



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

JUL 28 2015

Dear Ms. McCollum:

Thank you for your June 19 letter regarding UNICEF's 2013 report on the treatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention.

The well-being of U.S. citizens is our foremost priority. We publicly noted on July 6, 2014 that we were profoundly troubled by reports that a Palestinian-American youth was severely beaten while in police custody. We strongly condemned any excessive use of force, and called for a speedy, transparent, credible investigation and full accountability for any excessive use of force. An Israeli officer has been indicted in this case. Embassy Tel Aviv is closely following the court proceedings.

The annual *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* documents the treatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention. In the 2014 report, we cover UNICEF's 2013 report, as well as subsequent efforts by the Israeli authorities to address the concerns raised. We reported that the Military Prosecutor for Judea and Samaria (West Bank) established a dialogue with UNICEF on the rights of children in military detention, and also on specific actions that could be undertaken to improve the protection of these children. We noted that in October 2013, the Israeli Defense Force Central Command for the West Bank implemented a pilot test in the West Bank that replaced with a summons procedure the practice of night arrests of children suspected of security offenses. Since the beginning of the pilot program, UNICEF has documented 24 instances of summoning of children in the Jenin and Hebron, Nablus, and Ramallah governorates. Despite the new procedures, we note reports that some children received summonses at night. Also, there were reports of mistreatment during the subsequent interrogation process at the military detention center or police station.

The Honorable
Betty McCollum,
House of Representatives.

Our Embassy in Tel Aviv and our Consulate General in Jerusalem regularly meet with UNICEF and other organizations that document the treatment of children. Upon the release of UNICEF's report in 2013, Israel committed to studying the conclusions of the report and agreed to implement them in cooperation with UNICEF. We are engaged with the Government of Israel concerning the outcome of that effort.

We hope this information is helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Julia Frifield
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs