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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 3

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

### **Written statement\* submitted by Institute for NGO Research, 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.

[5 February 2024]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.

## **CAAC Fails to Protect Children From Palestinian Grave Violations**

### **Introduction**

NGO Monitor, a project of the Institute for NGO Research, has researched the rampant campaign of incitement targeting children and the endemic recruitment and use of child soldiers by the Palestinian Authority (PA), Hamas, and other terrorist factions. This campaign of incitement is endemic throughout Palestinian society and has damaged many generations of Palestinian children. Palestinian incitement undergirds the ongoing armed conflict with Israel and is responsible for countless deaths of both Palestinians and Israelis. UNRWA has played a central role in perpetuating this pathology.

On October 7, 2023, thousands of Palestinian terrorists poured across the border from Gaza into Israel, slaughtering 1200 people, torturing and maiming thousands, including 36 children who were slaughtered in their homes. Several of them were horrifically burned alive, while others were brutally murdered in the presence of their parents, or forced to witness their parents being killed before they were murdered as well. Hamas, and other terrorist groups, also kidnapped more than 200 individuals, of which 30 were children.

The PA's human rights obligations are not diminished because of its on-going armed conflict with Israel. The existence of this conflict and the unresolved legal status of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza cannot serve as an excuse for the PA's non-compliance with its international legal obligations.

### **PA Indoctrination of Children**

Despite the clear obligations mandated by the various international agreements and human rights conventions, and the PA's assent thereto, the Palestinian Authority and Hamas have routinely committed grave CAAC violations. Not only does the PA fail to protect its children from incitement, it has fully adopted and implemented a program specifically targeting children, flooding them with racist and antisemitic messages, encouraging children to participate in violence, and heroicizing those who engage in antisemitism and extreme violence. This program strongly emphasizes the commission of hate-based violence against Jewish civilians.

The PA also does nothing to prevent incitement campaigns and recruitment and use by Hamas, Islamic Jihad, PFLP, and other Palestinian armed groups. Failure to prevent these activities is a violation of the PA's legal obligations. For instance, in the Concluding Observations to the 2019 CERD review of Palestine, the Committee expressed concern over "the existence of hate speech, in particular hate speech directed against Israelis, which at times fuels anti-Semitism towards this group, in certain media outlets, in particular those controlled by Hamas, as well as on social media, in public officials' statements and in school curricula and textbooks, which also fuels hatred and may incite violence."

Contrary to these recommendations, the Palestinian Authority, Fatah, Hamas, and other armed factions routinize the grooming of children from an early age as combatants in the Palestinian war against Israel and Jews. They have enacted a widespread and systematic program of violent and antisemitic incitement. Children are encouraged by cuddly animals on PA and Hamas TV to kill Jews. Fatah publishes manuals for kids on how best to kill with stones and knives.

Recreation centers and sports tournaments are named after terrorists, including kids who kill. UNRWA schools teach antisemitism, hate, and glorify Palestinian killers and the elimination of Israel. Kids are encouraged to skip school to participate in violent riots, slingshot rocks at passing cars, and even to stab children and mothers to death in their homes.

For instance, in April 2022, the PA inaugurated a garden at the Al-Adawiya High School for Girls in Tulkarem in “honor” of the “freedom tunnel prisoners,” six prisoners who were convicted for planning and carrying out numerous terror attacks, including suicide bombings and shooting attacks on civilians. Additionally, on March 18, 2019, on the official PA TV station, a Fatah official referred to two murderers who killed four Israelis as “the role models for the children.” On May 29, 2017, the Gaza-based Palestinian Islamic Jihad affiliated Al-Huda Kindergarten held a graduation ceremony where the children are seen “armed with toy weapons and wearing military uniforms and Islamic Jihad headbands. They simulate killing other children playing Israeli soldiers dressed as ultra-Orthodox Jews. A Hamas song in Hebrew is playing in the background, with lyrics including “O Zionist, a rocket will reach you where you live... I will make you drink the cup of death.”

Additionally, the PA is also a leader in state-sponsored antisemitism, propagating anti-Jewish propaganda in textbooks. IMPACT-se, has documented significant incitement of Palestinian children in the educational curriculum. For example, the Palestinian curriculum uses “subliminal violent messaging” in math, science, and other subjects.

### **Child Soldiers**

While the PA’s international legal obligations explicitly forbid the recruitment and use of child soldiers, the recruitment and use of Palestinian children sanctioned by the PA and also Hamas is endemic.

The ruling Fatah party’s Tanzim and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades recruit and use children as combatants. Many other organizations in and members of the PA, the Palestinian Legislative Council, and the Palestine Liberation Organization are part of Palestinian terror groups such as Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the DFLP, and others. The PA routinely allows armed groups to recruit on school campuses under the guise of carrying out “social programs.” Such activity allows vulnerable children to be placed in contact with violent actors, placing them at risk for recruitment.

In the Concluding Observations of the 2020 CRC review of “Palestine,” the Committee explicitly criticized the PA for “recruitment and use of children in hostilities by non-State armed groups operating from the territory of the State party.”

In summer 2022, Fatah’s Central Hebron branch held the “Buds of Construction and Liberation” summer camp where hundreds of Palestinian children as young as seven were taught to handle automatic weapons and to celebrate the murderers of Israeli Jews. Photos posted on social media show hundreds of children holding Kalashnikov rifles in front of a banner depicting former PLO/PA/Fatah leader Yasser Arafat, and current PLO/PA/Fatah leader Mahmoud Abbas. A video on the Facebook page of the Fatah Commission of Information and Culture explains that the camp is necessary because “our battle with the sons of dogs [in other words, Israelis] is long and we need a young generation.”

Shamefully, the CAAC working group operating in the West Bank and Gaza have deliberately refused to document Palestinian grave violations against children.

### **Targeting of Children by Terror Groups**

According to the United Nations Security Council, there are six grave violations against children in times of war, including the abduction of children.

On October 7, 2023, thousands of Palestinian terrorists poured across the border from Gaza into Israel, slaughtering 1200 people, torturing and maiming thousands, and kidnapping more than 200, of which 30 were children, the youngest just nine months old. Babies and toddlers were found butchered, decapitated, or even burned alive in the remnants of the various Israeli kibbutzim. The brutal attack left 21 children from 13 families orphaned or having their parents abducted or missing.

On October 14, NBC News published documents found on the bodies of Hamas terrorists that included maps and “specific plans of attack for each village that included the intentional targeting of women and children.” In an attempt at psychological warfare, Hamas has released disturbing videos showing armed men playing with the children, attempting to spin the narrative of their positive treatment.

In reality, according to statements by released hostages, Hamas drugged children and branded them using an exhaust pipe of a motorcycle. Any child who cried was threatened with a gun and children were forced to watch videos of Hamas atrocities committed against Israel. Following the November release of 30 children, many of the children had skin rashes, lice infestations, and infected wounds. These children will face a long psychological recovery, as they learn to live with the trauma.

As of January, three children under the age of 18 still remain hostage in Gaza.

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