



Declassified¹

AS/Soc (2026) PV04add3

23 June 2026

Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

Minutes

of the hearing on “The situation of women and children in the Palestinian territories” on Thursday, 4 June 2026, in Athens

Ms Saskia Kluit, Chairperson, opened the hearing and welcomed Mr Khaled Quzmar, Executive Director, Palestinian Centre for Child Rights (PCCR) (online) who presented the situation of Palestinian children detained by the Israeli military forces.

Mr Khaled Quzmar, Executive Director, Palestinian Centre for child Rights (online)

Mr Quzmar began by expressing gratitude to the Committee for this crucial hearing on the rights of Palestinian children. He presented his extensive professional background, having served as a defence lawyer for over 20 years representing Palestinian children in Israeli courts. Additionally, he had acted as director of a foundation dedicated to working with these children for a decade, and had recently joined a new organisation, PCCR. The mission of this entity was to support children in the occupied Palestinian territory, irrespective of whether the violations emanated from Palestinian or Israeli authorities.

Mr Quzmar highlighted the grave issue of the Israeli policy of military detention of Palestinian children, a practice which had been continuous since 1967, the first day of the occupation of the West Bank. He explained that this policy applied to all Palestinians without distinction – children, adults, the elderly, and women. The Israeli military law was described as being crafted by the Israeli military itself, not for the purpose of serving justice, but rather to criminalise Palestinian children and legitimise their continued detention and prosecution. These concerns were shared by many lawyers, including those with German, French and dual Israeli nationalities, who criticised the military court system for falling short of international standards for fair trial and due process.

He underlined that the Israeli military courts, administered and overseen by military officers, systematically violated the rights of children. Israel was described as the only state in the world that routinely arrested and prosecuted children in military courts, a practice that had persisted since 1967. Moreover, there had been no accountability for violations or abuses committed against these children.

Addressing developments since 7 October 2023, **Mr Quzmar** described a drastic deterioration in the conditions faced by detained children. Whereas, in the past, detention – although far from ideal – had been regarded as relatively safer than other risks, it had now become highly perilous. Palestinian children faced torture, starvation, denial of family and lawyer visits, and deprivation of education and medical care from the moment of arrest, regardless of their age, from 12 up to 17 years old.

He referred to a specific case of 17-year-old Walid Khalid Abdullah Ahmad who died in Israeli custody due to starvation and medical neglect confirmed by an autopsy. The Israeli authorities had refused to release his body to his family. Such a case illustrated a broader pattern where the arrest of children had become routine, with no access to legal advice or family support.

Further, he condemned the practice of administrative detention whereby children were imprisoned for renewable periods up to six months without charges or trial, often without any evidence presented besides vague allegations of endangering security. According to Israeli statistics, more than 360 Palestinian children were detained, with over half of them being held under administrative detention. These children were denied fundamental rights to education, healthcare and family visits, and had minimal contact with legal counsel, once a month in the best scenario. Even

¹ The minutes were approved and declassified by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development at its meeting on 23 June 2026.

through the visit the lawyer was not allowed to share any information to the child about his family, only to talk about health.

In conclusion, he asserted that these acts constituted war crimes and crimes against humanity and warned that, in the absence of international intervention, more children risked suffering fatal outcomes. A call was made for the international community, especially EU member States, to pressure Israel to end administrative arrests of children, free the children, enforce accountability for reported abuses and ensure Palestinian children enjoyed the same rights recognised in the Convention on the Rights of the Child as children worldwide.

Discussion

Ms Kluit thanked the guest speaker for his clear message regarding the condition of hundreds of Palestinian children in Israeli detention. She then invited Mr O'Reilly, the General Rapporteur on the situation of women and children in the Palestinian territories, to comment.

Mr O'Reilly expressed gratitude for the articulate presentation and noted that the issue of Palestinian children in detention by Israel had been debated in the Parliamentary Assembly years before October 7, underlining that it was not a recent development. He found the figure of 360 detained children "shocking" and asked what could be done at the international level to address these ongoing flagrant violations of children's rights.

Ms Kluit underlined the importance of family and lawyer access for detained children and the effects of its restriction, and asked what could be done to help these children.

