Regional Strategy

Protection of Arab Women: Peace and Security

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Printed in
The Arab Republic of Egypt

First Edition 2012

National state security is no longer achieved through securing its borders only, but through providing also human security to its citizens, both men and women, as the twentieth century has witnessed a quantum leap in the quest for improving the conditions of human rights in general, and women's rights in particular. Such fundamental conceptual change extended to include the status of women in times of peace and war alike. Interest in the status of women is no longer limited to protection from violence during armed conflicts, but extended to eliminate discrimination against them and to enhance their role and promote their status in the society during times of peace, as this has become a main prerequisite for achieving the security and stability of the society as a whole, up to promoting international peace and security.

This new concept reflects the close link between the international law of human rights and the international humanitarian law which, together, constitute the two wings of protection for the rights of individuals and groups in times of peace as in times of armed conflict and military occupation. Security Council Resolution 1325, issued in the year 2000 on "Women, Peace and Security" together with the subsequent and related complementary decisions, constituted a critical turning point in addressing the human security of women during and after armed conflicts, all confirming the need to urge the international community, member states and international and regional organizations concerned to take further measures towards improving women's participation at all decision-making levels, in preventing and resolving conflicts and in peace building and keeping while enhancing legal protection to victims of armed conflicts in resettlement, rehabilitation and reintegration, while taking into account their basic needs.

With the development of the political conditions in the Arab region, that witnessed conflicts and disputes in some countries during the past decade, Arab women have borne with resilience the heaviest burden of acts of violence, evacuation and displacement and played prominent roles in their struggle for achieving human freedom and the freedom of their national soil.

The Arab region has faced during the past year, great challenges, major transformations, and unprecedented historic events in the form of uprisings, demonstrations and popular revolts by citizens demanding change, reform and good governance, to achieve democratic change, social justice, human dignity and fundamental rights.

To that end, the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and the Arab Women Organization have given much attention to the urgent need for issuing a Regional Strategy for the Protection of Arab women. The Strategy aims at achieving peace and security for women, in cooperation with UN Women. It is based on legal frameworks and mechanisms on both Arab and international levels. We hope that this strategy can serve as an appropriate reference and a serious premise which would enable concerned decision- and policy-makers and specialized experts to develop programs and plans to suit the priorities for achieving the human security of Arab women.

Introduction

The League of Arab States, the Arab Women Organization and UN Women devoted great attention to address the very important issue of the enormous challenges facing women in the Arab region under conditions of occupation and conflict, through the formulation of an Arab strategic framework that contributes to the encouragement of states and international and regional organizations to involve more women in peace building and security efforts.

The strategic study focused in its first part, on several of the United Nations treaties and conventions, in addition to describing many of the bodies that have been established for the protection and safeguarding of women and girls, and empowering them to play an active role in the area of peace. The legal framework at regional and international levels focused on international references such as the UN Charter, the Human Rights Council and CEDAW, as well as the United Nations resolutions relating to peace and security such as Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, concerning the protection of women against all forms of violence, respecting their fundamental rights, and promoting their participation in the management of conflict situations and reconstruction. In this part of the study, the focus has also been on regional references relating to peace and security such as the Arab League Charter, and the Arab Charter of Human Rights and the Strategy for the Advancement of Arab Women, in addition to referring to the international mechanisms such as the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the CEDAW Committee and UN Women. It also concentrated on some of the regional mechanisms relating to peace and security, such as the League of Arab States, the Council of Arab Peace and Security and the Arab Women Organization.

The second part of the study focused on the concept of human security for women, reflected in the preservation of human dignity, and the fulfillment of their physical and moral needs. These notions manifest themselves within the framework of comprehensive development, in which humanitarian, cultural, social, economic and political dimensions intertwine. This part also addresses violence against girls and women during armed conflicts, its forms and causes, and the repercussions of wars and armed conflicts on women in general and Arab women in particular, analyzing the conflicts and mechanisms for enhancing protection. Also addressed in this part of the study, are the current conditions of Arab women in Arab countries facing conflicts, including Palestine, Iraq, Somalia, the Syrian Golan Heights, Lebanon and Sudan. In addition, this part of the report discusses the conditions of the detainees inside Israeli prisons and the Palestinian refugees.

Part three of the strategy deals with the vision, "that emphasizes guaranteeing Arab women's right to protection against all forms of gender -based violence in times of war and peace, and to access their full rights without discrimination and, to enhance their role in a society where justice and equality prevail". The general objective of the strategy emanated from the premise of recognizing the importance of preparing an Arab Strategy on Women, Peace and Security, laying down an Arab general framework for motivating all relevant entities and decision

makers at the Arab Region level as well as the national level in the various Arab countries, to work towards protecting women against all forms of gender–based violence, to which women are subjected, especially in times of war, occupation and armed conflicts.

The strategy also addressed the work needed in three areas, namely, participation, prevention and protection, to be implemented over three stages: pre-armed conflict – peace and security; the stage of emergency and armed conflicts; followed by post-armed conflicts, reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The fourth and last part addressed the question of what happens beyond the strategy in terms of an Arab plan of action, and urging Arab countries to prepare national strategies and action plans, in addition   to cooperation mechanisms at the Arab level. The Appendix cited several successful models and efforts exerted both at the regional and international levels.

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Communities in general suffer from the consequences of armed conflicts and terrorism, and we find that girls and women are the ones who suffer the most in such circumstances, because of their social status as well as their gender. Conflicting parties often rape women, and sometimes use systematic rape as a war or terrorism technique. Women drastically suffer also from displacement, loss of homes and property, loss of relatives and poverty, in addition to the separation and dispersion of family members. Women and children account for 80% of the millions of refugees, displaced persons and evacuees, including internally displaced individuals worldwide.

Women and girls still bear the brunt of armed conflicts that have spread widely since World War II. During armed conflicts, acts of torture are committed with the collapse of the role of the police and the judicial system, leading to the absence of normal restraints on violent acts against women. The difficult conditions and deprivation of women forces them to succumb to sexual relations which are not consensual. Armed conflict and the ensuing displacement, lead to an increase in all forms of violence, including domestic violence, against women.

Violence against women is not just a symptom of war; it is, rather, a weapon that may be used for the purpose of spreading terror, destabilizing the society and breaking its resistance, as well as extracting information and rewarding victorious soldiers.

Violence against women, particularly torture, has been used as a method of ethnic cleansing and genocide. Evidence in all cases investigated by Amnesty International, has pointed out that the military had used violence against women to achieve some of these purposes.

Women also make up the largest percentage of civilian victims of current armed conflicts, as about (70%) of victims of armed conflicts in the world were not combatants but were mostly women and children. Corpses of women became part of the scene in battles where terror was used as a tactic of war, where the combatants resort to rape and humiliation of women, forcing them to bear the children of rape and coercing them into sexual exploitation and slavery. A documented long history exists of acts of terrorism, subjugation, terrorization and revenge against women captured by soldiers.

The nature of armed conflicts is not a practice of destruction against both sexes alike on the battleground, as evidence gathered by human rights organizations, national and international courts of law prove that women are targeted because of their gender, and that the forms of violations committed against them tended to be directed at them as females. The Statute of Rome of 1998 issued by the International Criminal Court was the first treaty to consider gender-based violence a serious breach of international law.

The level of protection and support for women who had experienced such violence during and after conflict remains weak, because access to social services, protection and legal indemnity,

medical care and shelter remains limited, despite the efforts of many local NGOs. Moreover, impunity aggravates the situation and encourages the continuation of violence. The Security Council Resolution 1325 issued by the Security Council in the year 2000 on Women, Peace and Security, called for the involvement of women on an equal basis with men in dealing with peace and security issues. However, it became clear more than ten years later that additional efforts are still needed to reinforce mechanisms for the prevention of violence against women during wars and for the investigation of incidents associated with it, reporting such incidents, pursuing the perpetrators, compensating victims, and involving women in efforts for achieving peace.

In order to promote peace activities, efforts should be exerted to implement the commitment made fifteen years ago by participating countries in the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing. Participating countries pledged to promote the equal participation of men and women in all fora and peace activities at all levels, especially at the decision-making level, and the introduction of the dimension of equal gender participation in conflicts resolution efforts. It has been confirmed by many studies that women's participation in conflict prevention and peace-building and preservation operations, improves their efficiency and has its impact on their results.

The importance of the role of women becomes evident in times of armed conflict and the deterioration of social conditions, as they strive hard to preserve the social order, amidst this turmoil. Women effectively contribute inside and outside the home in teaching children the fundamental principles of peace, though often, this contribution is not visible.

The equitable access and full participation of women in power structures and their involvement in conflict prevention, management and resolution operations is of great importance in the preservation of international peace and security. Women are still not effectively represented in decision-making positions, hence it is necessary to empower them politically and economically and to allow them a fair representation at all levels of decision-making and to give adequate opportunity to play their role in achieving and preserving peace. Women are a valuable and fundamental force in peace-building, conflict resolution and reconstruction in post-conflict eras.

The role of women has now been recognized as a key factor in conflict prevention, management and resolution. Such recognition is reflected in many of the United Nations resolutions, programs and activities. It is unlikely for a development strategy to succeed, if women are not engaged as main actors in their development and implementation, and that a peace strategy can endure without the involvement of women.

Discussions at the Special Meeting of the UN General Assembly held in New York in the year 2000 confirmed the close relationship between the concepts of empowerment

and advancement of women and human security. The concept of security was expanded to include the provision of food, housing, health, education, and elimination of violence, protection, democracy and good governance in addition to respect for human rights. The discussions also emphasized the role of the government in the provision of human security.

Emanating from the conviction of the global women's movement and the international community in general, of the importance of providing human security for women as a prerequisite to enabling them to carry out their roles towards their own advancement and that of their societies, it was necessary to integrate women in the efforts aiming at establishing peace and providing security following armed conflicts and domestic and global crises. The participation of women in these efforts and their implementation emphasize their role as active partners and not just as victims of these conflicts, as women's participation constitutes an essential link in peace-making and its sustainability in the world and in spreading a culture of peace, tolerance and dialogue among civilizations in order to counter intolerance and terrorism.

Women have a key role to play in building and spreading a culture of peace in the community at all levels, both private and public, and this requires accepting to give women the role of main partner in this process. Yet, for various reasons, women have not been given to date the role of partnership in the process of peace -building, and their role was mainly confined to addressing the consequences of violence resulting from wars caused by male- dominated societies, where males have the authority to wage wars and violence as well as stopping or terminating them.

Despite the elapse of almost a decade since the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325, which established the concept of Peace and security, and called for a clear international plan of action for the protection of women during armed conflicts, and for enhancing their participation in conflict prevention, the implementation of the objectives of this resolution is still far from the aspirations of the countries of the world who issued it, especially at a time when, reports and statistics from sites of conflicts confirm that women and their children are the most affected . In most cases, women are the prime objective of combatants and armed parties that deliberately target them by various forms of aggression, ethnic cleansing and forced displacement, and other violations of human rights.

The objectives of the Security Council Resolution 1325 for the year 2000 calling for increasing women's participation in peace-keeping and conflict resolution at all levels, integrating their views in peace agreements, and addressing the impact of conflicts on women, in addition to their protection from sexual abuse and criminalizing it, are still pressing issues. Despite some progress, there is still much to be done. Therefore, there is a need to give new momentum to the implementation of the resolution through concerted efforts on all international and regional levels.

Despite all what has already been achieved as a result of the Security Council resolution 1325, challenges still remain. It requires more effective monitoring of the implementation of the resolution in order to alert member countries and the Security Council to loopholes in the implementation process. There is still a need for stronger framework characterized by more determined procedures to address the violations against women's rights during and after conflicts, and there is much that can be done.

From the lessons learned, it is necessary to ensure translation of recommendations into measurable practical implementation, and should implementation gaps occur, it will be necessary to identify specific remedial actions to be undertaken. Efforts should be exerted to achieve the objectives for which the resolution was issued, and to make sure that women play a role in shaping a more secure future for themselves, their community, their country and the world.

Since the forties of the last century, the United Nations endorsed numerous principles of human rights and women's rights in particular, and studied the status of women in various countries, for the purpose of assisting them in obtaining such rights. Those principles have been formulated as charters and declarations, conventions and international agreements. Several conferences and seminars were held to discuss those principles.

The worldwide struggle of women played a key role in pushing Member States of the United Nations to pay attention to the interests of women. Efforts of the international women's movements, in particular, contributed to conveying women's voice to the United Nations. In the early seventies of the last century, the international women's movements, with their different factions, launched an unprecedented campaign in the history of the United Nations and in the history of international women's movements, which led the UN to declare 1975 an international year of women. A very wide network of women's organizations was formed and through a strong momentum, worked to put forward women's demands at an international level, and paved the way for the Mexico Conference in 1975, and extended its work in organizing conferences until 1995.

Part I

The legal framework at regional and international levels

First: International terms of reference related to peace and security.

Second: Regional terms of references related to peace and security.

Third: International mechanisms related to peace and security.

Fourth: Regional mechanisms related to peace and security.

First: The International terms of reference related to peace and security.

There is a wide range of international agreements which, if put together will form an extensive database. Resolution 1325 - for example - provides a framework and direction and an international recognition of women's rights. In order to affirm the ideals of peace, the General Assembly of the United Nations established in 1981, the International Day for Peace to emphasize the importance of peace among all nations as well as peoples of the world.   To promote these ideals, the General Assembly decided, twenty years later, to celebrate this day annually on the 21st of September as "a day for ceasefire and non-violence in the world". Accordingly, it called on all its Member States and UN institutions and regional organizations and non-governmental organizations and individuals to commemorate the International Day of Peace adequately, through education and spreading awareness, and to cooperate with the United Nations in achieving a cease-fire on a global scale.

As well, there are hundreds of sub-issues relating to international peace and security that can initiate action, through UN treaties and conventions, as well as access to many of the bodies established for the protection of women and girls, to enable   them to play active role in promoting peace, these include:

1. The United Nations Charter -26 June 1945:

The United Nations Charter stipulates the need to save future generations from the scourges of wars, and affirms the belief in human rights and dignity of the individual and the worth of the humans of both genders and their equal rights. Towards these ends, it is necessary to join forces in order to save the international peace and security.

2. The Declaration of the Protection of Women and Children during Emergency and Armed Conflict. (General Assembly Resolution No.2200 A, 16 December 1966):

The Declaration stipulates that the relevant members of the armed conflict must exert all efforts to protect women and children from the sufferings of war, and must take all necessary measures to ensure the prevention of the occurrence of any of the following crimes: harassment, torture, punishment, and violence by focusing on the civilian population, especially women and children.

3. General Assembly Resolution 3519 (Women's Participation in Peacekeeping and Security Operations): 15 December 1975:

The resolution calls on all governments, governmental or and non-governmental organizations, especially those working with women and women's groups to step up their efforts to maintain peace and prevent all forms of colonialism and put an end to discriminatory policies and all its practices and all forms of bigotry, and discrimination on the basis of race, violence, occupation and foreign domination.

4. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979:

This Convention provides for women a framework for dialogue, discussion, support and advocacy which are carried out at the national level in order to achieve the goal of gender equality. The Convention sets out the principles concerning women's rights in all fields, therefore, the countries that adopted and approved this Convention are committed to its application and implementation. CEDAW prohibits discrimination, and seeks to uproot it from all areas of the lives of women, and expounds to the procedures and necessary measures that ensure and guarantee that women in all parts of the world enjoy their rights. "CEDAW" covers the measures for combating violence in both public and private sectors, and makes recommendations for the committed States to address violence against women and ways of treating, which include legal protection, prevention, reporting as well as the preparation of such reports.

The Calling of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women "CEDAW" leads to increasing and strengthening women's participation in the decision-making process by governments at national level and local levels, as well as by institutions and regional and international bodies.

The application of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women "CEDAW" was first implemented in 1999. By 2004, 75 countries had signed the Optional Protocol which endorses the application of the International Charter, and allows all non-governmental organizations, individuals or institutions to submit written complaints of violations of rights directly to the Committee which is responsible for monitoring the implementation of CEDAW and the level of commitment to it, which is known as the 'procedures of communication'. This gives the Commission the power to investigate violations and offenses committed against the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women "CEDAW" in the countries that have signed the Protocol. It is noteworthy that of the Arab states, Libya and Tunisia have joined the Optional Protocol.

5. General Assembly Resolution on (Women's Participation in the Promotion of International Peace and Cooperation) 3 December 1982:

Paragraph 12 of this resolution asserts the need to take all necessary measures to provide practical opportunities for the effective participation of women in the maintenance of international peace and cooperation and economic development, including social progress. To this end, it is necessary to secure the equal and fair representation of women in government jobs and non-governmental organizations, and provide equal opportunities for women to engage in as well as diplomatic appointment or the nomination of women as members of delegations and meetings at the national, regional or international scale, on equal and fair basis with men.

6. The World Conference on Human Rights (The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action):

This Declaration stressed that the human rights of women and girls are an inalienable part of the universal human rights and constitute an integral and indivisible part of it. The World Conference on Human Rights deplored the human rights violations on a large scale, especially those that take the form of genocide and "ethnic cleansing "and the systematic rape of women in war situations, leading to a mass exodus of refugees and displaced persons. Such abhorrent practices were strongly condemned by the World Conference on Human Rights, which also called for punishing the perpetrators of these crimes and stopping these practices immediately.

7. The International humanitarian law: (The four Geneva Conventions and their two annexed protocols):

The international humanitarian law confirms the necessity to maintain equal rights for women as those of men during conflicts, whether as a fighter or as a person being protected. In addition, they must receive special treatment and protection in view of their sex, against any violation, rape, enforced prostitution, or any form of violence or humiliation. Furthermore, children under the age of 15, pregnant women and mothers with children under the age of 7 must be provided with any preferential treatment enjoyed by the residents of the state.

8. The Statute of Rome of the International Criminal Court:

The "Statute of Rome" was adopted on the 17th of July 1998, during the United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries that was held in Rome and that was dedicated to the Establishment of an International Criminal Court. It was in 1993, that the International Law Commission was working on the drafting of the "Statute of Rome ", while Amnesty International pursued the process. The draft was then submitted to the UN General Assembly in 1994.

After that, contributions in the political process to review the draft of the International Law Commission were made by the organization, a process assumed by the special committee on the establishment of an International Criminal Court, set up by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The special committee held two meetings in 1995 and continued to work through the "Preparatory Committee on the Establishment of the International Criminal Court", which in turn, held six meetings during the period from 1996 to 1998.

9. Beijing Platform for Action:

This platform was adopted during the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, in October 1995, which emphasizes the fundamental principle that women's human rights and those of the female child are inalienable fundamental rights and inseparable from the universal human rights. This platform focuses on the fact that women's common worries can

be addressed through a collective action and in association with men in order to achieve the main goal of gender equality. This platform also respects and values the diversity of women situations worldwide.

The Beijing Platform for Action is another tool for supporting gender equality and advocates for a joint Plan of Action in the context of Peace and Security. It specifically addresses the status of women in armed conflicts and the importance of the role they can play in peace operations. It calls for:

• Increasing the participation of women in the conflict resolution process and decision-making and the protection of women living under conditions of armed conflict and those living under foreign occupation.

• The reduction of both excessive military expenditures and the availability of weapons.

• It encourages methods of non-violent conflict resolutions and reduces the incidence of human rights violations in conflict situations,

• It encourage women's participation in creating a culture of peace,

• It ensure protection, assistance and training to refugee and displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women.

• It provides assistance to women in the colonies and non-autonomous regions.

Among the strategic objectives contained in the strategic area of armed conflicts of the platform are: Increasing the participation of women in the conflict resolution process and decision-making as well as the protection of women living under conditions of armed conflict and those living under foreign occupation, and the reduction of both excessive military expenditures and the availability of weapons. Furthermore, it should encourage methods of non-violent conflict resolutions; and encourage women's participation in creating a culture of peace, and to ensure protection, assistance and training to refugee and displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women, and, finally, to provide assistance to women in the colonies and non-autonomous regions.

10. Security Council Press statement on International Women's Day 8 March 2000:

This statement emphasized the suffering of communities in general from the consequences of armed conflicts and terrorism, but acknowledged that women and girls are the most to suffer in such circumstances, and stressed the fact that women constitute the majority of the world's refugees. It considered the role of women at times of armed conflict and the deterioration of social conditions to be of great importance, as they strive to maintain social order amidst conflicts. It further emphasized the necessity of the empowerment of women politically and economically, and that they should be accurately represented at all levels of decision-making so that they can have the opportunity to play a productive role in providing and maintaining peace.

11. The Declaration of Windhoek (Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a gender perspective in various peace support operations) 31 May 2000:

The Declaration asserts access and equality in participation of women and men in the areas of armed conflict at all levels and in all stages of the peace process, in the cease-fire talks and / or treaties of peace, women should make up an important part of team talks and operations. It also stressed that the initial assessment mission for any peace support operation should include experts in mainstreaming a gender perspective, and considered the presence of a special unit for social affairs important to integrate a gender perspective effectively. This unit must be a key element in all missions. It also pointed to the importance that the United Nations should set an example in increasing the number of female personnel in its peace support operations, in the integration of gender perspectives in all curricula and training courses, national and regional, relevant to peace support operations, and secure funding for the appointment of specialists in gender in each mission to serve as a reference on gender, as well as assigning to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General's the responsibility of ensuring the implementation of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all elements of the mission and its parts, and utilizing all available means to increase public awareness of the importance of mainstreaming gender in peace support operations.

