

Rights group says Israel withholding bodies of Palestinian children

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Ramallah, February 24 (RHC)-- The Israeli regime has refused to hand over the bodies of nine Palestinian children, whom it has killed since 2016, says a rights group. Reporting the matter on Tuesday, Defense for Children International - Palestine (DCI) said the practice was in violation of both the international law and the principles of human rights.

The international law, which the regime was contravening by withholding the bodies, "includes an absolute prohibition of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and stipulates that parties to armed conflict must bury the dead in an honorable manner," the DCI said.

"It falls under the policy of collective punishment practiced by the occupation against the Palestinian people, and the harm caused to the families of the martyrs as a result, amounts to collective punishment that violates international humanitarian law," it added.

The Palestinian children were all under 18, when they were murdered by the regime under the pretext of "carrying out stabbing attacks." The youngest of the children, who were killed as early as 2016 and as late as December 2021, were two 15-year-olds.

The DCI called 2021 the deadliest year for Palestinian children since 2014, with Israeli forces killing as many as 76 Palestinians inside the occupied territories and the Tel Aviv-blockaded Gaza Strip.

As early as 1967, when the regime occupied huge swathes of Palestinian and other regional Arab territories, the regime started setting up cemeteries inside closed-off military zones, where it would retain the bodies of the people, who had been killed as a result of its aggression.

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