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Palestinian Intelligence Services Forcibly Disappear a Minor in Jenin Despite Court Order for His Release

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK) has condemned the abduction and enforced disappearance of a Palestinian minor by the General Intelligence Service in Jenin, in flagrant breach of a court order mandating his release. AOHR UK stated that the act represents a grave crime, reflecting the total collapse of the justice system, a flagrant breach of basic legal norms and human rights, and a dangerous contempt for the principle of judicial independence and the rule of law.

According to AOHR UK, 16-year-old Watan Thamer Abdul-Mughni Sabaaneh, from Qabatiya town, was arrested several days ago in a security ambush carried out by officers of the General Intelligence Service in Jenin governorate. He was arrested without a judicial warrant and taken to an undisclosed location. Since the moment of his arrest, his family has been denied all contact with him, and he has not been brought before any competent judicial authority. This renders his continued detention unlawful both procedurally and substantively, in clear violation of Palestinian law and international conventions concerning children's rights, foremost among them the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

To date, no official charges have been brought against the child, which raises deep concern that he may have been subjected to torture or inhumane treatment during his disappearance. These fears are compounded by widespread and well-documented reports of recurring abuse within Palestinian security facilities, including physical assault, sleep deprivation, stress positions, and psychological torture.



AOHR UK noted that the General Intelligence Service deliberately ignored a judicial ruling issued by the Administrative Court on 29 April 2025, which ordered the immediate release of the minor. This disregard for the judiciary reflects a broader pattern of security apparatuses overpowering the rule of law and exempting themselves from legal obligation, an act that blatantly violates international conventions prohibiting arbitrary detention and the abuse of minors.

AOHR UK stressed that this incident must not be viewed as an exceptional case, as it is part of a systematic practice of arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances carried out by Palestinian security services against activists and civilians, including children carried out within the context of close security collaboration with the occupying Israeli forces. These practices, coupled with the violation of legal safeguards, consistent neglect of judicial decisions, and a total lack of accountability, function as mechanisms of societal intimidation and suppression of voices critical of the occupation and the Palestinian Authority's policies.

Such violations occur within the broader context of a continuing military occupation that is committing acts of genocide in the Gaza Strip and creeping ethnic cleansing in the West Bank. This only intensifies the suffering of the Palestinian people and further weakens their ability to withstand the pressures of occupation and settler violence aimed at erasing their existence, AOHR UK added.

AOHR UK holds Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa, and the head of the General Intelligence Service fully responsible for the safety and wellbeing of Watan Sabaaneh. It emphasised that this crime cannot be separated from the broader political environment, which enables and provides cover for such flagrant breaches of law.

AOHR UK calls on the international community, particularly UNICEF, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, to take urgent action to determine the whereabouts of Watan Sabaaneh, to pressure for his immediate and unconditional release, to ensure his physical and psychological safety, and to bring to account those responsible for his detention and torture.



AOHR UK stressed that the ongoing perpetration of such violations, in the absence of real accountability and under continued international silence, sends a dangerous message that repression, even against children, can be exercised with impunity. This is morally and legally unacceptable and must be stopped by all available legal and advocacy channels.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK