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August 18, 2015

The Honorable Anne Woods Patterson
Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Tom Malinowski
Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Ambassador Patterson and Assistant Secretary Malinowski:

Last week Mr. Siam Nawara, a Palestinian resident of the West Bank, visited my office to request assistance in response to the 2014 murder of his seventeen year old son – Nadeem Nawara – by Israeli security forces. In my view Mr. Nawara is very courageous as he seeks justice for his son. Nadeem's death appears to be a blatant example of an unlawful killing that merits both condemnation and action by the U.S.

On May 15, 2014 Nadeem was shot in the chest by an Israeli border policeman using an M-16 rifle. Most disturbing, Nadeem's murder was captured on video by local security cameras as well as international journalists. One can literally watch the murder of this Palestinian teenager as he walks innocently down the street. A sixteen year old youth, Mohammad Daher, was shot and killed in the same location one hour after Nadeem's murder. Like Nadeem, Mohammad was innocently walking down the street, and his murder was also captured on video.

Forensic analysis of the video footage conducted by Defense for Children International/Palestine clearly shows that these children posed no threat to Israeli forces at the time they were killed. Last November, Israeli authorities arrested a member of the 38th Company of the Israeli Border Police, the company stationed at Ofer military base, in connection with Nadeem's killing. The policeman's trial is scheduled to begin next month.

As these killings exemplify, Israel's treatment of Palestinian youth in the Occupied West Bank is unacceptable and must not be tolerated by the U.S. or the international community. Systemic human rights abuses are well documented, including the physical and psychological abuse of Palestinian children held in military detention. The murders of Nadeem Nawara and Mohammad Daher only highlight a brutal system of occupation that devalues and dehumanizes Palestinian children. It is time for a strong and

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unequivocal statement of U.S. commitment to the human rights for Palestinian children living under Israeli occupation.

I have three requests to make of the State Department with regard to the murder of Nadeem Nawara:

1) This case must be raised with Israeli officials, impressing upon them that the U.S. government expects a fair, transparent and credible trial. The person(s) responsible for the murder of this Palestinian youth must be held accountable;

2) I would request that a U.S. State Department official be present to observe the conduct of the trial to ensure appropriate standards of justice are achieved;

3) Finally, I request the State Department investigate whether the killing of Nadeem Nawara and Mohammed Daher constitute violations of the "Leahy Law". If a "Leahy Law" violation occurred, then the 38th Company of the Israeli Border Police should be ineligible to receive future U.S. military aid and training and all border police involved in this incident should be denied U.S. visas as stipulated by the law.

In closing, please allow me to also express my appreciation and gratitude to the State Department and the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem for granting Mr. Nawara a visa to come to the U.S.

I thank you for attention to this important matter and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

cc: Ambassador Daniel B. Shapiro, U.S. Embassy/Israel
Consul General Donald Blome, Consulate General of the U.S./Jerusalem