12. Commission on the Status of Women (The outputs that are agreed upon concerning women and armed conflicts):

The official records of the Economic and Social Council-1998, noted in its report of the meeting No. (42) from 2-13 March 1998, the importance of ensuring that national legal systems provide equal and gender-sensitive opportunities to all victims of armed conflicts. They should take into account the impact of armed conflict on women's health, as well as addressing the needs and concerns of women refugees and displaced persons, and to recognizing the importance of the inclusion of women in designing reform policies after the war, and the importance of mainstreaming gender perspective in policies that address internal displacement and resettlement, also in humanitarian assistance in disasters and armed conflict and rehabilitation

activities and reconstruction after the war. Furthermore, it recommended increasing women's participation in peacekeeping operations, peace-building, decision-making before and after the war, in conflict prevention and reconstruction and the reform that follows the war, as well as recognizing and supporting women's NGOs, and supporting the establishment of networks that call "for work on the basis of "women for Peace".

13. *The European Parliament Resolution on the Participation of women in peaceful conflict resolution:*

The European Parliament Resolution of 30th of November 2000 on the participation of women in resolving peaceful conflict which goes in line with the efforts of the United Nations, called for the need for ensuring equal participation of women and men at all levels of the diplomatic settlement of disputes and reconstruction initiatives. It furthermore urged the European Commission and its member states to be mindful of the gender aspect in the initiatives related to peace and security.

The Resolution also condemned the acts of violence perpetrated against women and children in situations of armed conflict, such as rape and enforced insemination, sexual slavery, and enforced sterilization. In this regard, the Resolution urged the member states to amend Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Protocol, in favor of affirming that such violations are serious violations of the Geneva Convention. The European Parliament Resolution also urged its Member States to ratify the Rome Convention, which allows for the intervention of the International Criminal Court. In addition, it called on the European Parliament Member States as well as its missions to integrate a gender perspective when planning refugee camps, thus helping to secure the right of refugee women in the determination of their fate through the provision of appropriate economic opportunities and equal representation in the refugee committees and other decision-making bodies within the refugee camps.

14. *Security Council Resolution (1325) "Women, Peace and Security":*

Adopted on the 31st of October 2000, this resolution urged the Security Council, the Secretary-General, the Member States and all other parties to take necessary measures in matters relating to the participation of women in decision-making and peace processes, and the integration of gender in training and peace keeping, and the protection of women as well as gender mainstreaming in all United Nations reporting systems, mechanisms and program implementation.

The adoption of the Security Council Resolution (1325) can be considered as a landmark in the evolution of women's rights and issues of peace and security, as it is the first legal official document to be issued by the Security Council, that urges all parties involved in conflicts to respect women's rights, and support their participation in the peace negotiations, and in the reconstruction and reconstruction phase that follow such conflicts and struggles.

Resolution (1325) is important for women at the global level because it is the first Security Council resolution that aims to connect the experience of women in armed conflicts with the issue of maintaining peace and security, by calling for:

• Increasing the participation of women at all levels including decision-making, the processes of conflict resolution, in peacekeeping forces and in negotiations.

• The absorptive capacity for gender issues by those working in peacekeeping operations and training programs for developing those capacities.

• Addressing the issues of gender at times of peace, the demobilization of armies and the re-integration process.

• Respecting the rights of the civilian population and refugees and internally displaced persons.

• Protecting women from physical violence and discrimination.

• Avoiding amnesty for crimes committed against women during war.

Since issuing the Resolution in October 2000, several steps have been taken to implement it around the world. This historic Resolution helped women to overcome many difficulties that were hindering their participation in issues of peace and human security. However, despite the efforts of governmental and non-governmental agencies, there still exist a large "awareness gap" in the Arab region relating to the provisions of this important resolution.

It should be noted that the Resolution of the Security Council (1325) urged Member States to the need to increase the representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and in mechanisms of conflict prevention, management and resolution, and called on all the parties involved to take special measures to protect women and girls against gender- based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse and other forms of violence in all situations of armed conflict.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations launched a global campaign in March 2008 aimed at ending violence against women, including sexual violence during conflict, the Secretary-General also noted that the United Nations can operate with greater force when the Security Council adopts strong tone resolutions on sexual violence and called forth to include in the functions of the United Nations missions clear provisions on the protection of women and children during armed conflicts[1].

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(1) Source: CEDAW and UN Resolution no. 1325: Guidebook on Women, Peace and Security- UNIFEM (NOW PART OF UN WOMEN) (NOW PART OF UN WOMEN) 2008.

Themes raised in the Security Council resolution (1325) "Women, Peace and Security" issued in 2000

First: Participation of Women in decision-making and peacekeeping operations:

Member States	Secretary General of the UN	States Party to Conflicts	Security Council
- Ensure greater representation of women at all decision-making levels in national institutions and mechanisms, regional and international, for conflict prevention and inclusion and resolution (Paragraph 1). - Nominate women candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a central data base that is updated on a regular basis to appoint them as special envoys as goodwill officers (Paragraph 2).	-Implementation of his strategic plan which calls for increased participation of women in all decision-making levels in conflict resolution and bringing about peace (Paragraph 2). - Appoint more women as special representatives and envoys as goodwill officers on his behalf (Paragraph 3).		Expresses its readiness to take into account a gender perspective in peacekeeping operations.

Second: Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the field of peacekeeping:

Member States	Secretary General of the UN	States Party to Conflicts	Security Council
- Training to raise awareness on HIV/ acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) in their national programs for training military personnel and civilian police personnel in preparation for their deployment, (Paragraph 6).	- Seeking to increase the role and contribution of women in the United Nations field operations, especially among military observers, civilian police and human rights officers and humanitarian assistance (paragraph 4).	Apply a gender perspective, including the following: 1 - taking into account the special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and UN related needs for the rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction.	Expresses its readiness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including means of consultation with women's groups at the local and International levels. (Paragraph 15).
-Increase their financial and technical support and that in the field of transport and logistics for the efforts of gender-responsive training, including the efforts of the specialized funds and programs, as well as the United Nations Fund for Women and the United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other competent bodies (paragraph 7).	- Ensure that a gender component is included in the field operations, where appropriate (paragraph 5).	2 – Taking measures that support local peace initiatives of women and the operational measures by the natives in resolving conflicts, and that involves women in all mechanisms of implementation of peace agreements (paragraph 8).	

Third: The protection of women and girls in conflict zones and refugee camps:

Member States	Secretary General of the UN	States Party to Conflicts	Security Council
- Stresses the responsibility of all States to put mechanisms to address impunity prevention and to prosecute those responsible for genocide and crimes against humanity and war crimes, including those against women and girls, sexual and other forms of violence. Further stresses, in this respect, the need to exclude those crimes from amnesty provisions and relevant legislation, wherever possible (paragraph 11).	- To provide Member States with guidelines and training materials on the protection of women rights and their special needs, as well as on the importance of involving women in all measures of peacekeeping and peace-building (paragraph 6). - To ensure that the civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training (paragraph 6).	-Take measures to ensure the protection and respect of human rights of women and girls, particularly with regard to the constitutional and the electoral systems, the police and the courts of justice (paragraph 8). - Assume full respect for the international law applicable to the rights of women and girls and their protection especially as civilians, and in particular, the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and its Additional Protocol of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and its 1967 Protocol, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1977 , and its Optional Protocol of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, and its two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and take into account the relevant provisions of the Statute of Rome of the International Criminal Court (paragraph 9). - Take special measures to protect girls and women from gender- based violence in situations of armed conflict, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse (paragraph 10). - Respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and take into account the special needs of women and girls, including the designing of such camps and settlements; and refer to the resolutions 12,082,000 of 19 April and of 18 of November 1998 and 1296; of the year 2000 (paragraph 12).	

15. Security Council Resolution (1612) on children and armed conflict:

The Security Council resolution (1612) 2005 requests the implementation of the mechanism specified by the Secretary-General in his fifth report on children and armed conflict to monitor the six grave violations identified in his report. The Resolution (1612) is considered a leading resolution that paved the way for adopting practical measures aimed at preventing the violating parties from escaping punishment. Of these violations, killing or maiming of children, recruiting or using child soldiers, rape and other grave sexual violations against children, abduction of children, attacking schools or hospitals, and obstructing the delivery of humanitarian aid for children.

It is confirmed that the adoption of Security Council resolution (1612) of 2005, which served as the basis for targeted measures against the aggressors, has consequential impact of preventive and deterrent effects. This resolution has strengthened the work done by advocates in the field of child protection, and acted as an authority that the parties have to comply with.

Mechanisms of accountability	Resolution (1612) 2005: Children and Armed Conflict	Resolution (1325) 2000: Women and Peace and Security
Follow-up mechanism and reporting.	Plan of action system-wide to stop the recruitment of child soldiers and other violations. Including an agreed upon mechanism for monitoring and reporting.	The Plan of action system-wide lacks agreed upon indicators for effective follow-up. It rather focuses on the implementation of plans of the United Nations agencies, not on the violations or the results at the programs level.
The mechanism of "accountability", to expose the perpetrators.	The report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council will include lists of the parties that violated the resolution.	Nothing.
Regular procedures for review.	A Security Council working group composed of all of its fifteen member countries, and headed by a permanent member of the Council, shall meet once every two months, to review the reports on the mechanism of obedience and adherence to standards, and the progress achieved in the development and implementation of action plans by the parties involved in armed conflicts.	Until 2008, there was no formal mechanism, rather an annual open discussion, and an annual report in addition to a verbal briefing by the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the request of the members of the Security Council, as well as informal meetings of the Council on the subject.
Accountability of the Member States.	It is expected of the parties involved in armed conflicts to prepare concrete action plans and time-bound schedules to stop the recruitment of child soldiers and administered in close cooperation with the United Nations peace keeping missions and the United Nations regional teams.	There are currently national plans of action related to 12 countries. The development of such plans is not a binding condition for the parties to armed conflict, and those plans are not reviewed by working groups of the Council or any entity of the United Nations.
Coordination / leadership within the United Nations.	Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict.	The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues carries out a coordinating role, however without adequate resources or cooperation on the part of any of the implementing partners.
The compliance mechanism.	A regional team of the United Nations or a working group at the regional level, that operates on Children and Armed Conflict is to follow the rates of recruitment of child soldiers and with support of the UNICEF, exerts pressure on violators to comply with the resolution.	Nothing practically. A range of the United Nations entities provides support in some contexts to women's peace coalitions, to help women's access to peace talks, and to provide services for survivors, but this support is not being coordinated. There is no compliance mechanism.

16. Security Council resolution (1820):

By issuing Resolution (1820) in 2008, the Security Council, for the first time, classified sexual violence against women and children as a serious threat to security and an obstacle to the restoration of international peace and security.

The Resolution, passed at a meeting attended by the foreign ministers of the member states, requires from all parties to an armed conflict «a complete cessation of all types of sexual violence against civilians »and urges them to«take appropriate action immediately to protect civilians, including women and girls, from all types of sexual violence».

Why is Security Council Resolution (1820) important for women?

This Resolution is important because it is the first Security Council resolution on disputes relating to sexual violence as a tactic of war, and a critical element in maintaining world peace and security, requiring the maintenance of peace and justice and a response to the peace negotiations.

• Amnesty for sexual violence related to conflict is categorically prohibited.

• The protection of civilians, refugees and internally displaced persons from sexual violence.

• Application of leadership in the conflicts of sexual violence.

• Demobilization of human rights abusers from the armed forces.

• Gender mainstreaming in programs to address physical violence.

• Showing no leniency by UN peacekeepers of the United Nations towards perpetrators of sexual violence.

• Participation of women in peace talks and dispute resolutions.

• Developing measures to improve protection and assistance, particularly in the judiciary system and health.

• Exposing the main causes of sexual violence.

One of the principal procedures stated in the resolution is to impose appropriate military sanctions on the violators, and to train soldiers to fight against all types of sexual violence against civilians, and the evacuation of women and children at risk of sexual violence to safe areas.

According to the Resolution, rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a «war crime or a crime against humanity, or a crime of genocide». It stressed the need to exclude sexual violence crimes from amnesty provisions in the context of conflict resolution. It also encouraged inviting women to participate in the talks aimed at preventing and resolving conflicts and maintaining international peace and security, and noted that women and girls are targets of sexual violence in «a plan of war to humiliate, control and intimidate as well as the

separation and displacement of civilians by force», and it must be noted that such plans often continue even after the conflict ends.

In conclusion, the Council requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon, to present a report by June 2009 on the implementation of this resolution. Notably until then, sexual violence was regarded as a matter of human rights, and not a weapon of war, despite its common practice in wars as a war strategy.

What did the Security Council Resolution (1820) add to the Resolution (1325)?

Following is a comparison between these two resolutions that will help disclose the value added of resolution no. (1820):

UN Security Council Resolution (1325)	Security Council resolution (1820)
There is no strategy to provide the Council with information.	World Report delivered on 30 June 2009.
"Special measures" to protect women and girls from gender- based sexual violence.	An indicative index for violence can improve the protection and assistance to women and girls from sexual violence based on gender.
There is no mention of coordination.	Appreciates the decision to coordinate efforts of United Nations organizations on sexual violence in conflict.
There is no mention of the root cause of rape during war.	Puts forward a general framework to address the root causes of rape during war.
There is no mention of peacekeeping operations	Peacekeeping operations to provide advice on ways to combat sexual violence.
The first resolution of the Security Council linking the women to the agenda to peace and security.	The first Resolution of the Security Council that considers the issue of sexual violence an issue of the individual's security connected to reconciliation and peace.
Address the effects of war on women and their contribution to conflict resolution and sustainable peace...	Exclusion of sexual violence crimes from amnesty provisions.
Training on the protection of women's issues and their needs.	Specialized training for the forces involved in "peacekeeping operations".
There are no mention of sanctions.	Sexual violence is linked to sanctions set by the regimes in each country.

17. UN Security Council Resolution No. (1888) on "Combating sexual violence in armed conflict":

UN Security Council adopted a resolution in 2009 that aims to end sexual violence against women and children in conflict zones. This resolution, the draft of which was presented by the USA, sets the procedures that can be taken by the United Nations and its Member States to contribute to the prevention of sexual violence during conflict and end the impunity of perpetrators from punishment.

The draft resolution states that "ending impunity is an essential factor if the society in which conflict occurs or is recovering from conflict, has the will to reach an agreement regarding the violations committed in the past against civilians affected by armed conflict, and in order to prevent the recurrence of similar violations in the future".

Resolution (1888) was based on the two previous resolutions of the UN Security Council: (1820) and (1325) that were instrumental in raising the issue of sexual violence in conflict zones and its inclusion on the agenda of the UN Security Council.

Operational elements of the Security Council resolution (1888):

The Resolution (1888) called for a presentation to the Security Council to analyze the gaps that occur in the response system of the United Nations systems to sexual violence in armed conflict as follows:

• The appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to reduce sexual violence during armed conflict, thus Margot Wallstrom was designated in February 2010.

• Establishing a task force of legal expert under the supervision of Wallstrom to support fast-track judicial responses to sexual violence in conflict contexts.

• The appointment of advisers on the protection of women in the United Nations main mission.

• Finalizing the report on sexual violence in armed conflict by December 2010, on condition that the names of perpetrators of sexual violence are mentioned on a large scale and systematically heard.

• The submission of a proposal to the Security Council about the mechanism for monitoring and reporting, and appending the Security Council Resolutions Numbers (1888) and (1820) to Security Council resolution (1882).

The Resolution (1325) adopted in 2000 requested the parties involved in conflicts to respect the rights of women and support their participation in peace negotiations and reconstruction efforts after the conflict.

On the other hand, the Resolution (1820), adopted in 2008, established a clear relationship between the maintenance of international peace and security, the prevention of using sexual violence as a weapon of war and the means of responding to it. It also obliged the UN Security Council to take appropriate measures in ending these atrocities and punishing the perpetrators.

It is noteworthy that sexual violence against women and children in areas of armed conflict continues in many parts of the world, and many of the survivors of sexual violence are infants, especially girls, of whom, in the Democratic Republic of Congo are reported to be about 1100 cases of rape per month, i.e. an average of 36 rape cases of women and girls every day, in addition to these rapes and incidents of gangs rape, which are estimated to be around hundreds of thousands during the conflict, the perpetrators frequently mutilate women during the attacks.

18. Security Council Resolution (1889):

Ten years have elapsed since the passing of Resolution (1325) that was approved by the Security Council on 31 October 2000, without women in war and conflict zones receiving any protection that eases the scourge inflicted upon them, and without a significant increase in the rate of women's representation in decision-making and resolution and management of conflicts. This led the Security Council to pass the resolution No. (1889) in 2009, in which the members of the Security Council expressed deep concern "about the lack of adequate representation of women at all stages of peace processes and especially the limited number of women in the mediation processes, after 10 years of the adoption of Resolution (1325), in which the Security Council called for providing a greater representation of women at all levels of decision-making to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts".

Why is UN Security Council Resolution (1889) important for women?

The UN Security Council Resolution (1889) issued on 5 October 2009, addresses the issue of the exclusion of women from the early recovery and peace-building processes and the lack of necessary planning and funding for their needs, and further called for:

• Developing a strategy to increase the numbers of women in conflict resolution and decision-making processes.

• United Nations organizations shall collect data on the situation of women in the post-conflict stage.

• The appointment of gender advisers specialized in the protection of women in the United Nations missions.

• The participation of a number of women from the nearest country in the political and economical decision-making process targeting peace-building.

• Ensuring adequate funding to meet the needs of women.

• Submitting a proposal on the modality by which the information about peace and security of women is received and acted upon by the Security Council.

• The Secretary-General report on women and peace-building is to be presented to the Security Council.

In a deeper perspective of the reason for this failure, Resolution (1889), "highlighted the violence, lack of security, the rule of law and cultural discrimination, including high rates of extremism and intolerance that hinder the participation of women in conflict resolution", and the " Resolution further renewed on calling to all parties to cease all violations of the international law regarding the rights of women and girls and their protection, and stressed that it is the responsibility of all States to end the policy of impunity and punish those responsible for all forms of violence, including rape and sexual violence".

In a resolution by the members of the Security Council, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon, was invited to develop a strategy and provide appropriate training programs to increase the number of women in mediation positions, as well as submit a number of recommendations within six months on the implementation of the resolution. The Council members further expressed, in the resolution (1889), their deep concern about the lack of adequate representation of women in all stages of peace processes, especially the limited number of women in the processes of mediation despite that 10 years elapsed since the passing of the Resolution (1325), which called on the Security Council to secure greater representation of women in all decision-making levels in conflict prevention, management and resolutions.

19. Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security:

Security Council Resolution (1325): 31 October 2000

The first resolution of the Security Council (1325 of 31 October 2000) that links women's experiences in conflicts zones to peace keeping and international security.

Security Council Resolution (1820): 19 June 2008

The Security Council classified in this Resolution (1820 of 19 June 2008) sexual violence against women as a serious threat to security and a serious factor in preserving international peace and security, as it requires the preservation of peace, justice and the response to peace negotiations.

Security Council Resolution (1888): 30 September 2009

The Security Council Resolution (1888 of 30 September 2009) reinforces the implementation mechanisms of Article 1820, by appointing a leadership and enhancing the capacity of judiciary personnel and the reporting mechanisms.

Security Council Resolution (1889): 5 October 2010

The Security Council Resolution (1889 of 5 October 2010) addresses the exclusion of women from early recovery and peace building, in addition to the lack of necessary planning and funding for their needs and for monitoring mechanisms.

20. Report of the Secretary General of the United Nations during the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2010 about the release of women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts, including those who were subsequently imprisoned:

The Committee on the Status of Women expressed its strong belief that the immediate and unconditional release of women and children taken hostage in areas of armed conflict will promote the implementation of the objectives enshrined in the Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action and the two outcome documents of the General Assembly's twenty-third special session, as well as the Final Declaration of the General Assembly Special Session on Children entitled "A World Fit for Children", including the provisions relating to violence against women and children contained therein. The Commission strongly urged all parties to armed conflicts to fully respect the rules of international humanitarian law in armed conflicts and to take all necessary measures to protect the civilian population and the immediate release of all women and children taken hostage.

Gender Justice

Gender justice in peace building during post war phase during the transition to peace provides a unique window of opportunity for a gender-sensitive framework of action for the reconstruction of a country. This prompted UN Women to increase its gender focus on electoral, constitutional, legal, judicial reforms for peace building.