Mr Quzmar recalled the visit to the European Parliament together with Palestinian and Israeli officials over a decade earlier to discuss prisoner conditions. Although recommendations had been made for a fact-finding mission to monitor prisons and report back to the European Parliament, Israel denied access. Conditions had worsened since, particularly after 7 October. He described systemic and policy-driven abuses led by Israeli National Security Minister Ben-Gvir, noting that cruel treatment – including humiliation, restraint and beatings of prisoners – was authorised by officials at the highest political and security levels. There was no accountability and no perpetrators were charged. There was an urgent need for European intervention using international law to pressure Israel. He finally described the additional suffering of families who had been denied recuperating the bodies of their deceased children, with over 80 bodies still being withheld. Since 2023, no imprisoned child had been allowed to see their family, not even by video.

Ms Kluit regretted this extreme cruelty and confirmed the Committee's commitment to defend the rights and better detention conditions of Palestinian children in Israeli prisons. She thanked Mr Quzmar and closed the hearing.

List of presence / *Liste de présence*

(The names of members who took part in the meeting are in bold /
Les noms des membres ayant pris part à la réunion sont en caractères gras)

Chairperson / *Président-e*:

Ms Saskia Kluit (Netherlands / <i>Pays-Bas</i>)	
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Vice-Chairpersons / *Vice-Président-es* :

Ms Carmen Leyte (Spain / <i>Espagne</i>)	
Ms Yuliia Ovchynnykova (Ukraine)	
Mme Sophia Chikirou (France)	

Members / Membres	Country / Pays	Alternates / Remplaçant-es
Ms Ogerta Manastirliu	Albania / <i>Albanie</i>	Mr Ardit Bido
Mr Cerni Escalé	Andorra / <i>Andorre</i>	Mme Bernadeta Coma
Mr Armen Gevorgyan	Armenia / <i>Arménie</i>	Ms Hripsime Grigoryan
Ms Claudia Arpa	Austria / <i>Autriche</i>	Ms Doris Bures
Mr Andreas Minnich	Austria / <i>Autriche</i>	Ms Agnes Sirkka Prammer
Mme Anne Lambelin	Belgium / <i>Belgique</i>	Mr Andries Gryffroy
M. Benoît Lutgen	Belgium / <i>Belgique</i>	Mme Véronique Durenne
Ms Darijana Filipović	Bosnia and Herzegovina / <i>Bosnie-Herzégovine</i>	Mr Šemsudin Dedić
Ms Atidzhe Alieva-Veli	Bulgaria / <i>Bulgarie</i>	Mr Kostadin Angelov
Ms Maya Dimitrova	Bulgaria / <i>Bulgarie</i>	Mr Ilian Iontchev
Mr Marko Pavić	Croatia / <i>Croatie</i>	Ms Rada Borić
Ms Christiana Erotokritou	Cyprus / <i>Chypre</i>	Mr Constantinos Efstathiou
Ms Ivana Mádllová	Czechia / <i>Tchéquie</i>	Mr Ondřej Šimetka
ZZ...	Czechia / <i>Tchéquie</i>	ZZ...
Ms Camilla Fabricius	Denmark / <i>Danemark</i>	Ms Charlotte Bagge Hansen
Ms Hanah Lahe	Estonia / <i>Estonie</i>	Ms Kadri Tali
Ms Minna Reijonen	Finland / <i>Finlande</i>	Mr Pekka Aittakumpu
Mme Sophia Chikirou	France	Mme Sabrina Sebaihi
M. Alexandre Dufosset	France	Mme Liliana Tanguy
M. Alain Milon	France	M. Alain Cadec
Mme Maud Petit	France	M. Jean Laussucq
Ms Birgit Bessin	Germany / <i>Allemagne</i>	Ms Martina Kempf
Mr Vinzenz Glaser	Germany / <i>Allemagne</i>	Ms Christin Willnat
Ms Inge Gräßle	Germany / <i>Allemagne</i>	Mr Julian Joswig
Mr Serdar Yüksel	Germany / <i>Allemagne</i>	Ms Franziska Kersten
Mr Georgios Stamatis	Greece / <i>Grèce</i>	Mr Dionysios-Charalampos Kalamatianos
Ms Maria Syrengela	Greece / <i>Grèce</i>	Ms Maria-Nefeli Chatziioannidou
Ms Mónika Bartos	Hungary / <i>Hongrie</i>	Mr Zoltán Bóna
Ms Mónika Dunai	Hungary / <i>Hongrie</i>	Mr István Hollik
Ms Kolbrún Áslaugar Baldursdóttir	Iceland / <i>Islande</i>	Ms Ásthildur Lóa Þórsdóttir
Mr Joseph O'Reilly	Ireland / <i>Irlande</i>	Mr Rónán Mullen
Ms Elena Bonetti	Italy / <i>Italie</i>	Mr Roberto Rosso
Ms Aurora Floridia	Italy / <i>Italie</i>	Mr Giuseppe De Cristofaro
Mr Alessandro Giglio Vigna	Italy / <i>Italie</i>	Mr Graziano Pizzimenti

