



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

18 December 2018

Raja Shehadeh and Gerard Horton  
Military Court Watch  
22 Ben Bella Street  
Ramallah  
Palestinian Territory

Dear Mr Shehadeh and Mr Horton

Thank you for your letter dated 8 November 2018 regarding judicial practices in the West Bank.

Australia takes seriously and complies fully with its international humanitarian law obligations. Since your last correspondence with my predecessor Matthew Neuhaus in March 2018, the Australian Government has continued to take steps to address forcible transfers of Palestinian minors from the West Bank, and to ensure the rights of Palestinian minors in detention are upheld and respected.

The Government has made repeated representations to Israel focused on three key issues in particular, namely: an end to the use of single-hand ties, leg-ties, and blindfolds; the notification of legal rights; and, the mandatory use of audio-visual equipment. Since March 2018, the Australian Embassy raised our concerns on five occasions with Israel's Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) and the Israeli Ministry of Justice.

We encourage the Israeli Government to engage constructively with UNICEF, including in regards to a recently commenced cross-agency consultation process between UNICEF and relevant Israeli authorities, including the Ministry of Justice, Israel Police and the Israeli Defense Forces. Australian officials in Israel also remain in contact with UNICEF directly on the issue of minors in detention. Australia provided \$56.1 million in 2017-18 to support UNICEF in its role advocating for the protection of children's rights in the West Bank and elsewhere.

Our Embassy in Israel also makes regular representations to the Israeli Government on a range of other human rights issues of concern to Australia.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

HK Yu PSM  
First Assistant Secretary  
Middle East and Africa Division  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade