil prisons in which Palestinian children were held on a regular basis. Most of the facilities hold adult Palestinians as well as juveniles. In fact, according to the Israeli military orders applicable to Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Palestinian children aged 16 and above are treated as adults.

Detention Centres

Following their arrest, children are usually taken to the nearest detention centre, thus detainees from northern areas of the West Bank are generally placed in Huwwara, Kadumim or Salem detention centres; those arrested in the central West Bank are held in Binyamin detention centre and children from the south are taken to Etzion detention centre near Bethlehem.

Detainees are often very badly treated during interrogation – their hands and feet are usually bound, they are verbally and sometimes physically abused by their captors and interrogators, and often threatened with severe beatings and sometimes sexual assault. Children have also testified to the fact that threats are made against the safety of family members and against their family's property.

Conditions in the detention centres are poor – the food is inadequate, visits to the bathroom are limited to a couple of times a day and detainees are not permitted to leave their cells or go outside for prolonged periods. The cells contain thin and dirty mattresses and insufficient covers for the detainees, especially in winter. The cells are damp as metal panels often cover the windows preventing the sun from entering the cells.

Interrogation Centres

Sometimes children are taken for further interrogation by the Israeli General Security Services to either Al Jalame interrogation centre in the north of the West Bank, or Askalan, Petah Tikva or Moskobiya interrogation centres inside Israel. The latter, also known as the Russian Compound, is located in Jerusalem and is also used as a detention centre for Palestinian children and adults arrested in and around the city.

Israeli Prisons

The prisons to which Palestinian children are sent are run by two authorities:

1- Prisons administrated by the Israeli military.

- Ofer military prison camp, on the edge of the West Bank near Ramallah
- Ketziot military prison camp in the Negev desert.¹

2- Prisons administered by the (civil) Israeli Prisons Service (IPS).

- Telmond prison compound (Hasharon and Ofek facilities)
- Megiddo prison (handed over to IPS from military control in early 2005).

Prisons in the Telmond Compound

After sentencing, and in some cases beforehand, children are transferred from the detention centre to prisons inside Israel. The majority are held in facilities in the Telmond prison compound, northeast of Tel Aviv, where the Hasharon facility includes a wing in which some 200 Palestinian security child prisoners aged 13-17 are held. There are three sections for Palestinian child detainees held on so-called security charges. The sections are all overcrowded. Section 7 contains 27 cells, designed to each hold two children however, the section contains on average 85 children. Section 14 consists of 18 rooms, each of which hold 2 or 3 children, but on average the

¹ Ketziot has since been handed over to Israeli Prisons Service (IPS)

section houses 60 boys. A new section, Section 8, has been opened, consisting of five cells, each one holding eight children. The section currently houses 45 children.

In addition, there are two sections for female prisoners in the Hasharon facility - Section 11 houses 60 females, including three girl-child prisoners, and Section 12, housing 40 females, including a further three girl-child prisoners.

The Telmond compound also includes Ofek prison, which is primarily used to hold Israeli juvenile criminal prisoners. However Palestinian political prisoners are also imprisoned there when overcrowding becomes too severe in the Hasharon section – in general there is only a handful of Palestinian political child detainees held at any one time.

Conditions in the Telmond facilities, particularly Hasharon, are very bad - prisoners do not receive adequate food; access to medical care is very limited and in the vast majority of cases the only treatment available is the provision of Acamol – an over-the-counter pain killer. The funds paid by parents and organisations into their *canteena*² accounts enabling the prisoners to supplement their meagre diets, are often confiscated by the prison administration; cleaning staff do not enter the prison to clean the cells and children are not given cleaning materials.

Prisoners are usually transferred to other prisons, such as Megiddo, Ketziot (also known as the Naqab or Ansar III) and Ofer Military Prison camp, when they reach the age of 18, although on some occasions they are transferred while still 17. Large tents, designed to sleep around 20 make up the accommodation in these three prisons. However, there are often more than 20 prisoners in each tent, who are forced to sleep on thin foam mattresses placed either directly on the ground or on wooden pallets.

Over the course of 2005, DCI/PS lawyers conducted a total of 184 visits to the Israeli-controlled prisons and detention centres in which Palestinian children are held, visiting a total of 642 child detainees.



² The *canteena* is the prison shop/canteen where detainees can buy snacks and other consumables.

Name of closed institution	Number of visits	Number of detainees visited
Prisons (IPS):		
Telmond: Hasharon	27	125
(Boys' section and Girls' section)		
Telmond: Ofek	7	17
Megiddo*	8	41
Prisons (Military)		
Ketziot**	5	18
Ofer	18	53
Hospitals		
Ramle Prison Hospital	5	14
Hadassah Ein Kerem	5	5
Detention centres		
Huwwara		
Etzion	22	131
Kadumim	19	65
Binyamin	25	93
Salem	9	34
Interrogation Centres (Shin Beit)		
Askalan	6	9
Petah Tikva	5	7
Al Jalame	10	12
Moskobiya (also used as a detention centre)	13	18
Total	184	642

* In early 2005, Megiddo prison was transferred from military to IPS control

** In early 2006 Ketziot prison was transferred from military to IPS control

On the Palestinian Authority Jurisdictional Level

Legal representation/consultation

Over the course of 2005 the Legal Unit followed up a number of complaints regarding child rights' violations on the Palestinian Authority jurisdictional level, although it must be added that the number of complaints received was limited as a result of certain obstacles, such as restriction of movement within the Palestinian Authority jurisdiction areas imposed by Israeli occupation policies and other obstacles that relate to the functioning of the Palestinian Courts and police departments. The Legal Unit also followed up 21 cases of children in conflict with the law. Twelve of these cases were felonies and the rest were misdemeanours. Five of these cases had been opened in 2003 and 2004, respectively, and others were still open at the end of 2005.

Legal Memorandums and Research

The Legal Unit submitted several legal memorandums in 2005 to different international and local bodies concerning Palestinian children's rights. The purpose of these memorandums is to urge these bodies to assure the compliance and implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in dealing with specific issues related to children rights, such as honour killing and rape. Moreover, the Legal Unit supervised two research papers; the first concerning children in street situations and the second representing a needs assessment of ex-child prisoners.

Visits to Juvenile and Protection Centres

Throughout 2005 the Legal Unit organized monthly visits to Dar Al Amal Juvenile Centre for boys (Ramallah), Dar Riaiat Al Fatayat Juvenile and Protection Centre for girls (Bethlehem) and the Child Protection Centre for boys (Ramallah). The purpose of these visits was to monitor the living conditions of the detained juveniles and check whether they are in compliance with the international standards related to juvenile justice, and to encourage the Centres to coordinate more with other players in the justice system that Palestinian juveniles pass through, especially the General Attorney Office and the courts.

Lobbying on a legislative level

The Legal Unit followed up two child-related Palestinian laws in 2005: The Child Rights' Law and the Juvenile Justice Bill. DCI/PS was an instrumental player in the drafting committee of the Child Rights' Law, which was enacted in January 2005. DCI/PS also remains a driving force on the drafting committee of the Juvenile Justice Bill, yet to be enacted. Comment papers were prepared and national campaigns mounted in order to create pressure to amend the Child Rights' Law and favourably influence the Juvenile Justice Bill before enactment.

The Child Rights' Law

Immediately after enactment in January 2005, DCI/PS Legal Unit launched a campaign to lobby for amendments to the Child Rights' Law. A follow-up committee was formed, consisting of representatives from DCI/PS, the Secretariat of the National Plan of Action for the Palestinian Child (Now the Child Planning Unit of the Ministry of Planning), Al Haq and the Ministry of Women's Affairs. DCI/PS submitted a paper to the PLC that outlined and justified the committee's suggested amendments; these included increasing the minimum age of criminal responsibility, ensuring free health insurance for children and applying penalties to individuals or entities that force children to leave school during compulsory schooling years.

The Juvenile Justice Bill

The Legal Unit continued exerting efforts with regard to the Juvenile Justice Bill. Eventually after much negotiation, a drafting committee for this piece of legislation was established by the Palestinian Ministry of Justice, in cooperation with UNICEF and under the supervision of the Legislation Advisory Bureau. The committee consists of representatives from the relevant ministries, a representative from DCI/PS and a representative from Al Haq. The committee held several meetings and the first draft was painstakingly drawn up despite many obstacles encountered attributable to different legal visions among the committee members in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as communication difficulties between the committee members and competition among various members of the committee for leadership of the drafting process. The draft shall be discussed with the relevant institutions before presenting it to the PLC.

