

Rights group says Israel killed 25 Palestinian children since beginning 2018



Ramallah, July 4 (RHC)-- A children's rights NGO says Israeli military troopers have shot and killed 25 Palestinian children in the occupied West Bank and the blockaded Gaza Strip since the beginning of the current year.

Defense for Children International/Palestine reported on Monday that Israeli soldiers are responsible for the death of 21 children in the Gaza Strip alone. The organization added that 18 children lost their lives while participating in the "Great March of Return" protests, which began on March 30th at the Gaza border with occupied territories.

The rights group further noted that Israeli forces had deliberately killed 21 minors with the use of live ammunition, and that eleven of them were shot in the head and neck. It also said the fate of 15-year-old Yousef Jaser Abu Jazar remains unknown since April 29, when Israeli soldiers fired shots at him. Israeli military officials later declared that he was killed without returning his body, while the Palestinian Ministry of Health could not confirm his death.

“The Israeli army continues its escalations using lethal force and live bullets against Palestinian children who pose no direct threat to it,” the NGO’s statement read. It also called for the arrest of Israeli soldiers, who kill or maim Palestinian children in clear violation of international law.

At least 135 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces in anti-occupation protests in the Gaza Strip. A total of 14,811 Palestinians also sustained injuries, of whom 366 are reportedly in a critical condition.

The Gaza clashes reached their peak on May 14, the eve of the 70th anniversary of Nakba Day (Day of Catastrophe), which coincided this year with the U.S. embassy relocation from Tel Aviv to the occupied Jerusalem.

Last month, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Turkish and Algerian-sponsored resolution, condemning Israel for Palestinian civilian deaths in the Gaza Strip. The resolution, which had been put forward on the behalf of Arab and Muslim countries, garnered a strong majority of 120 votes in the 193-member assembly, with 8 votes against and 45 abstentions.

The resolution calls on UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to make proposals within 60 days “on ways and means for ensuring the safety, protection, and well-being of the Palestinian civilian population under Israeli occupation,” including “recommendations regarding an international protection mechanism.”

It also calls for “immediate steps towards ending the closure and the restrictions imposed by Israel on movement and access into and out of the Gaza Strip.”

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