

Urgent Appeal to the United Nations Special Procedures

Re: Escalating Pattern of Child Killings in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem as Israeli Occupying Forces Arbitrarily Deprive Palestinian Children their Right to Life, in Criminal Acts of Apartheid and Genocide Against the Palestinian Group

Date: 20 April 2026

For the attention of:

- Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, Ms. Francesca Albanese;
- Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Mr Morris Tidball-Binz;
- Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Ms. Ashwini K.P.;
- Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, Ms. Reem Alsalem;
- Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism, Mr. Ben Saul;
- Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, Ms. Tlaleng Mofokeng;
- Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, Mr. Albert Kwokwo;
- Special Rapporteur on the right to development, Mr. Surya Deva;
- Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity, Ms. Cecilia Bailliet;
- Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Ms. Heba Hagrass

Introduction

Al-Haq has documented a pattern of escalating attacks against children in the West Bank, in territory administered by Israeli Occupying Forces (IOF) under its expansionist settler colonial apartheid regime, illegal occupation and continuing genocidal erasure of the Palestinian people. The killing of Palestinian children in the unlawfully occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, has been steadily rising since 2021, when 17 children were killed by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF). Al-Haq has been stringently documenting this increasing pattern of attacks against children– in 2022, this number increased to 36 children, followed by 121 children

in 2023. In 2024, the death toll remained high with 92 children killed, and 54 children killed in 2025. According to OCHA, between October 7, 2023, and March 28, 2026, 1,073 Palestinians, including at least 233 children, have been killed in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem.¹ Of these, 27 have been killed since the beginning of 2026.

Al-Haq has reported multiple incidents where children were shot or killed in circumstances which attest to the unlawful use of force and targeting of a civilian protected under international law. While these incidents occurred in an array of locations throughout the West Bank, such as towns, refugee camps, agricultural areas, and regions near military checkpoints and illegal settlements, they exhibit very similar patterns in both behaviour and results. While noting that Israel's genocidal acts in Gaza since 7 October 2023, have resulted in the killings of 72,315 Palestinians in Gaza including 21,283 Palestinian children, this Urgent Appeal highlights the continuing pattern of killings of a further 14 Palestinian children in the West Bank between November 2025 and the end of March 2026.

The victims, all minors, were killed in situations mainly involving low-level confrontations, such as stone throwing, or during routine civilian activities, including leaving places of worship, working on family land, or moving through their communities. In several cases, the children were shot from a distance away from IOF positions, without posing any immediate threat to life. Other incidents involved tear gas used in a way that led to fatal outcomes, or the blocking of access to urgent, life-saving medical care.

Al-Haq's field investigations, which rely on eyewitness testimonies, medical records, and on-site inspections, reveal recurring patterns across these cases, including the use of live ammunition without warning, targeting of the upper body, a failure to abide by the principles of proportionality and subsidiarity, and the obstruction or delay of medical aid. In several cases, the bodies of the children were withheld by the IOF, compounding the suffering to their families and communities and evincing a clear intent to cause serious mental harm.

The present Urgent Appeal analyses these incidents not as isolated events but as acts of genocide and other crimes against humanity and war crimes. It also examines the manifest illegality of using lethal force against Palestinian children under international humanitarian law and international human rights law, both applicable in the occupied Palestinian territory. In doing so, the report concludes that the documented killings constitute extrajudicial executions amounting to arbitrary deprivations of life.

¹ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), 'Situation Report No. 215 on the Humanitarian Crisis in the Gaza Strip and the Occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem' (31 March 2026) <<https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/unrwa-situation-report-215-humanitarian-crisis-gaza-strip-and-occupied-west-bank>>

1. A Pattern of Attacks Against Children in the West Bank

1.1 The Killing of Murad Seifin, 15

At around 10:15 p.m., on Wednesday, 5 November 2025, the IOF invaded the town of Yamoun, west of Jenin. The IOF travelled in 3-4 military jeeps, arriving at the main roundabout at the beginning of the Bank of Palestine Street on its northern side. Young men and boys, including children gathered to protest and throw stones at the military vehicles. A number of armed Israeli soldiers disembarked from the jeeps and spread out across the area. One of the Palestinian protestors participating in the clashes wore a black cloth mask. At around 10:40 p.m., a number of Israeli soldiers started to advance on foot along Bank of Palestine Street from north to south, prompting those present to flee. However, the masked protestor was seen standing on the western side of the street, next to a side street and opposite a candy store, following the movements of the soldiers. He did not see another soldier positioned directly opposite him about 60-70 metres away.

The masked demonstrator was seen carrying and preparing to throw an object that was later found to be a homemade explosive device. According to witnesses, he was shot without warning three to four times before taking any action with the explosive device. The masked demonstrator was then seen falling to the ground in front of the shop, lying motionless and not making any sound, indicating that he had been killed by one or more Israeli soldiers. As the soldiers approached the location where the masked man lay on the ground, an explosion was heard at the scene.

One witness, who chose to remain anonymous, described the incident to Al-Haq, stating he heard:

“... three or four consecutive gunshots, and immediately the masked man fell to the ground in the described location without moving or making any sound. I realized that the shots described were fired by one or more soldiers from that force at the masked man, causing him to be hit and fall to the ground as described above. No one dared to approach the area because Israeli soldiers were approaching on foot, and I also heard the sound of military vehicles approaching. I moved away from the site, but after a few seconds, no more than a minute, I heard another shot accompanied by an explosion that shook the area, and then the shooting stopped completely, without any repetition.”²

The IOF took control of the site and were seen covering the body with cloth covers. Soldiers imposed a tight military cordon around the area preventing the Palestinian Red Crescent ambulance crew and vehicle from approaching the deceased, despite their repeated attempts. At around 11:30 p.m., that same night, Israeli forces began to leave the area after soldiers were seen transferring the body of the demonstrator into one of the military jeeps.

² 2025-11-261-JN-K-T1-IL-CLD (6 November 2025), Affidavit on file with Al-Haq.

The abovementioned witness recalled to Al-Haq:

“A few minutes later, I heard the sirens of an ambulance approaching the site. I did not know what was happening outside, as Israeli military forces remained at the site until around 11:30 p.m. that same night. I then learned from others and through social media that the Israeli forces had withdrawn from the site. Like others, I rushed to the site where the masked man had been injured. I saw traces of blood scattered on the asphalt street in front of a candy store. I also saw bloodstains on the door of the store, which was closed at the time.”³

When the IOF withdrew, the cloth mask was found at the scene, covered in blood, with traces of human brain matter. Three semi-circular openings were seen in the front and one opening in the back of the mask, indicating that the person had been shot in the upper part of his body, specifically in the head area. At 8:00 a.m., the following morning, Thursday, 6 November 2025, the Palestinian General Authority for Civil Affairs and the Palestinian Ministry of Health confirmed the death of **Murad Fawzi Youssef Abu Seifin** (15), a resident of Yamoun. The child’s body is still being withheld by the IOF.

