

Since 2007, a UNICEF-led working group consolidated efforts to report on the impact of armed conflict on children in Israel and the State of Palestine. The bulletin is published on a quarterly basis highlighting trends and patterns in grave violations against children.

Members of the working group include: DCI-Palestine, B'Tselem, Médecins du Monde – Suisse, Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, Save the Children, War Child Holland, World Vision, OCHA, OHCHR, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNRWA, UNMAS and WHO.

This edition covers January, February and March 2016.

**Update as of September 2017:** The Principals of Working Group member organizations met in August 2017 and reaffirmed their commitment to continue to generate accurate and reliable data on the situation of children affected by the conflict in Israel and the State of Palestine and to put this data in the public domain for advocacy purposes and to improve the situation of children. They will continue to work to improve the content and format of the CAAC bulletins and implement specific actions to that end. They also agreed to move forward with a similar but distinct 'bulletin approach' on other non-conflict related child rights issues of concern in an effort to ensure a more comprehensive approach to the child rights agenda. They re-affirmed the need for engagement with all concerned parties. UNICEF, as the chair of the Working Group, is also in the process of reaching out to other human rights organizations who may be able to provide additional data on grave child rights violations and, where relevant, will propose their inclusion in the Working Group.

### MAJOR TRENDS & VIOLATIONS

The overall situation in the State of Palestine, in particular in the West Bank, was extremely tense. The total number of incidents documented in the first three months of 2016 is 644, affecting at least 16,576 children. The total number of killings of children documented in the West Bank and Gaza is 22.

The wave of violence that started in the last quarter of 2015 continued, resulting in **20 Palestinian children killed in the West Bank** – including eight in the Hebron governorate. The Israeli Security Forces state that the majority of the Palestinian children killed (14) were perpetrating or attempting to perpetrate attacks against Israelis. Ninety-four (94) education-related incidents were documented in the West Bank, marking a decrease compared to the 296 incidents documented in the last quarter of 2015. However, 3 schools were demolished during the reporting period, affecting at least 71 children.

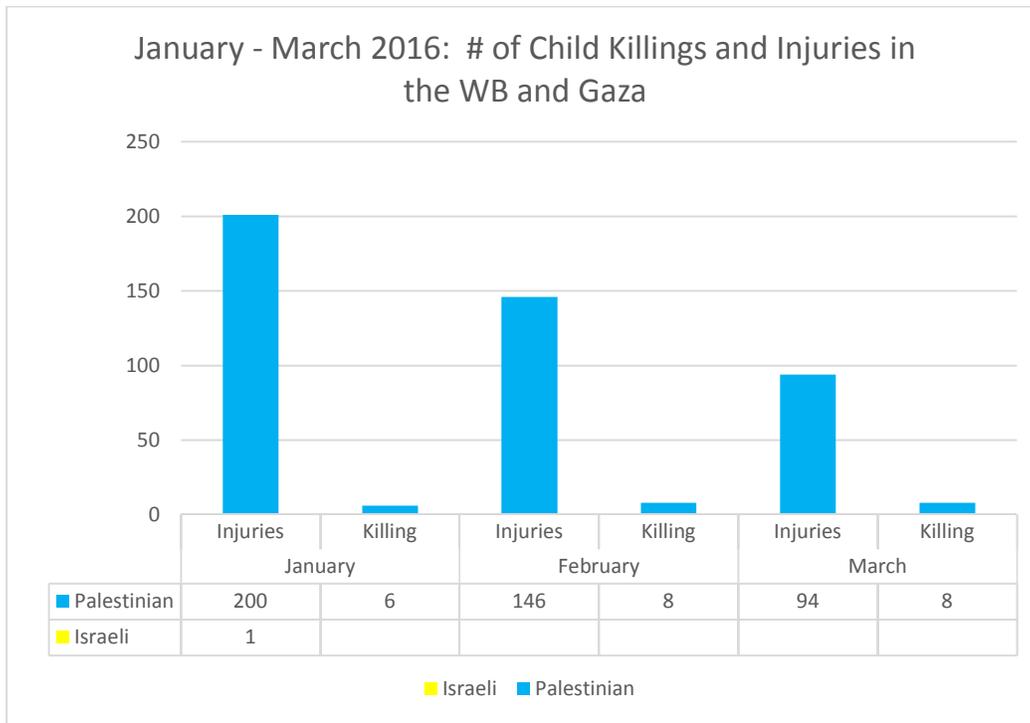
In addition, during the reporting period, there was a **dramatic increase of demolitions, including of those funded by donors as humanitarian aid**, resulting in the displacement of 323 Palestinian children. In this quarter, the number is almost as high as the total number of Palestinian children displaced in 2015 (408).

