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Military Court Watch

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for resending your letter of 2 December 2015 about the transfer of Palestinian detainees, including children, from the West Bank to detention facilities inside Israel. I apologise for our very long delay in responding, though we appear to have no record of receiving it in 2015.

You are right to remain concerned at the situation of Palestinian children detained in Israeli prisons, and about the continued transfer of Palestinian child (and adult) detainees to prisons inside Israel in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. We share these concerns, and continue to raise them in our engagement with the Israeli authorities.

Other issues of particular concern, which we have raised, include night raids and arrests, ill-treatment and alleged torture in detention, and reports of the heavy use of painful restraints. We also understand that a large number of Palestinian children are not informed of their legal rights, in contravention of Israel's regulations. We have therefore called for children to be notified of their legal rights before interrogation, including the right to counsel, and to have their parents informed of the location of and reason for their arrest. We have also encouraged transparency of statistical information on the arrest and detention of minors.

Our commitment to this issue continues. The UK government has continued to support and fund projects raising children's awareness of their legal rights and providing access to good legal services for those in Israeli military detention.

We look forward to continued engagement with Military Court Watch.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Philip Hall'.

Philip Hall, OBE
HM Consul General