1.2. The Killings of Muhammad Ateem, 16 and Muhammad Qasim, 16

On November 7, 2025, two Palestinian children, **Muhammad Rashad Fadel Qasim** (16), a high school student and brother to five sisters, and **Muhammad Abdullah Muhammad Ateem** (16), who worked in a private carpentry workshop owned by his father, and one of nine children, were pronounced dead by the Palestinian Ministry of Health. A grainy, distorted and abruptly cut video was released by the IOF, with a caption stating:

“During a shooting range of unit 636, led by the Benjamin Brigade in the Jadira area, two terrorists were identified last night who lit and threw Molotov cocktails at a central civilian axis, the force eliminated both terrorists.”⁴

The video is recorded in the vicinity of a high concrete wall resembling the Annexation Wall. The video shows two people standing next to the wall, at one point handling an object that appears to be on fire before throwing it over the wall to the other side, which is not visible in the video. As they throw the object, people appear behind the two individuals and start shooting at them from a distance of less than five meters. At least one of the individuals appears to be injured as they try to escape the shooting, and is seen stumbling and falling to the ground, then stumbling and falling again, before the video ends.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ See notice and video on Facebook <<https://www.facebook.com/reel/4171930793029989>>



Al-Haq's field researchers inspected the site where the shooting took place, which is an empty lot next to the section of the Annexation Wall located north of the village of Al-Jadira.⁵ The wall in that area is six meters high, and behind it is Route 45, which starts in the Qalandia area of occupied Jerusalem and extends northwest, passing through the lands of a number of Palestinian villages such as Bir Nabala, Al-Jadira, Al-Jib, and others, until it reaches Route 443, part of which passes through the West Bank. Route 443 is a major bypass road connecting Jerusalem and West Bank settlements, along with the settlement of Modi'in to Israel.

Al-Haq's field researchers identified a bloodstain which appeared approximately 7.5 to 8 meters away from the Annexation Wall. From where the bloodstain was located, it appears that the two children were not standing directly next to Street 45, as that section of the wall is separated from the street by side street used by the Israeli authorities for security purposes, then empty land, and then Street 45. The distance between the location of the two youths and the street is estimated to be between 43.5 and 44 meters. This distance makes it extremely difficult to throw any burning object at vehicles passing on Street 45, especially considering that the children did not throw the object from a high place toward a point below them, but rather threw it in an arc due to the presence of the wall in front of them, which naturally reduced the final range of the projectile. From Al-Haq's field inspection, the shooting left more than thirty holes in the Annexation Wall, distributed over three concrete blocks, each about four meters long. Furthermore, the distribution of bullet holes and the different angles of entry was indicative of shooting coming from more than one source.

On the night of Thursday, 6 November 2025, at around 9:55 p.m., witnesses that spoke with Al-Haq recalled hearing heavy gunfire, around 15-20 consecutive shots at once, without any prior warning. A few minutes later, as IOF military patrols arrived near the wall, gunfire was heard for the second time, followed by shouting in Hebrew. After about three minutes, numerous soldiers got out of the military patrol and approached the wall on foot. They detained a person wearing a white shirt and put him in the back of one of the patrols. One witness, who asked to remain anonymous, recounted to Al-Haq:

“My house is located at the northern end of the village of Al-Jadira and directly overlooks the section of the annexation wall . . . This section of the wall is no more than 200 meters away from my house. This section of the wall separates the village from the settlement road 45. I live on the third floor of a building located on a high hill, which increases my ability to see the wall clearly. On Thursday, November 6, 2025, between 8:30 and 9:00 p.m., I was on the roof of my house with my brother S. and my wife, drinking coffee, when I heard gunfire. The sound was loud, ranging from 15 to 20 shots fired in one burst, as if it were a full volley. I couldn't tell if the volley came from one weapon or more, and I didn't hear any

⁵ 2025-11-266-JE-K-R-IL-CLD (Internal field report, on file with Al-Haq).

other sounds before it, such as warnings, shouting, or sporadic gunfire; just this sudden, intense volley.

About five minutes after the first burst of gunfire, two or three Israeli army patrols arrived at the scene. I saw them by the light of their vehicles, not by their flashing lights, which were not activated. The patrols arrived from the direction of al-Jadayera village and headed toward the wall. When the patrols arrived, I heard someone shouting in Hebrew, “He’s up there,” and then another voice saying, “Stop.”

Immediately afterwards, there was a second round of gunfire, about 10 shots in succession. Then I saw 5 or 6 lights moving in the area, which appeared to be flashlights carried by soldiers. Thanks to the patrols' lights and flashlights, I was able to see five or six soldiers leading away a person wearing a white shirt. This person was walking on his own two feet between them, and I could see him clearly, especially because of the colour of his shirt. The soldiers put him in one of the patrol cars, and after about ten minutes, the patrols withdrew from the village.

I sent a message to the village WhatsApp group asking residents to check on their children, fearing that one of them might have been arrested.”⁶

Subsequent reports on the village’s social media groups indicated that two children from the village, Muhammad Rashad Qasim and Muhammad Abdullah Ateem, both 16 years old, had disappeared. The villagers tried to contact the two boys, but there was no answer. Shortly thereafter, their phones were turned off, which increased the villagers’ concern. Later the family of Muhammad Qasim confirmed that he had been wearing a white shirt that day.

The residents then contacted the Palestinian liaison, who contacted the Israeli military liaison. At around 1:00 a.m., on Friday, 7 November 2025, the liaison reported that there were two arrests, one of which involved a minor injury. An hour later, this was updated to two arrests, one with moderate injuries. At 4:00 a.m., the liaison informed the families that there were two arrests with serious injuries. At around 10:00 a.m., the IOF released a video showing the shooting of the two children. At 11:30 a.m., that same day, the Palestinian liaison office, citing the Israeli liaison office, reported that the two children had been killed as a result of the shooting by the IOF. The IOF continues to refuse to return the bodies of the children, preventing their burial and aggravating the unimaginable suffering of their families.

⁶ 2025-11-266-JE-K-T1-IL-CLD (8 November 2025).

1.3. The Killing of Aysam Jihad Labib Nasser, 13

On 11 November 2025, the National Hospital in Nablus pronounced the death of **Aysam Jihad Labib Nasser** (13).

One month earlier, on Saturday, 11 October 2025, at around 7:00 a.m., Aysam’s mother, Ms Ghoroub Muhammad Ahmad Nasser left her home accompanied by her two sons, Karam (30), and Aysam (13). The family headed to their agricultural land located in the Wadi Aziz area of Jabal Qamas, southeast of the town of Beita and Nablus city, to harvest olives. The day before, the area had witnessed attacks by illegal Israeli settlers protected by the IOF, prompting families to go to their land in groups to protect it from possible attack. The family began harvesting, without any IOF present or confrontations in the area. The atmosphere remained calm until around 10:00 a.m., when three Israeli military patrols stormed the area.