For more information:
www.womenwarpeace.org

21. Report of the Secretary General of the United Nations during the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women - in 2010 about the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women:

The Economic and Social Council in its resolution No.(2009/14) on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women, expressed its concern about the grave situation of Palestinian women in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and requested the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation in order to assist Palestinian women by all means available, including the means reported by the Secretary-General in his previous report on the status of and assistance to Palestinian women (5/2009) and submit a report on the progress made towards implementing this resolution, containing information provided by ESCWA, to the Commission on the Status of Women on its fifty-fourth session.

22. Resolution (48/3) of the Commission on the Status of Women in the forty-eighth session in 2004 about the release of women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts, including those subsequently imprisoned:

This Resolution refers to all the decisions of the previous Commission on the release of women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts, confirms the decision on all the commitments made by the Beijing Conference, as well as the final outcome document of the General Assembly Special Session on Children "A World Fit for Children", including the related rulings against women and children, and urges all parties to armed conflict to allow for and provide all possible humanitarian assistance to these women and children safely and without any constraints, in accordance with the international humanitarian law, and further stresses the need to put an end to impunity and on the responsibility of all States to prosecute or bring to justice those responsible for war crimes, in accordance with the international law , including hostage-taking.

Second: Regional terms of references related to peace and security:

1. Charter of the League of Arab States:

The League of Arab States approved the Charter of the League, consisting of twenty articles, related to the League's objectives, and to the relations between Member States, as well as other issues. The Charter is characterized by its comprehensiveness and wide diversity in identifying areas of joint Arab action. It paves the way for further cooperation among willing member states, and for closer links than those stipulated in the text of the Charter, through entering into agreements amongst them to achieve these objectives. The Charter may be amended by the approval of two thirds of the Member States, in order to strengthen and further relations between Member States, to establish an Arab court of justice, and to regulate relations between the League and other international organizations that seek to maintain international peace and security. The Charter is complemented by two annexes in the form of two main documents, namely, the Joint Arab Defense Treaty (April 1950) and the National Economic Action Charter (November 1980).

2. The Arab Charter of Human Rights:

The Summit held by the League of Arab States in May 2004 approved the Arab Charter of Human Rights, which entered into force in March 2008, and was ratified by ten Arab countries, namely: Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Libya, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. The Charter represents a review of the document created in 1994, which included 53 articles dealing with the concept of rights and justice, and preventing the removal of any of the human rights stipulated in international conventions. The Charter was considered to be in line with the principles of Islamic law, and succeeded in maintaining the Arab distinctiveness, the religious constants and principles, while at the same time conforming to the international standards of human rights.

The first Article of the Arab Charter of Human Rights states that "human rights in the Arab countries should be placed among the main national concerns", and that "Each State Party to the present Charter pledges to ensure that every individual subject to its jurisdiction is entitled to the rights and freedoms set forth in this Charter without discrimination because of race, color, sex, language or religious belief or opinion, or thought, or national or social origin, wealth, birth or physical or mental disability, " thus establishing the principle that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

The Charter stressed in many of its articles the importance of justice for women as citizens of full legal capacity. Paragraph 3 of Article 3 of the Charter stipulates that men and women are equal in human dignity, rights and duties in accordance with the positive discrimination decreed by the Islamic Sharia' and other divine laws, as well as the legislation and conventions in force that are in favor of women rights. Each State Party to the Charter must accordingly undertake all necessary measures to secure equal opportunities and effective equality between men and women in the enjoyment of all rights set forth in this Charter.

3. Resolution No. 369 issued by the Riyadh Summit, on the Palestinian issue and Arab-Israeli conflict 2007:

The Arab Summit held in Riyadh adopted the Arab initiative for peace with Israel and also approved the formation of working groups that act, along with the international community and other concerned parties, towards the implementation of this initiative. The initiative further called for the normalization of relations of Arab countries with Israel, in exchange of the withdrawal of the Jewish state from the territories it has occupied since 1967, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state and settling the issue of the Palestinian refugees. It also called for a just and agreed upon solution to the problem of refugees who have fled their homes in 1948, and reaffirmed their right of return. In accordance with the decision of the General Assembly of the United Nations No. 194, released after the war of 1948, following the establishment of the State of Israel: the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors must be allowed to return as soon as possible, and compensations must be paid for the loss of property to those choosing not to return. The Summit also called for taking all necessary measures to pursue the immediate and unconditional release of Palestinian women and children imprisoned in Israeli jails and for providing international protection for them.

4. The Decision of the Arab Ministers of Justice during their Special Session in 2008:

This resolution was passed regarding the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes carried out by the Israeli occupying forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It confirmed the need to take the necessary legal procedures to prosecute Israeli officials for committing the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in the West Bank and Gaza and their trial. Accordingly, a committee headed by the Palestinian Minister of Justice was formed to oversee the process of collecting evidence to the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by and perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people and documenting them.

It also called upon on all nations, worldwide, to prosecute Israeli officials for these crimes and that they be tried in each country's national courts. This resolution also emphasized the need to implement the decisions of the General Assembly of the United Nations that is based on the advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice regarding the separation wall and binding Israel to comply with an immediate cessation of the construction of the wall and dismantle what has been built already.

5. Resolution No. (7158) adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its regular assembly (133) at ministerial level on the Palestinian issue:

The resolution (7158) warns against the dangers of the tragic situation of the kidnapped, the detainees and the Palestinians and Arabs prisoners of war in Israeli prisons and detention centers in the light of the ugly practices contrary to all laws and international conventions, and request the international community, especially humanitarian organizations and international legal organizations to exert pressure on Israel to release them, and reveal the inhuman conditions to which they are exposed particularly women and children.

6. Rules and Regulations of the Permanent Arab Committee for Human Rights:

The Rules and Regulations have been approved at the ministerial level meeting in 2007. The regulations stipulate that the membership of the committee is composed of representatives of the Member States of the League. Its mission is to establish the rules and the extent of cooperation between the Arab countries in the field of human rights, and the preparation of draft agreements related to human rights issues on the regional and international level, in addition to the cooperation with international and regional bodies and organizations, relating to human rights, to work on and promote the development of the human rights in the Arab world and encourage its respect and protection.

7. Strategy for the Advancement of Arab Women:

The strategy for the Advancement of Arab Women was launched in 2002 during the Arab Women's Summit held in the Jordanian capital. This strategy formed a solid basis for investing in the capabilities of Arab women, based on the principles and common grounds between

the Arab countries, most important of which are the religious and spiritual values that provide human dignity, justice, freedom and responsibility for men and women to participate effectively in the formulating the present and the future. The strategy aims to increase women's capabilities in the areas of education, health, environment, media and the empowerment of Arab women socially, economically, politically and legally.

8. Recommendations of the Fora held in the framework of the Arab Women's Summit, including the Forum on Arab Women and Armed Conflict (Beirut 7- 8 March 2004):

The recommendations issued by the first Arab Women's Summit (Cairo, November 2000) called for the organization of a series of fora to be held within the framework of the summit, for in-depth research into the overall conditions impacting the effectiveness of the role of women in support of comprehensive development in the Arab world.

In this context, a series of forums were held starting from the year 2001. In 2004, the Fourth Forum was held in Beirut; under the title "Arab Women and Armed Conflict" witnessed the participation of delegations from many Arab states. The forum looked into several issues, including women in legislations relating to disputes and agreements, international provisions and the status of Arab women in wars, as well as the importance of the role of women in the development of programs designed to raise awareness and the protection of women.

The closing Declaration of the Forum indicated that Arab women are the most affected by the consequences of wars and armed conflicts at the national and Arab levels. Its recommendations included calling on Arab governments to join civil society organizations for developing programs to raise social awareness about the devastating effects of armed conflict and occupation on women and children, and calling on Arab Governments to undertake initiatives that include programs for training military, security forces and civil defense divisions on the principles of the protection of women, as stipulated in the international agreements. It further invited the Arab States to nominate candidates to the Secretary-General of the United Nations to be appointed as special representatives and envoys to act as goodwill officers on his behalf.

The closing statement further called on governments as well as national and international civil society organizations to create programs that support Arab women with special needs arising from occupation and armed conflicts, enhancing the role of Arab women in conflicts on their own territory, and calling on the media to highlight the role of women in armed conflicts. It also called on the Arab Women Organization to establish a database for statistical and analytical studies about the actual status of Arab women victims of occupation. The Declaration also called on the Arab Women Organization to cooperate with Arab youth institutions to develop programs for young people aiming at consolidating the concepts of citizenship, the protection of the homeland and the concepts of justice and

peace, as well as to establish an Arab network affiliated to the Organization for training and building the capacity of women to participate in lobbying groups addressing the international community and institutions.

At the international level, the recommendations emphasized the importance of inviting the international community and organizations to apply international laws, particularly the international humanitarian law, and to invite international organizations, both governmental and civil, to play an effective role in protecting women in armed conflict, asking the international community to ensure and secure the return of all refugees and displaced people as well as those displaced as a result of armed conflict to their homes. The recommendations also called on international, regional and Arab organizations to work on the preparation of field studies and statistical analyses on the effects of occupation and armed conflicts on the situation of Arab women. It also invited the international community and civil society organizations to strongly demand of the occupation and the parties to armed conflict to respect the international law regarding the rights of women and girls. It further recommended the organization of an Arab and international movement to cooperate with international organizations and human rights organizations to put pressure on the occupation forces to release Arab men and women detainees and prisoners of war.

The recommendations also called on the international community to pressure Israel to remove the segregation wall, as well calling for making the Middle East an area free of weapons of mass destruction, as well as pressuring Israel to sign the Treaty of the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Finally, the international community was called upon to assist in the removal of landmines implanted in the Arab territories[2].

9. Conferences of the Arab Women Organization and their mechanisms:

A. First Conference of the Arab Women Organization "Six years after the First Arab Women Summit: Achievements and Challenges", Manama, 13-15 November 2006.

This conference was held under the chairmanship and auspices of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bent Ibrahim Al Khalifa, aiming at the review and evaluation of the extent of Arab efforts undertaken in response to the recommendations of the eight forums that were held within the framework of the First Arab Women Summit in November 2000 in Cairo. The agenda of this Conference included a workshop on Arab Women and Armed Conflict, with presentations and discussions of the current developments in the Arab countries on the predicament of women suffering from the atrocities of armed conflict in the region.

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(2) **Original reference cited in Arabic**. Source: the Final Report on the Forum: Arab Women and Armed Conflicts, (Beirut, 7-8 March 2004).

The working paper submitted to the workshop – based on the outputs of the regional reports – clarified that there were several positive steps that were taken towards activating the recommendations of the Forum held in Beirut. Among these are formation of partnerships between formal and civil society institutions, as manifested in initiatives by the First Ladies of some countries who launched national initiatives by joint national institutions, and the establishment of independent organizations combining both public and private sectors, to work towards raising awareness and combating the effects of armed conflict, in addition to ratifying the principal international relevant conventions.

The paper further highlighted the important role played by civil society and community organizations, especially women's groups, in all areas related to the implementation of the recommendations of the Beirut Forum. On the other hand, the national authorities concerned with the recommendations worked on the areas of direct aid to the victims of armed conflict, and dissemination of information relating to security, protection, and creating women's awareness in this respect, in addition to developing special and effective programs on demining.

The above mentioned workshop issued proposals to develop the recommendations of Beirut that include:

- Working on the regulation of the possession of small arms that are prevalent in countries that have experienced or witnessed internal armed conflicts, in an attempt to minimize the random spread of such weapons.

- Working on the issuance of an international resolution that prohibits the use of non -traditional bombs that constitute a grave danger to civilians and women, such as cluster bombs and uranium depleted or enriched bombs.

- Encouraging the Arab States and other countries of the world to ratify the Ottawa Convention on the prohibition of the use of stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines and on their obliteration (1997), as well as the Geneva Convention on the Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (1980) and its Additional Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the use of mines and other booby-traps. Calling on Arab countries to align their national legislation with international conventions they have ratified[3].

B. Second Conference of the Arab Women Organization: "Women in the concept and issues of human security: the Arab and the international perspective", Abu Dhabi, 11-13 November 2008.

In the context of clarifying the concept of human security and the position of women with regard to the issues it raises, the Arab Women Organization dedicated its Second Confer-

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(3) Source website of the Arab Women Organization - http://www.arabwomenorg.org.

ence to this subject. The conference was held under the title " Women in the concept of human security and its issues: An Arab and international perspective" in Abu Dhabi - UAE , from 11 to13 November 2008 under the chairmanship and auspices of Her Royal Highness Sheikha Fatima bent Mubarak, President of the organization's third session (2007-2009).

The conference aimed at bringing together the Arab and international sides into a dynamic dialogue that seeks to translate their common interest in the concept of human security in general, and women's security in particular, into policies and programs of action that outline the responsibilities of all parties, and impose on them commitments that can be implemented on the ground. Furthermore, it provides a platform for dialogue among those concerned with the status of women in the concept of human security and its issues, from both Arab and international perspectives. The purpose is to reach a set of goals that include the Arab contribution in the formulation of this new concept, especially in regard to women.

The conference analyzed the different dimensions of the human security concept, and evaluated them through a series of panel discussions that have contributed to the analysis of the various dimensions of this concept in relation to women. These dimensions are: culture, education, health, environment, economy, social policies and armed conflict. In addition, a discussion group laid the theoretical framework of the concept and the integrated relationship between national security and human security. The conference also highlighted the challenges faced by women living under the yoke of occupation, siege and armed conflicts in Palestine, Iraq, and that are confronting violence as a key component in their daily lives.

To that end, participants condemned the misuse of the concept of human security as a pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of States. The Conference stressed in its recommendations that the protection of women and ensuring their security must be the two main components of the concept of human security. The conference asserted general principles encouraging the adoption of the concept of comprehensive security which integrates the concept of national security with the concept of human security, meaning that one does not replace the other, while stressing on the respect of the sovereignty of the state. The Conference also urged stakeholders to ensure the rights of women and provide for their needs within the concept of human security. It also called on governments, the international community and civil societies to support initiatives that achieve human security for women, especially in periods of armed conflict[4].

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(4) ibid.

THIRD: International Mechanisms Related to Peace and Security

The International humanitarian law provides general protection to women equal to the protection granted to men. However, the International Humanitarian Law treaties acknowledge the need to grant women a greater protection based on their specific needs, a matter which the international frameworks confirm, most prominently[5]:

1. The Security Council:

The Security Council assumes primary responsibility in maintaining international peace and security and is composed of 15 members: five permanent members having the right to veto, who are: the Russian Federation, China, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and ten non-permanent members of which the General Assembly elects five per year for a term of two years. The Security Council does not meet periodically but is always prepared to convene whenever the situation warrants it. It is noteworthy that the Republic of Lebanon is currently the member of the Security Council representing the Arab Group for the period 2010-2012.

2. The General Assembly:

The General Assembly consists of all the Member States of the United Nations, each state having one vote, and carries out tasks such as: discussion of international problems, aspects of international cooperation, approval of the budget of the United Nations, admission of new members, as well as the task of appointing the Secretary-General and members of other agencies.

3. The Economic and Social Council:

The Economic and Social Council is one of the United Nations councils, and consists of 54 Member States, elected by the General Assembly for a period of 3 years. The Council meets twice a year: the first meeting in New York and the second in Geneva. This council is responsible for the economic and social activity of the United Nations. It also works on increasing respect and protection of human rights and the fundamental freedoms, and consults with non-governmental organizations dealing with matters of concern to the Council.

4. The International Court of Justice:

This is the principal judicial arm of the Organization of the United Nations, and is based in The Hague, Netherlands, and the only one of the six organs of the United Nations, not

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(5) http://www.un.org/ar.

based in New York. It was founded in 1945 and began its work in the following year. It is important to distinguish between the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

The International Court of Justice is judicially active on a wide scale. It considers the issues set by the various states before it, and provides legal advice to international bodies upon their request. The rulings of the Court are relatively few, but have seen some activity as of the early eighties. The United States has pulled its recognition of mandatory judicial authority of this court, which means that the U.S.A. has become selectively committed only to the court decisions that meet its ends and disclaims what does not.

The Court is composed of 15 judges, elected by the General Assembly of the United Nations and the Security Council, for 9 years, and can be re-elected. One third of the members are elected every three years and the court does not allow the presence of two judges having the same nationality. In case of the death of a member judge, another judge with the same nationality as the deceased shall be elected to hold his seat until the end of his term.

5. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees:

This Geneva-based organ of the United Nations was founded in 1949. It is the primary international body authorized to provide protection to refugees worldwide. UNHCR has received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1954. The organization aims to provide international protection for refugees and find durable solutions to their cases, according to the seventh paragraph of the Commission's charter for the year 1950.

6. The International Criminal Court:

It is the first permanent international judicial body with a global mandate, seeking to put an end to the global culture of impunity and evasion of punishment. Article (27) of the Statute of Rome explicitly states that heads of state do not enjoy impunity from prosecution.

The establishment of the International Criminal Court dates back to the invitation of the General Assembly of the United Nations in June 1998 to convene an international conference in Rome, Italy, to finalize and deliver the final draft of the Statute of the Court. In July 17 1998, 120 countries adopted the Statute of Rome against 7 rejections, these were: China, Iraq, Israel, Libya, Qatar, the United States, and Yemen, with 21 others refraining from voting. On the first of July 2002 the Statute of Rome entered into force with the number of member States that ratified the treaty reaching 60, thus establishing the International Criminal Court.

The International Criminal Court is based in the city of The Hague, Netherlands, but may hold meetings anywhere it deems appropriate. The Court consists of four main organs.

The International Criminal Court functions as an independent legal body of the United Nations, unlike the International Court of Justice, which is the judicial organ of the United Nations assigned with the task of settling disputes that arise between Member States or between Member States and the Organization itself.

The Court has a special contractual relationship with the Security Council; for example, Article (13) of the Security Council allows it to refer what it sees as issues of threat to peace and global security to the court, while Article (16) of the Code of the Court prohibits investigations that exceed one year in a case, unless the original referral is renewed for another time period.

The International Criminal Court also cooperates with the United Nations Organization in various fields including the exchange of information and logistical support, and provision of annual reports on their various activities to the United Nations. The United Nations also hosts some meetings of the Assembly of Member States[6].

7. Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee):

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women was created to oversee and monitor the implementation of the CEDAW agreement through the reports submitted by the Member States, where these reports are taken into account and the proposals and recommendations are decided.

8. Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

The Commission on the Status of Women was established as a subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in order to improve the status of women in economic, political and social scopes.

9. Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW):

This United Nations department will provide administrative functions for the Commission on the Status of Women with the purpose of improving the status of women and the dissemination of gender equality and gender concepts in all parts of the world.

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(6) Source: the website of the International Criminal Court http://www.un.org/law/icc/index.html.

10. International Institute for Research and Training for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW):

The General Assembly of the United Nations established the International Institute for Research and Training for the Advancement of Women in 1976 as one of the recommendations of the First World Conference on Women. The main task of the INSTRAW is to support global progress for women through research activities, training and information exchange.

11. United Nations Development Fund for Women UNIFEM (now part of UN Women):

UNIFEM (now part of UN Women), which was established in 1976, works to promote women's rights and equality between the sexes. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programs and strategies that promote women's empowerment, starting from the premise that the fundamental right of every woman is to live a life free of discrimination and violence, and that gender equality is essential for the development and building of just societies.

UNIFEM (now part of UN Women) focuses its activities on supporting the implementation of many existing international commitments to promote gender equality at the national level, in support of this goal, and is working in the field of promoting women's economic security and rights, and to end violence against women, in addition to reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls, and achieving gender justice[7].

12. Special Rapporteur on violence against women:

The Special Rapporteur works on the prevention of acts or threats of violence against women, which are acts committed on the basis of gender. This type of violence is defined as all acts or threats of violence directed against women because of their gender, or acts of violence that affect women disproportionately.

13. The International Organization of Women's Affairs (UN Women):

The General Assembly of the United Nations decided in September 2009, to found an international organization for women's affairs, to be headed by a universal personality, as deputy or representative of the Secretary-General. The Organization was to combine the four core bodies dealing with issues of gender equality. The current four bodies concerned with women's issues in the framework of the United Nations are: Women's Fund "UNIFEM (now part of UN Women)", Office of the Special Adviser on women's Affairs, Department for the Advancement of Women, the International Institute for Research and studies for Advancement of Women. The decision issued by the General Assembly on the eve of the

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(7) Source: UNIFEM (now part of UN WOMEN) website: http://www.unifem.org/

beginning of its last session, has entrusted the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, with the preparation of a detailed proposal on the new organization in terms of its structure, organization, financing, and the form of the executive board, that will supervise its activities.

14. The Human Rights Council:

The Human Rights Council was established as a multilateral governmental body according to the adopted General Assembly Resolution (60/251) on 15 March 2006. The Council is composed of 47 members representing the Member States in the General Assembly based on equitable geographical distribution, and follows the General Assembly in its procedures, and is considered one of its principal organs. The Board was established to replace the Human Rights Commission which ended its mandate in 2005, and carries out the same functions of its predecessor on the promotion of respect for human rights, and grants the states more space for self-assessment to review their policies and priorities in addressing the issues important to their people, through the mechanisms that have been added recently to this machinery such as the recent UN universal Periodic Review mechanism.

