

## “Palestinian Women’s Vision on Results of Global Review for UN Resolution 1325”

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### **Introduction:**

As part of its program for promoting dialogue to influence public policies and its efforts to create a space for dialogue that guarantees interaction at the national and international levels based on a framework of international legitimacy including international humanitarian law, human rights accords and relevant UN resolutions including the right to self-determination, UN Resolution 1325 and the CEDAW Agreement, MIFTAH held a public policy meeting on April 25, 2017 to showcase and discuss the report: “Palestinian women’s vision based on the global review for implementing UN Resolution 1325.” The report was presented by its author and 1325 consultant, Dr. Hadil Qazaz, which is part of MIFTAH’s Oxfam-funded project “Promoting women’s participation in civic peace”.

### **The discussion: General Framework**

The report on Palestinian women’s vision of the global review on the implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 sheds light on the gaps pertaining to the situation of Palestinian women under Israeli occupation, a point disregarded in the global review. The review was conducted upon recommendation by former UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon on the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the issuance of Security Council Resolution 1325. The 2015 special study was entitled: “Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice and Securing the Peace”. The report pointed to the fact that the global review disregarded the suffering of Palestinian women under occupation and did not denounce Israeli occupation measures or demand their end given that this is the longest colonialist occupation in history. The report attributed this shortcoming to global power relations that consider Israel to be above international accountability for the crimes it commits against women, children and the entire Palestinian people. This in particular, is what the global review focused on when it showcased the pressures put on the women’s international movement during discussions on UNSCR 1325. It eventually settled on wording that took the middle ground. However, the global review itself points to the importance of “tireless efforts”

and for the original defenders of women's rights to continue to push forth the agenda of women, peace and security at the local, national and international levels given that the changes in the balances of power constantly require building alliances and evoking pivotal issues.

In spite of this shortcoming, the report, which specified the roles and responsibilities at the national and international levels in advocating for the protection of Palestinian women and girls through accountability of the relevant parties, did say the global review included several issues which could be used as tools by the women's movement and coalitions active in promoting Resolution 1325. Furthermore, the study spoke about the changes in the nature of wars and conflicts around the world, which have shifted from wars between armies to wars between "non-state actors" in addition to the widespread use of highly advanced technology and modern media, which further increase the burden on women.

The study noted that there was more mention of women on issues of peace and security and the level and nature of their interventions, which helped revive their practical role rather than remaining just symbolic. It noted that there was a certain level of gender-sensitivity in addressing conflict-related issues.

The participants' presentations called for addressing the issues that led to the critical change in violence against women (mass rapes), the assault on women's achievements and the increase in the number of women refugees and immigrants in addition to the ongoing Israeli occupation. These issues include: interjecting religion into politics, the influx of arms into conflict areas and war zones and the disregard of arms-producing countries of this influx.

In the Palestinian context, the many achievements of Palestinian women in putting UN Resolution 1325 into action were pointed out. The majority of these achievements pertained to the issue of participation, protection and accountability, all of which are included in the national plan prepared by the national committee for implementing Resolution 1325 and discussing them at higher levels.

Regarding violence in Palestine, the speakers noted that violence is carried out within a framework of the occupation's domination, maintaining that the core solution to this violence is to end the Israeli occupation.

The presentations also warned against the process of undermining, dividing and fragmenting countries and identities in the Arab world such as in Syria and Iraq. They also warned about the transfer of external wars to Arab territories, thereby unraveling all aspects of political and social life and creating the complete occupation of thought and political decision-making. At the same time, they said, international decisions were being made in accordance with the Israeli vision.

The presentations stressed that an analysis of the UN's discourse and the way it deals with Palestinian women indicates an attempt to isolate their cause from the context of the Israeli occupation. This, they maintained, calls for efforts to find a formula for ending this occupation.

The participants also broached the subject of the role of the Arab League, calling on the League to put more focus on UN Resolution 1325 and offering more support in this regard. They said the League's official stance on the issue was extremely weak.

### **Recommendations**

- Women's rights are a political and legal issue in the first degree; it is imperative that all women's issues are included in enacted political frameworks
- Reaffirming that the 10 proposed strategies included in the Palestinian vision are not an alternative to the national plan but complementary to it. This includes a three-way joint responsibility between civil society and official and international institutions.
- Reaffirming the high participatory level between the women's coalition and the national committee for implementing Resolution 1325 in implementing the national plan and preparing relevant reports.
- The need to maintain the role of the women's coalition for 1325 as a lobbying and advocacy body, which supports the development of Palestinian women's agenda for peace and security; the need for Palestinian discourse on the provision on peace and security in Resolution 1325 to be integrated with relevant international resolutions.
- Reaffirming the role of international organizations in endorsing the Palestinian demand to end the occupation and to support women's voices in international arenas, the Human Rights Council and the UN; to support the efforts of the Palestinian women's movement in its demand to achieve protection for Palestinian women under occupation.
- Addressing the concept of violence against women through the context of peace and security necessitates a political decision and comprehensive intervention and for the international community to shoulder its responsibility in this regard.
- Expanding the space for confrontation with the occupation in international arenas, especially after Palestine's newfound membership in a number of international treaties.
- The need to summarize national strategies in an understandable way; the need for a Palestinian reference that includes all of the information collected by civil society organizations on human rights organizations.
- Reaffirming the power of Resolution 1325 as being equal to the legal strength of UNSCR 242.
- The demand to implement the provisions on the protection of women and on accountability of the occupation as the central national cause; to determine implementable goals regarding Resolution 1325 with the help of friendly international parties.

- Demanding European countries to recognize the state of Palestine and to call on them to respect their own decisions regarding settlements and the occupation; to put pressure on international institutions to reclaim their neutral and nonbiased role towards Israel.
- Reaffirming that local institutions play a key role in influencing international institutions with the role of the latter being to offer financial support, experience and capacity building so as to ensure that the voice of women is heard around the world. This is to be carried out through a framework of strategic partnership between local and international institutions.
- To request from the next Arab League ministerial meeting to focus more on Resolution 1325 and its support for it.
- Making a call to women leaders to invest in the youth generation since they are capable of shouldering the responsibility and passing on the experiences of the old generation to this one.