Between 10 and 15 heavily armed Israeli soldiers dismounted from the patrol vehicles, positioning themselves about 300 meters away from the farmers. They began shouting through loudspeakers, demanding that the residents evacuate the site within ten minutes. Within a minute, the IOF advanced and stormed the agricultural land where the Nasser family and several other families were present. The soldiers ordered everyone to leave immediately without allowing them to collect their agricultural tools. Some farmers tried to talk to the soldiers to ask for more time, but they were refused. Moments later, the soldiers fired a tear gas canister directly at the family, forcing them to flee. As Ms. Ghoroub and her family members were leaving the area via an ascending dirt road, the occupation army began firing a barrage of gas canisters, covering the area with thick white clouds. She detailed the scene to Al-Haq:

“They [IOF] quickly fired a tear gas canister at us, forcing us to flee the area. Within moments, the occupation soldiers rained down a barrage of tear gas canisters that emitted white smoke. We left the area via an uphill path, and as we walked away, I saw Aysam coming out of the cloud of tear gas.”⁷

Within moments, Aysam fell to the ground. According to the witness testimony of Ms. Ghoroub Muhammad Ahmad Nasser (53):

“He [Aysam] was panting and choking, his eyes were very red, and he was unable to breathe. He quickly reached me and then fell to the ground as if he had completely lost consciousness, showing no physical response.”⁸

⁷ Testimony of Ghoroub Mohammed Ahmed Nasser, Taken on 12 November 2025 in Beita. On file with Al-Haq.

⁸ *Ibid.*



One of the town’s nurses was at the scene and rushed to examine the child, finding that he was not breathing and his pulse was very weak or non-existent. He immediately began CPR, while an ambulance was called. An ambulance arrived within two minutes, transporting the child to the Beit Emergency Centre. On the way, the medical team continued CPR until they reached the medical centre, where the doctor used a defibrillator, which restored the child's heartbeat and gradually returned his vital signs.

After his condition was somewhat stable, Aysam was transferred to the National Government Hospital in Nablus. While the ambulance was passing through the Israeli military checkpoint at Awarta, soldiers stopped the vehicle for about three minutes, despite the driver’s explanation that the child was in critical condition, causing a delay in his arrival for treatment. A preliminary medical report obtained by Al-Haq, dated 11 October 2025, stated:

“The aforementioned patient arrived at the National Hospital Emergency Department on October 11, 2025. After inhaling gas from the Israeli occupation forces, his heart stopped for several minutes necessitating the use of a defibrillator.

Upon arrival at the hospital, the patient was in a semi-conscious state, with unstable vital signs and severe oxygen deficiency. He required artificial respiration in the emergency room and was then admitted to the intensive care unit before being transferred to Al Najah National Hospital for further treatment.”⁹

Upon arrival at the National Hospital, Aysam was admitted to the intensive care unit because of his critical condition. A day later, on 12 October 2025, he was transferred to Al-Najah National University Hospital to continue treatment in the cardiac intensive care unit. There Aysam fell into a coma for a whole month, until his heart suddenly stopped at around 17:59 p.m., on Tuesday, 11 November 2025. Doctors stated his death was due to complications from gas suffocation. The medical report obtained by Al-Haq stated:

“Unfortunately, the patient developed worsening anoxic brain injury, became ventilator dependent without spontaneous breathing, had fixed and dilated pupils bilaterally, having no neurological response, despite being off sedation, exam showed absent corneal and gag reflexes, and no ventilator triggering. Paediatric neurology consultation confirmed findings; apnea test confirmed brain death . . .

⁹ Medical Report, Ministry of Health, State of Palestine, 11 October 2025. On file with Al-Haq.

On 11/11/2025, the patient developed bradycardia eventually leading to asystole. Pulse was not palpated . . . unfortunately, spontaneous circulation was not restored, and the patient was announced dead at 17:59 on 11/11/2025.”¹⁰

Aysam’s family and relatives all confirmed that he did not suffer from any previous heart or lung diseases that could have affected his health or recovery.

1.4. The Killing of Jadallah Jihad Juma Jadallah, 14

At approximately 4:00 p.m., on Sunday, 16 November 2025, three IOF military vehicles advancing from the north, in the direction of Jenin, stormed Al-Fara'a camp, south of Tubas. As the IOF passed through the street adjacent to the camp, clashes broke out between young men and boys and the IOF, with the young men and boys throwing stones at the military vehicles, located approximately 60 metres away.¹¹ At that moment, another group of soldiers, who were 15-20 meters away in an alley opposite the boys began firing a barrage of bullets at the boys, who scattered and quickly moved away.

One individual was directly hit and fell at the beginning of the alley, which is an extension of Al-Nadi Street. The IOF advanced on his location while continuing to fire at the boys and young men, two of whom were slightly injured by shrapnel. The IOF surrounded the injured boy and prevented anyone from approaching him. Paramedics tried to approach the boy more than once and from different places, but the IOF pointed flashlights at the ambulances as a warning to prevent them from approaching. The paramedics then returned on foot, and threatened them with targeting – pointing the lasers of their weapons directly at the paramedics – thereby preventing them from approaching and providing first aid to the injured boy, who remained lying on the ground.

After 35-40 minutes, the military vehicles and IOF withdrew from the area towards the city of Jenin, taking the injured Palestinian boy with them. The same day, at around 8:00 p.m., the Palestinian General Civil Affairs Authority announced that it had received confirmation from the Israeli authorities that the child, **Jadallah Jihad Juma Jadallah (14)** had died from his injuries. Similar to the other incidents examined above, his body is still being withheld by the IOF.

1.5. The Killing of Jamil Atef Jamil Hanani, 17

At approximately 9:25 p.m., on Sunday, 2 November 2025, three IOF patrols including military jeeps stormed the town of Beit Furik, located about 7km east of Nablus. The IOF entered the town

¹⁰ Medical Report, Dr Mohammad Khaled Al Hindi, An Najah University Hospital (12 November 2025). On file with Al-Haq.

¹¹ Al-Haq internal report, Report on the killing of the child Jadallah Jihad Juma Jadallah from Al-Far’a camp, south of Tubas city, on 16 November 2025. On file with Al-Haq.

from the main western entrance, drove along the main street, and continued patrolling the town for about 15 minutes before withdrawing toward the Beit Furik checkpoint.¹²

Around 9:40 p.m., military vehicles returned to the town from the same western entrance. When they reached the main street near the Friendship Medical Centre in the western part of town, a group of young men and boys gathered there. The vehicles headed toward the town centre and stopped near the old mosque for a few minutes. Meanwhile, some young men and boys began to gather on the western side and along the main street to confront the Israeli forces. Clashes erupted as the patrols were pelted with stones, and the IOF shot live ammunition and tear gas canisters at the youths. At about 9:55 p.m., five to seven young men and boys, including **Jamil Atef Jamil Hanani (17)**, who was participating in throwing stones at the soldiers, tried to confront the IOF in the western part of the main street near the Friendship Medical Centre.