FOURTH: Regional mechanisms Related to Peace and Security

1. The League of Arab States:

The League of Arab States was established on 22 March 1945, as a response to the Arab public opinion in all Arab countries, where there was a strong direction to create within the Arab nation an entity that brings Arabs in an institutional manner through having a historical unity, the goal and the future.

The League of Arab States works as a regional organization to consolidate the relationships between Member States and coordinate between their political, economic, security, social and cultural plans to achieve collective collaboration, the protection of the national Arab security, and the preservation of the independence and sovereignty of Member states, while enhancing collective Arab work in the various fields for the general benefit of the Arab societies and the Arab individual.

It also works to protect the Arab and national interests, through the implementation of joint Arab endeavors in the political sphere at both regional and international levels. It coordinates relations between Member States with regional and international organizations and entities and looks into disputes conflicts among Member States and takes decisions and measures to peacefully resolve them.

The League of Arab States contributes to the support of international peace and security, being a regional organization, whose goals coincide with those of the UN Charter and other international and national organizations.

2. The Arab Peace and Security Council:

The Arab Peace and Security Council was established, based on the Pledging Document entitled " Consensus and Solidarity among Leaders of Arab Countries", emanating from the Tunis Summit under Resolution No. 255 dated 23 May 2004, to affirm their solidarity in consolidating relations and ties among Arab countries with the goal of achieving integration through developing joint Arab cooperation, strengthening collective capacity to ensure the sovereignty, protection, security, safety and protection of the Arab territories, and to peacefully resolve Arab disputes, by implementing conflict prevention, management and resolution mechanisms.

Based on the pledging document, the Arab Peace and Security Council was established to operate under the supervision of the League of Arab States for the prevention, management and resolution of disputes.

The Council aims at preventing , managing disputes that may occur among Arab countries, and resolving these, in addition to following up and submitting recommendations to the League of Arab States on developments relating to the national Arab security.

The rules and regulations of the Arab Peace and Security Council entered into effect on 19 June 2007, after their endorsement by seven countries. The number of Arab States that endorsed the rules and regulations to date has reached twelve. The creation of the Council represented a turning point in the understanding of the Arab States of a joint Arab institutional role and of the importance of the regional work in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution, and a step forward towards achieving regional security.

In the context of cooperation between the Arab Peace and Security Council and the African Peace and Security Council, consultation meetings among the two councils took place. It also works at enhancing the cooperation with the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies in the areas of conflict prevention, management and resolution. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 3 March 2009 with the Delegation of the European Union for External Policy, to benefit from the EU early warning system, and for the provision of the Secretary General with modern and state-of-the art systems for political, economic, social, cultural and environmental data collection.   The Council also entered into a documented cooperation for establishing an effective official record with the European Security and Cooperation Organization, with the purpose of reaching a better understanding of the Arab issues and developing the cooperation channels.

3. The Arab Women Organization:

The Arab Women Organization was established as a response to one of the recommendations of the Cairo Declaration emanating from the First Arab Women Summit, held in

2000. The agreement relating to the creation of the organization entered into force in 2003. It has three major goals: the empowerment of Arab women, building their capacity in all spheres for the advancement of the Arab society, and creating awareness of the crucial importance of the equal partnership of women, on an equal footing with men, in the development process.   Efforts to be undertaken include raising the awareness of women themselves and the whole Arab societies, in addition to cooperation and coordination among Arab countries towards achieving the empowerment and awareness goals. The Arab Women Organization has adopted the objectives aimed at achieving these goals, which include solidarity among Arab women, as a main cornerstone for Arab solidarity, coordinating the position of the joint Arab stand in relation to both the general and international situations and in addressing women's social, cultural, legal and media issues in regional and international fora.

The general policies of the Organization conform to the recommendations of the intellectual fora that were organized within the framework of the first and second Arab Women summits. Among the areas that represent priority areas for the work of the Organization towards the advancement of women are women political participation, the legislations, particularly those relating to discrimination against women and preventing their participation.

An important intellectual forum organized in the Arab Region was on Women and Armed Conflicts, held in Lebanon in 2004. The aim of the workshop was to emphasize that comprehensive peace has to be based on right and justice and international legitimacy. It also aimed to increase social awareness of the devastating effects of armed conflicts and to entrench the principles of citizenship, justice, and peace based on the principles of international laws.

In the framework of the Summit, the First Conference of the Arab Women Organization (6 years after the first Arab Women Summit) under the title: Achievements and Challenges was held in the Kingdom of Bahrain in November 2006 to review the work undertaken since the start of the millennium relating to the response to the recommendations of the intellectual fora. A workshop entitled "Arab Women and Armed Conflicts" was held to review current developments in the Arab world in order to discuss and activate all its dimensions. The workshop issued its recommendations to promote the Beirut recommendations emanating from the Beirut Forum.

The Second Conference of the Arab Women Conference , "Women in the concept of Human Security: Arab and International Perspectives", was held in 2009 in Abu Dhabi to support the efforts of the Organization for the protection of women, by discussing the various issues that affect their live, particularly those pertaining to women in armed conflicts. The Conference addressed the concept of human security in two areas: the different aspects of the lack of human security resulting from conflicts and violence, and the

other focusing on the developmental aspects of human security, mainly lack of security related to poverty, health, education and gender discrimination. Hence the concept of human security is based on the main assumption that achieving security needs working on two tracks, one for settling disputes and the second for moving gradually forward with developmental activities.

The Conference made it clear that a wide range of issues are now included in the concept of human security as well as the areas that are necessary for achieving it, which affect women in general and Arab women in particular. Struggles, armed conflicts, post-war situations, cases of compulsory migration due to the conditions surrounding conflicts, war and occupation, in addition to poverty, deprivation from education, illiteracy, immune-deficiency diseases and gender discrimination are issues constituting the elements that the concept encompasses and which affect Arab Women in a direct way[8].

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(8) Source: Website of the Arab Women Organization: http://www.arabwomenorg.org.

Part II

Human Security and the Security of Women

First: The Concept of Women Human Security.

Second: Violence against Girls and Women in Armed Conflicts, Forms and Causes.

Third: Repercussions of Wars and armed conflicts on Women.

Fourth: Arab Women Struggle and Protection Enhancement Mechanisms.

Fifth: The Current Situation of Women in Arab Countries in Conflict Situation.

Sixth: The Prisoners of War inside Israeli Jails and Palestinian Refugees.

First: The Concept of Human Security

Human security is the protection of the dignity of the human being, meeting his materialistic and moral needs, expressed within the framework of the concept of development where human, cultural, socio-economic and political dimensions are interlinked. Talking about human security entails identifying the most important challenges facing collective security and highlighting the links between current threats to which the collective security system is exposed such as: terrorism, civil wars and poverty and development. In this context, the United Nations adopted the Third Millennium Declaration on development in the year 2000, which included eight main goals (MDGs) for a better life and conditions that humanity aspires for , to be achieved during the period from 1990 to 2015.These goals are eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and women empowerment, reducing mortality rate for children below five, improving maternal health and, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global partnership for development[1].

The concept of human security can be traced back to the Universal Declaration for Human Rights of 1945, which focused on laying down rules for protecting human rights, thus achieving human security. Subsequently, limited initiatives for putting forward a concept for human security were undertaken. However, they did not have an effective role in introducing the concept to the agenda of international relations. In 1966 a Canadian psychological theory called the "Individual Security" appeared, and with the beginning of the 1970s a set of reports made by a number of committees, including the Club of Rome group, the Independent Committee for International Development and the independent committee for disarmament and security issues. These committees underscored the importance of achieving individual security and focused on the poverty and pollution that people throughout the world suffer from, as well as the lack of job security in the labor market, hence, the need to shift attention to the problems of individuals.

The concept of human security appeared as one of the terms of the "holistic paradigm" which developed under the framework of the United Nations. The 1994 Human Development Report is the main document that endorsed the concept of human security within the UN conceptual frameworks, together with policy proposals and measures. This was the launching of the concept, as the report addressed this concept in the second chapter that dealt with the new dimensions of" human security." The report predicted that the human security concept, despite its simplicity, would be revolutionary in societal management in the twenty-first century.

(1) Source: MDGs website: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/

The report identified four major characteristics for human security. These are:

1. Human Security is global and comprehensive – It is a right for every human being everywhere.

2. The components of human security are integrated and interdependent.

3. Human security is possible to achieve through early prevention.

4. Human security is human-centered and is related to the quality of people's lives everywhere.

The UNDP advocated the concept, which later on began to spread, be adapted and supported by many countries.   It focused on the protection of civilians and children, in providing health care, combating drugs, eliminating coercive migration in addition to confronting organized crime. All these goals are included in the International Covenant on Socio-economic and Cultural rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention against Torture and other Cruel Treatment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the international Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and their families[2].

> A selected set of 26 indicators to women, peace and security were prepared and grouped into 4 main categories, i.e. prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery. The UN Secretary General – Report on Women, peace and security – April 1010.
>
> Margaret Wallstrom, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Violence in cases of disputes.

In a report entitled "Globalization with a Human Face' issued by The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1999, the UNDP confirmed that despite the enormous opportunities offered by globalization for human progress in all spheres due to the rapid transfer of knowledge and modern technology and the freedom of movement of goods and services, it conversely imposes extreme risks on human security in the 21st century.

These risks will strike individuals in rich and poor countries alike. The report identified seven basic challenges that human security in the age of globalization. These are:

(2) Source: The Human Development Report, United Nations Development Programme, 1994.

a) Fiscal instability: The most obvious example was the financial crisis which hit South East Asia in the mid 1997. The report stressed that in the age of globalization and the rapid flow of goods, capital and services, similar financial crises are expected to happen, and this is what actually happened in 2009.

b) The lack of job security and instability of income: The global competition policies led governments and employees to adopt more flexible employment policies characterized by the absence of contracts or job guarantees, resulting in the absence of job security.

c) The absence of health security: the ease of travelling and freedom of movement was associated with the easiness of transmission and spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS. The report indicates that in 1998 the number of people infected with HIV/AIDS reached 33 million worldwide, of whom 6 million persons contracted the disease in 1998 alone.

d) The absence of cultural security: Globalization is built on a cross-fertilization of cultures and the transmissions of ideas and knowledge through media channels and satellites. The report emphasized that the transfer and fusion of knowledge and cultures is performed in an inequitable way, based on the transmission of knowledge and ideas from the rich to the poor countries and in many cases the incoming ideas and cultures represent a threat to the local cultural values.

e) The absence of personal security: Manifested in the spread of organized crime, which uses state of the art technology.

f) The absence of environmental security: This danger stems from the modern inventions, which have extremely dangerous side-effects on the environment.

g) The absence of political and societal security: Globalization has added a new dimension to disputes represented in the easy transfer of arms of across borders, thereby increasing their complexity.

The 2000 United Nations Millennium Summit acknowledged that human security is still threatened by chronic problems, in addition to other newer challenges. It underscored the importance that all nations should be free from want and fear. To achieve this objective, an independent Committee for Human Security was created with the aim of promoting the concept of human security and developing appropriate mechanisms for achieving it. Moreover, a human security initiative was launched in 2003 to focus on the means of protecting and empowering all human beings.

In his 2008 study entitled[3] "Global Visions for Security and Safety: Were Women Taken into Consideration?" Dr. Bahgat El-Qorani defined human security as a concept for security,

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(3) Dr. Bahgat Korani prepared this study as a reference document in the framework of the research papers of the Second Conference of the Arab Women Organization. Abou Dhabi. 2008.

based on confronting non-military threats in their entirety and aims at focusing mainly on the protection of individuals and peoples in the first place, rather than the institutions of the state. This does not mean, however, that the concept of human security must necessarily lead to the exclusion of the traditional concept of security; because it mainly aims at expanding the scope of the threats, and hence the method of addressing them and concentrating on what befalls the individual and his/her community.

As indicated above, the concept of human security appeared in the second half of the decade of the nineties as an outcome of a set of post-cold war transformations witnessed by post-cold-war periods regarding the nature of the concept of security. Previously, the concept of security was limited to securing the borders of the national state, being the main actor in international relations, against any external military threat to its sovereignty or stability or any of its national interests. To protect these interests, the use of military force is a main tool for achieving security.

Yet, the concept of security has come into closer scrutiny by the scholars of international relations in the post-cold war period, which resulted in the emergence of other concepts, the most prominent of which is the human security. This transformation in the concept of security is considered a logical result for the change of the international scene in a qualitative way. This led to a reconsideration of all the main assumptions of the security equation in international relations. As action and reaction were no longer limited to the state due to the appearance of main international actors and non-governmental organizations other than the states, such as regional and international governmental organizations non-governmental organizations.

There was also a shift in the nature of the sources of threats to states, having far more destructive effects than the military ones. These threats are in most cases invisible e.g. the spread of international terrorism, of diseases and epidemics such as HIV/AIDS, poverty and environmental pollution, as it is impossible for any state to close its borders or use military force to prevent the spread of such types of threats, which require cooperation on the international level to be addressed. This contributed to changing the agenda of international relations, as the last decades has witnessed more focus on some issues, including the issue of environmental pollution, the virus of HIV/AIDS, terrorism and the issue of refugees and other international issues. It was no longer possible for a single state to achieve its own security singlehandedly. Therefore, this issue was one of the main causes for developing the concept of security or in other words for the humanization of the issues of security.

Consequently, we realize the strong link between human security and development, as the human development paradigm ties between the human security, equality, sustainability, growth and participation since development allows evaluating the level of security of life which people can achieve.

In 2004, the UNIFEM (now part of UN Women) issued a report through its Arab States Regional Office, on the "Progress of Arab Women: one Paradigm, 4 Areas and More than 140 Million Women", presenting for the first time a pattern for human security. The report endorsed the human security concept as the main analytical and moral reference. It clarified that human security is concerned with reducing and eliminating, whenever possible, the lack of security that affects human life.

The report indicated that human security for women in the Arab World faces considerable concessions. Women in the Arab Region are unable to practice and protect their rights freedoms, nor can they recognize or enhance their own strengths or ambitions. The report mentioned three areas of work in the Arab Region that aim at empowering women, and consequently achieve for them a certain level of social, economic or political security. These three levels include a policy level that seeks to comply with international commitments, while the second level deals with national practical plans and procedures. The third and most important level deals with achievements and challenges related to women's everyday life[4].

No doubt, the vital significance of achieving security for women in the Arab region lies mainly in effectuating the necessary social, cultural, and political change that can be translated into genuine changes in the lives of Arab women. This can actually be carried out through creating a sound political, cultural, and social environment favorable for providing a platform for women to voice their needs and express their fears, with the objective of reformulating the policies and strategies that can eventually secure the protection of their safety and security. Policies characterized with sensitivity towards the social gender and women's protection from various vulnerabilities, while creating an atmosphere of security and human dignity for them are needed.

Second: Violence against Girls and Women in Armed Conflicts, Forms and Causes

Violence against women is considered as a flagrant violation of their human rights, since it denies them the right to enjoy their fundamental liberties, including rights to life, to security, to health, to education, to shelter, and above all the right to share in public life. This has its

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(4) Original reference cited in Arabic. Report on the Progress of Arab Women. UNIFEM (now part of UN WOMEN), Arab States Regional Office, 2004.

dire social, health and economic consequences, which negatively affect the women's physical and reproductive health. Women exposed to violence show symptoms of ill mental health, and deficiency in performing their social functions. It has also been reported that women exposed to violence become more inclined to taking alcoholic drinks, hard drugs, and even suicide attempts.
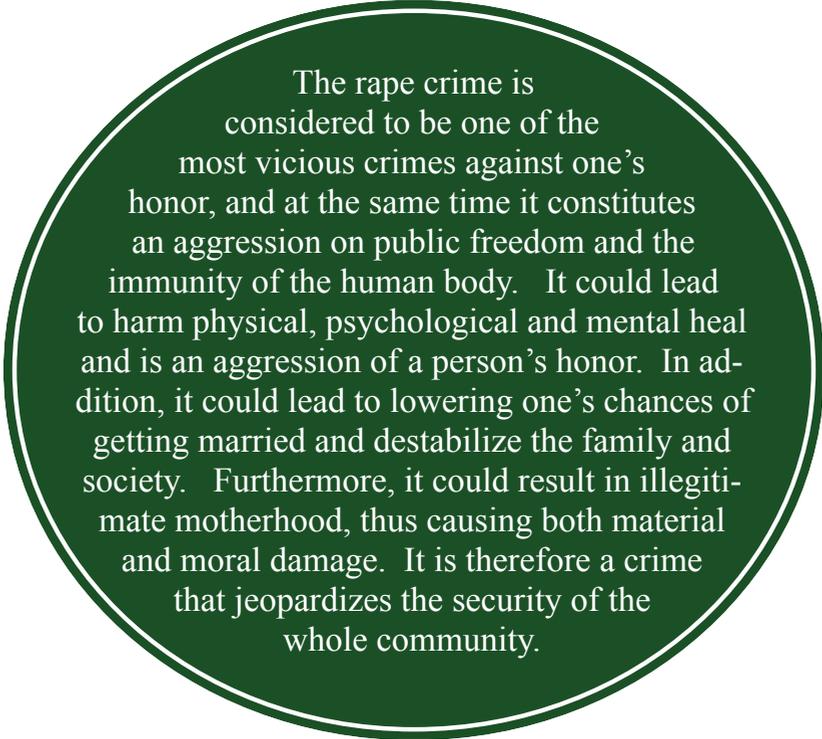
The rape crime is considered to be one of the most vicious crimes against one's honor, and at the same time it constitutes an aggression on public freedom and the immunity of the human body. It could lead to harm physical, psychological and mental heal and is an aggression of a person's honor. In addition, it could lead to lowering one's chances of getting married and destabilize the family and society. Furthermore, it could result in illegitimate motherhood, thus causing both material and moral damage. It is therefore a crime that jeopardizes the security of the whole community.

And in spite of the fact that women do not by and large participate in wars, yet they are vulnerable to various forms of violence, merely for being women. They are susceptible to human trafficking, raping, torture, exploitation, besides being forced to practice prostitution, resulting in their being infected with HIV/AIDS and compulsory pregnancy. Several studies indicate that familial violence increases during armed conflicts.

In most wars, injuries increase largely among civilians amongst ranks of armed fighters. Meanwhile, both unarmed men and women are vulnerable to violation of human rights including indiscriminate killings and tortures. Yet, women are more susceptible to specific abuses and infringements that cause them particular sufferings, since girls as well as women are violently subjected to sexual violence, mainly rape. Women have to confront more obstacles because of the shame and disgrace inflicted on those who manage to survive sexual violence. In the course of armed conflicts, both girls and women are vulnerable to raping, kidnapping and other forms of violence because of their gender, particularly during their escape for safety and their passage through the military fire lines, or through the areas hit by chaos or civil war.

Seeking a safe haven makes women extremely vulnerable, since they might be subjected to extra hazards, including sexual violence and exploitation in their attempt to seek permission to move to a safe haven. Meanwhile, women who are deported within their own country are also subjected to more difficult circumstances, since makeshift camps allocated for refugees do not provide safety or protection for girls or women. And since makeshift camps are very frequently situated in hazardous locations, adjacent to hot spots or close to disputable borders, armed attacks on such camps most often include rape and abuse of women. On the other hand, the absence of traditional behavioral norms which secure the protection of women under normal conditions, together with the sense of frustration that befall men as a result of camping life, may increase the violent acts and practices against women.

Additionally, armed conflicts increase the risk of forcing women and girls into compulsory prostitution, and in most cases the hardships facing girls and women force them to prostitute themselves in order to provide food, shelter and relative safety for their households. And though most of the disputes are internal, girls and women are transported across international borders to the camps of soldiers or rebels positioned in the lands of a neighboring country.

In many cases, rape is manipulated as an effective tool to devastate social bonds and to impact entire societies over generations to come. Regretfully, the victims of sexual violence are in most cases susceptible to stigmas, and are consequently ostracized by their spouses, parents, brothers and whole families. Many raped victims are subjected to deportation and expulsion from their homes and in many cases, women are vulnerable to murder at the hands of a family member, on the pretext that they have brought shame and disgrace to their households, regardless of the fact that they are mere victims; a regretful state of affairs that eventually sever the bonds that bolster families and societies.

In addition to the main sexual attack, there are other long-term psychological, physical, and economical impacts that come later on and affect both woman and society. And with the widespread of HIV/AIDS (Acquired immunity deficiency syndrome) and other diseases contracted through sexual intercourse, women and girls are more vulnerable to the risks of death, weakness and feebleness for

long periods after their being sexually attacked, taking into considerable account that women constitute the backbone of any society, and when they are vulnerable, the entire society will be subjected to sufferings.

