

## **On World Children's Day, the occupation has arrested more than 200 children since October 7th.**

Today, November 20th marks World Children's Day, yet on this day, Israeli occupying authorities continue to commit crimes against children in various Palestinian cities, villages, and refugee camps. Since October 7th, the Israeli military has killed over 5,000 children in its ongoing aggression against Gaza. Additionally, they have killed more than 52 children in the occupied West Bank since October 7th, raising the number of child martyrs in the West Bank to 92 since the beginning of the year according to Defense for Children-Palestine.

Israeli authorities persist in the systematic arrest of dozens of Palestinian children who are already living in difficult conditions inside prisons. Approximately 200 children have been arrested since October 7th, with some of them subsequently released. Israeli forces systematically arrest Palestinian children as part of punitive collective detention campaigns. These detained children are subjected to various forms of psychological and physical torture, without respecting the necessary child protection measures.

Israeli forces exploit the arrest of children to blackmail their families, forcing them to pay high financial fines for their release. The process of arresting children leaves devastating effects on their mental and physical health.

### **Child abuse during arrest operations...**

The Israeli forces began conducting continuous arrest campaigns since October 7th, targeting various segments of the Palestinian population in the West Bank provinces as a form of collective punishment and oppressive policies. They forcibly storm homes in a brutal manner during the night, instilling fear in children and residents alike. Children have not been spared from these arrest campaigns. Since the beginning of October, prisoner support organizations have documented more than 200 cases of children being arrested.

The Israeli forces use various methods of torture and physical abuse during the arrest of children. The case of a detained child, Q., 17 years old, from the city of Bethlehem, is one among many instances of deliberate abuse and humiliation by the occupying army against children. The soldiers detonated the door of his house, violently stormed in, brutally beat him, terrorized him with police dogs, and forcefully tied him up before taking him to one of the camps where he was subjected to severe beating until he bled. He was then transferred to Ofer Prison.

### **The child prisoners endure harsh and difficult conditions inside the occupation's prisons.**

Amid the ongoing aggression and mass arrest campaigns carried out by the Israeli army in the occupied West Bank, the occupying forces detain prisoners in what is considered the most difficult conditions in decades, especially for children. Children are prohibited from visits and communication with the outside world. Additionally, they are deprived of preparing their own food, provided with only two inadequate meals a day as part of a deliberate policy of starvation enforced by the prison authorities against the male and female prisoners. Children are also subjected to physical assault and beatings within the prisons.

### **Children under arbitrary administrative detention..**

The Israeli authorities use the policy of arbitrary administrative detention against Palestinians as a tool for suppression and control amidst escalating events, also as a punitive measure. No one is exempt from this policy, as the occupation currently holds over 2,300 administrative detainees in its prisons, **including 26 children**, most of whom were detained and subjected to administrative detention orders after October 7th. They are held without charges filed against them, claiming the existence of secret files that steal their childhoods in cells that extinguish all meanings of life and childhood, depriving them of their right to education and a safe life.

### **The detention of children as hostages to pressure their relatives to surrender themselves to the Israeli army..**

Recently, a policy has emerged of using children in Palestinian villages and cities as hostages to pressure their relatives into surrendering themselves to the occupying forces amid ongoing arrest campaigns. The occupation detains and arrests children, threatening their families with them to coerce them into surrendering themselves. One of the cases documented by prisoner support organizations involved a child (M.N.), three years old, where Israeli forces stormed the family's house and detained him to pressure his father to surrender himself for over an hour and a half.

### **The courts of the occupation steal the childhood of Palestinian children.**

The Israeli courts continue to issue harsh sentences against children. The Central Court in Jerusalem recently sentenced the Jerusalemite child, Nufuz Hamad, to 12 years in prison along with a fine of 50,000 shekels (around 13,000 dollars) with a three-year suspended sentence. Hamad was arrested in 2021 from her school in Jerusalem and faced difficult conditions during her detention. She is the youngest Palestinian female prisoner in the occupation's prisons.