### CHILDREN KILLED AND INJURED

During the first quarter of 2016, **22 Palestinian children were killed** (20 boys and 2 girls). Twenty (20) Palestinian children were killed in the West Bank and 2 in Gaza.

In the first quarter of 2016, **440 Palestinian children were injured**. This marks a **sharp decrease** compared to the last quarter of 2015, when 1,325 Palestinian children were injured. All but six children were injured during clashes between Palestinians and Israeli Security Forces or Israeli military operations.

**One Israeli girl was injured; no Israeli children were killed.**



Source: CAAC database

**WEST BANK**

*Palestinian children killed*

In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, **twenty (20) Palestinian children aged between 13 and 17 years were killed** (19 boys and 1 girl). The most affected governorate was **Hebron**, where eight children were killed; the other children were killed in Jenin (3), Jerusalem (2), Nablus (2), Salfit (2), Bethlehem (1), Ramallah (1), and Tulkarem (1). All children were killed as a result of the use of live ammunition by Israeli Security Forces; in 14 instances were accused of carrying out stabbing attacks.

In the West Bank **425 children aged between 9 and 17 years were injured** (406 boys and 19 girls); 424 were Palestinian and one was Israeli.

*Palestinian children injured*

- Four hundred and twenty-four (422) Palestinian children, 404 boys and 18 girls, were injured in clashes between Palestinians and Israeli Security Forces during demonstrations and protests. Of these, 48 children were injured by live ammunition, 101 children were hit by rubber-coated metal bullets, 264 children suffered from tear gas inhalation, four boys were hit by a tear gas canister, one was hit by shrapnel from live ammunition, one was hit by stones, and three were physically assaulted. This includes four boys who were injured during alleged stabbing incidents against ISF and settlers.
- One (1) Palestinian boy was injured with second-degree burns in the face, chest and hands when an **explosive remnant of war (ERW)** exploded near his house in Tayaseer (Tubas), and one (1) boy was injured in his eye. An ISF military training had reportedly taken place on 9 February near the residential area.

- Out of the 424 Palestinian injuries:
  - 262 Palestinian children, 256 boys and 6 girls, were injured by the Israeli Security Forces during security operations, such as search and arrest operations and ensuing clashes between Palestinians and the Israeli Security Forces including in and around refugee camps. During these operations, children were injured by live ammunition (30), rubber-coated metal bullets (56), tear gas inhalation (172), shrapnel (1), tear gas canister (1), and physical assault (2).
  - On 4 March 2016, ISF soldiers shot and wounded an 11-year-old Palestinian boy during the weekly demonstration in Kafr Qaddum village, near Nablus. Witnesses told OHCHR that the soldiers allegedly ambushed the protestors while they were on their way to the protest site. This appears to be confirmed by cellphone footage of the incident. No other Israelis are visible in the vicinity. There did not appear to be any imminent threat to life or serious injury to justify the use of a firearm – particularly against an 11-year-old child. The soldiers also shot at, and wounded, a man who tried to evacuate the wounded boy.
  - Nine (9) boys were injured in the context of violence involving **Israeli settlers, and the intervention of Israeli Security Forces**. Three (3) boys were injured by live ammunition; 4 boys were injured by rubber-coated metal bullets and two boys suffered tear gas inhalation.

### *Israeli children injured*

- On 4 January, in Jerusalem, a 15-year-old Israeli girl was injured in the leg as a result of shrapnel from live ammunition that Israeli forces fired at a 16-year-old Palestinian who reportedly attempted to stab nearby Israeli policemen. The 16 year old boy was shot and injured.

No Israeli child was killed during the reporting period.

