



November 13, 2022

The Hon. _____
U.S. House of Representatives
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Senator _____
United States Senate
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

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United States Senate
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Detention of Palestinian Children

Dear Members of Congress,

As an Episcopalian and your constituent, I am writing to ask that you contact Mr. Hady Amr, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Israeli and Palestinian Affairs at the State Department to press for the release from imprisonment without charge of Shadi Khoury and other Palestinian children.

In the pre-dawn hours of October 18th, 16-year-old Shadi was arrested, beaten, and dragged bleeding from his east Jerusalem home by Israeli forces. He has had multiple court hearings during his three-week detention, yet no charges have been filed against him. After his most recent hearing he was moved from Jerusalem's notorious Moskobiya Interrogation Center to the high-security Damon prison near Haifa.

It is unclear what crime he might be accused of. He is an 11th grade student at the Friends (Quaker) School in Ramallah, a school known for its non-violence and peacebuilding. Speculation is growing that pressuring his parents, who lead Palestinian cultural NGOs in Jerusalem, and who were briefly detained by the Israeli police this summer, may be the true purpose of his arrest.

Unfortunately, Shadi's arrest is not unusual. The Israeli military prosecutes between 500 and 700 children each year in military courts that lack fundamental fair trial rights and protections. Organizations such as UNICEF, Human Rights Watch, and B'Tselem, have found that ill-treatment of Palestinian children by Israeli forces is widespread, systematic, and institutionalized from the moment a child is detained in the Israeli military detention system. The United States Department of State and the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child have also raised serious concerns about the mistreatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military custody.

In addition to contacting the State Department, I am writing to ask you to join the 6 California co-sponsors* who support H.R. 2590, or sponsor a companion bill in the Senate, which would prohibit U.S. military aid from being used by foreign armed forces to support the military detention, interrogation, abuse, or ill-treatment of children in violation of international humanitarian law. In 2018, The Episcopal Church's governing body passed a resolution aiming to safeguard the rights of Palestinian children.

Passage of H.R. 2590, together with a companion Senate bill, would be first steps in protecting the rights of all children, including Palestinians. Please contact the State Department about Shadi Khoury and ALL child detainees in Israeli jails and support the Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act.

Sincerely,

Name (please print): _____

Address: _____

* Thank you, Representatives Chu, DeSaulnier, Huffman, Lee, McNerney and Speier from California, who have already co-sponsored H.R. 2590. Don't forget to call the State Department.