The United Nations Development Fund for Women in 2007, issued a report entitled " Violence against Women: Facts and Figures", which states that most victims of the ongoing armed disputes and conflicts are civilians, since (70%) of the latest armed conflicts were non-combatants, but mostly women and children. Women's corpses were part of the fighting scenes, where fighters adopted terrorism as a military tactic, and resorted to rape, humiliation, slavery, and sexual exploitation, besides forcing women to become pregnant. The Statute of Rome, 1998, issued by the International Criminal Court, constituted the first agreement to regard violence, on the basis of sex, as a serious infringement on international law. More than half of those convicted by the International Criminal Court and other courts such as the International Criminal Court of former Yugoslavia, and the International Criminal Court of Rwanda, together with the Criminal Court of Sierra Leone, face accusations of rape and sexual manipulations. Respective reports point out that women are exposed to violence during and after international and non-international armed disputes.

> "Violence against Women and Girls has its ugly fingerprints on every continent, country and culture and immensely damages women's lives, their families and the whole society. There are many societies that prohibit this type of violence, but more often than not, it is either concealed or disregarded".
>
> Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary - General
>
> 8 March 2000

The report adds that the level of protecting and supporting women subjected to such violence during and after armed conflicts is regretfully poor, since access to social services, legal indemnities, medical care and safe havens is still limited, in spite of the efforts exerted by several local non-government organizations NGOs. Evading punishment also contributes to the aggravation of the situation, since it encourages the continuation of violence. Hence, the Security Council Resolution (1325) issued in 2000 on "Woman, Peace and Security",

calls on women's contribution to the issues of peace and security on equal footing with men. However, it has become obvious after the lapse of ten years that the issue still requires more efforts to consolidate the mechanisms for the protection of women against violence during wars, and investigate into the incidents associated with crimes of violence: reporting them, chasing their perpetrators, compensating victims, and moving towards women's contribution to the achievement of peace[5].

Economic, political and ethnic disputes are viewed as the most major causes behind the flare-up of conflicts and use of military force to take possession of the riches abundant in some countries or to change political regimes through military force, or for the sake of ethnic cleansing, which might be within the country. Such factors are regarded as the most important causes behind violence against women during armed conflicts. A report issued by the United Nations Secretary General on violence against women affirms that the application of force to resolve economic and political disputes breeds anti-woman violence, since acts of rape and torture are now practiced as one of the tools of war, and which are considered as the most despicable forms of violence against women.

Whereas international laws and regulations stress on the preservation of both man and nature, and their protection from any risk or ruin or harm, ban of all forms of humiliation, abuse or austere treatment of man, to the extent that such laws prohibited the bad treatment of the prisoners of wars (POWs) or their display on the mass media, considering such practices as contradictory to man's dignity and psychological morale, and may eventually lead to physical, intellectual or mental disorders. Nevertheless, women are still exposed to arrest, which is by and large used as a strategy to extort information from men through threatening them to rape their women and torture them under their very noses.

THIRD: REPERCUSSIONS OF WARS AND ARMED CONFLICTS ON WOMEN

Article (227) of Geneva's fourth agreement emphasized the protection of civilians in wartimes. Furthermore, articles (75 and 76) of the first appended protocol of the agreement provided for the protection of women, particularly from attacks, rape, forced prostitution or any other form of sexual harassment, since civilian women are exposed to murder or injury as a result of random military assaults, mine diffusion and lack of basic means of survival and medical care. This besides the difficulty of livelihood earning, support of families, disappearance, hostage taking, torture, captivity, compulsory conscription in the armed forces and homelessness. We cannot in any way separate the direct and indirect impacts on women during wartimes and armed disputes from the general prevalent situation, yet women's sufferings from such conflicts are quite different in many aspects including:

(5) Source: Violence Against Women- Facts and Figures – UNIFEM (now part of UN WOMEN) Report, 2007.

The cost of violence against women is exorbitant. It includes the direct costs of treatment of the female victims and their children, supporting them and putting the perpetrators to trial. These incidents costs include being out of work and having a low productivity. In addition to these costs are those incurred as a result of human pain and suffering.

In the US alone, the cost of domestic violence exceeds US$ 508 billion annually, of which US$ 401 billion go to the medical and direct health care services. This is in addition to US$ 108 billion loss in production.

Physical Impacts:

Wars generally cause harms to large numbers of civilians. Statistics released from areas of dispute usually refer to the numbers of injuries among civilians, including children and women, to demonstrate the size of catastrophe. Numbers of injuries are not normally counted on the basis of gender, since the physical impacts of wars on women include wounds, handicaps, physical deformations, deterioration of health, contracting various venereal diseases and infliction of HIV/AIDS. In addition, women are subjected to compulsory prostitution, forced pregnancy and human trafficking. Furthermore, women are exposed to humiliation and degradation at the hands of militias or occupying forces deployed within civil areas, where women are stopped for being searched and investigated. Women are also subjugated to kidnapping, trafficking, abuse, rape, captivity, and torture due to their political attitudes or activities, or in many cases to exercise pressure on men or humiliate them, or force them to confession or extort information from them. Additionally, the health of women deteriorates, particularly expectant mothers during and after baby delivery, for lack of necessary medical care. This is in addition to domestic violence and the so-called crimes of honor, as a result of the culture of violence which originates during wartimes and difficult psychological and economical conditions[6].

(6) Original Reference cited in Arabic. Source: Promoting the Rights of Women in Armed Conflicts zones. Sample studies in selected Areas in the Arab Region. ESCWA – Prepared by Zeina Al Zaatari, 2007.

Psychological repercussions:

Under the existing economic, social, and physical repercussions of wars including poverty, violence, and homicide, many regard other psychological impacts as something marginal, since what is most important is survival itself. Psychological effects are considered as individual cases.

Wars generally inflict collective sufferings and the psychological impacts of wars are many, most often invisible, and may eventually lead to serious diseases, and alcoholic or drug addiction. Much worse is that wars instill chronic fear and in some cases cause pathological phobia which needs medical treatment.

Women in areas of dispute are more susceptible to frustration, psychological disorders, and absence of the sense of safety, which is consequently reflected on their daily lives, and on their dealing with their children and others. Much worse to women is the loss of a family member, which has a profound effect on them, particularly if they are mothers. A woman's worry about kidnapped relatives and lack of information about whether they are still alive or dead, further aggravates her suffering, particularly if the matter concerns her husband, and she finds herself forced to survive in the absence of her spouse and act as father, mother and breadwinner for long years, without being actually prepared to take such a burdensome moral and materialistic responsibility.

Social impacts:

Social impacts are represented in migration or exodus within or outside the country, a state of affairs that is conducive to family breakup, separation and lack of communication among family members. Uprooting women from the natural environment in which they were brought up and moving them into another foreign environment, can eventually lead to several pathological disorders that can affect their lives and their ability to get acclimatized to their new milieu where they find themselves refugees and not citizens in their own homeland. The process of establishing new social relations in their new surroundings takes a rather long time.

In the meantime, wars impose restrictions as regards freedom of mobility, travel, and education. Enrollment in education or seeking work becomes fraught with hazards, particularly for women, who are vulnerable to kidnapping or raping. Meanwhile, wars push families to wed their daughters at a very early age, either because they are worried about them or to escape from the costs of their livings. Cases of familial violence grow during wartimes whereas victims of rape and sexual attacks are either murdered or scorned by their families and the whole community, despite the fact that they are mere victims.

Women are mostly compelled to work during wartimes to fill the gaps left by men who were either killed or went to war, adding an extra heavy burden on women besides the upbringing

of their children. Meanwhile, wars bring about a disproportionate balance between men and women, particularly when such wars last for long periods, not to mention the social corruption in cases where wars take longer times or persist for years.

Economic repercussions:

Women are by and large more influenced than men from the economic impacts of wars, since they suffer from poverty and unemployment, particularly in the case of losing their supporter or the abode that shelters them. Hence, they find themselves compelled to act as family providers, and consequently the number of female breadwinners in dispute regions grows during wartimes. Women may have lost a husband or a family supporter or they may become breadwinners themselves, and as such forced to seek various types of work to provide sustenance for their families. Also the loss of women's house as a result of any punitive policies practiced by many occupying forces, in addition to the demolition of houses, confiscation of lands and consequently the homelessness of families; are all reprisal strategies against any family or one of its members in case of resisting occupying authorities[7].

FOURTH: Arab Women, Struggle and Mechanisms for Enhancing Protection

Women in areas of wars and armed disputes are the first victims, since not only are they compelled to leave their homes and emigrate elsewhere with their children, they also endure the horrors of war. They remains targeted by armed groups and suffer from violence, rape, abduction and even torture.

Wars leave serious psychological repercussions that are hard to cure. Despite the fact that the international agreements concluded after the two world wars, acknowledged that the crimes committed against women including rape, abduction or torture are actually war crimes, yet no one has so far been tried for perpetrating crimes on the basis of gender.

In this context, the Third Millennium Summit of 2000 acknowledged that human security is still challenged by unremitting issues, in addition to other new challenges. It affirmed the necessity of all the peoples of the world to live away from fear and want. To achieve such objective, the Summit established an independent ad-hoc Committee for Human security to upgrade the concept of human security and to establish specific measures to achieve it. In 2003 the Summit launched its initiative of human security which focuses mainly on the means of securing protection and empowerment for all humans.

(7) Original Reference cited in Arabic. Source: Promoting the Rights of Women in Armed Conflicts zones. Sample studies in selected Areas in the Arab Region. ESCWA – Prepared by Zeina Al Zaatari, 2007.

The UNIFEM (now part of UN Women) issued a report on the "Progress of Arab Women" through its Arab office in 2004, in the context of addressing the concept of political security, which raised the question about the best way to put issues of women empowerment and their political participation on the agenda of countries that struggle for survival, as well as ensuring women's share in political security in achieving the struggle and its objectives.

This paradigm emphasizes the fact that freedom and security on the national level, are the springboard for achieving them on the individual level, and women are regarded as agents of change towards defending political security, not only because they suffer more, but because they aspire to safety. In this context, it is imperative for women to contribute to all fields of managing the affairs at the local and national levels, in order to be more capable of achieving freedom from fear or want. . Accordingly, we see that the pattern of political security adopted by the report of the UNIFEM (now part of UN Women) has exceeded the mere eradication of violence against women, but has extended to include social justice, and sustainable development. Hence, there will be no strong security strategies without women's participation, on the basis that building peace is a societal activity that is arranged and advocated for by the grassroots levels.

In this context, the Security Council Resolution (1325) appealed for all disputant parties to fully respect the international law that should be applicable to girls' and women's rights and secure their protection, besides taking necessary procedures, particularly as regards guaranteeing the protection of all girls and women from any form of gender based violence which includes, in its wider sense, all forms of physical, sexual, psychological, social, cultural, and economic violence, resulting from the unequal participation of both men and women in authority.

The CEDAW Convention underlines the means for the fulfillment of protection requirements, and response to violence as described in the Security Council Resolution (1325), and it also provides ways and means necessary to prevent and combat violence against women, including trafficking and sexual abuse.

The United Nations Secretary General (UNSC) declared the year 2008 the launching of a global campaign to end Violence against Women. In his message addressed during the launching of that campaign, he emphasized that violence against women is an urgent issue, as clearly evidenced in statistics, which indicate that one out of every three women may be exposed in her lifetime to beating, forced to sexual intercourse, or exposed to abuse. Also, with gender selection being carried by expecting parents, many females are denied even the right to exist. This inhuman practice is not exclusive to one specific country or culture nor is it dependent on women's age, young or old. In most cases, such crimes go unpunished and perpetrators escape the arm of law.

Violence against women during armed disputes is the most cruel and brutal form of violence, in which victims suffer from serious, unbearable situations, predominantly in the wave of wars that struck some Arab countries in the previous years, particularly in Palestine and Iraq.

And as girls and women are the most affected from the repercussions of occupation, wars and armed disputes, it is imperative for the Arab communities to put this issue on the top of their priorities.

In Palestine, for instance, reports released by human rights organizations, indicate that forms of violence against women are unparalleled there, since such violence actually represents crimes internationally banned and include deportation, exile of the families of martyrs who carried out suicidal attacks, besides demolition of their properties and .blowing up their houses.

Women are subjected to humiliating bodily search and denied the right to necessary medication, to the extent that many of them met their ends as a result of the ban imposed on medical convoys by the Israeli army. These inhuman practices naturally led to loss of life among children and grown-ups, not to mention the growing number of Palestinian female martyrs due to the barbaric Zionist raids during the previous years, and which are still being carried out in the besieged Gaza Strip>

Women are stopped at the increasing military barriers set by the Israeli army. Much worse is the lack of medical services and the increasing number of delivery cases within houses due to unfavorable medical conditions and the absence of appropriate health circumstances, this, in addition to the decreasing number of mothers receiving post-natal care.

There are still the savage detentions of women who are kept in captivity under very harsh and inhuman health conditions, in jails, in an extremely poor health and environmental, agonizing atmosphere; in addition to being subjected to other repressive and suppressive practices as thrashing, ceaseless humiliation and threats of being attacked or raped by their jailers. The same inhuman conditions are applicable to Iraqi women, who are being kidnapped, robbed and attacked due to the absence of security and stability in their country. Iraqi women are prevented from getting access to their schools or work locations lest they would be exposed to assault or abduction.

Yet, despite the non-achievement of security by and large in the Arab region and the persistence of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in addition to other regions affected by that conflict, yet, on the level of Arab countries that participated in the Beijing Conference, only a few Arab countries defined armed disputes as a national priority in the strategies for women development.

Physical violence, with its inhuman characteristics, does not harm the individual alone, or a single village ,family or group, it tears the human fabric that keeps humanity together, exposes families and societies to danger and works at destabilizing political and social stability and reduces economic development.

By reviewing the status of women in some countries still in the focus of disputes, such as the numerous countries in the Arab Region that live in a continuous state of armed conflict, with all its forms, which affect all members of society, it is found that its negative effects affect the most marginalized segments of society, namely, women and children.

FIFTH: The Current Status of Arab Women in Arab Countries in Conflicts

The Status of Palestinian Women

Armed conflict and occupation in some Arab countries represent a violation of human rights in general, and women in particular, as well as a hindrance to their development. Israeli violations are still persisting in the areas controlled by the Palestinian National Authority, including the construction of the racial segregation wall, the implementation of the unilateral separation plan, the appropriation of Palestinian territories, water sources, and the isolation of the Palestinian people. These violations reached a peak during the war waged by Israel on the Gaza strip which expanded to children, women and men, intensifying the plight of Palestinian women.

Palestinian women have actually suffered from dual persecutions: a national persecution due to the Israeli occupation, since they constitute half of the Palestinian society (49.5%), and a sexual persecution based on discrimination between both genders. Nevertheless, this did not prevent women from being a vital part of the Palestinian national movement. Women have taken advantage of the struggle against the occupation to improve their status, by founding their own societies and organizations, since the twenties of the past century. Perhaps the real starting point of the level of women's contribution to political life occurred after the creation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964, which was followed by the establishment of the General Federation of Palestinian Women.

The segregation wall represents the greatest obstacle separating regions, communities and breaking up social networks thereby affecting women and entire family members. About 57% of the wall has been constructed so far, and another 9% is still underway. The largest part of the track of the wall passes through the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

According to a report issued by the Coordination Office for Humanitarian Affairs, the Palestinian Ministry of Health faces hardships hindering the provision of the primary health care, particularly with regard to maternal and child health and to citizens living in villages at the outskirts of cities, due to Israel's military closures and road blocks. Expectant mothers cannot travel between villages and towns, particularly between the city of Jerusalem and its suburbs, nor can they get access to hospitals unless they obtain permits from the Occupation authorities, which are difficult to obtain and with a validity of no more than one or two days.

Statistics released by the Ministry of Education indicate that one of the main reasons for girls dropping out of schools is the military barriers on the roads. This reason was ranked third by females compared to seventh by males[8]. Road blocks also hinder the regularity of school attendance and students' punctuality. Students enrolled in Beirzeit University, including females, refer to road blocks as the cause of their delay, absence or withdrawal from regular classes.

Statistics also indicate that the decline of the family's economic conditions is due to Israel blocking the labor market to Palestinian manpower, in addition to the installation of road blocks and the segregation wall, a situation that resulted in separating cities from their outskirts. In 2008, unemployment rate reached as high as (22%) among women and (23%) among men[9]. The decline of the economic condition also led to an increased burden on women who are now responsible for the provision of the basic needs of the family, such as food supplies and clothing.

Meanwhile, Palestinian women are routinely exposed to harassment and abuse, terrorization and harm at the various check-points and inspection gates by the Israeli soldiers. They are subjected to humiliation and sexual violence by Israeli soldiers and settlers in front of their families. There are around (120) Palestinian women behind bars, including (11) held under administrative custody, meaning that they were detained without charges or trials. Women prisoners are exposed to criminal violence while under custody and during investigations. In addition, another (348) Palestinian children are still detained in Israeli prisons and interrogation centers, including three minor girls.

In the same context, the Information and Media Center of the Palestinian Woman has conducted a study on Palestinian women that illustrates the impact of Occupation and its racial practices against the Palestinian people in general, and on the Palestinian women, in particular. The study focused on the effects of the wall and its expansion on the health, educational, economic, social and psychological status of women.

> I was hit in my shoulder by a stone thrown by a young 13-year old settler. I tried to defend myself and catch him. But, another one came to kick and hit me. He spat on my face and threatened me.
>
> While trying to escape to my uncle's house, other settlers tried to catch me. I entered my uncle's house around which they gathered.
>
> From the day I was exposed to this attack, I don't go to school. Neither I nor my sisters venture to leave the house alone.
>
> I am fed up with the life I am living. We are deprived from the freedom of going out.
>
> Even on the day of the feast, I could not go out of the house. I feel I am confined in a prison, because the whole house is surrounded by barbed wire and we cannot go out.

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(8) Original reference cited in Arabic. Executive Summary: The phenomenon of Dropping out of Palestinian Schools, Causes, Preventive and Remedial Measures. Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Studies. August2005.

(9) http://www.palpress.ps/arabic/print.php?ChannelID=35736.

The aforementioned study is based on a survey conducted by the Central Statistics Agency, on the impact of the wall on the social and economic conditions of the families in the areas crossed by the wall. This study points to the decrease of movement among families through barriers during the period 2003 – 2006 as it was noticed that the percentage of the movement of individuals for whom the time necessary for transfer and crossing road barriers represented an obstacle, declined from (93.1%) in October, 2003 within the gatherings located behind the wall barrier to (82.9%) in August 2006, whereas this percentage declined during the same period for families located in the gatherings situated outside the wall of annexation its expansion from (80.7%) to (56.5%).

The study also revealed that the rate of separation between members of the same family or the separation of one only of its members, as a result of the building of the wall and the Israeli measures, has affected communities in areas inside and outside the wall of confinement and expansion, during the period 2003-2006. The study referred to the special memorandum of John Doghard, the Special Human Rights Rapporteur, to the General Assembly, in which he stressed that the Israeli practices on Palestinian women in the occupied territories of 1967, emphasizing that both the occupation and the wall violate women's rights in varying degrees.

Furthermore, the conditions of female prisoners raise concerns about their health and welfare. In addition, the restrictions imposed by the occupation authority on freedom of movement strongly hinder the access of Palestinian women to education and health care services, limit the opportunities available to them to achieve self - sufficiency, and restrict the number of women seeking formal education or a job, since women study and work at home. It has been proved that unemployment and poverty resulting from occupation lead to divorce and occurrence of domestic violence.

Women in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank experience a great deal of social discrimination and inequality. The Palestinian struggle against Israel has contributed to the creation of active feminist movements that constitute an essential part of the national struggle. Many women actively participated in the Intifada, in the resistance to occupation and in demonstrations against the Israeli government. Since the Oslo agreements of 1993, feminist movements extended their activities to include combating all forms of discrimination, violence and other issues affecting the lives of Palestinian women. However, the power of such feminist groups remains limited due to lack of resources and the prevailing culture resisting social change.

It has been noticed that women's participation in demonstrations, marches and struggle during the Al Aqsa uprising was actually less than during the previous one. It was also observed that women refrained from violent confrontations, because most conflicts occurred at the Israeli barriers on the borders separating Palestinians and Israelis.   However, women and feminist groups were active in providing assistance and support to the wounded Palestinians[10].

(10) Source: Palestinian Ministry of Women' Affairs.

The Status of Iraqi Women:

Under the 2005 Constitution, Iraqi women enjoy equal rights before the law without any gender discriminatory basis. The constitution grants women (the mothers) the right to pass their nationality to their children, a right that was not granted earlier. It also asserts their civil, economic, social and cultural rights. After establishing that the family constitutes the basis of the society, the constitution requires the state to secure the protection of motherhood and childhood, and prohibits all forms of violence and abuse in the family, school and society.

The 2005 constitution also guarantees all freedoms including the freedom to establish and join associations or political parties. It also asserted that no citizen shall be forced to join or remain as a member of any party, society or political body. The state also committed to enhancing and developing the role of civil society organizations and to preserve their independence in achieving their legitimate goals, through peaceful means and a law to organize their activities was passed.

