

# *Nearly 2,000 Palestinian Children Killed Since 2000*

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Geneva, September 18 (RHC)-- An independent non-governmental organization says nearly 2,000 Palestinian children have lost their lives at the hands of Israeli military forces and illegal settlers over the past 15 years.

Defense for Children International-Palestine (DCIP), in a report released on Thursday, criticized the Israeli regime's policy of land expropriation and consistent development of illegal settlements in the occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank, warning that such practices are placing Palestinian children and their families against "expanding and often violent Israeli settler communities."

The Geneva-based NGO further noted that Israel's ongoing settlement expansion activities are increasingly creating a "hyper-militarized environment" for Palestinian children, where they are highly exposed to disproportionate violence from both Israeli forces and settlers.

The DCIP said Israeli soldiers killed 12 Palestinian children in East Jerusalem and West Bank in 2014, and the majority of the fatalities were caused by ammunition. It highlighted that there is "no evidence that any of the children killed in the West Bank posed a direct threat to Israeli troops or settlers."

The rights group also revealed that 553 of the Palestinian children killed since 2000 died as a direct result of the Israeli military's onslaught against the impoverished Gaza Strip in summer 2014, noting that around 68 percent of the victims were under the age of 12.

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