

Israeli forces shoot and kill 11-year-old Palestinian boy in Hebron

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Ramallah, July 28, 2021—Israeli forces shot and killed an 11-year-old Palestinian boy today in the southern occupied West Bank.

Mohammad Mo'ayyad Bahjat Abu Sara, 11, was shot and killed by Israeli forces around 3 p.m. as he sat in his father's car near the entrance to the town of Beit Ummar located north of Hebron, according to information collected by Defense for Children International - Palestine. Mohammad sustained a gunshot wound to the chest, causing bleeding in his lungs. He was pronounced dead around 8 p.m.

Six Israeli soldiers deployed near the road that connects Route 60 to Beit Ummar shouted at Mohammad's father, Mo'ayyad, to stop his car and then subsequently fired upon it, according to information gathered by DCIP. The vehicle was approximately 50 meters (165 feet) from Israeli forces when Mohammad was shot and at least 13 bullets were fired at the car, according to an eyewitness.

"Israeli forces routinely unlawfully kill Palestinian children with impunity, resorting to intentional lethal force in situations where children pose no threat," said Ayed Abu Eqtaish, accountability program director at DCIP. "Systemic impunity enables Israeli forces to continue killing Palestinian children with no limits."

The killing occurred near an Israeli military watchtower located near Route 60 at the entrance to Beit Ummar, a town 8 miles (13 km) north of Hebron in the southern occupied West Bank.

After the shooting, Mohammad's father drove him to the Red Crescent in Beit Ummar. He was subsequently transferred to Al-Ahli hospital in Hebron where he underwent surgery. Following the surgery, Mohammad was placed in the intensive care unit, and he succumbed to his injuries around 8 p.m., according to information collected by DCIP.

Under international law, intentional lethal force is only justified in circumstances where a direct threat to life or of serious injury is present. However, investigations and evidence collected by DCIP regularly suggest that Israeli forces use lethal force against Palestinian children in circumstances that may amount to extrajudicial or wilful killings.

Mohammad is the 11th Palestinian child shot and killed by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank since the beginning of 2021. Israeli forces shot Mohammad Munir Mohammad Tamimi, 17, in the back on July 24. Mohammad underwent surgery at Salfit governmental hospital but succumbed to his wounds later that evening.

In June, Israeli forces killed two Palestinian teens from the occupied West Bank village of Beita located southeast of Nablus. Israeli forces shot and killed 15-year-old Ahmad Bani-Shamsa in the head with live ammunition around 5:30 p.m. on June 16 in Beita, DCIP reported. Ahmad did not present any threat to Israeli forces at the time he was shot. On June 11, Israeli forces shot and killed 16-year-old Mohammad Hamayel in the chest with live ammunition around 4:30 p.m. during a protest, DCIP reported.