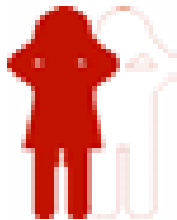
Training for professionals working in the juvenile justice system

In 2005, DCI/PS conducted a 35-hour training course, targeting the different key figures in the justice system that deal with juveniles: defence lawyers, probation officers, social workers and policemen, especially police interrogation officers. Prosecution lawyers and judges were also targeted; however, they did not attend. The rationale for targeting such a wide spectrum is twofold: Firstly, each of the above figures plays a specific role in the system, whether during the arrest, interrogation, detention and/or trial of juveniles and thus knowledge and competence with regard to the existing international standards and the nascent national framework concerning juvenile offenders is of utmost importance. Secondly, by bringing these different figures together, DCI/PS aimed at facilitating the creation or improvement of coordination mechanisms between them.

The police training course aimed at preparing and training a special juvenile police force and at strengthening social understanding of children in conflict with the law. With regard to probation officers and social workers, the training course aimed at strengthening their role before and during the trial of juveniles and increasing their ability to draft their reports on the juvenile in question in such a way that would enable the presiding judge to have a real understanding of the juvenile before making any ruling. With regard to the defence lawyers, the training course aimed at enhancing their legal follow-up and defending abilities in juvenile cases and increasing awareness on the adopted procedures concerning juvenile trials. Despite the lack of representation of two key figures in the system, the training course went exceedingly well. Although the course was designed to serve 24 trainees, 36 trainees were accommodated.



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Training & Social Mobilisation Unit

Introduction

The core focus of the Training and Social Mobilisation (TSM) Unit is to empower children and promote and enhance their active participation in Palestinian society through awareness-raising activities. The work of the unit is fundamentally based on the principle that the child must be taken seriously as an effective agent and social actor – someone with the ability to affect his or her own future, and that of their society. Thus TSM activities are prepared and designed to maximize child participation, so that the children themselves are directly involved in the planning and evaluation process, and in the subsequent wider dissemination of the issues covered.

In order to ensure that children are incorporated as fully as possible into the work of developing their society, DCI/PS also undertakes activities with individuals and institutions from the wider community, to build up a network of trained adult professionals who facilitate a supportive environment in which children can exercise their rights. These courses are intended to empower individuals to independently run programmes on child rights and establish projects to help children channel their energies in productive ways by discovering and developing new skills.



Unit Main Objectives

To empower Palestinian children through developing their leadership and life skills, increasing their awareness of their rights, and facilitating their active and effective participation in Palestinian society

Sub-objective 1:

To develop the life skills of Palestinian children and their knowledge of child rights

Sub-objective 2:

To facilitate Palestinian children's participation in their communities, especially in the wider dissemination and awareness-raising of their rights.

To create a supportive environment for Palestinian child rights among institutions and the community at large.

Sub-objective 3:

To raise social awareness within the Palestinian community about child rights.

Sub-objective 4:

To train a cadre of professionals to work with children in the community and develop the capabilities of institutions working with children.

Sub-objective 5:

To advocate and lobby to change the policies and practices related to children's rights in the Palestinian community.



Empowering children

Child rights' training:

DCI/PS believes that the key to child empowerment lies primarily in the discovery by children of their own capacity and entitlements, as well as access to knowledge, skills, tools and resources. The TSM Unit aims at facilitating these first steps towards the empowerment of children by conducting various training modules on diverse child rights' issues and life skills. In 2005, the TSM Unit gave a total of 490 hours of child rights' training to children through training courses, workshops and open discussions, reaching over 1000 beneficiaries. The focus of this training ranged from discussions about child rights' in general, to concentrating on specific issues within the sphere of child rights, such as non-discrimination, gender issues, child abuse and neglect. The unit also gave a total of 330 hours of life skills training, reaching 900 beneficiaries, and held 35 child rights- themed open days and 10 marches.

Girl child development project:

DCI/PS, with the support of our partner, Save the Children-Sweden, has been working to empower Palestinian girl children in Hebron since 1998. The Girl Child Development project targets girls, not only because they suffer almost daily harassment and aggression from Israeli soldiers and Jewish settlers, but also because they live in one of the most culturally conservative cities in the West Bank, and therefore have limited educational and social opportunities.

From the beginning of 2005, the project not only incorporated six schools in and around the old city of Hebron (Qortoba, Al Yaqobiah and Al-Yaqatha, Al Fayha, Shajaret Al Dur and Rabea' Al-Adawia), but was expanded to include activities for parents and other caregivers in women clubs, centres and societies in villages within the wider Hebron area (Tarqumiya, Tafouh, Saa'er and Beit Ummar). This expansion led to increased community awareness of child rights in general and thus helped to create a more supportive environment towards girls' rights in particular. In 2005, the project directly benefited more than 200 girls aged 14-16 and more than 180

parents, as well as many teachers and other adult duty-bearers of girls' rights. Indirectly, all the girl pupils (aged 6-16) attending the six targeted schools benefited from the multiplier effect of empowering the core groups of girl participants, whose improved social, psychological and cognitive capacities enhanced their participation in the local communities. This, in turn, helped to reverse negative and discriminatory attitudes towards girl children in the wider community.

Project Aims:

- To focus on the needs of Palestinian girls, providing them with the opportunity for personal development and empowering them with the tools and life skills to transfer their experience to the greatest number of peers possible.
- To develop the girls' personal qualities and give them the opportunity to develop their potential and raise their status and level of participation in society.
- To train a cadre of girls who are capable of mobilizing and leading educational and cultural activities
- To increase wider social awareness of the specific rights of girls, creating a climate of understanding, appreciation and support for girls' rights.

Activities and outputs:

In coordination with local government departments and NGOs, DCI/PS organised focus groups, training courses, workshops, meetings, discussions, lectures, open days, summer camps and the first ever DCI/PS Girl Child conference (see section on Facilitating child participation). These activities not only promoted girl-child rights, but also provided an opportunity for the students to learn more about themselves and discuss sensitive topics about their development and express their concerns and hopes for the future, through child-to-child methodology. They covered topics such as early marriage, non-discrimination, honour-killing, sexual abuse, violence, neglect and other issues, while training focused on life skills, such as decision-making and problem-solving, as well as technical skills such as new information and communication technologies. Training on international standards of child rights, especially the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, also played a central role in the project.

Through the life skills and problem-solving workshops, the girls' self-esteem and self-confidence were enhanced, with the added benefit of bringing the participating girls closer together as a group. Through the focus group discussions, the girls learned how to express themselves more effectively. Moreover the open days, summer camps and Art & Craft workshops created happiness and hope among the participants while giving them the chance to discover and develop their talents. Awareness of girls' rights increased among families and among the administrative staff of the six targeted schools, through their participation in workshops and meetings.

Some Achievements in 2005:

1. The existing parents' council became more efficient in following up girls' demands and problems and more supportive of their ideas.
2. Representatives from the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling and the Family Planning Centre joined to form a committee of adult duty-bearers in support of the project. This committee acts as a consulting and advisory body to the project.

3. Within the self-organised focus groups in each school, the girls further activated sub thematic groups of girls, with facilitation and follow up by the project coordinator, a teacher and a school counsellor. The sub groups were categorised as follows:

- The Culture Group designed and organised cultural contests in the targeted schools.
- The Heritage Group organised activities to promote and protect Palestinian heritage.
- The Media Group documented the other groups' work and reported on it through DCI/PS media channels, such as the "Little Hands" newsletter; as well as designing and publishing newsletters in the targeted schools.
- The Clean Environment Group promoted a cleaner environment in their schools and communities by raising money to invest in environmental campaigns.
- The Creative Writing Group wrote creative pieces such as poetry, short stories, and plays.