As the IOF retreated toward the Beit Furik checkpoint, the young men and boys threw stones at the patrols. The vehicles were roughly 50 meters from where Jamil was standing on the western side. According to surveillance footage, at exactly 9:59 p.m., Jamil stopped at the beginning of a side road off the main street, between a house and a commercial building, opposite the Friendship Medical Centre on the south side of the street. Witnesses told Al-Haq that Jamil was no longer throwing stones at this point. Three other boys stood next to him when one soldier fired a single shot from inside a small military jeep parked northwest to Jamil's location. Jamil was shot in the front of his abdomen, with the bullet exiting through his back.

He lay on his back, bleeding heavily. About ten seconds later, an ambulance arrived. Four young men and boys carried him from the alleyway at the start of the side road and placed him in the ambulance, which took him to the nearby Friendship Medical Centre. At the emergency room, medics treated a gunshot wound approximately 6-7cm in diameter. A witness told Al-Haq:

“While I was inside the ambulance on the main street, parked on the north side about 7-10 meters from the young men and boys and roughly 40-50 meters from where the Israeli patrols had stopped on the western side, I heard a gunshot and saw someone fall to the ground directly in front of me, with no obstacles in between. I immediately drove the ambulance toward him, and the paramedics removed him and other young men and boys from the alleyway and loaded them into the ambulance. We then transported him to Al-Sadaqa Medical Center, which is just 10 meters away.”¹³

While Jamil was in the emergency room, about five Israeli soldiers in full military gear stormed in, shouting and brandishing automatic weapons. A witness described:

¹² 2025-11-260-NA-K-T2-IL-CLD, Affidavit on file with Al-Haq.

¹³ *Ibid.*

“Less than a minute after the victim arrived, about five Israeli soldiers entered the emergency room shouting and pointing their guns at the staff. One approached Jamil’s bedside. I explained the severity of his injury. The soldier then took a photo of Jamil, the staff, and us with his cell phone before leaving the center smiling, as if relieved after seeing his condition.”¹⁴

An IV was inserted, fluids administered, and efforts made to resuscitate him. Jamil was later transferred by ambulance with a doctor to Rafidia Government Hospital in Nablus. During the trip, Jamil suffered severe bleeding; his vital signs ceased; and his pupils dilated. About 10 minutes later, he arrived at the hospital, was admitted to the emergency department, and attempts to resuscitate him were made. He was then taken straight to surgery, but around 1:10 a.m. on Monday, November 3, 2025, medical staff pronounced him dead.

1.6. The Killing of Muhannad Tariq Zagher, 17

At around 10 p.m. on Monday, 1 December 2025, local news sources in Palestine reported a ramming attack had allegedly taken place near Route 35, near Hebron, in which an Israeli soldier had been slightly injured.¹⁵ The IOF alleged that the perpetrator of the ramming attack had accelerated his vehicle toward IOF forces, injuring a female soldier. The army – who launched a large scale “manhunt” across Hebron – claimed that the perpetrator of the attack had been shot and wounded, but fled in his vehicle. No independent eyewitnesses were present to corroborate the IOF’s account of the car ramming.

The IOF subsequently closed the entrances to Hebron and stormed several neighbourhoods in the city, including the courtyards of the city’s hospitals – Al-Ahli Hospital, Muhammad Ali Al-Muhtasib Hospital, Al-Mezan Specialized Hospital, Al-Hilal Al-Ahmar Specialized Hospital, and the Royal Hospital. The IOF raids on Hebron continued from 10 p.m. until around 5 a.m. the following day (2 December 2025). Following local news sources that a person from the Zagher family had been involved in the incident, Israeli forces raided the Zagher family home in the Miftarak al-Madaris Hebron and arrested members of the family.

At 5:37 a.m., the IOF issued a statement, alleging:

“During the night, the [suspect] was identified by security forces in the city of Hebron while in the vehicle used to carry out the attack. As part of the attempt to apprehend him,

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ IMEMC, Israeli Forces Claim Car-Ramming Attempt Near Hebron (1 December 2025), <https://imemc.org/article/israeli-forces-claim-car%E2%80%91ramming-attempt-near-hebron/>

the [suspect] tried to flee while endangering the fighters; the forces responded with gunfire, and he was eliminated.”¹⁶

At 8:00 a.m., the General Authority for Civil Affairs informed the Palestinian Ministry of Health that **Muhannad Tariq Muhammad al-Zaghir (17)**, had been killed by Israeli army gunfire in the city of Hebron. Muhammad was a school student, who lived with his parents and seven siblings, and was not wanted by the IOF. The IOF detained Muhannad’s body and transferred it to an unknown location.

Later that day, at around 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 2 December 2025, the IOF stormed the home of **Muhannad al-Zaghir’s**, father in the Muftaq al-Madaris area, and broke up a mourning tent that the family had set up for Muhannad. They went on to threaten the family, warning them not to open mourning tent again before withdrawing from the area.

1.7. The Killings of Bilal Baaran, 15 and Muhammad Abu Ayyash, 15

On 13 November 2025, two 15-year-old Palestinian boys, **Bilal Bahaa Baran** (also known as Sabarna) and **Muhammad Mahmoud Abu Ayash**, were shot and killed by Israeli soldiers near the Karmi Tzur settlement, located north of Hebron in the area of Beit Ummar in the unlawfully occupied West Bank.

According to the field investigation conducted by Al-Haq, gunfire was heard between approximately 3:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. in the Al-Dhahr area, close to the illegal settlement. The Israeli military subsequently stated that soldiers from Battalion 636 had opened fire on what they described as “two armed men” allegedly attempting to approach the settlement and throw Molotov cocktails.

The testimonies from the families of the victims indicate that the two boys had been working in nearby agricultural fields earlier that afternoon. Both were students, and according to their families, neither had previously been arrested nor were they wanted by Israeli authorities. At the time they were shot, the boys were reportedly located approximately 250 meters from the settlement fence, a distance from which they could not have posed an imminent threat that would warrant the use of lethal force.

Following the shooting, Israeli soldiers removed the boys on stretchers without providing medical assistance and then withheld their bodies. On 15 November 2025, Israeli forces raided the victims’ families homes at 2:00 a.m., and warned them against organising mourning gatherings. During the raid, Bilal Bahaa Baran’s father was arrested and detained for approximately 10 hours. According

¹⁶ בא ההגנה לישראל (@idfonline), Tweet (5:37 am, 2 December 2025)
<<https://x.com/idfonline/status/1995728911192187170?s=20>>

to the family's account, he was physically assaulted, was struck on the shoulder with a rifle and held in harsh, extremely cold conditions until he was released around noon the same day.

The Israeli forces are still withholding the dead bodies of the two children.

1.8. The Killing of Muhammad Al-Naasan, 15

On 16 January 2026, **Muhammad Sa'd Sami Na'san (15)**, a student from the village of al-Mughayyir in the Ramallah and al-Bireh Governorate, was fatally shot by the IOF during a military raid on the village.¹⁷ The incident occurred in the context of heightened tensions following the presence of Israeli settlers in the southern part of the village earlier that morning.

According to field documentation and collected testimonies, settlers were present in the southern area of al-Mughayyir during the early morning hours. Following the spread of news on their presence in the area, several villagers and young residents gathered in anticipation of a potential attack. Between approximately 9:30 and 10:00 a.m., a confrontation occurred during which stones were reportedly thrown in the direction of the settlers. Shortly thereafter, Israeli forces entered the village through its eastern entrance and attempted to disperse the gathered youths. The IOF subsequently withdrew after tensions temporarily subsided.

At approximately 1:25 p.m., during the time of Friday prayers, Israeli forces returned to the village and deployed stun grenades near the eastern mosque. After prayers concluded, several military vehicles moved toward the village centre. At that time, Muhammad Na'san was leaving the mosque with his father and walking toward their home. During the walk, Muhammad moved away from his father and proceeded along a nearby side road near a stationary military vehicle that had been subjected to stone-throwing by a group of youths and children. Muhammad approached the area and attempted to pick up a stone from the ground. According to Al-Haq's field investigation, when he was approximately 65 meters from the military vehicle, Israeli forces fired live ammunition, striking him with a single bullet in the chest at approximately 1:30 p.m.

The bullet entered the left side of Muhammad's chest and exited through his back, causing a fatal injury. He collapsed immediately. A resident, who is also a volunteer paramedic, transported him to a medical centre in the nearby village of Abu Falah. However, the paramedic reported that Muhammad showed no signs of life upon arrival. Despite attempts by medical personnel to resuscitate him, he was later transferred to the Palestine Medical Complex, where he was officially pronounced dead at approximately 2:00 p.m.

¹⁷ Al-Haq internal report, Report on the killing of the child Muhammad Na'san in the village of Al-Mughayyir. On file with Al-Haq.

Following the incident, Israeli forces closed the village's only western entrance and imposed movement restrictions preventing the residents, including the victim's family, from returning to their homes until the evening hours. The village remained under heightened military presence during the subsequent mourning period.

1.9. The Killing of M.R.N, 17

On 27 January 2026 at approximately 20:00, the IOF conducted a raid in the town of Al-Dhahiriya, located south of Hebron in the unlawfully occupied West Bank. According to field investigation findings and witness testimony,¹⁸ two military vehicles entered the town and patrolled several streets, including the area known as Aqabat al-Tarsha near the Old Halal Market. Several soldiers disembarked and continued the patrol on foot within the neighbourhood.

At approximately 8:30 p.m., M.R.N (17), and his relative H.N (18), were walking from Hassan's home toward Muhammad's residence in the Aqabat al-Tarsha area. While attempting to cross a street separated by farmland and a stone wall, Muhammad climbed onto the wall to access the road. At that moment, Israeli soldiers positioned approximately 10 meters away opened fire.

M.R.N was shot once in the left side of the abdomen and fell from the wall. Shortly thereafter, soldiers fired multiple shots toward H.N as he attempted to flee, striking him twice in the right leg. The IOF subsequently approached the injured child, while preventing the Palestine Red Crescent Society ambulance from reaching the scene. Witness accounts indicate that the soldiers blocked access to medical assistance for approximately 15 minutes, during which time the child remained bleeding without treatment. IOF soldiers reportedly dragged the wounded child from the farmland toward the street before eventually allowing the ambulance to proceed.

According to the medical report, M.R.N was first transported to a local medical clinic and then transferred to Dura Government Hospital due to the severity of his injuries. Medical examination revealed a gunshot wound to the abdomen, causing severe internal bleeding and significant blood loss. Despite emergency resuscitation efforts and surgical intervention, he succumbed to his injuries at approximately 10:20 p.m. the same evening.

The following day, the child's body was returned to his hometown of Al-Dhahiriya, where funeral prayers were held before burial at the Al-Tamra Cemetery.

¹⁸ Internal Al-Haq Report, Report on the killing of the child Muhammad Rajih Nasrallah by Israeli occupation soldiers in the town of Al-Dhahiriya, south of Hebron, on January 27, 2026. On file with Al-Haq.

1.10. The Killing of Muhammad Wahbi Hanani, 17

On the evening of 21 February 2026, the IOF conducted a military incursion into the town of Beit Furik, east of Nablus.¹⁹ At approximately 8:20 p.m., military vehicles entered the western neighbourhood near Al-Zalmout Mosque, where a group of youths, including Muhammad Wahbi Abdulaziz Hanani (17), had gathered after evening prayers.

Shortly after the arrival of the military vehicles, limited confrontations broke out, during which some youths threw stones toward the armoured vehicles. According to the field testimonies and scene analysis, the soldiers remained inside fortified military vehicles, which were equipped with protective measures and mounted weaponry, and were not exposed to an immediate or life-threatening danger.

Within a brief period, estimated at less than two minutes from the start of the confrontation, Israeli soldiers opened fire using live ammunition from inside the vehicles. Muhammad Hanani was struck by two bullets: one to the head and another to the chest below the left armpit. He immediately collapsed at a distance of approximately 40 meters from the military vehicles. Field inspection confirmed that the line of sight between the soldiers and the child was direct and unobstructed, indicating that the shooter could see clearly.

Following the shooting, Israeli soldiers exited their vehicles and approached the wounded child. Although a Palestinian ambulance arrived at the scene within minutes, its crew was initially prevented from accessing the victim for several minutes. After being granted access, paramedics provided emergency medical care and transferred the child to Rafidia Governmental Hospital in Nablus; however, additional delays occurred during transport due to an obstruction at a military checkpoint.

Medical examinations revealed that the child sustained a penetrating head injury, causing brain laceration, and a penetrating chest injury resulting in severe internal bleeding. Despite surgical intervention and intensive care treatment, Muhammad Hanani succumbed to his injuries shortly after midnight on 22 February 2026.

1.11. The killing of Mohamed Ali Bani Ouda, 5 and Othman Ali Bani Ouda, 8

In the early hours of March 15, 2026, around 1:30 a.m., undercover IOF soldiers infiltrated the western part of Tammun, south of Tubas, using civilian vehicles with Palestinian license plates.

¹⁹ Al-Haq Internal Report, A report on the incident of Israeli occupation soldiers firing live ammunition, which led to the killing of the child Muhammad Wahbi Hanani in the town of Beit Furik, east of Nablus (28 February 2026). Report on file with Al-Haq.

The operation, reportedly carried out to arrest wanted individuals, involved armed personnel setting up concealed ambushes in a residential area.

During this operation, a civilian vehicle driven by Ali Khaled Sayel Bani Ouda approached the area while returning from Nablus. The vehicle carried six members of the same family: the parents and their four children, aged between 5 and 11 years. There is no evidence that the vehicle was engaged in any activity that could reasonably be interpreted as a threat.

