

Israel accused of committing yet another war crime over killing 8-year-old boy in West Bank



Ramallah, May 3 (RHC)-- Israel has been accused by various experts of committing yet another war crime, for the tragic death of an eight-year-old boy who was shot dead while innocently playing in the street last November.

Adam, 8, and Basil, 15, were killed on November 29, 2023 in the occupied West Bank while playing on a street. Video footage from November 29th shows an Israeli armed convoy passing by as Adam, a football fanatic and massive Lionel Messi fan, stood in the street with his older brother, Baha, 14, and nine other boys.

CCTV cameras that provided a nearly 360-degree view of what happened next captured the moment when gunfire erupted, with 11 shots fired, hitting cars and nearby buildings. Tragically, two shots struck Basil in the chest, and one hit Adam as he attempted to flee from the scene.

Evidence from mobile phone and CCTV footage, along with information on Israeli forces movements, witness testimony, and a thorough investigation of the scene, including measurements, have uncovered compelling evidence pointing to grave human rights violations.

Baha recounted the harrowing experience of dragging his younger brother to safety, desperately calling for an ambulance. "I was in a state of shock; I wasn't even thinking about myself. I tried to speak to him. I started saying, 'Adam, Adam!' But his soul was basically leaving his body because he didn't answer," Baha told BBC tearfully.

The Israeli forces deny any allegation of misconduct and claim that Basil was in possession of an explosive at the time of the shooting. "Live fire is used only in order to remove immediate threats or for arrest purposes, following arrest protocols after exhausting other options," Israeli forces claimed.

A group of experts have unanimously called for an investigation into the incident, with some asserting that there are potential violations of international law.

The evidence has led the UN special rapporteur on human rights and counter-terrorism, Ben Saul, to raise concerns about the legality of using lethal force in Basil's case as he asserted that the death of Adam seems to be a "war crime."

"For Adam, this appears to be a violation of the International Humanitarian Law prohibitions on deliberately, indiscriminately or disproportionately attacking civilians, a war crime, and a violation of the human right to life," Saul said.

Another legal expert, Lawrence Hill-Cawthorne, criticized the soldiers for resorting to lethal force instead of pursuing a more strategic approach in response to the threat, stating that their actions violated international law and described the use of lethal force as "indiscriminate."

The Palestinian Red Crescent says this is not an isolated incident and similar attacks have been happening "systemically."

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