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NOVEMBER 17, 2009

Israeli army kidnapped 6200 children since 2000 Official report



Middle East Monitor
November 16, 2009

An official report, received by Arab League from the minister of prisoners' affairs in the Palestinian Authority (Ramallah), revealed that the Israeli occupation forces have kidnapped about 6,200 Palestinian children since the beginning of Al Aqsa Intifada (2000), including approximately 337 children still detained in Israeli prisons and interrogation centers.

During last Saturday's meeting of the Arab League's permanent delegates council, which was set to discuss the conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, Minister Issa Qaraqe introduced the report, which unveiled the "repressive, inhumane practices of the Israeli occupation authorities against Palestinian children in Israeli prisons and detention camps," stressing that this violates the rules of international law, conventions on children's rights, and all international norms.

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The report pointed out that "any person under the age of 18 is considered a child, according to international law, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and, recently, Israeli domestic law," and according to the definition of juvenile by the United Nations' Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners, which were adopted in the General Assembly Resolution 45/113, dated December 14, 1990.

Qaraqe stated that the Israeli occupation authorities "deprive detained children from the basic rights granted by international conventions, such as the right to know the reason for their arrest, the right to counsel, the right of families to know the reason and the place of detention of their child, the right to appear before the judge, the right to object to the charge and lodge an appeal against it, the right to communicate with the outside world, and the right to a humane treatment that preserves the dignity of the detained child."

The report warned that the occupation authorities, "blatantly violated the rights of detained children"; dealt with them as "potential subversives", "and subjected them to different types of torture and cruel treatment, such as beating, sleep deprivation, starvation, sexual harassment, and deprivation of visits. The occupation forced applied the worst mental and physical means to extract confessions from child prisoners and to pressure them to work for Israeli intelligence."

The report also mentioned that during the first Intifada, massive numbers of children were arrested and detained on charges of throwing stones and other forms of political resistance, whereas, during the second intifada, Tel Aviv began adopting administrative detention against Palestinian children and it started convicting and detaining children under the age of 14 for periods of up to 6 months. The report further stated that, according to the 2002 annual report of the Defense of Children International organization, those arrest patterns did not exist during the years of the first intifada.

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