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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by United Nations Watch, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[27 May 2020]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

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Palestinian Violations of Child Rights

United Nations Watch is deeply concerned by Palestinian Authority (PA) and Hamas violations of the right to life of Israeli and Palestinian children in breach of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (article 6) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (articles 6 and 38) to which the State of Palestine is a party.

The Palestinian Authority acceded to these human rights treaties in April 2014. The period since has been marked by several waves of Palestinian terrorism and violence, resulting in both Palestinian and Israeli children being killed. Israeli civilians, including children, were the specific targets in many of the terrorist attacks.

Just two months after the PA joined these treaties, Hamas terrorists kidnapped and brutally murdered three Israeli teenagers (two of them under age 18). This incident was followed by the summer 2014 Gaza war, an intense seven-week conflict in which hundreds of Gaza rockets were indiscriminately fired at Israeli cities, many launched from in or near schools or other civilian infrastructure putting both Palestinian and Israeli children at risk.

The only reason Israeli civilian casualties were so low is because of the extensive measures Israel takes to protect its citizens, for example, by building bomb shelters, deploying the iron dome missile defense system, and blaring warning sirens of incoming rocket attacks. Despite these measures, just a few days before the end of that war a 4-year-old Israeli, unable to reach the shelter in time, was killed by a mortar fired from Gaza. Shockingly, the lethal mortar was launched from near a school being used to shelter Palestinian civilians.¹

In September 2015, a new wave of terror attacks commenced featuring stabbings, shootings, car ramming attacks, and one suicide bus bombing. According to Israel's Foreign Ministry, since October 2015, 76 people were killed and 1187 were wounded in terror attacks. During this time, there were 202 stabbing attacks, 147 attempted stabbings, 221 shooting attacks, 73 car ramming attacks, 316 roadside bombs, and 1,223 rocket and mortar attacks from the Gaza Strip.²

One disturbing aspect of this wave of terror is the numbers of child perpetrators. A recent report found that 174 Palestinian children carried out 142 separate terrorist attacks during this period, killing 7 Israelis and wounding 58.³

These child terrorists were responding to pervasive anti-Israel incitement and glorification of martyrdom coming from Palestinian leaders, on Palestinian television, and in the Palestinian education system. For example:

- The 16-year-old terrorist who brutally stabbed to death 38-year-old Israeli Dafna Meir in front of her horrified children was acting in response to Palestinian television shows that portrayed Israel as killing and humiliating young Palestinians. He told investigators that if allowed to go free he “would go to Al-Aqsa mosque, even if I was killed, and on the way I would kill as many Zionist Jews as I could.”⁴
- A 17-year-old posted the following on Facebook one day before carrying out a fatal stabbing attack: “History will write that we faced Israel with a stone, a knife, explosive devices, weapons, and our hearts, and we offered blood of Mujahideen as sacrifice for the place from which the Prophet ascended to heaven. May God accept us as martyrs in paradise.”⁵

¹ Four-year-old killed in mortar attack, Times of Israel (August 22, 2014).

² Wave of Terror 2015-2016, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (last visited February 20, 2019), <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Terrorism/Palestinian/Pages/Wave-of-terror-October-2015.aspx>.

³ A Society Not Ready for Statehood: Palestinian Children Who Kill and Their Adult Enablers, Human Rights Voices (September 6, 2018), http://www.humanrightsvoices.org/assets/attachments/documents/Report_on_Palestinian_Child_Terrorists_September_2018.2.pdf.

⁴ Teen given life in prison for cold-blooded murder of Dafna Meir, Times of Israel (November 2, 2016), <https://www.timesofisrael.com/teen-given-life-in-prison-for-cold-blooded-murder-of-dafna-meir/>.

⁵ Palestinian teen discussed death on social media prior to fatal attack, Ma'an News (January 26, 2016).

- One week before stabbing to death a 13-year-old Israeli girl, her 17-year-old attacker posted on Facebook about wanting to be a martyr: “death is a right and I am asking for my right.”⁶
- In another case, a 15-year-old would-be stabber was motivated to become a “martyr” by Palestinian media coverage of recent stabbing attacks.⁷
- After being released from Israeli prison in 2018, then 17-year-old Ahed Tamimi pledged “to continue on the path of the martyrs, so that their blood will not have been shed in vain. We shall always continue on their path. I have pledged to continue to make sacrifices, even sacrificing my life, for the sake of liberating Palestine.”⁸

These are not isolated incidents. They reflect a culture of hatred and violence inculcated in Palestinian youth from a very early age. Through the education system and the media, children are taught that Israel has no right to exist because Israel proper really belongs to the Palestinians. Children are encouraged to follow in the footsteps of famous terrorists, who are honored and glorified. Israel, Israelis, and Jews are routinely demonized.