Palestine Future Project

With the daily grind of the occupation, Palestinian children have all but lost the ability to dream for a brighter future on either a personal or social level. The Palestine Future Project, funded by the British Council, has since 2002 provided children with a breathing space to reflect on the future, and to see how this future could be shaped for their benefit. The 100 children participating in the project are aged between 12-15 and are drawn from the districts of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, Ramallah and Nablus. Special attention is given to ensuring a gender balance, with the result that at least half of all participants in each geographic group of 20 are girls. Efforts are also made to ensure that each group includes children from a wide cross section of society including children injured during the current intifada and those who have lost family members; ex-child detainees, children with disabilities and children living in areas which have been subjected to severe Israeli army restrictions and violence.

Project Aims:

- Bringing Palestinian and British children together to explore the concepts of state and civil society, focusing on issues related to democracy and citizenship.
- Involving children effectively in constructing a vision of Palestine's future
- Providing them with comprehensive information on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the challenges faced by the Palestinian society concerning the rights enshrined therein.

Activities:

In 2005 two exchange visits were carried out within the framework of this project. In late March a group of 12 Palestinian boys and girls visited Scotland to meet and interact with a group of their Scottish peers. The programme was full of activities that aimed at promoting teamwork and cultural understanding between the two youth groups, as well as giving them an opportunity to work out a common vision for the project activities for the rest of the year. The visit provided the perfect chance for Scottish youth to find out firsthand about the various issues and concerns facing children in Palestine, and the Palestinian group in turn learned about the problems facing children in Scotland, particularly children from ethnic minorities and especially with regard to their integration into Scottish society.

In August, six girls and boys from DCI/PS and six girls and boys from our local partner Pal Vision welcomed a delegation of 16 Scottish girls and boys to Palestine. Through this visit, the relationship between the children from both nations was strengthened and a mechanism for future cooperation was further developed to ensure sustainability of this relationship. The programme focused on the exchange of ideas and information with regard to issues such as democracy, citizenship, rights and integration. These issues were dealt with through workshops, film screenings and visits to many local organisations and institutions.

Besides the exchange visits, six 25-hour training courses were carried out for the participants of the project on communication, leadership, photography skills and social mobilization.

Facilitating child participation

DCI/PS Child General Assembly

The first general meeting of the DCI/PS Child General Assembly was held in Bethlehem on 22 February. Fifty children (25 from Hebron, 25 from Bethlehem), who had previously taken part in DCI/PS planning and activities, were invited to form the assembly. At this first meeting, the children learned about election processes in general before drawing up their own criteria for assembly membership/election with the facilitation of a TSM unit member. Their second meeting came one week later, during which the child general assembly discussed the idea of creating a website to promote children's rights and children's participation in civil society. This website would contain related articles on child rights and information about local organizations, DCI/PS activities, etc. In addition, five committees were created to deal with issues and organise actions in the following spheres: media, art, health and environment, education and communication. The children decided to hold regular assembly meetings, however due to movement restrictions and distance it was agreed that the Bethlehem and Hebron groups would meet separately.



DCI/PS Child Board of Trustees

At the first DCI/PS Child General Assembly, a Child Board of Trustees was established. The newly selected assembly members elected the following children to represent them on the DCI/PS Child Board of Trustees in 2005:

- Yazan Al-Zubeide (Chairperson)
- Sara Higazy
- Zeinb Abu Zakiya
- Rowaida Khalaf
- Miral Al-Aza
- Nidal Al-Ayasa
- Omar Khader



The assembly also drew up the following responsibilities for the Board: To supervise the five assembly committees; to discuss and solve problems and decide on suggestions made by general assembly members; to motivate assembly members to participate in DCI/PS activities.

Children's conferences

The year 2005 saw the organisation by DCI/PS of two children's conferences. In January, DCI/PS held its first girl child conference, organised within the framework of the Girl Child Development project (see section on empowering children). The conference, entitled **"Towards Freedom of Speech and Effective Child Participation"** brought together 120 girls aged 12-16 from various schools in the West Bank city of Hebron and aimed at promoting the visibility and importance of girl child rights throughout the Palestinian community and at providing an opportunity and space for girl children to participate in matters that most concern them through discussion, debate and exchange. The conference lasted three days and included the participation of not only girl children, but also representatives from DCI/PS, Save the Children - Sweden and Save the Children - US, the Hebron office of the Ministry of Education and the PA Secretariat for the National Plan of Action for Children. The conference centred on issues arising from the presentation of discussion papers on violence and child abuse; freedom of speech and the right to participate; and on discrimination. In their presentations, the girls sought to illustrate the impact of such issues on the various components of society – including within the family unit and in schools, but also expanded discussions to examine the causes and various forms related to the phenomena. Following a series of lively discussions in workshops and plenary sessions, the girls worked together to formulate a set of recommendations in the form of a concluding statement (see overleaf)

In addition to the workshops and discussions, the conference provided an opportunity for the girls to express themselves through various alternative communication techniques including artwork both exhibited and created during the conference, through drama and dance performances and through the composition and performance of songs and poems.

As a follow up to the conference and in order to multiply its outcome, the girls split into smaller groups, and each group delivered the recommendations in person to 50 local children and women's organizations. A discussion followed and avenues for future cooperation were explored.

Concluding Statement of the Girl's Conference

Fathers, mothers, our fellow children, teachers, decision makers, governmental and non-governmental institutions, leaders who represent us in the Palestinian Legislative Council and all those who support Palestinian girl child rights, Greetings.

We are young girls from Palestine between 12-16 years of age. We represent a sector of the Palestinian population that suffers constantly from the cruel occupation, from its killing and oppression. Coming from the old city of Hebron, we suffer doubly from the occupation and the settlers who take our land and have control over everything in our lives. We, 120 young girls of Palestine, of the city of Hebron announce the following:

We have gathered here for the first Palestinian girls' rights conference. The meeting lasted for three days from 15-17 January 2005. From 9am to 4pm each day, we consulted, presented papers, worked in small groups and workshops, and discussed a number of important issues concerning the life and the future of the children of Palestine. The most important issues discussed were how to protect children from the political and physical violence and the occupation; how to protect young girls from being discriminated against and how to ensure our freedom of speech and participation. We remind you all that we children form more than 53% of the total population of Palestine. We young girls of the present day are the grown ups of the future- its leaders and decision makers. Give us the chance to exercise our rights as young girls so that we can hopefully have a bright future as adults.

We, young girls of the Palestinian city of Hebron demand the following;

1. Relative to physical violence against children:

With all our love to our society and to our future and nation, we hope to witness a law that prevents violence in general, but if we want to specialize, we should start any effort with small successive steps. Love and belonging to a family and school and nation cannot be cultivated through violence. We hope that any anti-violence law passed will be implemented by all sectors of society, including educational institutions, and that this law will include provisions that ensure that anyone who commits physical violence against children will be penalised.

2. Relative to discrimination against young girls:

We look forward to a just future, in an equal society, free of discrimination and fanaticism. Our experience with occupation has taught us a hard lesson regarding racism and discrimination. We are relying on you to create provisions, bylaws and laws that grant everyone equal opportunities regardless of their sex, colour, origin, religion and sense of belonging.

3: Relative to freedom of speech and participation:

Our society without the female factor is a society against advancement, development and creativity. As we form half of society, the absence of freedom of speech and participation for young girls means a retarded society in the future that will be unable to be self-dependent.

We hope you will grant us opportunities and a reality that helps us make sense of our existence. We have potential just like you. By granting us our right to free speech and participation, you will reduce the number of early marriages and school drop-outs. By doing this you assist not only us girls, but yourselves too, for you will be serving the development of a society in which we can all contribute.

4: Relative to the Political Violence

We are the young girls of the Palestinian city of Hebron , our dreams are different from any other human dreams. In fitful sleep we see repetitive assaults, strange faces, strange clothes, and strange rituals. They are the Israeli settlers who live among us taking everything we own, from land to houses. They have stolen our right to meet each other and visit our friends. They have made us strangers to each other.

We hope you give us your support and solidarity. Being trapped in this way, only leads to problems and weak people. Not being able to communicate with each other, leads to even more problems. We are fine; we are not weak at this moment, which depends on you too.

In conclusion, our statement from the first girl child conference is placed between your hands. We pray for our children in the Israeli prisons, boys and girls, to be released soon, also for our imprisoned fathers and mothers.