Among the major achievements in favor of Iraqi women is the allocation of seats for them in parliament, representing no less than one fourth of the total number of seats in the House of Representatives (the parliament) , a right asserted by the new election law. The Iraqi parliament formed a committee entitled the Committee of Women, Family and Child" concerned with women's issues, in addition to creating a new Ministry for women.

In the context of the protection of woman from violence, a new directorate for family protection was created for the first time in Iraq, in order to guarantee settlement of familial and domestic disputes and ensure women's protection from any violation to which they may be exposed. Meanwhile, safe shelters for battered women have been established in Kurdistan. Furthermore women entered the judiciary authority and the police force.

Iraqi women played a pioneering role in facing terrorist attacks, pursuing their efforts and heading to work, like men.

On the other hand, the illiteracy rate among women between the age of 15 and 24 years increased in Iraq, reaching more than (80%), particularly after families became reluctant to send their daughters to schools due to lack of security, spread of violence verbal and sexual harassment in public places. According to a report released by the Ministry of Interior of Iraq, the number of women that were raped amounted to 873 from 2003 to 2010, whereas the number of those killed during the same period reached 3238.

Maram (not her real name), a young engineer was abducted in Baghdad in 2003. She was shopping with her mother and sister and a male relative, when she was forced by six armed men to ride in their car. They took her to a country house, outside the city, where she was repeatedly raped. After one day, she was returned to her neighborhood and thrown out of the car.

It is noteworthy that women in different parts of Iraq are exposed, on a daily basis, to various forms of violence due to the current political situation and continuous violence. It is known that with the increase of conflicts in a country, violence against women also increases. It has therefore been noted that the number of women exposed to deliberate harm within the family during the period from 2003 to 2010 reached 11167 cases.

It is evident that when gender- based violence turns into a phenomenon, it consequently leads to restricting the freedom of women's movement outside the home, their access to health services, or to pursue their studies or any active participation in public life. The abduction of women constitutes the most serious issue that cause family worries. In most cases, kidnapping is perpetrated by gangs in exchange of ransoms, kidnappers being aware that families would not hesitate to pay ransoms at whatever cost in exchange of the freedom of the victims. Sometimes political motives may be behind the abduction of women. The number of women abducted during the period 2003 to 2010 reached 1807. Most of the times, families depend upon themselves in dealing with kidnappers. In general, abduction is carried out to sell women and children victims to other gangs involved in the same crime in several parts of the world.

With the growing number of killings among civilians, the number of victims amongst women is steadily rising due to the increased use of explosive belts and car bomb attacks. Consequently, violence increased, taking new forms and most of its victims being women and children. Regretfully, women are sometimes deployed to carry out suicidal attacks; the number of women exploding themselves in terrorist operations is estimated at 37, according to the statistics released by Iraq's Ministry of Interior.

Apart from military operations, armed groups and random killings, women are still killed under the pretext of the so-called 'honor crimes', as Iraq's penal code is similar to numerous laws in some Arab countries, where punishment for killing women in defense of honor has attenuating circumstances. Hence, Article 409 of the penal code stipulates the punishment of

those incriminated with honor crime to three-year imprisonment at most. However, this law was amended in Kurdistan to pass judgments on crimes of honor, similar to those applied to other common crimes. According to the statistics of Iraq's Ministry of Interior, the number of women murdered during the period 2003-2010, under the pretext of washing away dishonor, reached as many as 238 cases.

Furthermore, with the spread of armed dispute and the escalating wave of violence in Iraq, the number of widows and wives whose husbands are missing has, as a consequence, increased. The World Relief Agency in Iraq, which prepared the report, confirmed that by the end of 2010, the number of widows reached as high as 1,593,457 representing 81.9% of the total number of married women. This regretful state has had a harsh impact on the lives of these women, creating a shift in their social and economic roles by compelling them to hard labor, enduring the impacts of emigration after the loss of the family breadwinners, and diminishing their personal safety and identity, particularly taking into account that the families supported by women amount to (7.7%) of the total number families in Iraq. Based on the report issued by Iraq's Ministry of Planning, and the Supreme Authority for Population Census in its report published in 2011, family providers include widows, divorcees, and abandoned[11].

The Status of Syrian Women in the Golan Heights:

Syrian women in the Golan Heights have been living under occupation since 1967 but no precise statistics about their status are available due to blackout campaigns imposed by the occupier [12]. The Golan's electronic website however, explains how the situation of Golan women is part of the reality of Arab women in general, and the reality of women in the Arab occupied territories, in particular. Yet, the actual situation on the grounds of the Golan Heights has been and is still characterized over the last forty years with some specific features that have naturally affected not only the role of women and their status, but extended to include all the categories of the Golan society, due to the repressive policy of blockade and closure adopted by Israel, prohibit women in Golan from communicating with their relatives geographically with their neighboring Arab countries or with the outside world since the mid-80s of last century.

Israel has prevented the inhabitants of the Golan Heights from traveling outside their lands, and enforced oppressive Israeli military laws until 1981, and did not comply with international treaties concerning civilian population under occupation.

The Golan remained under Israel's policy of blockade, oppression, and coercion. Yet, women preserved their traditional roles both in their homes and in the agricultural area, on equal footing with men, not to mention their social and national contributions until the early 80s of the

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(11) Source: Iraqi Ministry of Planning - Supreme Authority for Population Census. 2011.

(12) Source: the Syrian Authority for the Family. 2010.

last century. A new social and political awareness began to be formed during the great February Uprising of 1982, largely influenced by the social impact and the consequent results that reflected upon the reality of the feminist movement in Golan, which is still suffering, exactly like all other Golan inhabitants, from the impacts of occupation and the lines of fire between Syria and Israel. This sad state of affairs kept the Golan women separated from their family members who have being scattered in the wake of 1967 war.

> Fahd Loa'ay Shukair was born in a hospital in Damascus to parents from occupied Golan, who moved to study at the University of Damascus.
>
> Upon their return to the occupied Golan, the Occupation authorities refused the entry of the child under the pretext that he was born in Damascus, which they describe as the capital of the enemy , compelling a mere child in his early years to a forced residence with relatives.

Israel's coercive policy towards Golan population pushed the Golan women into the forefront of the popular confrontation, whether through political activities, relief and support efforts, receiving delegations and dealing with the media. A solid nucleus for the feminist political activity in the occupied Golan Heights was formed. A number of women effectively engaged in education processes, joined colleges and institutes geographically located near the Golan, and pursued their active contribution to local political establishments.

However, despite women's achievements in occupied Golan Heights through their struggle and resistance, yet they failed to realize any political gains in their human and national strife, nor could they reach any viable solution to their most pressing, agonizing, and distressing cause in the course of the past forty years, namely; the dispersion of families between two fire lines, due to Israel's rejection of all the humanitarian and legal calls and appeals submitted to the concerned authorities to permit women in Golan to pay visits to their relatives in the motherland Syria.

Israeli authorities are still following double standard policies with the Golan society, as they only allow religious clerics to visit the holy places in Syria yearly, which allows them to meet their families, while denying women the right to visit theirs. Women fall once again victims to the repressive practices of discrimination and racism. Such persistent policies have been consolidated by Israeli occupiers who have been and are still creating impediments to deny the Golan community their right to family reunions.

Any discourse about Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan must address the sufferings inflicted on women, no matter what their ages are, or marital status or economic situation, since they are exposed to all forms of direct violence that befalls them and their family members. They actually suffer from of lack of food, water and shelter, in addition to being subjected to physical violence and family separation. They are denied the right to communicate with her family members on the other side of the border lines.

Among the forms of suffering of the Syrian women is the denial of her national identity, through imposing the Israeli identity on all Golan citizens, despite their persistent rejection. This is in addition to depriving the Syrian citizens and consequently their young daughters in the occupied Golan from receiving their education in their own mother tongue and learning about their homeland by Israeli imposing syllabi on them.

Golan women's Organizations note that many of the women living in the occupied Golan are separated from their own families, and are not permitted to cross the border to their homelands, on the pretext that Israel's Interior Ministry considers them Israeli citizens forbidden from travel to an enemy country. They are only allowed to apply for travel permits on individual basis despite the fact that the procedures may take months, and the application may be after all rejected.

Furthermore, since the occupation of the Golan Heights in June, 1967, the Golan women have been subjected to interrogation and detention by Israeli police and military court. Judgments have been passed against tens of women who were fined for merely participating in national strikes, demonstrations and sit-ins held in the occupied Golan Heights in protest. Meanwhile, the Syrian woman in the Golan who visit her detained family members, is liable to repressive measures by Israeli occupying troops through search and frisk besides being delayed for long in front of the detention camps walled with glass barriers that prevent verbal communication with detainees and let visitors be content with seeing only; a repressive tactic that heightens the psychological coercion of both detainee and visitor[13].

The status of Lebanese Women:

The women in the south and Western Beqaa in Lebanon has been vulnerable to the direct repercussions of the armed dispute and ceaseless Israeli aggressions since the early 70s of the 20th century, especially since 1978, when Israel occupied some parts of Southern Lebanon and Western Beqaa. These parts remained under occupation until 2000. Lebanon's national resistance launched defensive acts were actively initiated which compelled the Israeli military to withdraw from South Lebanon and Western Beqaa with the exception of Sheba's Plantations and Kafr Shoba Hills.

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(13) Prepared by the Syrian Authority for Women. 2010.

Israel escalated its onslaughts anew during 1996, when Israeli shelling bombarded 45 villages and towns in southern Lebanon in the context of Israel's so-called "Grapes of Rage" against Lebanon, during which many residential areas were showered with shells causing devastation of buildings and killings of several families and fighters. It is noticeable that in these bloody conflicts women were more affected, for besides being subjected to compulsory emigration, they endured heavy social and psychological burdens to secure protection and care for their families.

Wars repeatedly broke out, the last of which was in 2006 when over a million Lebanese civilians, mostly women and children, emigrated and experienced enormous hardships to meet their basic requirements in their make-shift abodes. Reports and programs carried out in the wake of the war referred to the particularity of the horrific plight of women in the areas attacked by Israel.

These wars and aggressions had their impacts on the development programs in various Lebanese areas, as the state's resources had been depleted in humanitarian aid. Women were by and large the most badly affected due to the lack of a supportive reconstruction policy based on gender and as result of not taking women's needs and issues under due considerable account. When priority was given to reconstruction, or reparation of material losses, relief programs in Lebanon lacked plans and tools necessary to handle issues of psychological, or sexual, or economic violence to which the women survivors of the war were vulnerable.

Meanwhile, social and financial burdens increased on housewives whilst the aid offered failed to meet urgent family needs.

Additionally, several women suffered from captivity and detention in occupation jails just like men. To this effect, national statistics refer to various physical disabilities in the Lebanese society due to wars, leaving a social and psychological impact on the disability-stricken family, especially women who shoulder the responsibility of providing health care and psychological support for their families.

On the other hand, Lebanon witnessed since 1975, in addition to the repeated Israeli attacks, several armed disputes in the capital city and in various other parts of the country. Generally speaking, Lebanese women were victims of all forms of violence in the course of all conflicts. However, they always proved to be a vital element in the civil society through rendering social and humanitarian services while prompting Lebanon's civil society to stand steadfastly against war and violence. No doubt, wars and armed conflicts have enlarged the familial commitments incumbent on the Lebanese women. The percentage of women breadwinners in Lebanon reached about (15%).

The initiative of " Women and Citizenship" introduced by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) indicates that the Lebanese women played an active role in education and economy, but are still excluded, to a large extent, from the political institutions. And despite the fact that legislation granted women in Lebanon the right to suffrage and candidacy since 1953, yet their representation in parliament is still very limited. The highest percentage of women representation occurred in 2005, when it reached 4.6 %. As for women's contribution in government, it actually started in 2004 and in Lebanon's parliament of 2009-2013, there are only four women MPs from a total number of 128 parliamentarians. The cabinet was devoid of any woman minister in the last government formed in 2011. In the judiciary, however, there are 124 women judges from a total number of 443.

Lebanon ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1996, with reservation on the two Articles (9 and 16). The Lebanese government, in support of women, established a national authority for women's affairs in 1998 with the objective of formulating a special policy for Lebanese women and for adopting gender-sensitive national policies.

In this respect, the National Authority for Women's Affairs set a "national strategy for women" in 1997 that was later upgraded in 2011 to better address women's needs and with the aim to influence public policies. In the context of the new strategy, the Authority gives special focus to international legislations and resolutions, particularly CEDAW Agreement and Security Council Resolution 1325.

In the wake of the July 2006 War, and in the light of SC Resolution 1325 of 2000, the National Authority for Women's Affairs endorsed a specific program to support women in areas exposed to aggression and violence, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) with the purpose of empowering women to address discrimination and to work towards its eradication.

This project was carried out in areas affected by wars and other areas below poverty line. In this context, the program deals with various areas including women's participation, protection against violence, promoting women's capabilities, economic empowerment, including the provision of small loans to female heads of households.
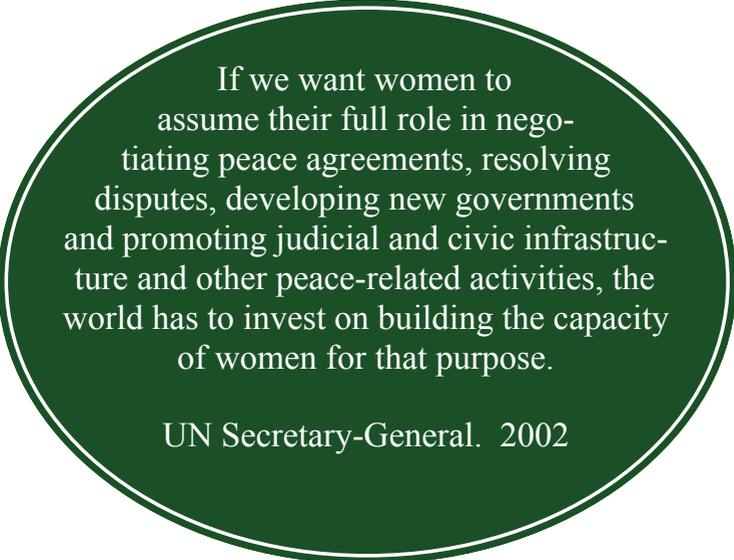
If we want women to assume their full role in negotiating peace agreements, resolving disputes, developing new governments and promoting judicial and civic infrastructure and other peace-related activities, the world has to invest on building the capacity of women for that purpose.

UN Secretary-General. 2002

In the same context, the Authority carried out a program for raising awareness among women about their legal rights and to present new images of women in public life. It also worked towards promoting women's political participation through a campaign to activate women's participation in the municipal elections which were carried out in 2010, in addition to exerting all efforts to introduce law amendments that can better achieve gender equality.

Since the ratification of the CEDAW Convention, feminist organizations in Lebanon have been playing a leading role in promoting the government to lift all its reservations CEDAW and to move forward towards its implementation. There is also a demand to conclude its Optional Protocol. Meanwhile, non-governmental organizations in Lebanon are still exerting continuous voluntary efforts to eliminate discrimination against women and to increase awareness on this vital issue.

In the meantime, non-governmental organizations were engaged in areas of rehabilitation and protection of women, assisting and protecting them. In recent years, over 3000 NGOs are active in Lebanon, some being directly concerned about women while others include women's issues within their overall activities. It is noteworthy that non-governmental organizations had a leading role throughout and after the armed disputes and wars in Lebanon. They steadily extend support to deportees through various projects. NGOs members are increasingly aware of women's needs and endeavor to create a larger scope for their participation[14].

The current Status of Women in Somalia:

Since 1991, Somalia has been suffering from disintegration, breakdown of central government and absence of the sovereignty of law. Addressing the current status of women in Somalia, the Women and Citizenship Initiative in Arab Countries shed light on the destructive repercussions of the civil war and the persistent absence of central government on Somali women, as women and children often fall victim to tribal violence during war. Reports published thereof note that the attacks that targeted women in Bidwa in December 2003, and that the destruction of the infrastructure had led to the spread of hunger, disease and poverty in Somalia.

UNICEF estimated that a million Somalis, mostly women and children, are currently vulnerable to starvation, whereas news reports point to the perpetration of rape attacks by the Ethiopian soldiers and the militia forces associated to the federal caretaker government and by armed bandit during the conflict that flared up in Mogadishu. Meanwhile, displaced women within the camps, together with other escapees from Mogadishu were exposed to rape even in taxis, particularly those belonging to minority groups. Moreover the Islamic youth extremist movements publicly flog women for wearing bras, on the pretext that it is a deceitful act that contradicts Islamic faith, to the extent that militant hardliners circle any woman whose breasts appear firm, while other masked extremists flog her in public[15].

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(14) Source: National Lebanese Authority for Women. 2010.

(15) Source: Dr.Ismail Jamali Foundation for Human Rights.

Somalia has actually turned out to be a den for women's rape on daily basis. The United Nations (UN) revealed that sexual violence against women in the Somali capital Mogadishu had reached an unparalleled level and that women are being sexually attacked at checkpoints and in the open under the very nose of pedestrians throughout the day by all the parties involved in the savage conflict in Somalia. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) stated that rape has become a tool manipulated by the government troops backed by Ethiopian troops, and has actually turned out to be a new tactic in the persistent conflict for the past 17 years, and which has been aggravated early this year. Sexual violence and rape have become part of conflicts in Mogadishu.

Women who try to escape the anguish of occupation, and who have become a part of the exodus of a million people since 2006 –are vulnerable to rape at checkpoints and road blocks controlled by the government troops and pro- government militia backed and supported by Ethiopia. Additionally wounded women and children are left to die unaided on streets. Collecting data on the number of rape cases in the capital is very difficult as very few international peacekeeping teams are deployed there. The figures gathered by several relief agencies indicate that at least 50 women were raped within one single month, whereas children are being conscripted in the militias after (80%) of schools in Mogadishu had closed their doors due to violence.

Somalia is struck by the highest rates of malnutrition in the world. The number of children suffering from acute malnutrition in the country reaches 300,000 children annually, whereas the percentage of acute malnutrition infection amounts to over (20%), and this percentage rises as high as (28%) in some areas. Experts note that when the rate of overall acute malnutrition rises to (30%), it indicates that the country is facing starvation.

More children now are living alone on the streets uncared for, many of them having lost their parents or were separated from them or fail to find them. This state of affairs turns those children as main targets for conscription in armed militias, simply because they have nowhere to go. Dire need leaves no other option for them but to enlist in militia ranks. Despite the fact that the traditional support networks which used to be responsible for children have started to break up due to huge economic and security pressures experienced by Somalia, yet some women rights organizations are still launching campaigns to protect women and children from violence[16].

The Current Status of Sudanese Women:

Sudan suffered from the war that broke out in the south against armed rebel and secession movements. This war persisted for more than fifty year, during which the country's resources had noticeably suffered. Successive governments exerted efforts to reach a comprehensive

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(16) Source: http://awfonline.net/page/sm/2004/h.htm.

and durable peace. In the first stage, efforts succeeded in stopping war activities through the Addis Ababa Accord with the (Ananias) in 1972. Nonetheless, the conflict flared up again in a more violent way in 1983 under the leadership of the National Movement for the Liberation of Sudan, led by John Garang. When the National Salvation Revolution took the reins of power in 1989, it put the achievement of peace in the south on the top of its priorities and held several conferences and negotiations rounds with the Popular Movement in many African cities.

After years of negotiations between the Salvation Government and the Popular Movement under the umbrella of the African Union and with the participation of many western countries, the two parties reached a comprehensive peace accord, which was signed in Nivasha, Nairobi, on 9th January, 2005.

The Nivasha Agreement gained a great support from all concerned political powers in both the north and the south, and accordingly the authority was divided between the federal, regional, and district levels in the best interests of both parties. Such support was may be due to the desire to end the bloody war between the south and the north. The accord covered all controversial issues between the two parties.

However, clashes renewed until it was eventually agreed to hold a referendum to select between union or secession for the population of South Sudan. This referendum was carried out in 2011 and the result was that the vast majority of the southern people choosing secession and the establishment of an independent state. The state of South Sudan was officially declared on 9th July, 2011, with the consent of the Sudanese government.

The armed disputes in the Sudan are actually considered the key factors behind the loss of lives and funds, and the main stumbling block to development.   These disputes also led to the creation of negative social phenomena such as migration, asylum and homelessness, most frequently affecting underprivileged categories of society, including women and children. Women were the most harmed segments by armed conflicts, simply because they are directly and indirectly targeted, not to mention that such conflicts result in very destructive psychological, familial, social, and economic repercussions, in addition to the sharp insufficiency of food supplies, clothing and shelter, as well as the deterioration of public services such as education, health, water and energy.

In addition to the dispute between north and south, which ended in the secession of the south and the declaration of its status as an independent state with full membership in the United Nations in July 2011, the phenomenon of violence against women in the Sudan was associated with the armed disputes that broke out in Darfur, since the population buildup there is composed of 80 tribes from Arab and non-Arab ancestries. These tribes intermingled together ethnically and culturally over successive centuries and the outcome was the existing Darfur society with its unique characteristics which were largely brought about by the amalgamation between the tribes of border areas and the population of neighboring countries.