### **GAZA STRIP**

In the Gaza Strip, two children were killed (1 boy and 1 girl) and 16 Palestinian boys were injured during the reporting period.

- On 12 March, Israeli warplanes launched nine airstrikes on four targets in northern Gaza, reportedly in response to four rockets that landed in southern Israel the previous day. One of the targets hit was an empty building in an Izz el Din al Qassam Brigades training ground in Beit Lahiya. The blast and fragmentation caused by the explosion impacted the house of the Abu Khusa family where they were sleeping - about 50 metres away from the training site. The roof of the home collapsed and debris killed two of the family's six children: a 10-year-old boy died immediately and his six-year-old sister died at the hospital a few hours later. The mother and another child aged 12 years were also wounded. This is the third time the house was damaged as a result of ISF military operations. The event gives rise to concerns that Israel did not take requisite precautionary measures to avoid civilian casualties.
- **Nine (9) boys, aged between 13 and 17 years, were injured in the Access Restricted Areas (A.R.A.),<sup>1</sup>** as a result of live ammunition or rubber-coated metal bullets shot by ISF, or from being hit by tear gas canisters deployed by ISF during demonstrations near the fence with Israel. UN monitoring did not find any indication that the actions of demonstrators presented a threat to the

<sup>1</sup> Access Restricted Areas: Since September 2000, Israel has tightened restrictions on Palestinian access to the sea and to land located near the fence with Israel, citing security concerns. Up to 35% of Gaza's agricultural land and as much as 85% of its fishing waters have been affected at various points. Currently, access to farming land within 300 metres of the perimeter fence separating Gaza from Israel is largely prohibited, while presence for several hundred metres beyond this distance is risky. Fishermen are currently allowed to access less than one third of the fishing areas allocated under the Oslo Accords - 6 out of 20 nautical miles (nm) from the coast.

Israeli soldiers that would have justified the use of firearms. Under these circumstances, the use of live ammunition appears to entail excessive force causing unnecessary risk and superfluous injury to the children affected. Medical records for a 13-year-old boy who entered the ARA and was shot by Israeli forces in February show that the bullet fragmented in his body, causing irreparable harm to his leg, hip and genitals and leading to long-term rehabilitation needs. These injuries, as well as those documented in previous shooting instances in the ARA, correspond to those caused by expanding bullets and heighten concerns about unlawful use of firearms.

On 18 February, three boy brothers (age not available) were injured while mishandling an unexploded ordinance (UXO) inside their home in Beit Hanoun.

### RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILDREN

There were no cases of child recruitment reported in the first quarter of 2016.

### ARREST AND DETENTION OF CHILDREN

**Table: Number of Palestinian children in detention for as security detainees and prisoner in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem**

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2010	314	338	337	328	300	287	281	280	264	251	226	210
2011	221	216	224	217	211	207	201	176	162	150	159	132
2012	166	183	203	218	231	220	210	194	189	164	177	193
2013	219	234	236	236	223	193	195	180	179	159	173	154
2014	183	210	202	196	215	202	192	201	182	163	156	151
2015	163	182	182	164	163	160	153	156	171	307	407	422
2016	406	438	444									

Source: Israeli Prison Service data

According to the monthly head count of children in Israeli Prison Service (IPS) detention, at the end of March 2016, **444 Palestinian children** aged 12 to 17 years were held in military detention facilities (429 boys and 15 girls), marking the highest number of children in detention in a month since 2010. This was considerably higher than the average for 2015 of 219. Out of the 444 children, five children are aged between 12 and 14 and 107 children between 14 and 15.

Out of the 444 Palestinian children, eleven were held in administrative detention, 289 were held in pre-trial detention and 144 were serving a sentence. Moreover, 148 of the children were transferred outside the West Bank to detention facilities inside Israel, in contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention (Article 76).

