

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Fifty-eighth session

30 June – 18 July 2014

Statement of the CEDAW Committee on the situation in Gaza - July 2014

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) notes with deep concern the deteriorating human rights and humanitarian situation in Gaza, particularly the heavy civilian casualties, including large numbers of women and girls, since the beginning of the Israeli military operation “Protective Edge” on 7 July 2014. The hostilities, between the State of Israel and certain Palestinian armed groups, are taking place against a backdrop of poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, chronic energy and water shortages in Gaza, which have further compounded the deprivation of women and children of access to basic amenities including food, medical care, education, adequate water and sanitation facilities, electricity and other infrastructures and means of livelihood.

The Committee is particularly concerned at the displacement of a significant number of women and girls, including older women and those with disabilities in Gaza, as a result of large scale destruction and damage to homes and civilian infrastructure.

While recognizing the right of the State of Israel to self-defence, the Committee urges full respect and strict adherence to international human rights and humanitarian law, including full respect for the principles of distinction between civilians and combatants, proportionality and the need to take precautions to avoid the targeting of civilians at all times and under all circumstances.

The Committee calls on the parties to the conflict to fully comply with their obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and to protect the rights of women in situations of armed conflict as spelled out in its General Recommendation No. 30 (2013) on “Women in Conflict Prevention, Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations”.

The Committee also emphasizes the urgent need to revive the peace process with the inclusion and the effective participation of women from both States Parties concerned, in line with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent relevant resolutions of the Security Council on Women, Peace and Security, as well as General Recommendation No. 30.

The Committee further calls on all States Parties and humanitarian actors to address the urgent humanitarian crisis in Gaza, facilitate the safe, rapid and unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and to mobilize adequate resources to assist the affected population taking into account the specific needs of women and children.