Women in Darfur have been badly affected by migration. Statistics estimated the number of migrants in camps and other affected population at the fringes of towns and the villages which stood fast against disputes and conflicts (statistics estimate this number at 2,300,.000 people representing more than one third of Darfur total population). West Darfur was the largest area invaded by migrants, where their percentage reached as high as (56%) of the total number Darfur refugees which amounted to 965,681, (70%) of whom were women and children.

Camps were set up in several parts of the district, encircling towns and villages. The district of North Darfur ranks second in the number of migrants, which reached 450,738. The camps absorbed the largest number of them were the Abou Shouq Camp, located south of Al-Fasher town. The largest camps were Al-Salaam Camp, and the camps in Zamzam, Kasab, and Fatabrono. Meanwhile, the bigger safe cities received around 167, 596 migrants in Al-Fasher Maleet, Katam, Om Brou, and in the villages of Shanqal Tobbai, kalkal, Tawella, Serif, Dammera Al-Waha, Barakat Sareya, Serf Amra, and Al-Malha., w whereas in south Darfur, the number of migrants amounted to 386395, distributed among 19 camps.

Several efforts were exerted in various areas hit by armed disputes in the country, to protect women. Meanwhile, the government formed a high level technical committee, under the presidency of the Under Secretary of State of the Foreign Ministry, and including members from all concerned ministries, and governmental bodies. The main objective of this commission is to draw a viable plan capable of confronting violence against women in Darfur. Other regional committees emanated from the main committee to operate in collaboration with the government and the United Nations to follow up the implementation of addressing violence against Women plans. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice created a unit to handle violence against women, aiming mainly to carry out the National Plan and establish units to fight any violence targeting both women and children in those three Darfur districts[17].

SIXTH: Prisoners of war inside Israeli Prisons and Palestinian Refugees

1- The Palestinian Prisoners of war inside Israeli Prisons and the conditions of their incarcerations

The number of Palestinian prisoners of war since 1948 reached 800,000. Since 1967 and until the beginning of the first Intifada, approximately 420,000 cases of detentions were recorded, i.e. at an annual rate of 21,000 cases. This rate increased during the years of the Intifada (from 9 December 1987 to mid-1994) to 30,000 cases per year amounting to 210,000 cases, and since the beginning of the Alksa Intifada till 2011 the recorded cases of incarcerations reached 7,000 annually.

Statistics show that until mid-September 2010, the number of Palestinian in prisons or in Israeli camps reached approximately 8,500 men and women, distributed in 25 prisons or camps.

(17) Source: The Ministry of Women's Affairs.

Amongst these are 788 men and women facing life sentences, 577 men and women with over 20 years sentence, more than 1100 men and women with sentences ranging from 10-20 years in different prisons or arrest stations, such as Naqb, Mejjido, Hadarim, Nafha, Shatta, Al Damun, Hasharon, the hospital of Ramla prison, Ofar, Ashkalon, Eshel, Ahli Kidar, Rimon and Gilboa'. They are also in the arrest junctions of Hawwara, Atsion and Salem and in the interrogation centers of El Galma, Bitah Tikva, Ashkalon and El Maskoubiah.

Prisoners live in very harsh conditions, are subjected to cruel treatment by the jailers and are deprived of their most basic human rights stipulated by the international law. Reports indicate that the distribution of prisoners among prisons is as follows:

Old Prisoners

This term applies to Palestinian and Arab prisoners incarcerated in Israeli prisons before the signature of the Oslo Agreement. According to the statistics of the Palestinian Prisoner Club, their number amounts to 316 and they come from all parts of the Palestinian territory.

These prisoners of war are considered the oldest prisoners still captive in Israeli prisons; the inmates with the shortest sentence having spent around 17 years, while the oldest is still detained since 32 years.

Among these prisoners, 120 have spent more than 30 years in Israeli prisons, 13 have spent more than a quarter of a century in continuous detention, and three have spent more than 30 years in prison. These latter are Nael Saleh El Barghouti, Fikry Asfour El Barghouti and Akram Mansour. Israel refuses to release these old prisoners on the pretext that they have blood on their hands, and they were not included in any agreement signed with Israel since the Oslo Agreement.

The women prisoners of war

More than 15,000 Palestinian women and young girls are detained in Israeli prisons, without distinction by Israel between elderly women and minors under 18 years old. The largest detention operation took place during the First Intifada in 1987, where the number of women detainees reached 3,000, while during the Second Intifada their number reached nearly 900[18].

Since the second half of 2009, the number of women prisoners of war decreased to 36, detained in a number of prisons, amongst which Hasharon, Hadarim, Aldamun. Hasharon accounts for 17 prisoners, Aldamun 19 and one prisoner exiled in Tirtza. 20 of these prisoners have been sentenced, 10 are detained awaiting court charges and three detained on administrative charges, one of whom is from Gaza and is in solitary confinement and two from the 1948 Occupied Territories. Five of these prisoners have life sentences; these are Ahlam El Tamimi (16 years

(18) http://www.alzaytouna.net/arabic/?c=134&a=127530.

life sentence and six years); Kahera El Saadi (three life sentence and 30 years); Amnah Mona (life sentence), Sanaa Shehata (three life sentence and 81 years) and Douaa Jyossi (three life sentence and 32 years). Amnah Mona, from Jerusalem has spent the longest time in prison, was detained since 20 January 2001.

Children Prisoners (The Cubs)

During the first Intifadah, hundreds of children under 18 years of age were detained and exposed to various kinds of torture and gross violations of the conventions on the rights of children. During the second Intifadah, no less than 7,000 children were detained, of whom 418 child under 18 years of age are still imprisoned, and 23 of them are under 16 years of age. Most of them are the prisons of Hadarim and Tzalmon. Several of these children, who are still minors (under 18 years of age), are still kept in prison until today.

The report indicated that the soldiers of the occupation assaulted the captives in the presence of their families, as in the case of the prisoner Bassel Faysal Al Darabee', a seventeen year old who was brutally assaulted by the soldiers, before being thrown in a critical condition in a remote area, far from his village.

The thirteen year old girl, Suhad Al Eweiwy, was detained for more than seven continuous hours in one of the military occupation sites, and on Thursday 1 April the occupation soldiers arrested tens of young boys in Wadi Halwa in the village of Selwan, one of whom was the fifteen year old Yazen Siam, on the grounds of throwing stones in the direction of the settlers and the soldiers, as well as several other cases involving children[19].

Syrian Prisoners in Israeli Prisons

The number of Syrian prisoners of war and detainees from 1967 and until 2011 exceeded 700. The total number of prisoners of war and detainees in Israeli occupation jails in 2011 were 10 freedom fighters, a number of whom are serving a sentence of twenty-seven years since more than 22 years. The first woman prisoner of war was Amal Mustafa Mahmoud (42), who was captured, arrested, and sentenced to five years imprisonment. The first Syrian prisoner of war was Maged Fouad Abu Jabal, from the Occupied Golan heights, who was arrested on 4 September 1967, followed by Soliman Al Mokt, on 25 November 1967, who faced the longest judgment passed by Israel against a Syrian citizen which was 315 years, 30 of which had to be in forced labor in addition to the activist Jabal Abu Shakib who was sentenced to 208 years[20][21].

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(19) http://www.alzaytouna.net/arabic/?c=134&a=127530.

(20) http://www.jawlan.org/english/opinions/read_article.asp?category=22&source=5&link=30.

(21) http://www.un.org/unrwa/arabic/Refugees/pdf/TABLE3.PDF.

2 - Palestinian refugees:

Refugees in 1948:

During the period between 1917 to 1949, Israel occupied 78% of the land of Palestine, expelling or causing the displacement of more than 750,000 Palestinians into the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and other Arab countries such as Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and other. The crisis of the Palestinian refugees, whose number is now approaching 3.4 million, remains the most pressing problem in the Middle East issue.

Refugees in 1967:

During the 1967 war, Israel began air strikes against Palestinian cities and towns in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. The air raids pushed thousands of Palestinians to flee their villages and towns seeking refuge away from bombardment of the Israeli artillery. The war has led to the displacement of more than 350,000 Palestinians. A number of additional camps were established to absorb these large numbers of refugees.

**Number of Refugees registered with the United Nations Relief Works Agency
as at 31 December 2005**
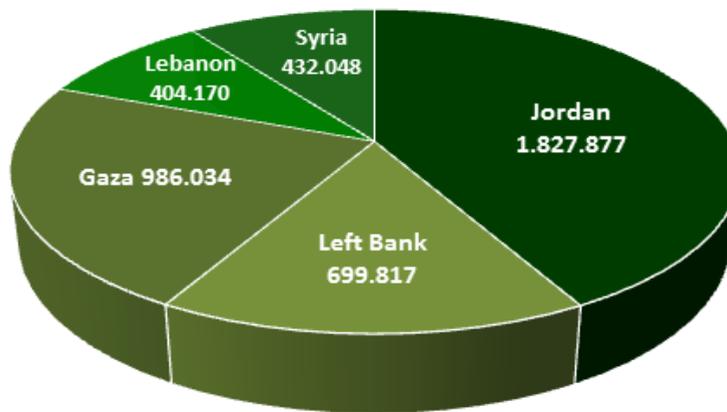
Source: UN Relief Works Agency Registration

The Palestinian refugees now:

The total number of Palestinian refugees today is almost 4.7 million people, of whom 3.4 million are registered in the records of the Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The largest number of Palestinian refugees is in Jordan, accounting for more than (40%) of the total. The refugees in the Palestinian Occupied Territories represent (38%) of the total number, while in both Lebanon and Syria, there are about (10%) of the registered refugees and the rest are distributed in neighboring countries, including Egypt.

Other refugees have emigrated to Europe, the United States of America, Canada and South America.

Refugees registered by UNRWA:

Total number of refugees registered with UNRWA in each country, as at 31 December 2005

Region	No. of persons	Births	Families
West Bank	699817	7768	153485
Gaza	986034	24321	212943
Lebanon	404170	3482	102603
Syria	432048	8014	102508
Jordan	1827877	25863	351991
Total Number	4349946	69488	923530

Part III

The Regional Strategy
Arab Women Protection: Peace and security

The Vision:

The overall objective:

Strategic areas:

First: The security and stability phase.

Second: The emergency and armed conflict phase.

Third: The post-armed conflict phase.

The Vision:

"To guarantee the right of Arab women to be protected from all forms of gender-based violence in times of war and peace, to attain their full rights without any form of discrimination, and to enhance their role in a society where justice and equality prevail".

Overall Objective:

The formulation of an Arab Strategy for Women, Peace and Security aims to develop a general Arab framework that creates a gender-sensitive environment that will stimulate other Arab parties concerned and decision-makers at the Arab regional level and at national levels in the various Arab countries to undertake concrete steps to protect women against all forms of gender-based violence to which they are exposed, particularly in wartime, occupation and armed conflicts.

Strategic areas:

Participation – Prevention – Protection in three Phases

First: The security and stability phase.

The Strategic Objective: is to create a social environment that is gender- sensitive to guarantee women's participation in all aspects of life and the protection of their rights, in accordance with the international, regional and Arab resolutions and conventions, related to ensuring the security and protection of women from all forms of violence.

Measures:

• **At the level of participation:**

1. Promoting the participation of women at all levels of decision-making and policy-making and national programs through the provision of appropriate infrastructure for the growth, development and empowerment of women in all social, economic and political areas.

2. Involving women in international, regional and national mechanisms that monitor the implementation of conventions and strategies aimed at strengthening their role and protecting them from all forms of violence.

3. Developing and implementing programs for women's empowerment at all economic, social and political levels.

4. Work on mainstreaming gender-sensitive budgeting in the public budgets, as well as in the implementation of public policies in various fields.

5. Involving women's organizations in the drafting of the legislative system, particularly in consolidating women's rights and equality with men before the law.

6. Increasing women's representation in the judiciary at all levels, including international courts.

• **At the level of prevention:**

1. Development of strategies, policies and national action plans to combat violence against women, create a culture of rejection of violence against women and of protection for their rights.

2. Ratification of international conventions related to peace and security.

3. Development of programs that promote awareness of women's rights and their effective role in building the society.

4. Working at promoting a culture of peace through the development of cultural programs for girls and boys.

5. Working at integrating   the principles of human rights and the values of equality, justice and gender approach into policies, programs and projects.

6. Finding and implementing systematic research to protect women from gender-based violence through the identification of priorities, the effects of violence and its economic cost.

7. Increasing the awareness of members of the armed, military and security forces of human rights and their mechanisms and international conventions that guarantee them.

8. The formulation of programs that enhance the concepts of citizenship, protection of the homeland, and the concepts of justice and peace.

• **The level of protection**

1. Strengthening the institutional capacity of community organizations to protect women from violence and to provide comprehensive health, social, and legal services that meet all the needs of battered women.

2. Providing qualified human personnel able to deal with cases of battered women at all health, social, educational, and legal levels.

3. Improving the access of women exposed to violence to information about the services and methods of prevention and protection from violence, as well as on referral methods in the event of cases of violence against women or girls.

4. Reviewing laws and legislations that imply forms of discrimination against women, for updating and harmonization with the human rights-based approach, and for the protection of women against all forms of violence.

5. Issuing laws that protect women in times of emergency and armed conflicts from all forms of violence and ensuring the punishment of perpetrators.

6. Strengthening coordination and partnerships between public and private sectors concerned with the protection of women in order to achieve an integrated and participatory planning approach.

Second: Emergency situations, eruption of war and armed conflicts

Strategic Objective: ensuring the provision of care and protection for women and girls in areas of struggle and armed conflicts, their repercussions and implications, especially rape, sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence.

Measures:

• At the level of participation:

1. Involving women in all levels and stages related to decision making and taking, negotiations, conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, peace-building and peace-keeping.

2. Forming Arab women alliances to follow up and monitor violations against women in countries suffering from conflicts and wars.

3. Educating and training women on management skills, leadership skills, advocacy and conflict resolution.

4. Including women in Arab and international mechanisms monitoring the implementation of international conventions on human rights and international conventions related to armed conflicts and those related to the protection of civilians, especially women and children during wars, or armed conflicts or state of emergency.

5. Involving women in the design and implementation and management of humanitarian activities for women in wartime, armed conflicts and their management.

• At the level of prevention:

1. Raising the awareness of those involved in humanitarian efforts and those responsible for peacekeeping about humanitarian laws, human rights and gender equality

2. Launching health and legal awareness campaigns for women in conditions of war and conflict, and in refugees' camps.

3. Providing information to women in armed conflicts on services available and on ways of accessing these services.

4. Increasing awareness of the nature of sexual and psychological violence during armed conflicts, its health, psychological, economic dimensions and its impact on women by spreading a culture of protection.

5. Increasing the awareness of local communities hosting refugees on human rights in general, as well as about the special needs and concerns of refugees and displaced women.

6. Training of personnel working in legal, medical and social fields, police, military forces and

immigration personnel through programs of women's rights in particular and human rights in general, and on methods to protect women from violations of their rights and to ensure their equitable treatment.

7. Preparing periodic monitoring reports on the status of women in conflict and war zones, and linking these with intervention and relief programs at Arab and international levels.

•At the level of protection:

1. Providing protection, health, legal and psychological assistance to displaced women, women detainees and refugees and those in need of protection.

2. Enacting and implementing legislation, reinforcing the legal and judicial systems and providing the necessary resources to prosecute perpetrators of sexual violence and violence against women in general.

3. Providing food, shelter, education, social and health services for women in conflict and women refugees.

4. Providing specific mechanisms to protect groups most exposed to violence, such as unaccompanied children or those who have lost contact with their families, and individuals with special needs.

5. Developing mechanisms and frameworks for the prevention and the punishment of trafficking in women, assaulting or forcing them into prostitution or performing any humiliating or harmful acts, or exploiting them as sex subject or symbol in times of war and armed conflicts.

6. Developing procedures manuals for all employees and service providers to ensure the specificity of all sectors of interventions in all support, protection and security operations at times of armed conflict.

7. Establishing legal frameworks that guarantee the process of reunification of family members separated as a result of conflicts and wars through providing protection to displaced women and children and through the search for missing persons.

8. Taking all necessary steps and procedures to ensure swift and effective investigations by independent bodies to review complaints by women about all forms of violence as well as procedures to ensure protection of victims and witnesses from intimidation and retaliation.

9. Appointing a Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States to be entrusted with the task of following -up procedures that ensure the protection of women and children from all forms of violence, especially in wars or armed conflicts zones in the Arab region.

THIRD: POST ARMED CONFLICTS PHASE

Strategic Objective: to ensure the effective participation of women in all efforts of conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, and in the formulation of programs, policies and legislation that ensure the building of a gender sensitive society.

Measures:

• At the level of Participation:

1. Involving women in all implementation mechanisms of peace agreements and putting them into practice, support of regional peace initiatives and operations for conflict resolution at the Arab level.

2. Involving women in peacekeeping and peace-building efforts at the Arab, regional and international levels.

3. Ensuring the full and effective participation of youth, women and other vulnerable populations, including refugees and internally displaced persons, in developing plans for comprehensive national actions to address sexual violence and violence against women.

4. Involving women in all stages of planning for and of reconstruction at national levels.

• At the level of prevention:

1. Developing and disseminating research on the physical, psychological, social and economic consequences of armed conflicts on women.

2. Raising awareness among refugee women of their legal rights in general and the right of non-refoulement or denial of return to their country or place of residence.

3. Increasing awareness of the security forces on human rights in general and women's rights in particular.

• At the level of protection:

1. Addressing all forms of violence against women in the context of planning, funding for humanitarian assistance, peace-building, development, and political dialogue, and linking it to relief and development funding to ensure the continuity of preventing and combating sexual violence.

2. Strengthening regional cooperation mechanisms among governments, donors, international organizations and the civil society to address sexual violence and violence against women, with special focus on areas of high tension.

3. Implementing programs of social and economic empowerment for women refugees and for victims of violence, and providing them with life skills and abilities.

4. Providing access to full justice to survivors of sexual violence or torture as well as legal assistance to them.

5. Implementation of international laws relating to the protection of women in times of conflicts and wars, punish and bring to trial perpetrators of all forms of assault on women.

6. Preparing and developing national gender-sensitive policies and programs that are sensitive to the needs of women and their rights and that strengthen their role in society building.

7. Developing and implementing programs for women empowerment at all levels: social, economic and political.

Part IV   What happens beyond the Strategy

First: Preparation of an Arab Plan of Action.

Second: Urging Arab countries to prepare national

           strategies and action plans.

Third: Cooperation Mechanisms at the Arab level.

Fourth: Implementations phases of the strategic areas

First: Preparation of an Arab Plan of Action

Objective:

To translate the Arab strategy into implementable programs and activities.

Measures:

The formulation of an action plan on women, peace and security and its launching represent the first step towards putting regional and international decisions into practice. The plan includes programs, projects and activities developed in the context of the strategic goals and for the purpose of achieving them. The action plans encourage the allocation of resources, budgets monitoring and mobilization of support at local, regional and international levels.

Action plans can also shed light on the issue of women and contribute to the development of benchmarks for national, regional and international efforts in the field of their protection, while dialogue and practice on the ground can contribute to putting the cause of women in dispute zones and in conflicts at the forefront of negotiations. The Plan of Action is neither a final nor a comprehensive document. It can be changed, modified, or improved. It is also necessary to provide regular reports on the progress achieved.

Why develop an action plan for women peace and security?

Arab states should consider the development of strategies and national action plans on the implementation of many of the relevant international resolutions and security related to women and peace. Although there are many initiatives around the world on women, peace and security issues, such as Security Council Resolution No. 1325, which are not implemented in a sustainable manner, the formulation of an Action Plan could provide the necessary platform for consultations with the concerned parties leading to the formulation of a strategic and more focused action plan that contributes to increased inclusiveness, coordination, awareness, ownership and accountability.

It should be noted that, although there are many initiatives and resolutions in all parts of the world related to women, peace and security, there is a need for concerted regional and international efforts to implement these decisions and initiatives, in addition to ensuring the full and equal participation of women in these operations and the integration of gender equality issues in these processes. The Arab Plan of Action will in turn help develop national action plans at the level of Arab States while the programs included in the Arab Plan of Action can directly contribute to the local efforts undertaken in preparation of the individual national action plan through technical support and advice from the Arab side.

• The Advantages of Developing an Action Plan

Impact		Results
Participation		
Including women in decision-making operations related to prevention and management of conflicts resolution.		• Increased and effective representation of women in the United Nations, and other international organizations concerned with peace and security. • Increased and effective participation of women in official and unofficial peace negotiations and in peace building operations. • Increased and effective representation and participation of women in the national and local governments, as a citizen, officially elected and empowered to take decisions. • Increasing participation of women and women rights organizations in the activities aiming at preventing, managing, resolving and responding to conflicts or violations of women's and girls' rights.
Prevention		
Prevention from all forms of physical violence against women and girls, including gender-based sexual violence.		• Creating workable systems for monitoring and reporting violations of women's rights during conflicts, fighting and peace negotiations after end of conflicts. • Responsiveness and responsibility of representatives from international and national organizations and others affiliated bodies from the security authorities to women's rights violations, in accordance with international standards. • Inclusion of the legislations aiming at addressing women's special needs and issues in the early warning systems and mechanisms of conflict prevention and monitoring their implementation.

