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UNICEF: 2006 One of The Worst Years for Palestine Children

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JERUSALEM, December 14, 2006 (WAFPA) - United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said that 123 Palestinian children have been killed since outbreak of hostilities, more than double the 2005 figure., adding that some 340 children remain in detention facilities.

UNICEF said Wednesday in a report that 2006 has been one of the worst years for children. "Across oPt, the conflict and closures, the withholding of resources and suspension in funding to the Palestinian Authority, as well as the strike by some public sector workers, have collectively blocked the fulfillment of children's rights," it said.

This year, says UNICEF, whether it is health care and education, protection from violence and abuse, or opportunities to play without fear - the rights of Palestinian children have been violated on an unprecedented scale.

The events of 2006 have impacted children in ways that will take years to unravel. Sonic booms, incursions and shelling created a context of extreme violence, stress and fear for children and their families, says the report.

"The summer, rather than being a time of recreation and play, turned out to be one without recreational opportunities as well as one with fear sine it was among the most lethal summers ever, with 40 child deaths in July alone," the report adds. "At this point in time, more than twice as many children died due to the conflict compared with 2005 - 70 per cent of these deaths were in Gaza."

UNICEF said it will scale up projects where there is need, focusing mostly in education, health, nutrition, child protection, adolescent development, water and sanitation.

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