

Children's Simple e-Petition

We all want the best for our children and we put a lot of energy into giving them a good life and supporting them to grow into healthy, responsible, creative human beings.

We are asking you to take one small action to offer support for the children in Palestine.

From our vantage point as Canadians, we can scarcely begin to understand the lives they lead.



Like us, their parents value education highly and support their studies in elementary school, high school and on to university. Here's a simple school in Khan Al Ahmar, a Bedouin village a short drive from Jerusalem. International donors provided the support to build the school.

And yet the Israeli government threatens to demolish the school where these Bedouin children study.



Bethlehem was the place where Keith Simmonds, a United Church Minister, was posted as a Human Rights Observer for the World Council of Churches from January to March 2020. He saw Palestinian kids in nearby villages like Tuqu' and Al Minyah going to school under the guns of heavily armed Israeli soldiers.

Kids in Al Minyah were threatened by Israeli settlers. In Kisan a 17 year old girl was run down by a settler 's vehicle as she walked to school.

These villages, like most in Palestine, are under the direct control of the Israeli military. Over fifty schools have been told they will be torn down by Israel. Countless kids are harassed by the Occupation military forces every day. Israeli soldiers enter schools whenever they like - sometimes firing tear gas, pepper spray, smoke grenades and sound bombs into classrooms because they've been told kids are demonstrating against the occupation.

Former Israeli soldiers tell us children are targeted at random by the Israeli military as a way to disrupt village life which is focused on family relationships. Keith interviewed families looking for their children who had been taken from their homes without charge by the Israeli military. These abductions by dozens of armed soldiers usually take place at 3 am, with the rest of the family forced to watch at gunpoint while their crying child is taken away.



This photo is a child from Beit Jafar, who was taken by the military. His family is desperately trying to locate him because he needs dialysis.

Teachers and parents tell the children to accept the Occupation even when their homes and schools are demolished by the Israeli military. They usually do, although Keith did see adolescent boys throwing rocks in the direction of the soldiers on the path. No soldiers were injured while many children suffered from tear gas. Keith says that reporting on, or hearing about, the kidnapping, abuse, imprisonment and killing of Palestinian children was one of the most difficult parts of being in Palestine.

These actions by the Israeli military are in contravention of international law and the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We are asking the Canadian government to appoint a special envoy to investigate what is happening to Palestinian children with the hope that Canada would put pressure on Israel to live up to its obligations under international law. The appointment of a special envoy to take an interest in the welfare of Palestinian children would follow this precedent of the appointment of Bob Rae as a special envoy with respect to the Rohingya people.

Please support the families of Palestine as they seek to bring up resilient, resourceful children. Their goals are no different from our's. The obstacles they face occur daily. Your signature on the petition will encourage Canada to take action to support human rights for Palestinians. Your children are welcome to sign as well. Here's the link to the page where you can sign the e-petition. "Canada, Stand Up for Children's Rights". <https://petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-2667> . Be sure to watch for the e-mail back asking you to confirm that you want to sign the petition.

If you wish more information it is available on this 40 minute video. Be aware that some of the scenes of children's arrest and interrogation are graphic and disturbing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llx0vzfTlzQ&feature=youtu.be>