**We demand freedom for all the children of Palestine.
We thank you for listening and your continuous support.**

Your daughters in the Girl-Child Development Project



Kids behind Bars- A Child Rights Perspective: National Children's Conference

From 28 – 30 June 2005, DCI/PS held its second national children's conference under the title of "Kids behind Bars – A Child Rights Perspective". This conference, which was held in Bethlehem, focused on child prisoners and children in conflict with the law, and ran parallel to a conference of the same name and on the same themes organised for international juvenile justice experts and professionals by DCI/PS.



One hundred girls and boys aged 12-17 came from all over the West Bank to participate in the children's conference. Efforts were made to bring children from Gaza but the Israeli occupation forces refused to give them travel permits – providing a harsh reminder of the realities of the daily oppression of the occupation. Undeterred, the children who were able to attend resolved to use the conference as a platform to raise their voices against this - one of many acts of unacceptable collective punishment - and to demand equal rights for all Palestinian children regardless of their geographical location. At the opening ceremony, the Chair of the DCI/PS Child Board of Trustees, 16 year old Yazan Al-Zubeide gave a speech to his fellow conference participants, which was followed by some words of welcome from three influential figures in the DCI movement: Jorge Vila, outgoing president of DCI at an international level, Rifat Kassis, outgoing president of DCI/PS and Norberto Liwski, Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and president of DCI Argentina.

They commended the children on their activeness, enthusiasm and hard work in organising and participating in the conference. Jorge Vila was then invited to open the side exhibition on "Kids Behind Bars", a collection of artwork by children from all over the West Bank. The programme of the conference featured different presentations and discussions on the rights of Palestinian children under occupation. Ex-child prisoners among the participants related their experiences of Israeli jails – which involved accounts of the torture, degradation and physical and psychological pain that they had suffered at the hands of Israeli prison personnel, as well as the impact their prison experience has had on their lives. These issues were further dealt with in smaller workshops. Other workshop themes included conditions in detention centres and prisons, rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-child detainees.

Participants also discussed how the concept of "kids behind bars" also related to the reality of life behind the Segregation Wall, and thus this topic also played a central role in the conference, with children examining the violations to children's rights resulting from the Segregation Wall, such as the right to health, the right to education and the right to an adequate standard of living. The conference provided many participants with a platform to discuss personal experiences and opinions in this regard, and the massive negative impact the Segregation Wall continues to have on their lives. The children highlighted the role of local and national organizations in helping and supporting traumatized children, and the importance of offering services that respond to the actual needs of those children.

At the end of the three-day conference, the children drew up a number of recommendations addressed to decision makers and duty-bearers of their rights which were presented by child delegate Nidal Al Ayasa during the opening plenary session of the "Kids Behind Bars" conference for adults:

- Give children the chance to express their opinion about the violations they suffer; help them improve their self-confidence, and transmit to them social and life skills.
- Create a democratic sphere for children in which they can participate actively and contribute positively to all issues related to children's rights.
- Give them the chance to exchange experiences, and formulate their conception of child rights and what programs should be implemented in order to achieve them.
- Raise public awareness about children's rights according to international ratified standards, especially protection from all forms of discrimination and exploitation.
- Raise public awareness (including children as a target) about the issue of Palestinian child detainees held in Israeli jails, appealing to the international community and local society to protect and guarantee the rights of these children.
- In particular, we call for the fair and kind treatment of child detainees while they are in prison as well as the fair and kind treatment of their families, especially aiming to improve the quality of communication between them, and to lift their spirits.
- We ask DCI/PS to create coordination mechanisms with the schools system, so that schools will commit to reinserting the ex-child detainees in the educational system.
- Enable Palestinian child detainees to make their own media, so that they can inform the outside world what really happens with prisoners and their families.
- In relation to the Segregation Wall, we ask all of you to inform the outside world about the wall and its effects. Media is the strongest weapon we can use.

Little Hands

"Little Hands" is a bimonthly Arabic language newsletter produced by TSM Unit staff and volunteers together with the children who partake in DCI/PS activities. Focusing on various child rights' issues, the newsletter is an extremely successful local advocacy tool as it is included as a supplement in Al-Ayyam, the second most widely-read daily newspaper in the OPT. For children taking part in DCI/PS activities, "Little Hands" is a useful channel through which they can freely express themselves and advocate for their own rights. With facilitation from the TSM team, many children organise themselves to research specific topics in preparation for the articles they contribute to the newsletter.



Child Rights' Centres

The 7th of April 2005 marked a special day for child rights in Palestine. Just two days after the Palestinian Child Day (5 April), DCI/PS celebrated the official opening of its new Child Rights' Centre in Bethlehem, funded by the French Consulate in Jerusalem and the Italian NGO UCODEP (through the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

The Bethlehem centre, along with the DCI/PS Child Rights' Centre in Hebron, has in fact been operative since 2004, when both centres were established to fulfil multiply objectives.



Their primary role is to serve as socio-legal defence centres, offering a safe space and child-friendly atmosphere for children to come and receive psychosocial support and/or legal advice, if needed. The centres are also a welcoming learning space for children, who can come and organise activities themselves in small groups with the help and facilitation of TSM unit team members. The children choose certain themes that they are curious about or which they find important and develop activities based on those themes, such as film showings with discussion, workshops, debates, research projects, and visits to other organisations or institutions. In addition, the TSM unit team suggests and organises other thematic workshops and training courses for the children related to child rights and life skills.

The centres also provide a space for DCI/PS (through the TSM Unit) to work directly with local grassroots organisations to provide training and capacity building for employees and volunteers in empowering children and enhancing their participation in society. Following the training courses,

the TSM Unit assists the local organisations in arranging and running activities which incorporate and seek to promote respect for children's rights. The aim of the DCI/PS centres is thus not to replace existing local clubs and networks, but to strengthen the facilities and knowledge base within the community. Target groups for DCI/PS' training include organisations working with particularly vulnerable groups of children, including ex-child detainees, children with disabilities, girl children and those from marginalized, rural areas. Children from these groups often visit the Hebron and Bethlehem centres with their organisations where they are able to use the many facilities including computers, library, training halls and meeting rooms for activities.

Networking for Child Rights

The Palestinian Network for Children's Rights – PNCR

The seed for the Palestinian Network for Children's Rights was sown in 2004, as an initiative by partners from Italy's Tuscany Region, in an endeavour to develop and strengthen links with a group of Palestinian organizations and institutions from Bethlehem, Hebron, Ramallah and Jerusalem and to encourage them to seek Italian partnership and financial support for collective projects in promoting child rights. At the beginning, this network aimed at exchanging experience, expertise and information between member institutions, and improving coordination to avoid duplication.



Initially, the PNCR consisted of 18 local organisations and partners from Italy, represented in Palestine by UCODEP and ARCI. DCI/PS took a leading role early on and was selected as the overall coordinator on the Palestinian level and chair of the steering committee. In 2005, however, DCI/PS and its network partners recognised the need to expand the PNCR to bring together and build on the efforts of organisations working with children

throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territories. However, as entry in and out of Gaza became even more difficult following Israel's disengagement from the area in September 2005, the network decided to initially focus its expansion on organisations in other parts of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. DCI/PS arranged a series of workshops with other organisations to develop the idea and a draft policy document to regulate the aims, objectives, vision, mission, and membership of the network was drawn up. DCI/PS also provided child-rights awareness training for the other local entities, as well as capacity-building workshops on communication skills and intervention techniques. In addition, DCI/PS designed a website for the network. The official launch of the newly- expanded PNCR took place in January 2006.

Child Rights' Advocacy

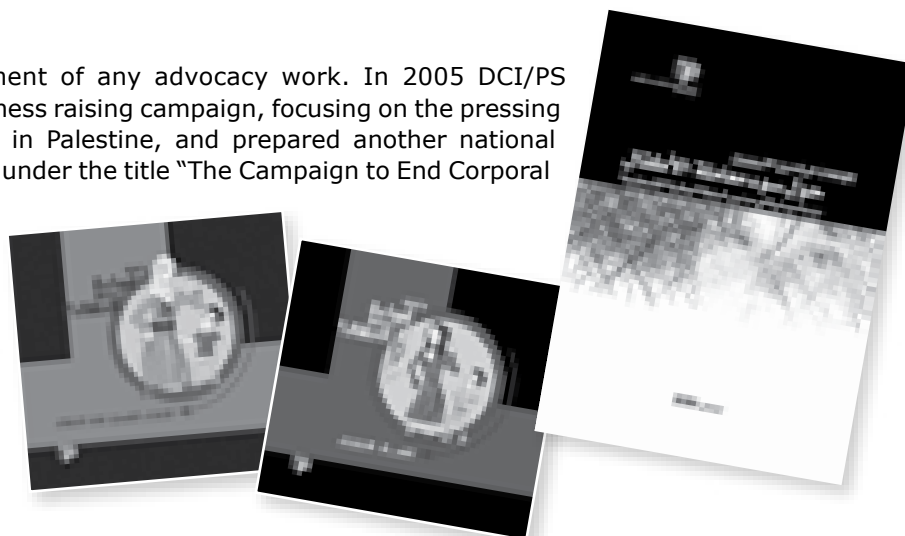
Child Rights' Advocacy, a central component of DCI/PS' overall mandate, is interwoven into all aspects of the organisation's work. The TSM Unit is primarily responsible for advocacy work on the local and national level, which it carries out in a number of ways, including offering training on child rights to various target groups from the community (also see section on Community Capacity-Building vis-à-vis Child Rights). A major local child rights' advocacy event for DCI/PS in 2005 was the Open Day it organised in partnership with the members of the PNCR on 5 April, to celebrate Palestinian Child Day. Around 250 children participated in this open day, which took place at the Peace Centre in Bethlehem. The Little Hands newsletter, produced by DCI-PS as a bimonthly supplement to the Palestinian daily newspaper, Al Ayyam, is dedicated exclusively to child rights' issues and an important advocacy tool on a national level.

Our voices

Another valuable advocacy resource produced in 2005 by DCI/PS to disseminate among Arabic and English-speaking communities was the "Our Voices" book, which is a compilation of the stories, hopes, dreams and fears of a group of Palestinian teenagers who took part in a series of child rights workshops and group reflection sessions, carried out in cooperation with the Italian NGO UCODEP, with funding from the Italian Cooperation.

Campaigns

Awareness-raising is a key element of any advocacy work. In 2005 DCI/PS carried out its first national awareness raising campaign, focusing on the pressing issue of child abuse and neglect in Palestine, and prepared another national campaign to be launched in 2006, under the title "The Campaign to End Corporal Punishment Against Children". These campaigns are parts of larger DCI/PS projects that deal with these themes.



Prevention of child abuse and neglect project

Child abuse and neglect is a problem that has aroused considerable public and professional interest in countries throughout the world in the past four decades. However, with regard to Arab societies, including Palestine, there is a serious dearth of in-depth research on the various components and dimensions of these phenomena, including patterns of neglect, the scale, specific risk factors, consequences, and the involvement of health, education and welfare services in dealing with the problem.

In 2004, DCI/PS, with the support of Kinderpostzegels (Children's Stamps – The Netherlands), initiated a project on Child Abuse and Neglect to tackle the problem in Palestine and challenge the way in which Palestinian society, government and non-governmental institutions are prepared and equipped to deal with the issue.

Main Aim:

The project's primary aim is to prevent all forms of cruelty to children, whether physical, sexual or emotional abuse and/or neglect by raising public awareness; building the capacity of child professionals; and cultivating a will among the public and professionals to tackle and eradicate these phenomena, at a community, social and legal level.

Specific Objectives:

- Increasing awareness of problems, issues, and alternative solutions for child abuse and neglect at all levels.
- Facilitating the exchange of knowledge about these problems, issues, and solutions.
- Identifying, sharing, and improving practices for detection, treatment, and prevention.
- Designing and facilitating education and capacity building for professionals in prevention.
- Promoting and facilitating research and the dissemination of academic and practical materials for exchange of information and action.
- Collaborating with other organizations to formulate and implement national laws making child abuse and neglect against children illegal.

Long Term Expected Results:

- The capacity of professionals whose work is directly connected to children is raised.
- New legislations that aim to protect and prevent children from being neglected and abused are drafted and enacted.
- Specific DCI/PS Centres for the Prevention of Child abuse and Neglect are functioning well and are an invaluable asset to the community.
- DCI/PS lawyers provide legal advice for victims of child abuse and neglect through a helpline or at the DCI/PS Prevention of Child abuse and Neglect Centres.
- A comprehensive resource centre on child abuse and neglect is open and accessible to the public.

Activities/Intervention:

There are four main components to this cross-cutting DCI/PS project: research, capacity-building of child professionals, awareness-raising and creating a child abuse and neglect resource centre.

Research

In the first phase, DCI/PS conducted research which documented and analysed the extent to which Palestinian society in general and the various formal and informal services in particular are organizationally and professionally prepared to cope with child abuse and neglect; how they deal with these cases in practice; and the extent to which their interventions satisfy the child's need for protection and the perpetrators' need for treatment and preventive intervention. Specifically, the research examined the approaches toward child abuse and neglect among educational counsellors at schools in the Palestinian Authority, in collaboration with the Department of School Health and Educational Counselling at the Palestinian Ministry of Education. The research was completed in 2005 and was printed and disseminated in early 2006.

Professional Capacity Building

At the same time DCI/PS sought to build the capacities of child professionals vis-à-vis this phenomenon and thus organised and conducted an intensive TOT (training of trainers) programme in partnership with the Department of School Health and Educational Counselling at the Palestinian Ministry of Education. The training course consisted of 40 hours for 25 Palestinian child professionals. The training prepared these professionals to conduct their own training and workshops in their new areas. The trainees were encouraged to apply the skills acquired during their daily work and in the second phase of the project two intensive 40 hour workshops were held for the TOT trainees in order to follow up on these child professionals' progress and to evaluate the effectiveness of the training. The follow-up workshops also afforded the trainees the opportunity to discuss with DCI/PS facilitators the obstacles they face since beginning to tackle this phenomenon in their work, as well as providing a space for them to develop further their techniques of identifying and preventing child abuse and neglect.

Awareness-raising

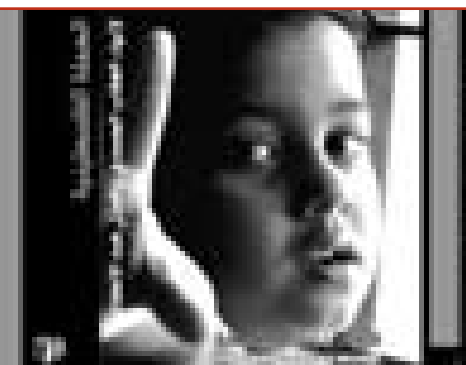
With the findings of the research conducted, DCI/PS conducted an awareness raising campaign on child abuse and neglect, which included monthly seminars to enhance public and professional awareness of the nature and scope of child abuse and neglect in Palestine, its causes and the destructive consequences on children. DCI/PS also produced a series of 10 televised debates with professionals on various issues related to child abuse and neglect; these debates were broadcast on most of the major television channels in the OPT. Besides providing an overview of the problem in Palestinian society, the debates served as a platform from which to launch strategies to treat the problem, as well as appealing to viewers to realise the moral obligation of society at large to mobilize itself in an effort to identify and protect victims of child abuse and neglect.

At the end of 2005, the campaign was further boosted when the DCI/PS team, together with the trainees of the TOT programme designed and distributed media materials (four flyers and an educational poster) among the public and the child professional sector activities. Further awareness-raising is carried out on an ongoing basis through regular lobbying of local media to increase the coverage of topics relating to the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Creating a resource centre

Within the framework of this project, DCI/PS identified the need to establish a resource centre as a means of addressing the serious lack of literature in Arabic on the subject. Scientific material on child abuse and neglect was gathered from various sources, some of which was translated into Arabic, and DCI/PS also collected books, magazines, brochures, and manuals for child professionals such as health and mental health professionals, educators, teachers, police, etc. In addition, the project team purchased a subscription to the monthly International Journal on Child Abuse and Neglect. This collection of resources is available for consultation at the DCI/PS Child Rights' Centre in Bethlehem, where it is constantly being expanded. A database of these resources is also being updated on a regular basis.

Palestinian Campaign to End Corporal Punishment



Within the scope of the project on child abuse and neglect, DCI/PS' strategy is to make an impact on two levels. On the one hand, DCI/PS takes an all-encompassing approach, striving to address the broad spectrum of issues which this phenomenon encapsulates, while on the other hand, it has selected specific issues to focus on, in order to anchor them firmly in Palestinian public consciousness. To this end, in November 2005, DCI/PS started to prepare a national campaign to end corporal punishment against children in Palestine.

Main Objective:

To launch a nationwide advocacy campaign to bring an end to the widespread use of physical violence as a perceived legitimate means of disciplining and/or punishing children in Palestine.

Target group:

Adult duty-bearers of child rights with a particular focus on parents, teachers and other figures of authority in a child's life.

Time frame for campaign:

November 2005 – December 2006 (2 months preparation stage, 12 month implementation stage)

In 2005, the preparation stage of the campaign was completed:

- Available literature on the subject of corporal punishment was reviewed and translated.
- Campaign posters, brochures and stickers were produced, ready to be distributed in early 2006
- The Palestinian Network for Children's Rights website was designed at the end of 2005. The website includes numerous links to relevant information on the corporal punishment campaign.

Community capacity-building vis-à-vis child rights

Training for adult duty-bearers of child rights

DCI/PS also undertakes activities with individuals and institutions from the wider community to build up a network of trained adult professionals who facilitate a supportive environment in which children can exercise

their rights, as well as involving parents as one of the main adult target groups. Over the course of 2005, the TSM unit gave a total of 180 hours of capacity-building and awareness-raising training, through training courses and workshops, as well as 200 hours of talks and group discussions on various child rights' issues, reaching over 1500 beneficiaries.

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What do children say about DCI/PS?

Omar, 16: “DCI/PS is like a dream for every child who lives in Palestine, in order to live in happiness and safety, because their main goal is to support children in society and to give them a smile and to support them in their grief and be with them day by day. One day I visited the DCI/PS centre and I felt I was at home, as among my brothers. I was welcomed by the staff and volunteers and while at the centre, I realised that I had a role to play in building my society and it made me happy. My colleagues and I are aware who and how we can defend our rights and to whom we have to go when someone violates our rights and/or we face problems. I participate in all the sessions and workshops that deal with child rights and our duties in society and how we can deal with this society in a positive way- you know that Palestinian society is an exceptional society, since we live under terror and occupation. This occupation does not care about the needs of childhood. In the DCI/PS centre, I found people who listen.”

Rowan, 15: “I felt strange and alone the first time I entered the centre and was hesitating to go ahead with this experience. In any case, I am shy. When I began a training course about girl child rights, I discovered that there are many things that I can do- things that I

wasn't aware of before. I got a lot of information from them. I became aware of my duties and rights and on a social level, I met new friends, who are enthusiastic about life and they have dreams that they are trying to pursue. About my experience in the centre, I cannot categorise it as difficult or easy but I can say that it was an effective experience about rights in society. Finally, with this experience I am more determined to continue and I believe that destiny will provide me with the power to carry out what I want to do in the future”

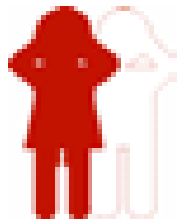
What do parents say?

Mother: “After my child began coming to the child rights' centre in Bethlehem, we began to have some conflicts with her inside the family. She began speaking about her rights and what she is entitled to. Normally we ask our children to do things without expecting them to refuse. We are used to our children just obeying. However my child started to assert herself and refused to do some things I asked. At first, I was frustrated and angry. But then, her behaviour made me reflect. Before I just told her what to do, thinking this was normal. Now we sit down and talk about it in a different way and I explain to her why I would like her to cooperate with me. It is challenging of course, but I am glad my daughter is enriching herself in this way.”

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Research & International Advocacy Unit

The year 2005 was a watershed year for DCI/PS in terms of its global advocacy work, in particular with the organisation and hosting of the international conference “Kids Behind Bars – A Child Rights Perspective” in Bethlehem on 30 June-2 July.



The conference, together with other activities to raise awareness of child rights, enabled DCI/PS to build on existing communication networks and initiate new contacts to support and strengthen the organisation's advocacy efforts, which are underpinned by the unit's research work. As cross-cutting components of DCI/PS' activities, both advocacy and research benefit from the expertise and skills of the organisation's other units – drawing on statistics produced by the Monitoring and Documentation Unit, information on cases provided by the Legal Unit and activities coordinated by the Training & Social Mobilisation Unit.

Unit Objectives

- To raise international awareness of violations against Palestinian children's rights in order to increase support for the implementation of these rights through campaigns, press releases and briefings.
- To develop and mobilize a network of activists in key countries abroad
- To improve media coverage on the situation of Palestinian children through writing press releases, op-eds, and articles and making direct contact with members of the media and organizing relevant interviews and tours.
- To produce regular research with which to fuel our advocacy efforts

Advocacy Activities

General Summary

In addition to its regular media work – including the dissemination of public statements, calls for action and the provision of interviews and briefings for journalists – DCI/PS worked increasingly to raise awareness among international governments and organisations of the situation and rights of Palestinian children living in the Occupied Territories.

Both individually, and in cooperation with partner organisations, DCI/PS arranged meetings with and briefed officials and delegations from UN bodies and EU-member state governments, international NGOs and grassroots organisations in order to provide a perspective on the status of children's rights in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The unit arranged field trips for international visitors to meet children, tour the DCI/PS centres in Bethlehem and Hebron and see first hand the conditions in which children in the OPT live. In addition, the RIA unit coordinated with DCI/PS lawyers to enable overseas delegates to attend and monitor the hearings of Palestinian children brought before the Israeli military courts. Over the course of the year, DCI/PS staff also attended a number of external meetings, raising awareness of children's rights and the work of the organisation as a whole.

Key advocacy events over the year included:

- In January, DCI/PS provided a briefing on the issue of Palestinian children in Israeli custody to the EU Informal Humanitarian Policy Dialogue Forum.
- In January, DCI/PS representatives attended the 2005 World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in Brazil conducting workshops and engaging in lobbying and advocacy activities around the issue of Palestinian children and the Palestinian question.
- In May, DCI/PS arranged a workshop bringing together local NGOs and government officials to discuss the use and exploitation of Palestinian children by the Israeli General Security Services and some armed Palestinian groups.
- In July, a DCI/PS representative travelled to Jordan to testify to the UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices. The representative provided a detailed briefing on the situation of Palestinian children, particularly those imprisoned by Israeli forces.
- During the summer, a DCI/PS representative participated in a series of meetings and discussion forums on international humanitarian and human rights law with local and international NGOs working in the OPT.
- In September a representative from DCI/PS travelled to Lebanon to participate in a workshop to follow up the concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the reports to the Committee from governments in the Arab region.
- In October, two representatives of the organisation met in a roundtable discussion with the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, Ms Hina Jilani.
- As the DCI representative to the UN for the MENA region, DCI/PS liaised with the authors of the upcoming UN Study on Violence against Children, and has been requested to prepare a case study on Palestine to be included in the final report due in 2006.



Campaigning

Since the launch in autumn 2001 of Freedom Now! The campaign to free Palestinian child political prisoners, DCI/PS' RIA unit has made extensive efforts to raise international awareness of the situation of Palestinian

children in Israeli custody. In 2005, the unit expanded its information-sharing activities with the Child & Youth Department of the Palestinian Ministry of Detainees' and Ex-Detainees' Affairs - the other main provider of legal defence to Palestinian children before Israeli military courts - in a move designed to improve the quality and accuracy of statistics as well as enhance the case-management system for both organisations. With the new consolidated information, DCI/PS continued to provide the media and public with briefings on the number and conditions of children in prison and expanded the "Children Behind Bars" updates to include interviews with recently-released children and an analysis of the military court system.

The campaign was given new impetus with the establishment in the Netherlands of the Talliq foundation. Cooperating closely with DCI/PS and one of our core funders, ICCO, the foundation was set up to raise awareness among the Dutch public around the issue of Palestinian child detainees. In addition to publicizing the issue, Talliq also seeks to provide financial and moral support for children in prison in the form of raising funds to be paid directly into the prison "canteena" accounts and sending letters of solidarity to child detainees and their families¹.