As the above illustrates, Palestinian antisemitic and terrorist incitement violates the right to life of Palestinian children who are encouraged to pursue terrorism and martyrdom and of Israeli children who are targeted by Palestinian terrorism.

Separately, this incitement violates ICCPR article 20 (prohibition against racial incitement); CRC article 17 (material disseminated by the media should promote “social, spiritual and moral well-being”); and article 4 of the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (prohibition against racial incitement by public officials and institutions).

Antisemitic and terrorist incitement in Palestinian media includes the following:

Children celebrate martyrdom and violence on official PA television

- In the presence of the PA Minister of Education, a Palestinian boy recites a poem on a PA TV children’s program, calling for war and vengeance against Israel—“To war that will smash the oppression and destroy the Zionist’s soul...” The television presenter responds encouragingly: “Bravo!” (March 17, 2017).⁹
- Young children recite a poem promoting escalation of violence from rock throwing to the use of an AK-47 weapon on a PA TV children’s program “World, hear and see, my rock has turned into an AK-47 [assault rifle].” The host responds “Bravo! You’re so talented!” (January 20, 2017).¹⁰
- Palestinian boy recites poem on PA TV calling to “pick up your rifle, resist and terrify...Destroy, shock, burn, and set fire,” and to sacrifice oneself for the “homeland,” by protecting it “with your blood.” (September 16, 2014).¹¹

⁶ Tovah Lazaroff, Kiryat Arba Attack: Palestinian terrorist stabs teen girl to death in bedroom, Jerusalem Post (June 30, 2016), <https://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Initial-report-Suspected-terror-shooting-in-Kiryat-Arba-2-wounded-459126>.

⁷ Palestinian boy, 15, indicted for attempted murder in thwarted Old City stabbing, Jerusalem Post (February 7, 2016), <https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Palestinian-boy-15-indicted-for-attempted-murder-in-thwarted-Old-City-stabbing-444152>.

⁸ Palestinian teen icon Tamimi urges more assaults on Israeli troops, Times of Israel (October 25, 2018), <https://www.timesofisrael.com/palestinian-teen-icon-tamimi-urges-more-assaults-on-israeli-troops/>.

⁹ Boy recites Poem on PA TV children’s program, PMW (May 17, 2017), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LXTwIz0DcJI>.

¹⁰ Kids on PA TV children’s program, PMW (February 1, 2017), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NboGyu4lNR8>.

¹¹ Boy at Fatah event: “Pick up your rifle...Destroy, shock, burn, set fire,” PMW (October 7, 2014), http://palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=12849.

Hamas TV children’s program teaches rejection and hate

- Hamas TV children’s program interviews young children dressed in military fatigues. One child says he wants to be an engineer when he grows up “so that I can blow up the Jews.” Another child recites a poem about liberating Jerusalem. The child host responds “Keep waging Jihad...when you grow up you will wage resistance against the Jews...” (September 4, 2015).¹²
- Hamas TV’s Tomorrow’s Pioneers teaches rejection of Israel by asking young girl about capital cities in the Middle East, when she gets to Israel, the child responds: “There is no Israel – Palestine.” The host responds “Superb,” and tells the child she is “so clever.” (May 23, 2014).¹³

Palestinian children are incited to violence with images of children holding weapons

- Poster guide to rock-throwing with written instructions, concluding “if you did not understand this...here is an example picture for you,” posted to Official Fatah Twitter account December 16, 2017.¹⁴
- In April 2015 Fatah posted to Facebook music video with armed child soldier undergoing military training singing praise for terrorism.¹⁵
- Photo posted to official Fatah Facebook page in July 2014 with the caption “My mother taught me that my stone is my weapon; that I am Palestinian only through my struggle.”¹⁶

We call on the High Commissioner and the Special Rapporteurs on racism and religious freedom, as well as United Nations member states, to strongly condemn all incitement to violence directed at Palestinian children and to demand the Palestinians end such incitement.

¹² Children on Hamas TV: we want to wage Jihad and blow up the Jews, MEMRI (September 4, 2015), <https://www.memri.org/tv/children-hamas-tv-we-want-wage-jihad-and-blow-jews>.

¹³ Hamas and PA have same children’s education: “There is no Israel,” PMW (May 25, 2014), http://palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=11533.

¹⁴ Fatah’s guide to rock throwing for kids, PMW (December 27, 2017), http://palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=24619.

¹⁵ Child soldier promotes violence in Fatah video, PMW (May 31, 2015), http://www.palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=14949.

¹⁶ Mahmoud Abbas’Fatah heats up confrontational atmosphere, PMW (July 3, 2014), http://palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=11913.