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**Human rights situation in Palestine and other
occupied Arab territories**

Written statement* submitted by Khiam Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture, 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.

[25 May 2021]

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



The arrests in the Palestine territories are Systematic

The occupation uses the policy of arrests as a weapon and a tool of repression by which the fight the Palestinian existence for the purpose of subjugating and terrifying the Palestinians.

During the year 2020, the occupation authorities continued their detentions of the Palestinian people, which affected all classes of society, including children, women, liberators, the ill people, the disabled, the elderly, the human rights activists, the journalists, the fishermen, the legislators, the factions' leaders and others, with 4,700 arrests reported this year. 360 Children, 78 Women & Girls, Jerusalem Arrests.

The arrests in Jerusalem are a systematic and deliberate policy of draining the Jerusalemites and creating a harsh living, economic and security reality targeting all walks of life to push them to flee and stay away to find a safe and dignified life away from the occupation and its continued targeting.

The year 2020, the arrest campaigns in occupied Jerusalem escalated dramatically, targeting all groups of children, women even the sick, the elderly and those stationed in the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and monitoring the report (2000) arrests in The City of Jerusalem during the year, including (360) children, (41) under the age of 12.

Among the detainees are 78 women and girls, many of whom were arrested in the squares and gates of the Al-Aqsa Mosque under the pretext of countering the settlers' incursions. Some of whom were arrested more than once during the year.

The town of Issawiya witnessed the largest number of arrests in Jerusalem, with 600 arrests, followed by the Al-Aqsa Mosque and its surroundings, with 380 arrests, and 280 arrests from The Old City of Jerusalem, while 200 were from The Town of Silwan.

The occupation also carried out a campaign of arrests against Islamic and national leaders, including the head of the Supreme Islamic Authority.

The occupation not only ordered the arrest of the Jerusalemites, but also targeted them with domestic detention, and the removal from the houses or prevention from entering the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque for various periods of time, sometimes for several months.

The deportation decisions over the year reached 360 orders, including (305) deportation decisions from the Al-Aqsa Mosque, (44) from the Old City of Jerusalem, and (11) from Jerusalem.

In accordance with international law, the Israeli army's seizure of east Jerusalem as part of the West Bank in 1967 and the imposition of its authority on it is a military occupation, and therefore applies to it the rules of international law on military occupation, in accordance with international law, international jurisprudence and international jurisprudence. To name but a few, the Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967 affirmed the necessity of the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the territories it occupied in 1967, and confirmed this characterization by many. In addition to international resolutions, the International Court of Justice, which affirmed that East Jerusalem is occupied territory, similar to the rest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and that international humanitarian law No. 1 applies to the territories of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Hence, Israel has limited authority to manage the occupied lands according to the International Law rules, especially Geneva 4th convention 1949.

However, Palestinian citizens in Jerusalem suffer from unjust racist treatment, as the Israeli authorities consider them permanent residents rather than citizens, and this discriminatory treatment has affected all their rights, including their rights as prisoners.

Gaza Arrests

Although arrests from the besieged Gaza Strip declined after the cessation of the Return Marches, the policy of arrests of Gazans did not stop during the year 2020, either at the Beit Hanoun crossing, or for fishermen working at sea, or as young people approached the eastern

border of the Gaza Strip. The report monitored (88) arrests of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip during the year 2020.

The occupation authorities used the Beit Hanoun checkpoint as a means of inflicting, blackmailing and exploiting the civilian population in the Gaza Strip, as the arrests at the crossing during the year reached 12 cases, including 5 merchants, a citizen who was heading to the Jordan Bridge to travel, and a journalist diagnosed with cancer. It did not stop as the arrests near the border.

There has also been a decline in the arrests of fishermen, but they have not stopped, as the Occupation Navy continued its attacks on fishermen while fishing near the shores of the Gaza Strip by pursuing, arresting and shooting them. 9 arrests of fishermen were reported.

Although the volume of arrests on the eastern border of the Gaza Strip declined after the suspension of the marches to break the siege reached (65) arrests, including a child under the age of 15, and a woman. That woman approached the military site of Zekim, and was released after hours of investigation through the Crossing of Beit Hanoon near the border.

Despite Israel's unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005, it is still considered occupied territory in accordance with international law. Israel controls the land, sea and air borders, as well as its continued practice of some civil authorities in the Gaza Strip, such as granting identity numbers to Palestinian children in the Gaza Strip, as well as continuing to control requests for reunification of Palestinian expatriates and their families in the Gaza Strip. That confirms the legal status of Israel as an occupying state, as well as the legal status of the Gaza Strip as occupied territory, and therefore applies to it the international humanitarian law, especially the Geneva Conventions of 1949. It is noting that Israel has been a party to these agreements since 1951 which imposes special obligations with regard to detainees from the Gaza Strip.

Detention of Underage Children

The arrests of under- 18 children reached (550), including 52 children under the age of 14, the youngest of whom was M. S (7 years old) from Gius, east of Qalqilya.

Despite calls and appeals by many international institutions, including the United Nations, that children should be released because they are at risk under the current exceptional circumstance of the continued spread of the CORONA virus, the occupation continued during the year 2020 to target the under- 18s by arresting, summoning and interrogating them in harsh conditions, and imposing harsh sentences and onerous fines to them.

The occupation arrested 16 - year-old, resident of Jala zone camp, on a checkpoint. He was held by soldiers and severely beaten during the arrest, despite suffering from a rare disease called severe muscular dystrophy, and was tortured and abused during interrogation in Skopje. Another from Al-A'roub refugee camp in Hebron, was brutally assaulted with the butts of a rifle at the time of his arrest, resulting in fractures to the jaw and face, general bruises on the body and shattered face. He was transferred to Hadassah hospital in Jerusalem, and underwent surgery to repair jaw and facial fractures.

The Israeli occupation forces also arrested 12-year-old boy, who is disabled. A. M was infected with the Corona virus and was transferred to Ramla hospital. He was sentenced to 9 years and a half. He has been detained for five years so far. The occupation did not hesitate to shoot Palestinian children before arresting and interrogating them before being treated. Rather, they blackmailed them by offering confessions in exchange for treatment and medical care. 10 of the boys were arrested after being shot, some of them seriously. In 2020, the military courts of occupation continued to impose heavy fines on child prisoners as part of a programmed and approved policy, with fines imposed on children in 2020 in the Ofer court only (350,000 shekels) equivalent to 102,000\$.

By the end of 2020, 170 children were held in Israeli prisons in three central prisons (Megiddo, Ofer and Damon). In addition, a number of them attended to detention and interrogation centres and were subjected to harsh conditions of detention, violent means of torture, and violation of their rights.

All those arrested were severely beaten while in detention, placed in harsh conditions in detention and interrogation centres, and subjected to all forms of abuse, torture, psychological and physical pressure. The occupation treats children as terrorists and constantly insults and threatens them.

The occupation prisons administration continues to deliberately deprive children of the most basic necessities of life, and commits arbitrary practices against them, most notably breaking into their rooms and sections. The occupation also deprives dozens of children from their families or lawyers visits. In addition to that, the jailers persist in their ill-treatment against those juvenile prisoners, and attempt to deprive the elderly prisoners from taking care of the young ones.

In order to further the legislation of violations against children, the occupation authorities recently introduced amendments to Military Order No. (1651) with the aim of lifting protection for children between the ages of 12 and 14, thus allowing the cap on their detention to be raised, as the maximum sentence imposed on this group before the amendment was no more than six months in effect or suspended.

International Solidarity with prisoners. Tadamon, NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.