

APPENDIX

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MISSION STATEMENT - FINAL VERSION

SEEKING ALTERNATIVES TO MINORS' (KIDS') IMPRISONMENT WITHIN THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT/ OCCUPATION

ACTION FOR THE PREVENTION OF IMPRISONMENT

*“a kid is just a
kid”*

Who we are

We are a group of young and senior local and international professionals who are concerned about the issues of kids' imprisonment, the injustices and the mistreatment, the consequences of the trauma inflicted on kids behind bars and their role in perpetuating new cycles of violence. We consider the issue of kids' imprisonment as a crucial element of structural violence fueling hatred and mistrust between Palestinians and Israelis, thus raising another traumatized generation haunted by fear.

Why we are involved

We see imprisonment as a form of punishment which does not provide for a constructive behavioral change among adolescents, especially within the frame of the Israeli-Palestinian context. Importantly, the way arrests are conducted, kids are treated and interrogated during detentions, the lack of legal assistance, the disconnection (detachment) from the families and the lack of contact with them and the lack of access to a fair trial are blatant violations of children's rights. Such injustices lead to a deep psychological trauma, ruin the life of numerous families and affect the surrounding

communities, as well as those who execute the arrest process. In the current context, such behavior reveals the asymmetry and the power imbalances of the conflict in a way when a stronger player can coerce and destroy a weaker one.

We are aware of the particular context of Palestinian and Israeli kids' imprisonment, but we are convinced that alternatives to imprisonment are absolutely necessary and can be found. Moreover, we believe that the issue hampers generating basic conditions for conflict resolution and reconciliation. The future lies in the hands of these children, in their well-being. Imprisonment and all the hardships that this sad experience entails leaves unforgettable scars that spawn feelings of hatred and revenge. Today, there's a strong need to break the cycle of violence. That is why we strongly believe that the issue needs to be addressed in order to generate basic conditions for lowering the levels of hatred,

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erasing fear on both of the sides, and promoting ways for conflict resolution and reconciliation. Our social responsibility as international scholars is to raise awareness for the issue and to promote strategies that alleviate the trauma of detention and imprisonment.

Our vision

- No children behind bars;
- to prevent any kind of violence and to use non-violent actions, methods and mechanisms to prevent children from imprisonment;
- to treat minors breaking the law in Israel or the conflict zones, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity or religion, equally and lawfully, following the convention on the rights of the child.

Our goals

- To design and develop a collective effort to promote alternative solutions to putting kids to prison;
- to contribute to find ways to breaking the cycle of violence by giving a voice to those involved in the conflict: kids, families, communities and those who execute the arrest process;
- to generate awareness of the issue and its consequences on local, regional and international levels;
- to make public institutions turn their attention to the issue;

- to promote active involvement of both Palestinian and Israeli mothers in the initiative - a mother's pain does not differentiate between nationality, ethnicity or religion;
- to ensure that both military and other social and governmental services follow the prescribed protocols. In case there exist grey areas in the protocols, there is a need to refine them;
- and to promote non-violent methods and violence prevention campaigns: "to protect and not to traumatize kids in conflict zones", to let security and military forces to secure the population with dignity and not to traumatize them.