As the vehicle entered the ambush zone, Israeli forces directed laser lights mounted on weapons at it and immediately opened fire without issuing any warning or instructions to stop. Testimonies and Al-Haq's field investigation indicate that the gunfire was intense, lasted about two to three minutes, and involved dozens of rounds. The firing reportedly began by targeting the vehicle's tires to immobilize it, followed by concentrated fire on the upper part of the vehicle where the passengers were seated. The attack resulted in the killing of four of the family members, including two young children: **Mohammad Ali Khaled Bani Ouda** (5), and **Othman Ali Khaled Bani Ouda** (8), a child with disabilities. Both children received fatal gunshot wounds to the head and face, indicating they were subjected to deadly force inside the vehicle. Medical evidence further confirms multiple high-impact injuries to their upper bodies, including cranial destruction.

Two other children survived with injuries: Khaled Ali Bani Ouda (11), and Mustafa Ali Bani Ouda (8). The testimony of Khaled, the eldest child and a survivor, provides critical insight into the nature of the incident. He states:

“Without any warning, lights flashed at the front of our vehicle, followed immediately by heavy gunfire like rain. I didn't know where the shooting came from. I saw my brother Mohammad next to me get hit in the first moments. My brother Othman, who was sitting on my mother's lap, became motionless. My father recited the Shahada, and my mother screamed 'enough, enough' until she fell silent. All of them fell silent after the intense gunfire that lasted about two to three minutes.”²⁰

The testimony confirms that: no soldiers were visible before the shooting; the family was unaware of any military presence; no warning, challenge, or attempt at arrest was made, and; the shooting continued after the vehicle had already been immobilized.

Following the shooting, Israeli soldiers removed the surviving children from the vehicle, subjected them to coercive questioning, physical harm, and delayed medical evacuation for about 30 minutes. The soldiers reportedly made celebratory remarks after the shooting and appeared surprised to discover that the occupants were a family rather than armed individuals. During this

²⁰ Affidavit Statement by Khaled Ali Khaled Bani Odeh from Tamoun, Tubas (15 March 2026). Affidavit on file with Al-Haq.

time, the four victims, including the two children, remained inside the vehicle without immediate medical help.

1.12. The killing of Salim Sami Fuqaha, 16

On 16 March 2026, Israeli forces shot and killed **Salim Fuqaha** (16), and injured Fathi Sahouri (16), on the eastern outskirts of Sinjil, northeast of Ramallah, near Route 60.²¹ According to Fathi, the injured boy, the two minors were walking toward a relative's house along a dark, rural path through olive groves at around 9:55 p.m. when two live rounds were fired. The first bullet hit Salim directly, killing him instantly, while the second hit Fathi in the shoulder, causing him to fall from an elevated terrace.

Residents reported hearing two consecutive gunshots at about 10:00 p.m. and saw Israeli military vehicles and soldiers in the area shortly afterward. No witnesses reported any warning shots or non-lethal force being used. The Israeli military claimed that its forces opened fire on individuals allegedly throwing stones at vehicles on Route 60. However, testimony indicates the boys were roughly 70–100 meters from the road. Even if this were the case, there's no evidence that warnings or graduated force were used before opening fire.

After the incident, the IOF deployed in the area and conducted raids in the town. The injured boy was not taken to receive medical care until about three hours later. Salim Fuqaha's body remains withheld by IOF.

2. Legal Analysis

Between November 2025 and March 2026, Al-Haq documented a series of incidents in which Palestinian children were killed by the IOF across the West Bank. These incidents included the killings of 15 children, demonstrating a consistent, intentional practice of the unlawful use of lethal force against minors. Although occurring in different locations and contexts, the cases share common factual features: the victims were children under 18, and they were not posing any immediate threat to life when they were fatally targeted. The analysis below relies on field investigations by the Al-Haq team, witness testimonies, and medical documentation to characterise these killings under international law.

2.1 Applicable Legal Framework

Israel, as the Occupying Power in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, is bound by the Hague Regulations (1907) and the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949), in addition

²¹ Internal Al-Haq Report, Field Researcher's Report on the Killing of the Child Salim Fqaha in the Town of Sinjil, North-East of Ramallah. Report on file with Al-Haq.



to customary international law. Israel also has obligations under international human rights law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which apply concurrently in the occupied Palestinian territory.

The right to life, protected under Article 6 of the ICCPR, is the most fundamental right from which no derogation is allowed – even in a situation of armed conflict. The UN Human Rights Committee has clarified that the application of lethal force must be no more than what is strictly necessary and proportionate in view of the threat posed by the attacker, and lethal force should only be used as a last resort when there is an immediate threat of death or serious injury.²²

Children, as civilians, are protected under international humanitarian law with the principle of distinction being one of the oldest principles and a cornerstone of the law governing armed conflict.²³ Additionally, under international humanitarian law, Palestinian civilians in the West Bank are protected persons under Article 4 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and must be safeguarded from violence to life and person, including deliberate killing.²⁴ Children are further protected under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which requires States to exercise maximum restraint in using force against minors.²⁵

In each case examined, the children were involved in civilian or low-level confrontational activities, including throwing stones, being near protests, or engaging in daily routines such as leaving a mosque or working on agricultural land. For example, Muhammad Na'san (15), was shot while trying to pick up a stone about 65 meters from an armoured military vehicle, while Aysam Nasser (13), was fatally injured after inhaling tear gas fired during the dispersal of farmers harvesting olives. These circumstances do not meet the threshold of active hostilities that would justify applying the conduct-of-hostilities rules. Therefore, the use of force must be evaluated under law enforcement standards, which strictly restrict the use of lethal force.

Israel's discourse surrounding the deaths of Palestinians often uses the term "elimination", rather than more humanising terminology such as "killed" or "death." This deliberate choice of language has been repeatedly criticized by human rights bodies and independent researchers as yet another means of stripping Palestinian men, women and children of their humanity that serves as further

²² UN Human Rights Committee, *General Comment No. 36 on Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, on the right to life*, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/36 (2018)

²³ See International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 'The Principle of Distinction' <https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/war-and-law/03_distinction-0.pdf>

²⁴ Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (1949), Articles 27 and 32

²⁵ ICRC, 'Rule 135: Children' (International Humanitarian Law Databases) <<https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/customary-ihl/v1/rule135>>: Children affected by armed conflict are entitled to special respect and protection

evidence of Israel’s intent to destroy the Palestinian people.²⁶ The systemic discrimination, persecution and racial domination of the Palestinian people by Israel’s settler-colonial apartheid regime avails of such language to advance its Zionist goal of Palestinian erasure.