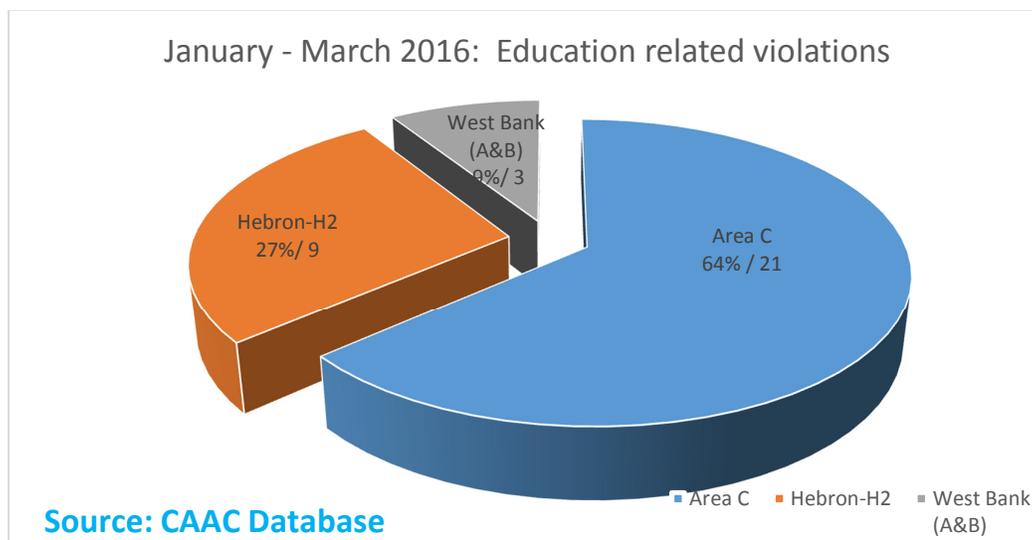
In addition to general data about Palestinian children in detention, the **arrest and detention of 210 Palestinian children from East Jerusalem** was documented in the first quarter of 2016, including at least nine children below the age of 12 (the age of criminal responsibility in Israel) who were reportedly detained. Seventy-three cases of arrest or detention of children in East Jerusalem were documented in January, 82 were documented in February and an additional 52 in March.

## ILL-TREATMENT OF CHILDREN IN DETENTION

In relation to the cases of military detention, the Working Group on Grave Violations against Children (WGGV) gathered 41 individual affidavits of Palestinian children. Thirty-eight (38) boys and three (3) girls, aged between 12 and 17 years, reported ill-treatment by the Israel Security Forces (ISF), the Israeli police, the Israeli Security Agency (ISA) and/or the Israel Prison Service (IPS) while in Israeli military detention in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem.

Out of the 41 cases, 35 children **reported being subjected to at least ten different types of ill-treatment**, including but not limited to painful hand-ties, blindfolding, strip-searching, leg-ties, verbal abuse, physical violence, no notification of rights and/or no presence of a lawyer or parent during interrogation. **In the first quarter of 2016, 21 Palestinian children reported being arrested at night, a traumatizing experience for children and their families.**

## EDUCATION-RELATED VIOLATIONS



### **Attacks & threats of attacks on schools**

#### **FIRST QUARTER OF 2016**

Between January and March, 33 education-related incidents were documented in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. No incidents were reported in the Gaza Strip or Israel.

Out of the 33 incidents, there were 29 instances of attacks against schools and four instances of attacks on protected persons.

### **Attacks on schools and protected persons**

During the first quarter of 2016, 29 incidents of **attacks against schools** were verified, affecting 3,893 children. The incidents included firing of tear gas canisters and sound bombs, raids and physical assault in or around schools. In two instances, the ISF fired live ammunition within the school premises. Six cases of soldiers causing intimidation by establishing a daily presence in front of schools were also

reported, including two cases of soldiers pointing weapons and verbally abusing Palestinian students. In six instances, the ISF raided schools, including at night.

Four incidents of **attacks against protected persons** in relation to education were documented (one in Bethlehem Governorate and three in Hebron Governorate), affecting 95 students. Two of these attacks were attributed to ISF and two were attributed to Israeli settlers. For instance on 16 March, six students were reportedly assaulted by a group of settlers while returning back to school in Yatta.

### Denial of access to education

In the first quarter, 60 incidents of denial of access to education were documented, affecting 10,529 students. Compared to the last quarter of 2015, **this marks a decrease** in the number of documented incidents (91) and in the number of children affected (11,961).

All of the incidents took place in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and no cases were reported in the Gaza Strip or Israel. These incidents included students and teachers being held at checkpoints, the closure of villages preventing students from leaving to attend their schools and the closing of schools. On 3 February, Dar al-Fata al-Lajia' Elementary School for girls in Wadi al-Joz received a demolition order.

In addition, 3 donor-funded schools were demolished and/or confiscated by Israeli Authorities during the reporting period. One school tent was dismantled in Nabi Samuel in February 2016. On 26 February, two tents from a primary school in Abu Nuwar Bedouin community were confiscated for being constructed without permits affecting 62 students. In March, one elementary school was demolished in Khirbet Tana herding community affecting 9 children. The school was constructed in 2011 as a response to the demolition of the original school of the community and consisted of 2 class rooms, 2 bathrooms units and a playground.

## DENIAL OF HUMANITARIAN ACCESS FOR CHILDREN

### Access to health

#### GAZA STRIP

Children in need of specialized medical care outside of the Gaza Strip continue to face delays when accessing health services. The main reasons include the Israeli authorities' denial of permits for accompanying adult relatives to cross the Erez terminal, and the ongoing restriction of access through the Rafah terminal by the Egyptian authorities since 2013.

- **Erez:** In the first three months of 2016, the Israeli District Liaison Office approved without delay 1,522 out of 1,965 applications (77%) for children to cross the Erez checkpoint for medical treatment outside of Gaza. **431 (22%) applications were delayed and twelve (0.6%) were denied.** Since November 2015, Israeli expanded security interviews to patients' companions up to age 55 (instead of 35) which is affecting the issuances of permits for parents and grandparents of sick children who need treatment outside Gaza.
- **Rafah:** In January and February 2016, the Egyptian side of the Rafah border with Gaza was opened only for three days in February, allowing 62 patients and 61 companions to cross to Egypt for health care. In March, the Rafah border was closed over the month. Authorities in Gaza indicated that around 30,000 people with urgent needs, including around 3,500 medical cases, are registered to cross. Before the July 2013 closure, more than 4,000 Gaza residents crossed Rafah monthly for medical assistance.

## Demolition and Confiscation of Humanitarian Aid<sup>2</sup>

### WEST BANK

Humanitarian actors have faced significant constraints when trying to access and provide emergency assistance to displaced families and communities in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. **In the first three months of 2016, 139 structures (including temporary residential and schools, tents, water and sanitation facilities) provided by aid organizations were demolished by the Israeli authorities.** Many of these structures were provided as emergency response to earlier demolitions. This practice is in contravention of Article 59 of the Fourth Geneva Convention which requires Israel as the occupying power to facilitate relief schemes on behalf of the population of the occupied Palestinian territory and deprives the affected children of the right to an adequate standard of living pursuant to Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### DEMOLITIONS AND DISPLACEMENT

#### WEST BANK

In the first quarter of 2016, Israeli authorities demolished 445 structures, resulting in the displacement of 652 people.

138 Palestinian homes and 307 other structures (including water wells and animal shelters) were demolished throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. **This marks a three-fold increase compared to the number of homes demolished in the previous quarter (37 homes).** As a result, **652 people were left homeless, including 323 children.** This represents a **threefold increase as compared to the number of children displaced in the previous quarter (114 children).** The demolitions deprive affected children of the right to an adequate standard of living pursuant to Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Another 1,380 persons, including 716 children, were also affected by the demolitions through **diminished access to services and threats to livelihood.**

Most demolitions were on the grounds of lack of a building permit, which is nearly impossible to acquire for Palestinians in Area C of the West Bank, which is under Israeli security and administrative control, and in East Jerusalem. Approximately 90 per cent (402) of the structures demolished were in Area C, 9 per cent (40 structures) were in East Jerusalem, and 1 per cent (3 structures) were carried out in Area A (under Palestinian Authority control), whereby, Israeli forces along with Civil Administration punitively demolished three residential structures. The houses belong to families of Palestinians who committed an attack against Israelis in November and December 2015.

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<sup>2</sup> This includes demolition of donor-funded structures provided for humanitarian relief