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Mr Keith Taylor MEP
European Parliament
Rue Wiertz 60
1047 Brussels

Dear Mr Taylor,

Thank you for your letter of 16 May concerning the treatment of children in Israeli military detention.

The EU is very concerned about this issue. The treatment of Palestinian children under the Israeli judicial system and, more specifically, the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child are discussed with Israel at all relevant levels.

Those issues were in particular addressed in the framework of the EU-Israel Political Dialogue at the level of the EU-Israel informal working group on Human Rights in January 2013 when the EU urged the Israeli authorities to avoid any discrimination to children on the basis of nationality or race.

Since then, some positive steps have been taken on the operational and legislative level by the Israeli authorities, but further progress is needed in order to ensure that Palestinian children enjoy equal rights under the law as Israeli children. This notably with regard to the presence of parents during interrogation, the maximum time allowed before bringing children before a judge and the consultation of a lawyer.

The EU and the Member States, third partners and international organisations on the ground, will continue to monitor the developments on the ground closely and call upon the Israeli authorities, in the appropriate format, to bring its practice in line with established international standards.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Ashton

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