2.2 Assessment of the Use of Lethal Force and Its Qualification as International Crimes

An analysis of the documented incidents reveals a consistent and systematic failure by the IOF to comply with the applicable legal standards governing the use of force, as established under both international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

First, regarding the immediacy of the threat, the evidence demonstrates that, in the overwhelming majority of cases, the children did not pose an imminent danger to life that could justify the use of lethal force. Victims were frequently located at significant distances from IOF forces and were not engaged in conduct capable of causing death or serious injury at the time they were shot. For example, Murad Abu Seifin (15) was shot from approximately 60–70 meters away before he could throw an object; Muhammad Na’san (15) was shot from around 65 meters while attempting to pick up a stone; and Jamil Hanani (17) was shot after he had ceased throwing stones. Similarly, in the cases of Muhammad Qasim (16) and Muhammad Ateem (16), field analysis of the scene indicates that the physical distance and barriers between the children and the alleged target area made it highly unlikely that they posed any real or immediate threat. These circumstances fall far short of the strict threshold required to justify lethal force under international law.²⁷

Second, with respect to necessity, there is no evidence that the IOF forces exhausted or even attempted to employ less harmful means prior to resorting to live ammunition. Across the documented cases, there were no warnings issued, no attempts to de-escalate, and no meaningful efforts to arrest or otherwise neutralize the children through non-lethal measures. Instead, live fire was used as a first resort. This pattern is evident in multiple incidents, including the shooting of Jadallah Jadallah (14), where soldiers immediately opened fire at a group of boys, and the killing of Muhammad Wahbi Hanani (17), who was shot from inside an armoured vehicle within minutes

²⁶ UN HRC, Legal analysis of the conduct of Israel in Gaza pursuant to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide Conference room paper of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, A/HRC/60/CRP.3 (16 September 2025), para. 230, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session60/advance-version/a-hrc-60-crp-3.pdf>

²⁷ UN Human Rights Committee, *General Comment No. 36 on Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, on the right to life*, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/36 (2018), paras. 12–13, 26

of limited stone-throwing. Such conduct reflects a broader operational practice that is incompatible with the requirement that lethal force be used only as a measure of last resort.²⁸

Third, the principle of proportionality was consistently violated, as the use of lethal force against children engaged in low-level confrontations, such as stone throwing or alleged Molotov cocktail use, constitutes a manifestly disproportionate response. This is particularly evident in cases such as Muhammad Na’san (15) and Muhammad Wahbi Hanani (17), where the children were shot with live ammunition despite posing, at most, a minimal threat. In the case of Aysam Nasser (13), the use of tear gas in a manner that resulted in fatal suffocation further underscores the excessive and disproportionate nature of force employed by IOF forces, even in non-shooting contexts.

The Human Rights Committee has emphasized that any deprivation of life must adhere to strict necessity and proportionality criteria, even amid public order disturbances or armed conflicts.

“Any use of lethal force must be strictly necessary and proportionate to the threat posed. Arbitrary or excessive use of lethal force constitutes a violation of Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). States must ensure that lethal force is only employed when no other means are sufficient to protect life or prevent serious injury.”²⁹

Finally, the requirement of precaution was systematically disregarded. In several incidents, IOF forces opened fire suddenly and without warning, often discharging multiple rounds or volleys. The pattern of targeting the upper body, including the head and chest, as documented in the cases of Murad Abu Seifin (15) and Muhammad Wahbi Hanani (17), strongly indicates an intent to kill rather than to incapacitate. This is further reinforced by the repeated obstruction of medical assistance, including the prevention of ambulance access in the cases of Murad Abu Seifin (15), Jadallah Jadallah (14), and M.R.N (17), thereby exacerbating the lethality of the force used.

2.2.1 Extrajudicial Executions

The documented incidents reveal a pattern of extrajudicial executions. Indicators of such actions include using live ammunition without warning, firing repeatedly, or targeting vital body parts, lacking an immediate threat, and not providing or allowing medical help after the shooting.³⁰ For example, Murad Abu Seifin (15) was shot multiple times without warning before he could act,

²⁸ ICRC, *The Use of Force in Armed Conflicts: Interplay between the Conduct of Hostilities and Law Enforcement Paradigms* (November 2013)

²⁹ UN Human Rights Committee, *General Comment No. 36 on Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, on the right to life*, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/36 (2018), paras. 12–13, 26

³⁰ UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (adopted by the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Havana, 1990), Principles 9–10

while Jamil Hanani (17) was shot with a single, precise bullet after he had ceased throwing stones. Such conduct reflects intentional and unlawful deprivation of life.

These actions exemplify key features of extrajudicial executions as defined by international human rights and criminal law: intentionally targeting individuals without legal proceedings, using excessive lethal force, and showing a systemic pattern that implies awareness or approval by commanding officers. The repeated incidents across various locations and over several months suggest these are not isolated cases but part of a wider operational pattern.

2.2.2 Denial of Medical Care

In multiple cases, the IOF systematically blocked or delayed access to medical aid, worsening the severity of their actions and breaching core protections enshrined in international law. For example, Jadallah Jadallah (14) was left without medical care for about 35–40 minutes as paramedics were prevented from reaching him, despite his critical injuries. Similarly, M.R.N (17) continued bleeding on the ground while access to medical treatment was delayed, and Aysam Nasser (13) faced life-threatening delays when an ambulance was held at a checkpoint despite his worsening condition. The intentional obstruction of medical assistance violates their binding obligations under international humanitarian law to provide timely medical assistance to civilians, including the wounded and sick, regardless of their status or actions.³¹ They also breach international human rights law, including the right to life and the prohibition of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.³²

By denying or delaying emergency medical care, the IOF not only increased the harm suffered by these children but also showed neglect for basic principles of humanity and caution in the use of force. The ongoing pattern of obstructing medical access highlights the systematic nature of these violations, reflecting operational practices that *prima facie* amounts to inhuman treatment and intentionally causing significant suffering under international criminal law. Such conduct, especially when it contributes to the death of vulnerable minors, strengthens the case for individual criminal responsibility and indicates potential command responsibility for those in authority who knew or should have known about these practices. These actions violate the obligation to provide

³¹ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 23 March 1976) 999 UNTS 171, art. 6; UN Human Rights Committee, *General Comment No. 36 on Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, on the right to life*, UN Doc CCPR/C/GC/36 (2018), paras 12–13, 26

³² UN Human Rights Committee, *General Comment No. 36 on Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, on the right to life*, UN Doc CCPR/C/GC/36 (2018), paras 12–13, 26

prompt medical care and may constitute violations of the right to life and the prohibition on torture, cruel or inhuman treatment under international law.³³

2.2.3 The Withholding of Children’s Bodies

In five of the 12 incidents analysed in the present report, the bodies of the children killed by the IOF were withheld. In the case of Muhannad al-Zaghir, IOF soldiers stormed the mourning tent – ordering those present to withdraw from the area. Such acts can only be interpreted as a means of inflicting serious mental harm. Carried out in the context of Israel’s genocide against the Palestinian people, this constitutes both an act of genocide³⁴ and an act of psychological torture.³⁵ In addition, it also breaches Article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention governing the treatment of protected persons, which entitles them – in all circumstances – “to respect for their persons, their honour, their family rights, their religious convictions and practices, and their manners and customs”.