Mr Stefano Maullu	Italy / <i>Italie</i>	Ms Domenica Spinelli
M. Andris Bērziņš	Latvia / <i>Lettonie</i>	Mr Edmunds Cepurītis
Mr Marc Risch	Liechtenstein	Mr Joachim Vogt
Ms Orinta Leputė	Lithuania / <i>Lituanie</i>	Mr Zigmantas Balčytis
Mme Stéphanie Weydert	Luxembourg	M. Paul Galles
Mr Michael Farrugia	Malta / <i>Malte</i>	Mr Joseph Beppe Fenech Adami
Mr Ion Groza	Republic of Moldova / <i>République de Moldova</i>	Ms Ana Calinici
M. Régis Bergonzi	Monaco	Mme Béatrice Fresko-Rolfo
Mr Miloš Konatar	Montenegro / <i>Monténégro</i>	Ms Edina Dešić
Ms Saskia Kluit	Netherlands / <i>Pays-Bas</i>	Mr Theo Bovens
Ms Carla Moonen	Netherlands / <i>Pays-Bas</i>	Mr Felix Klos
Mr Bekim Kjeku	North Macedonia / <i>Macédoine du Nord</i>	Mr Sadula Duraki
Mr Per Vidar Kjølmoen	Norway / <i>Norvège</i>	Ms Seher Aydar
Mr Szymon Hołownia	Poland / <i>Pologne</i>	Ms Magdalena Biejat
Ms Danuta Jazłowiecka	Poland / <i>Pologne</i>	Mr Mirosław Adam Orliński
Mr Jan Filip Libicki	Poland / <i>Pologne</i>	ZZ...
Mr Nuno Fazenda	Portugal	Mr António Mendonça Mendes
Mr Carlos Silva Santiago	Portugal	Ms Sofia Carreira
Ms Georgeta-Carmen Holban	Romania / <i>Roumanie</i>	Ms Mirela Elena Adomnicăi
Ms Dumitrina Mitrea	Romania / <i>Roumanie</i>	Mr Iulian Bulai
Mr Robert-Ionatan Sighiartău	Romania / <i>Roumanie</i>	Ms Maria-Gabriela Horga
Mr Gerardo Giovagnoli	San Marino / <i>Saint-Marin</i>	Ms Alice Mina
Mr Vladimir Đorđević	Serbia / <i>Serbie</i>	Mr Predrag Marsenić
Ms Tatjana Pašić	Serbia / <i>Serbie</i>	Ms Jelena Milošević
Ms Veronika Remišová	Slovak Republic / <i>République Slovaque</i>	M. Pavol Goga
Mr Dean Premik	Slovenia / <i>Slovénie</i>	Ms Iva Dimic
Ms María Fernández	Spain / <i>Espagne</i>	Ms Luz Martinez Seijo
Mr José Latorre	Spain / <i>Espagne</i>	Ms Nerea Ahedo
Ms Carmen Leyte	Spain / <i>Espagne</i>	Mr José Antonio Bermúdez De
Ms Sofia Amloh	Sweden / <i>Suède</i>	Ms Annika Strandhäll
Ms Victoria Tiblom	Sweden / <i>Suède</i>	Ms Boriana Åberg
Ms Sibel Arslan	Switzerland / <i>Suisse</i>	Mme Céline Amaudruz
Mme Valérie Piller Carrard	Switzerland / <i>Suisse</i>	Mr Niklaus-Samuel Gugger
Mr Murat Cahid Cingi	Türkiye	Mr Mustafa Canbey
Ms Gökçe Gökçen	Türkiye	Mr Namık Tan
Mr Berdan Öztürk	Türkiye	Ms Sevilay Çelenk
Mr Sevan Sivacioğlu	Türkiye	Ms Sena Nur Çelik Kanat
Ms Olena Khomenko	Ukraine	Ms Larysa Bilozir
Ms Yuliia Ovchynnykova	Ukraine	Mr Andrii Lopushanskyi
Ms Lesia Zaburanna	Ukraine	Mr Rostyslav Tistyk
Baroness Thérèse Coffey	United Kingdom / <i>Royaume-Uni</i>	Mr Dan Aldridge
Mr Mike Reader	United Kingdom / <i>Royaume-Uni</i>	Ms Leigh Ingham
Ms Elaine Stewart	United Kingdom / <i>Royaume-Uni</i>	Ms Kate Osamor
Lord Don Touhig	United Kingdom / <i>Royaume-Uni</i>	Ms Michelle Welsh

