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164 Palestinian children still held in Israeli jails

Providing a Voice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The prisoner exchange, which saw Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit returned to Israel and some 477 Palestinian prisoners released, did not include the 164 Palestinian children (12-17) whom Israel still detains in its jails. The majority of these children are charged with throwing stones.

It is unclear whether the children will be released in the second phase of the prisoner swap.

Since the year 2000, some 7,500 Palestinian children have been arrested, prosecuted and held in prisons inside Israel in violation of Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the transfer of prisoners out of occupied territory.

Most concerning have been the documented cases of torture and ill-treatment. AFP public advocate Samah Sabawi said "These children are terrified from the moment of their arrest which usually occurs in night-time raids on the family home. They are blindfolded, handcuffed and routinely abused both physically and verbally. Their arrests are most distressing for their families who are not told to which prison their children are being taken.

The Israeli organisation *No Legal Frontiers* released a report in August 2011 saying that 93 per cent of the children were denied bail, 100 per cent were convicted and 98 per cent received custodial sentences.

Amnesty International stated in its 2011 Annual Report, that "Consistent allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, including of children, were frequently reported. Among the most commonly cited methods were beatings, threats to the detainee or their family, sleep deprivation, and being subjected to painful stress positions for long periods."

Ms Sabawi said "Israel's actions in relation to the treatment of minors represent serious breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention, the UN Convention against Torture and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child." She stressed that "the same concern shown for Gilad Shalit's welfare and release should be extended to all these children."

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Notes:

[No Legal Frontiers – "All Guilty! Observations in the Military Juvenile Court" 2010-2011](#)
[Amnesty International Annual Report 2011 - Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories](#)

END