2.3 Qualification of the Killings Under International Criminal Law

The pattern of unlawful killings documented in this report gives rise not only to violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, but also to serious breaches of international criminal law, engaging individual criminal responsibility.

The wilful killing of protected persons constitutes a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Palestinian children in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem are protected persons, and the circumstances of the killings, particularly the absence of an imminent threat to life or limb, the deliberate use of lethal force – in clear disregard of the principles of distinction, proportionality, necessity and subsidiarity – and the targeting of vital body parts, demonstrate that these acts were intentional. This is especially evident in cases such as Murad Abu Seifin (15), who was shot multiple times in the head area, and Jamil Hanani (17), who was fatally shot despite no longer participating in clashes.

These acts amount to the war crime of wilful killing under Article 8(2)(a)(i) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The elements of this crime are satisfied across the documented cases: the victims were civilians and thus protected persons; the perpetrators, as members of the IOF operating in an occupied territory, were aware of both the armed conflict and

³³ See ICRC, ‘Rule 90. Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment’ (International Humanitarian Law Databases) <<https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/customary-ihl/v1/rule90>>

³⁴ Rome Statute, Article 6(b); Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1949), Article II(b)

³⁵ Rome Statute, Article 7(f); Article 8(2)(a)(ii); See Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984), Article 1(1)

the protected status of the victims; and the killings were carried out in circumstances that cannot be justified under any lawful use of force paradigm.

The repeated targeting of children, including Muhammad Qasim (16) and Muhammad Ateem (16), in situations where they posed no real threat, further supports the conclusion that these were unlawful and intentional killings. Moreover, when assessed cumulatively, the documented incidents indicate that these killings form part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population, thereby constituting the crime against humanity of murder under Article 7(1)(a) of the Rome Statute. The recurrence of similar patterns across geographically and temporally distinct incidents, including the routine use of live ammunition against minors, the absence of warnings, the targeting of the upper body, and the obstruction of medical care, points to the existence of a broader policy or practice. The killing of children such as Muhammad Na'san (15), Muhammad Wahbi Hanani (17), and Jadallah Jadallah (14) reflects not isolated misconduct, but a consistent pattern of excessive and unlawful use of force with the intention to cause death. This intent is further evidenced by the documented pattern of the IOF obstructing the work of medical teams, including by preventing timely access. In addition, the denial of medical care in multiple cases may itself constitute a separate violation under international criminal law. The obstruction of ambulances and delays in providing life-saving treatment, as documented in the cases of Jadallah Jadallah (14) and M.R.N (17), may amount to inhuman treatment or wilfully causing great suffering, particularly where such conduct contributed to the victims' deaths.

Israel's lethal targeting of the children included in this Urgent Appeal also constitutes the crime against humanity of persecution.³⁶ Under the Rome Statute of the ICC, persecution “means the intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights contrary to international law by reason of the identity of the group or collectivity”.³⁷ As outlined in the ICC's ‘Elements of Crimes’, the conduct must have been committed in connection with any other crime under the jurisdiction of the Court – which in the aforementioned cases is satisfied through the establishment of murder or wilful killing.

Further, the acts of killing also constitute acts of apartheid,³⁸ as the killings were committed in the context of an “institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group”, and the perpetrators – the IOF – clearly intend to maintain the regime through such conduct.³⁹

³⁶ Rome Statute, Article 7(1)(h)

³⁷ Rome Statute, Article 7(2)(g)

³⁸ Rome Statute, Article 7(1)(j); International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (1973), Article II(a)(i)

³⁹ See ICC, Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(j)

The responsibility for these crimes extends beyond just the direct perpetrators. Under the doctrine of command responsibility, military commanders and civilian officials may be held criminally liable where they knew or should have known of such conduct and failed to prevent it or ensure accountability. The consistency of the patterns documented strongly suggests not only knowledge, but an intentional policy and practice.

Finally, the killings amount to a genocidal act under the Genocide Convention and Rome Statute.⁴⁰ They are committed in the context of Israel’s ongoing destruction of the Palestinian people. Statements from Israeli officials, including Ministers, lay bare Israel’s genocidal intent. For instance, on 29 May 2024, Israel’s Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich publicly urged the IOF and government to adopt a Gaza-style military approach in the occupied West Bank, specifically referencing the city and refugee camp of Tulkarem following a gun attack from the area. Smotrich said that West Bank militants “must be fought like in Gaza” and that “terror needs to be uprooted anywhere, even if it means Tulkarem will look like Gaza looks today.”⁴¹ His comments are made against the backdrop of an exponential increase in annexationist policies and practices, State-backed and endemic settler violence, and discriminatory legislation attempting to legalise the destruction of the Palestinian people. For instance, in March 2026, the Knesset passed into law the Penal Bill (Amendment No. 159) (Death Penalty for Terrorists) 2025 in a clear act of collective punishment against Palestinians across the occupied Palestinian territory. The law does not include an age exemption for children.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The documented incidents reveal a recurrent and consistent pattern characterized by the use of live ammunition without warning against children, shooting at vital body parts, and the obstruction of medical assistance, as well as, in several cases, the withholding of bodies. This pattern establishes that the killings are not isolated incidents, but rather part of a broader policy and practice of excessive use of force, rooted in unlawful rules of engagement that seek to cement Israel’s settler-colonial apartheid regime as it pursues its genocide against the Palestinian people.

Al-Haq’s documentation of the deaths of 15 Palestinian children by the IOF between November 2025 to March 2026 attests to breaches of international human rights and international humanitarian law, in addition to constituting international crimes, that reveal deeper structural and policy issues, revealing the urgent need to pursue State, individual and command accountability.

⁴⁰ Rome Statute, Article 6(a); Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1949), Article II(a)

⁴¹ The Times of Israel, ‘Smotrich urges West Bank crackdown ‘even if it means Tulkarem will look like Gaza’ (29 May 2024) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/smotrich-urges-gaza-like-military-operation-in-west-banks-tulkarem-after-gun-attack/>



It is crucial to carry out independent and impartial investigations, hold perpetrators and commanding officers accountable, and ensure rules of engagement comply strictly with international law. Immediate, concrete actions – in line with the International Court of Justice’s Advisory Opinion on *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* – are needed to guarantee unhindered access to medical care, prevent the recurrence of excessive force, and tackle systemic practices that enable unlawful killings. This includes States respecting and acting upon their binding obligations to prevent and punish the crime of genocide and to respect and ensure respect for the Geneva Conventions of 1949, which includes: imposing a full arms embargo; cutting diplomatic and trade relations; imposing comprehensive sanctions; and pursuing accountability. Transparent monitoring, reporting, and structural reforms are vital to safeguard the rights and safety of children and civilians living under Israel’s genocidal, settler-colonial apartheid regime and must be called for and supported in all international forums.