Partners for Democracy / Partenaires pour la Démocratie

Mr / M. Allal Amraoui, Morocco / Maroc

Mr / M. Hassan Arif, Morocco / Maroc

Secretariat of Delegation or of Political Group / Secrétariat de Délégation ou de Groupe politique

Ms / Mme Francesca Verginelli, Italy / Italie

Ms / Mme Francesca Albanese Arbogast, Socialists, Democrats and Green Group / Groupe des socialistes, démocrates et verts

Mr / M. Sabih Gazi Öztürk, Türkiye

Experts / Expert-es

Ms / Mme Domna Michailidou, Greek Minister of Social Cohesion and Family Affairs / ministre grecque de la Cohésion sociale et des Affaires familiales

Ms / Mme Niki Kerameus, Greek Minister of Labour and Social Insurance / ministre grecque du Travail et de la Sécurité sociale

Mr / M. Stelios Maridakis, Vice President of the National Youth Council of Greece / vice-président du Conseil national de la jeunesse de Grèce

Mr / M. Basil C. Tarlatzis, Professor Emeritus of Obstetrics-Gynaecology and Human Reproduction, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki / professeur émérite d'obstétrique-gynécologie et de reproduction humaine à l'université Aristote de Thessalonique

Ms / Mme Alexandra Tragakis, Professor of economic demography at Harokopio University / professeure de démographie économique à l'université Harokopio

Ms / Mme Dionysia Theodora Avgerinopoulou, Chair of the Special Standing Committee on Environmental Protection of the Greek Parliament / présidente de la commission permanente spéciale sur la protection de l'environnement du Parlement grec

Mr / M. Scoullou Michael, Professor Emeritus, Laboratory of Environmental Chemistry / professeur émérite, Laboratoire de chimie environnementale

Mr / M. Grigoris Konstantellos, Mayor of Varis Voulas Vouliagmeni / maire de Varis Voulas Vouliagmeni

Mr / M. Khaled Quzmar, Executive Director, Palestinian Centre for Child Rights (PCCR) (online) / directeur exécutif du Centre palestinien pour les droits de l'enfant (en ligne)

Other persons present / Autres personnes présentes

Mr / M. Armağan Candan, Representative of the Turkish Cypriot Community (*) / Représentant de la communauté chypriote turque (*)

(*) In accordance with Resolution 1376 (2004) / Conformément à la Résolution 1376 (2004)

Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly / Secrétariat de l'Assemblée parlementaire

Ms / Mme Louise Barton, Director, Inclusive and Sustainable Societies and Co-operation Directorate / Directrice, Direction des sociétés inclusives et durables et de la coopération

Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development /
Commission des questions sociales, de la santé et du développement durable

Ms / Mme Catherine Du-BernardHead of the Secretariat / Cheffe du Secrétariat

Ms / Mme Aiste RamanauskaiteSecretary to the Committee / Secrétaire de la commission

Ms / Mme Jannick DevauxSecretary to the Committee / Secrétaire de la commission

Ms / Mme Claire Dubois-HamdiSecretary to the Committee / Secrétaire de la commission

Ms / Mme Prisca BarthelEurope Prize Section / Section du Prix de l'Europe

Ms / Mme Xenia Birioukova.....Assistant/ Assistante

Ms / Mme Özgü Tan.....Assistant/ Assistante