Networking

DCI/PS also continues to play a role in a number of regional and local networks including:

- Representing DCI in the United Nations Regional Commission for the Middle East
- Founding member of Occupied Palestine and Syrian Golan Heights Advocacy Initiative (OPGAI)
- Founding member of the Palestinian Network of Children's Rights
- Steering Committee Member of the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers
- Member of the MENA Action Network to stop the spread and misuse of small arms

Research Work

In 2005, DCI/PS produced its fourth annual violations report entitled "Surviving the Present, Facing the Future". The report, based on DCI/PS research and fieldwork as well as analysis of existing documentation from alternative data sources, presented a comprehensive overview of Israel's systematic violation of Palestinian children's rights and the impact this has on the lives of children living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The report includes a special chapter examining the legal framework of the OPT.

Over the course of the year, DCI/PS conducted research on a wide range of issues including:

- A Needs Assessment of Palestinian Ex-Child Detainees
- Children in a Street Situation in Palestine
- International Standards for the Fair Trial of Juveniles
- Attitudes and Beliefs of School Counsellors regarding Child Abuse and Neglect
- Child Justice in Areas under the Control of the Palestinian Authority
- The Impact of the Segregation Wall on Palestinian Children's Education
- The Attitude of Palestinian Youth to Small Arms
- The Palestinian report for the annual Landmine Monitor Report

¹ The canteena is the name of the prison shop/canteen, where snacks and other consumer items can be bought.

Towards the end of the year, the RIA unit joined forces with a group of Israeli, Palestinian and international non-governmental civil society institutions to submit a comprehensive parallel report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in response to the Israeli government's report.

Kids Behind Bars Conference

From 30 June - 2 July DCI/PS hosted its first international conference entitled "Kids Behind Bars – A child rights' perspective" in Bethlehem. The conference was a huge success, following on the back of the three-day international general assembly of the DCI movement – also organised in Bethlehem by DCI/PS, in cooperation with other DCI sections. The conference brought together DCI national sections, international, regional and national NGOs, academics and other individual experts, government representatives, UN bodies and specialized agencies from over 30 countries to share and discuss their experiences and expertise on the subject of juvenile justice. Among those participating in the conference were Professor Jaap Doek, Chairman of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and Mr. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, Independent Expert of the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children.

The conference formed part of the *No Kids Behind Bars!* global campaign coordinated by DCI- The Netherlands, which seeks on the one hand to reduce the number of children in prison and on the other, improve conditions for child detainees. The campaign was presented at the conference and organizations were invited to assist in achieving the campaign goals.

Hundreds of delegates attended the three-day event, participating in plenary sessions, workshops, regional roundtables and side events. The conference provided a forum in which to discuss a variety of issues facing young people from all corners of the globe and an opportunity to share experiences and explore solutions designed to promote child safety and guarantee child rights, enabling children to live and learn in a safe and nurturing environment. Participants attended seminars on key topics such as Street Children and Juvenile Justice; Deprivation of liberty as a measure of last resort; Juvenile delinquency prevention strategies - alternative and restorative justice; NGO Juvenile Justice Programs; and Advocacy and International Campaigns. More importantly still, the Kids Behind Bars conference acted as a launch pad for regional and international initiatives designed to raise awareness of the problems facing those children who come into conflict with the law.

Addressing a packed audience at the closing session of the conference, the newly-elected president of the DCI movement, Rifat Odeh Kassis, officially presented the Bethlehem Declaration – a call for concerted action at community, organisation and government level to reduce the number of children in prison and improve conditions for those detained as a matter of last resort. The Bethlehem Declaration was given a standing ovation, and adopted at the conclusion of the conference.

Bethlehem Declaration

No Kids Behind Bars

1. A statement by the International Executive Council of Defence for Children International based upon the presentations and discussions of the international conference "Kids Behind Bars – A Child Rights' Perspective" of DCI, gathered in Bethlehem, Occupied Palestinian Territory on 30 June – 2 July 2005.
2. **Children do not belong behind bars. Children should go to school. They should be playing with their friends. They should be together with their families.**
3. Different studies have estimated that over one million boys and girls are behind bars worldwide, too often in horrific, degrading, overcrowded and violent conditions. Detention should be considered as an option only for the very small number of children who have committed violent and serious offences.
4. The majority of children currently behind bars do not belong there. Many have committed only petty crimes and are still awaiting trial. Many have committed no crime at all such as street children, political prisoners, refugee and asylum seekers, children with mental disabilities and others detained without judicial process.
5. One hundred and ninety-two governments have already committed to the general principles outlined in this document by ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Nevertheless children in prison and detention remain abused and forgotten.
6. At the same time, repressive policies and actions have been promoted and implemented by the governments of many countries. These measures have significantly increased the number of children behind bars.
7. Putting boys and girls behind bars and separating them from their families and communities seriously damages their physical, mental and social development. Many do not receive adequate food, health care or education. Children are exposed to physical, psychological and sexual abuse and may become infected with HIV. Detention leads to lifelong stigmatization which hampers reintegration of children into communities.
8. During this international conference we have learnt that thousands of Palestinian children have been arrested and detained by the Israeli Occupation Forces since September 2000 for political reasons, as a deliberate policy designed to strengthen and maintain the Israeli occupation.
9. For us, this situation is unacceptable. Thousands of Palestinian children have been detained during mass, arbitrary arrest campaigns over the last four years and are often used as political hostages to the negotiation process. These children should not be used as bargaining chips.

Call for Government Action

10. Stop putting kids behind bars

- Stop the arrest and detention of girls and boys who are not suspected of an offence;
- Stop detaining children who have committed petty offences;
- Stop putting children in need of care and protection behind bars;
- Immediately decriminalize survival behaviours such as begging and vagrancy, and status offences such as truancy, and children who are victims of sexual or other forms of exploitation;
- Put an end to harsh, repressive, “tough on crime” policies that carry an excessive economic and social cost;
- Immediately release all child political prisoners and end the practice of political arrest;
- End discriminatory laws, policies and practices that put children behind bars based on race, nationality, ethnicity, socio-economic and other status;
- Bring those responsible for arbitrary and illegal arrest and other human rights violations such as torture to justice.

11. Invest in a positive future for children

- Prioritize and invest in programmes such as: social spaces; community youth centres; sports and cultural programs; mentoring; programs to help boys and girls stay in school;
- Implement programs to reduce violence and to promote positive child-rearing in families and communities, and to strengthen social support systems;
- Strengthen opportunities for participation of children in decisions that affect them and their communities and foster their roles as positive social actors;
- Increase opportunities for children to develop sustainable economic livelihoods and life skills;
- Strengthen and maintain care and protection systems, including alternative family based care for children deprived of a family environment and other social welfare services.

12. Develop community based and restorative alternatives

- Provide a range of local, community-supported diversion and individualized options for children in conflict with the law that will address the root causes of their offending in a way that is restorative to the victim and community e.g. victim/offender mediation, family group conferencing, community service;
- Focus on community-based support to reduce stigma and ensure that children avoid repeat conflict with the law and to empower children to work towards positive futures.

13. Improve conditions for the exceptional cases of children who need to be detained

- Ensure that detention as a last resort is used only for those exceptional cases where children need to be detained for the seriousness of their offence or because they pose a danger to themselves or others;
- Provide child-oriented, child-sensitive systems that are separate from adult criminal justice systems. Children must not be tried as adults;
- Make sure children are processed as quickly as possible by limiting detention in police custody to a maximum of 24 hours and ensuring that detention before conviction is court-ordered and regularly reviewed;
- Comply with international standards for physical and psychological protection, wellbeing and development of children while behind bars;
- Ensure the total separation of children from adults in detention and separation on the basis of sex and convicted status;
- Ensure that children are informed of their rights and the functioning of the juvenile justice system while they are in detention.

14. Establish national plans to reduce the numbers of children behind bars

- Develop mechanisms to effectively measure, monitor and report on the number of girls and boys behind bars;
- Develop a plan of action to reduce the number of kids behind bars which includes establishing a baseline and means to reduce that number by 50% within 10 years;
- Provide compulsory and quality training on standards and sensitization of law enforcement and juvenile justice personnel;
- Develop effective independent complaints and investigation procedures, independent monitoring and NGO access;
- At a local level, governments must monitor the situation in places where kids are behind bars and develop local action plans.

Call for Action to Other Partners

15. UN and other international bodies must:

(e.g. UNICEF, WHO, UNDP, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN Commission on Human Rights, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, UNIFEM and Habitat)

- Assist governments to collect and analyze national data;
- Provide technical assistance for the implementation and monitoring of national plans of action including training;

- Publish annual statistics on children in detention and in conflict with the law;
- Organize regular international meetings on children behind bars.

16. NGOs and civil society:

- International NGOs must lobby to place the topic on the international agenda, organize for a world congress and stimulate plans of action;
- National NGOs must establish national campaigns on *No Kids Behind Bars!*, monitor government actions and conditions in detention, and collaborate on a regional level;
- Community organizations must work closely with youth at risk, participate in local action plans and support children in closed institutions.

17. Media and educators must:

(e.g. TV, radio, newspapers, Internet, film and other cultural outlets, schools and academic institutions)

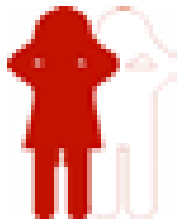
- Inform the public about the problem of boys and girls behind bars based upon accurate and balanced information that does not sensationalize, victimize and exaggerate incidents that increase fear of crime;
- Support and publicize the *No Kids Behind Bars!* global campaign;
- Develop programs about kids behind bars for school curricula and community groups that encourage critical thinking and their participation in the *No Kids Behind Bars!* campaign.





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Administrative & Financial Level

Without doubt, the greatest feat accomplished by the Administrative and Financial Unit in 2005 was the successful preparation and hosting of the ninth DCI International General Assembly and the “Kids Behind Bars- A child rights’ perspective” international conference, two events that took place back-to-back in June/July in Bethlehem under the auspices of DCI/PS. The administrative and financial staff did an excellent job, despite the obvious challenges of staging such huge events. Two months later, the same team successfully managed to prepare DCI/PS’ annual general assembly, in spite of the difficulties that invariably surround the organisation of a large meeting in the West Bank. DCI/PS board members and staff gathered for this important meeting in Ramallah in September 2005. As a registered Palestinian NGO, DCI/PS invited representatives from the Palestinian Ministry of Interior to attend and monitor the meeting and oversee the election process.

During the meeting, speeches and presentations were made by the candidate for Chairperson of the DCI/PS Board of Trustees, Nader Abu Amsa and the organisation’s director George Abu al-Zulof, while the outgoing treasurer Hussan Sababa presented the organisation’s financial report. In addition, a presentation was given on proposed modifications to the organisation’s by-laws, which were subsequently approved by the Assembly. In the ensuing discussion, the General Assembly agreed that DCI/PS would commence its five year review in October, to be followed by a major strategic planning process to map out DCI/PS’ priorities and commitments for the coming five years. At the end of the meeting, the General Assembly held elections for the board of trustees and seven members were elected.



Current Board Members

President:	Nader Abu Amsa
Vice-president:	Jacqueline Sfeir
Treasurer:	Khaled Farraj
Secretary:	Shawan Jabareen
Member:	Nidal Abu Al Zulof
Member:	Mahmoud Jeddeh
Member:	Imad Musbah

Board Meetings

In addition to the General Assembly, the DCI/PS board held four further meetings in accordance with the organisation's by-laws. In the course of these meetings, financial and narrative reports were submitted for review and approval and board members discussed and developed DCI/PS work and policies. The trustees also discussed preparations for the organisation's next General Assembly. In the meeting that followed the General Assembly organisational responsibilities were distributed among board members.

Internal developments

From October 2005 to early 2006, DCI/PS underwent a five year review and a thorough strategic planning process based on the outcome of the evaluation. The outcome of this process was the DCI/PS strategic plan of action 2006-2010, which foresees some important structural changes to DCI/PS on an administrative and financial level, including a restructuring of DCI/PS management and a comprehensive plan to implement a range of appropriate organizational development processes that will make DCI/PS' performance more efficient and their work more effective and sustainable. See section on Five-year review and strategic planning for more details at the beginning of this report.



DCI/PS audited statement 2005 by Ernst & Young

Expenditures

Expenditure	Predicted expenditures									
	2005 Budget	2005 Actual		2005 Actual	Expenditure in excess of Budget	Expenditure in excess of Budget	2005 Actual		2005 Actual	2005 Actual
	2005 Budget	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual
	2005 Budget	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual	2005 Actual
Salaries	1,000	1,000	1,000	17,000	1,000	11,000	100	1,000	11,000	10,000
Research and development fees	-	1,000	1,000	11,000	1,000	10,000	100	1,000	10,000	9,000
Printing and publications	1,000	1,000	1,000	-	400	10,000	-	-	1,000	10,000
Travel and transportation	1,000	100	100	1,000	100	1,000	100	100	100	10,000
Advertisement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
Utilities	1,000	100	100	100	100	1,000	100	1,000	-	1,000
Accommodation	-	-	-	-	100	-	100	100	-	100
Professional fees	-	1,000	1,000	-	-	-	1,000	1,000	-	1,000
Postage and telephone	-	100	100	1,000	-	1,000	-	-	100	1,000
Workshop	1,000	100	100	-	-	10,000	-	-	100	10,000
Translation equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	100	-	100
Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	100	-	1,000
Total	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000

Expenditures

	Partners' expenses (continued)										
	Small items			State-funded Non-Fee-for-Service					Administrative and non-personnel cost	Total 2005	Total 2004
	Expenditure	Nonpersonnel benefits	State fee addition	1/1/01/02	Resolving	Endowment	Other	Total			
Salaries	\$1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$1,000	\$62,000	100,000	\$64,400
Research and coordination fees	\$5,000	100	400	200	400	400	200	6,700	16,400	\$40,200	\$39,600
Printing and publications	\$1,200	20	1,400	400	1,400	2,000	200	\$1,200	\$1,400	\$5,400	\$1,800
Travel and transportation	\$1,400	-	1,200	1,400	1,200	6,400	1,400	10,400	17,400	\$24,800	\$1,400
Advertising	200	-	100	100	100	400	100	1,000	1,100	4,400	\$5,000
Utilities	\$1,400	100	0	0	0	0	0	\$1,500	\$1,500	6,100	\$4,300
Accommodation	400	-	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	400	\$4,000	\$4,400	\$1,400	\$1,400
Professional fees	\$1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$1,000	\$1,400	\$4,400	\$1,000
Postage and telephone	4,000	-	20	20	20	20	20	4,080	\$4,400	\$1,400	\$1,100
Workshop	\$4,000	-	4,700	1,100	4,700	4,400	1,400	\$1,600	\$1,700	\$4,400	\$1,700
Translation equipment	400	-	400	400	400	1,100	200	4,400	1,400	1,400	-
Books	1,000	-	100	400	100	1,400	100	4,700	4,400	\$1,400	\$1,400
Total	\$24,700	1,400	\$1,600	\$1,000	\$1,600	\$1,100	\$1,400	\$24,700	\$64,400	\$100,000	\$67,700

DCI/PS audited statement 2005 by Ernst & Young

Revenues

	Balance, Beginning of year	Additions	Cash received	Balance, end of year
Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst E.V. (EED)	198,494	-	(59,433)	139,061
Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCD)	-	254,888	(142,834)	112,054
Kingdom of Netherlands	250,178	-	(125,000)	125,178
Kerkinactie	7,222	169,919	(95,349)	81,892
ARCI Cultura	-	108,508	(63,517)	44,991
Consulate General of Sweden	-	107,016	(107,016)	-
European Commission	30,142	-	(13,685)	16,457
Save the Children -Sweden	5,645	89,107	(87,300)	7,449
UNODIP-Italy	46,733	-	(43,261)	3,472
United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF)	-	31,511	(26,643)	4,868
Canada Fund	4,870	-	-	4,870
Stichting Kinderpostzegels- Netherlands	1,986	43,853	(43,853)	1,986
Other	-	19,682	(19,182)	500
	<u>548,270</u>	<u>644,486</u>	<u>(825,278)</u>	<u>368,478</u>