Impact		Results
Protection		
Protecting the health, physical and economic safety of women and respecting their human rights.		• Protecting the political, economic, social and cultural rights of women and girls in accordance with international legislations and standards. • Structural and mechanisms based on promoting security and protection of women from bodily harm. • Access of women and girls exposed to danger or victims of gender-based bodily violence to care and health services. • Ensuring justice to women exposed to violations and/or abuse.
Assistance and Recovery		
Meeting the special needs of women in conflict and post conflict situations.		• Targeting the needs of women and girls, especially vulnerable groups such as displaced women and victims of gender-based sexual violence, former women combatants, refugees and returnees through rescue programs of early recovery and economic revival. • Preparation of responses to the issues of gender-based victims by the post conflict institutions concerned with national dialogue operations, transitional justice and improved governance. • Addressing integration programs and specific security and other issues are considered women security needs.

The preparation of a plan of action that includes strategic areas will provide room for situation analysis, consultations with stakeholders and initiation of strategic actions that are more specific and therefore having a better chance of success. The importance of preparing a plan of action is the following:

1. Preparation of a comprehensive program that can be implemented: taking into account the identified strategic priorities and defining the initiatives necessary for implementation.

2. Coordination: among all those working on women, peace and security issues. A joint working mechanism at the policy level should be established that shows and prevents duplication and increases the effectiveness of the use of available resources.

3. Raising awareness and education through the process of the development of the plan: If the process is well defined and well designed, it will contribute to the awareness and capacity building process, and can also open up room for information sharing, organizing seminars / training courses on women peace and security issues to promote the understanding and commitment to gender equality.

4. Ownership: Participation in the preparation of the plan underscores better understanding of women and peace and security issues, and the importance of implementing relevant regional and international resolutions, that contribute to an increased sense of ownership and responsibility at the time of the implementation of the action plan.

5. Accountability: With the increasing awareness comes a sense of institutional ownership and of personal accountability for the implementation of the Action Plan, whereby the responsible institutions can hold public meetings to discuss implementation mechanisms and identify the main institutions responsible for the implementation of each initiative while providing a clear timetable for implementation.

6. Monitoring and evaluation: the action plan follows up the monitoring and evaluation of the various parties implementing the plan, through the development of the required criteria and indicators. It also includes taking appropriate measures, such as providing annual reports through the focal points responsible for monitoring the implementation, follow-up and evaluation. The Action Plan is an effective monitoring mechanism that allows following-up and analyzing the successful implementation of initiatives, in addition to analyzing of the unsuccessful initiatives with a view to improving them.

B – Necessary preparatory steps for the development of a national action plan:

The preparation of a national action plan for women, peace and security is based on a number of factors that include the international and regional framework and the national situation in each country, in addition to providing their sources. There is no model for an action plan that can be implemented by all states. It is the outcome of national efforts in each country that determine its priorities, the action plan, the projects' activities and sub-activities of the work program:

1. Building political commitment and raising awareness: building a political will, working on political commitment and raising awareness about women, peace and security issues, are critical to the future success of the implementation of the Action Plan. This is in addition to awareness campaigns through media channels, publications, workshops, discussion groups and other effective methods and initiatives that increase awareness and support for women, peace and security issues. This process is ongoing throughout and beyond the development of the Action Plan as it allows the responsible officials to undertake its monitoring and evaluation in the light of the strategic goals.

2. Organizational Preparedness: Once the political commitment is obtained, national institutions could be invited to begin initiating efforts leading to the development of an action plan for women, peace and security. One of the most important steps to be taken concerning the issue of women, peace and security in all parts of the world is building a network among the various organizations at official and civil levels. This cooperation includes non-governmental organizations working in the field of gender, and those working on the issue of women and peace or in developmental issues. National committees, academia, and other civil society organizations can also contribute. Work starts upon the initiative of the Government to establish

a joint working group among ministries and concerned civil society institutions in order to launch the process of developing the Action Plan.

3. Describing the situation of women: it is necessary that an analysis of the situation of women in the state be included in the national action plan, indicating strengths and weaknesses in their status and their relationships with regard peace and security. The plan must also identify the major challenges and difficulties faced by women and those that might hinder the implementation of programs and projects.

4. Evaluation: Evaluation is an essential step in the context of an action plan for women, peace and security, that includes an assessment of the status of women in the state concerned and in all areas. It also includes a review of the relevant legal regional and international instruments. Evaluation allows the identification of priority areas and urgent initiatives.

5. Planning meetings or workshops: Participation is necessary in the context of the development of the action plan. It is designed to meet the needs and interests of all stakeholders and also contribute in building a spirit of collective responsibility, teamwork and accountability. Separate consultation workshops could be held for each department or sector to putting down their respective priorities that are then incorporated into the plan of action at the national scale of the state concerned.

C- Drafting the Action Plan:

The development of the plan depends on several factors that vary from one country to the other, depending on the circumstances and available resources. However, there are certain basic themes that are often included in an action plan. These are:

1. The Introduction of the plan: sets the general background and context of the Action Plan.

2. References and justification: are necessary to give the action plan a wide legitimacy and justify the great efforts that will be jointly undertaken in the preparation of the plan.

3. Setting long term and short term goals: goals can be divided as direct and short-term goals and general and long-term goals.

4. Guaranteeing Resources: the action plan identifies human and material resources needed to implement its programs.

5. Time-Frame: It is essential that the action plan include a timeframe for its implementation.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation: The action plan defines monitoring and evaluation mechanisms related to its implementation. These mechanisms are divided into self-assessments and external evaluations. Self-assessment in turn consists of a phased and a general assessment, while the external evaluation could be governmental, i.e. undertaken by national bodies designated by the government, or by international or regional experts assigned for this purpose by the national authorities concerned by women, peace and security issues.

A Plan of Action:

A Plan of action is a written document describing the efforts and resources necessary to implement the goal within a specified period of time. The document also identifies who is responsible for the implementation of each activity. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the interpretation of the process of writing the action plan as a translation of the policies and strategies for viable mechanisms for measurement and accountability procedures. Action plans includes identification of objectives and results, strategies, responsibilities and timelines.

UNESCO - Triple Strategic Planning 2005

The League of Arab States institutions can contribute to the evaluation efforts and they also can provide the Arab countries that wish to do so with technical support and expertise in the preparation of the national action plan phase or in a preliminary study related to the strengths and weaknesses, challenges and difficulties faced by women in every Arab country, especially in times of war and occupation or in conditions of armed conflict.

Second: Urging Arab countries to prepare strategies and action plans at the national level particularly in times of war, occupation or in armed conflicts situations:

Objective:

Translating relevant international and regional resolutions into national strategies and action plans to address gender- based violence in conflict zones.

Actions:

1. Encouraging Arab countries to develop strategies and action plans for women, peace and security.

2. Encouraging States to develop national action plans to address sexual violence and violence against women with specific integrated programs to coordinate the initiatives of the various sectors, including sexual and reproductive health and prevention of HIV / AIDS prevention, treatment and care.

3. Developing a comprehensive approach and complementary tools to assess the nature and scope of sexual violence and violence against women in conflict-affected countries, and determining the consequent costs and budgets.

4. Encouraging Arab states to submit periodic reports on the extent of their commitment to the implementation of international conventions on the protection of women and their rights; adopting national reports as reference in the preparation of plans of action for the protection of women against violence.

Third: Cooperation Mechanisms at the Arab Level

Objective:

To develop cooperation mechanisms at the Arab level in the League of Arab States in all frameworks, humanitarian, peace-building and development programs in conflict-affected countries and in times of peace.

Actions:

1. Strengthening the frameworks of accountability and the systematic observation and monitoring of the implementation of the relevant resolutions of Security Council and League of Arab States.

2. Implementation of the regulations of United Nations and the League of Arab States pertaining to behavioral adjustment and non-clemency for sexual assaults and sexual exploitation.

3. Integration of actions aimed at addressing sexual violence and prevention of all forms of violence against women, within the framework of humanitarian assistance programs included in the guidelines for addressing violence against women, within the humanitarian activities of the Council of Arab Peace and Security of the League of Arab States.

4. Intensification of the efforts of the international, regional and national mechanisms in order to ensure the penalization of perpetrators of violence through the enactment of appropriate legislation, implementation and promotion of legal and national judicial systems by providing the necessary resources for the prosecution of perpetrators of sexual violence and violence against women.

5. Establishing a Criminal Court at the Arab level, affiliated to the Arab League, similar to the International Criminal Court.

6. Designation / appointment of women Peace envoys (ambassadors) by the League of Arab States.

7. Training program to enable governmental mechanisms concerned with women's issues to develop national action plans based on relevant international and regional reference, including the regional strategy, and UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1889.

8. Establishment of an observatory for "Arab Women in Armed Conflicts," affiliated to the League of Arab States and the creation of a website for this purpose;   as well as identifying a liaison officer in each of the armed conflict countries to update the observatory / website.

9. Creating a field monitoring team at the Arab level to follow up the situation of women in conflict and war zones, and preparing a report about it.

10. Preparing a media plan targeting the West about the status of Arab women in wars and armed conflicts.

11. Strengthening partnership and networking among relevant organizations at Arab, regional and international levels.

12. The establishment of an Arab Fund to help and support families affected by war and armed conflict.

13. The establishment of an Arab relief and crisis management Agency and coordinating efforts to support those affected by wars and conflicts, especially children and women.

14. Forming a team of lawyers to file suits against authorities and international powers responsible for dislodging, asylum and forced displacement.

Fourth: the phases of implementation of the strategic areas

Post Conflict	During Conflict	Pre-Conflict	Strategic Areas
Participation			
1. The involvement of women in all mechanisms of application and implementation of peace agreements and in supporting regional peace initiatives and conflict resolution at the Arab level. 2. The involvement of women in peacekeeping efforts and peace-building at the Arab, regional and international levels. 3. Ensuring the full and effective participation of youth, women and other most exposed populations, including refugees and internally displaced people, in the development of comprehensive national plans of action to address violence and sexual violence against women. 4. The involvement of women in all stages of reconstruction and planning at national levels.	1. The involvement of women in all levels and phases of decision-making related to negotiations, conflict resolution, peace-building and peace-keeping. 2. Forming Arab women alliances to follow-up and monitor violations against women in countries suffering from conflicts and wars. 3. Training and education of women in leadership skills, leadership, advocacy and conflict resolution. 4. The involvement of women in Arab and international mechanisms that monitor the implementation of international human rights conventions and international conventions on registered conflicts, as well as those relating to the protection of civilians, especially women and children during wars, armed conflicts or states of emergency. 5. The involvement of women in the design and management of humanitarian activities and actions for women in conditions of war and in armed conflicts.	• Promote the participation of women at all levels of decision-making and policy formulation of national programs through the provision of the appropriate infrastructure for the advancement, development and empowerment of women in all social, economic and political aspects. • The involvement of women in international regional and national mechanisms that monitor the national implementation of conventions and strategies aimed at strengthening the role and protection of women from all forms of violence. • Development and implementation of women's empowerment programs at all economic, social and political levels. • Work on mainstreaming gender-sensitive budgeting in public budgets, and in the implementation of public policies in various fields. • The involvement of women's organizations in the drafting of the legislative system in particular to strengthen women's rights and equality before the law. • Increase women's representation in all levels of the judiciary, including international courts.	

Post Conflict	During Conflict	Pre-Conflict	Strategic Areas
Prevention			
1. Developing and disseminating research on the physical, psychological, social and economic consequences of armed conflict on women. 2. Raising awareness among refugee women of their legal rights in general, their right to non-refoulement or the refusal of return to her country or place of residence. 3. Increasing the awareness of the security forces of human rights in general and women's rights in particular.	1. Raising the awareness of humanitarian workers and peace keepers of humanitarian, human rights and equality laws. 2. Health and legal awareness campaigns for women in war and conflict conditions and in refugee camps. 3. Providing information to women in conflict areas on the services provided and the ways to access these. 4. Increasing awareness of the nature of sexual and psychological violence, and their health, psychological, economic dimensions and impact on women during armed conflicts, through the dissemination of a culture of protection. 5. Increase the awareness of local communities hosting refugees on human rights in general and about the special needs and concerns of refugee and displaced women. 6. Training of personnel working in legal, medical, social, police, military and immigration areas through the programs of women's rights in particular and human rights in general in order to protect women from violations of their rights and to ensure fairness. 7. Prepare periodic monitoring reports on the status of women in conflict and war zones, linking these to relief and intervention programs at Arab and international levels.	1. Developing strategies, policies and national action plans to combat violence against women, and entrenching the culture of non-violence and protection of women's rights. 2. Ratification of international conventions related to peace and security 3. Development of programs that promote awareness of women's rights and their effective role in building of society. 4. Work at promoting a culture of peace through educational programs for girls and boys. 5. Work at integrating the principles of human rights and the values of equality, justice and gender sensitive approach in policies, programs and projects. 6. Seeking and implementing systematic research on the protection of women from gender-based violence through the identification of priorities and the impact and economic cost of violence 7. Increasing the awareness of army members and other military and security forces on human rights and the mechanisms and agreements that guarantee these. 8. The formulation of programs that enhance the concepts of citizenship, protection of the homeland and of justice and peace.	

Post Conflict	During Conflict	Pre-Conflict	Strategic Areas
Protection			
1. Addressing all forms of violence against women within the frameworks of planning and budgeting for humanitarian assistance, peace-building, development, and political dialogue, and linking them to relief and development funding to ensure the sustainability for addressing and preventing sexual violence. 2. Strengthening the mechanisms of regional cooperation among governments, donors, international organizations and civil society to address sexual violence and violence against women, with special attention to areas of high tension. 3. Implementation of programs of social and economic empowerment for women refugees and victims of violence and providing them with life skills and abilities. 4. Providing survivors of sexual violence and torture with full access to justice and legal assistance.	1. Providing protection and health, legal and psychological assistance to homeless women and women in detention centers, refugees and those who are in need of protection. 2. Enacting and implementing legislation, promoting legal and judicial systems and providing the necessary resources to prosecute perpetrators of sexual violence and violence against women in general. 3. Providing food, shelter, education, social and health services for women in conflicts and women refugees. 4. Ensuring that specific mechanisms are in place to protect those most vulnerable to violence, such as children unaccompanied by their families or those who have lost contact with their families and individuals with special needs. 5. Developing mechanisms and frameworks for the prevention and punishment of trafficking in women, assaulting or forcing them to prostitution, harming or degrading work or practicing any form of exploiting them as a sex subject or symbol in times of war and armed conflicts	1. Strengthening the institutional capacity of the social institutions to protect women from violence and to provide health, social and legal services, to comprehensively cover all the needs of battered women. 2. Providing qualified human resources to deal at all levels of health, social, educational, and legal aspects with cases of battered women. 3. Improving ways for women exposed to violence to access information about services, methods of prevention and protection from violence, as well as on referral methods in cases of violence against women or girls. 4. Reviewing and updating laws and legislations that discriminate against women to comply with the human rights-based approach and the protection of women from all forms of violence. 5. Enacting laws that protect women in times of emergency and in armed conflicts from all forms of violence and ensuring punishment of the perpetrators.	

Post Conflict	During Conflict	Pre-Conflict	Strategic Areas
Protection			
5. Implementation of international legislations relating to the protection of women in times of conflicts and wars, and bring to trial and punish perpetrators of all forms of attacks on women. 6. Preparation and development of policies and programs and national programs, gender-sensitive to the needs and rights of women rights and to strengthening their role in community building. 7. Preparation and implementation of women's empowerment programs at all social, economic and political levels.	6. Developing procedure manuals for all personnel and service providers in the areas of support, protection and security in situations of armed conflict to ensure the privacy of each sector of intervention. 7. Establishing legal frameworks to ensure the process of reunification of family members separated as a result of conflicts and wars through the provision of protection to displaced women and children and the search for missing persons. 8. Taking all steps and procedures necessary to ensure swift and effective investigations by independent bodies to look into the complaints of women about all forms of violence and to ensure protection measures for victims and witnesses against intimidation and retaliation.	6. Strengthening coordination and partnership between public and private sectors concerned with the protection of women in order to achieve an integrated planning based on a participatory approach.	

Annex:
Successful models and effort
exerted At the regional and
international level

On the regional level

1. The Carnegie center for the Middle East (Beirut office)

The Carnegie Center for the Middle East was established by the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace in 2006. It is a research center comprising a group of experts in public policy matters, based in Beirut.

The Center is concerned with challenges facing development and economic and social reform in the Middle East and the Arab world. It comprises a group of eminent researchers in the region who conduct profound researches on vital issue facing countries and peoples of the area.

The Center endeavors to shed light on the process of political change in the Arab region and the Middle East in parallel with current events as well as raising the understanding about existing complex economic and security issues that affect the present and the future of this part of the world.

The Center focuses on conducting research based on practical experience and founded on observation and examination, and related to some of the main political, social and economic issues. Studies target a wide public including policy makers, professionals and media people in the Arab world and the Middle East,   as well as Europe, the United States, Russia and China, in addition to civil society organizations and citizens of Middle East countries who can benefit from the Center's work.

The center was established in the autumn of 2006 by an initiative from the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace. It is based in Washington D.C .this step was taken within the framework of a new approach aiming at elevating the institution to become a multinational research center and widening its scope on the international level.

The decision to establish the Middle East Center followed the outstanding success of the Carnegie Center in Moscow established in 1994, and coincided with new initiatives launched by the Carnegie Foundation in Beijing and Brussels.

The Carnegie Center for the Middle East is part of the renowned Middle East program. It follows the approach and standers   developed, over the past few years, by the program's researchers. There is no doubt that the work of the Foundation   has gained its significance through the ongoing cooperation, within the context of certain projects, between researchers in Carnegie centers in Washington, Moscow and Beijing.

In addition to the cooperation with a large number of research centers in the Middle East and Europe which provides additional significance to the work of the center. This high level approach provides policy-makers, professionals and activists all over the world, with analytical studies and recommendations based on profound information derived from reliable sources in the region and enhances the potential to address effectively its pivotal challenges.

In the meantime the Carnegie Foundation is currently working on establishing a consultative council for the Middle East Center comprising prominent national and international figures from different countries of the region, as well as activists in political, business and civil society fields .The council will focus on providing consultation and support to the Center[1].

2. Training institute on peace processes

A training institute on peace processes was established in Jordan in1996 to reflect the Jordanian vision about peace and security on the regional and international levels. The institute offers a training program targeted to troops participating in the peace processes from Jordan and sister and friendly countries to enable them to work in all areas of peace operations, in addition to training military observers on operations for safeguarding election processes and maintaining order in the world conflict and dispute zones.   It also conducted studies and research on peace operations and updating it according to the turn of events, giving lectures to different armed forces units, formations and schools about peace operations and articles of international humanitarian law.

The institute organizes courses in the area of promoting institutional peace operations, human assistance, cultural awareness, and women in peace operations, disarmament, combating terrorism, civil and military cooperation, border management and security, protection of UN personnel in armed conflict zones[2].

3. Generations for Peace Initiative:

It is a global initiative launched in 2007 by Price Faisal Ben Al Hussein, member of the International Olympic Committee. The Generations For Peace Initiative provide training for youth leaders from all parts of the world on the use of sports to bring people together in communities suffering from conflict. So far, nearly 350 participants "graduates" from 31 countries have participated in the ten day training camps, the program has so far reached more than 45,000 children.

The initiative's training program system focuses on peace building, by putting emphasis on the need to build tolerance and understanding so that youth in societies suffering from conflicts can find common grounds of understanding instead of division and difference. The initiative" Generations For Peace" has been successful in rallying individuals with similar beliefs and partners who believe that being part of the group is more valuable than having differences and that planting the seeds of peace is the responsibility of every individual.

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(1) Source: website of the Carnegie Center for the Middle East: http://www.carnegie-mec.org.

(2) http://www.potc.mil.jo/arabic/aboutus/all-ar.shtm.

The initiative teaches the trainees methods of teaching other trainers, who in turn are able to design and implement, children sports programs through workshops, lectures, presentations and debates assigning roles and giving   lectures on sports activities, and other topics including, leadership, teamwork, conducting dialogue, tolerance, respect, anger management, conflict transformation, peace education, working with children and young people, self-confidence, sports, religion and politics. Pioneers of the initiative" Generations For Peace" are expected to train other children annually, and to be committed to peace and to advocate the initiative" generations For Peace" and to support other peace pioneers.

On the international level

1. Peace building Support Office

The "Peace building Support Office" was established to assist and support the Peace building Commission and to manage the Peace building Fund as well as to serve the Secretary-General in coordinating the efforts of the United Nations agencies in peace building. The office is headed by the Assistant Secretary General for supporting peace building operations .It includes three sections one for promoting the work of the " Peace building Commission" and another for policy making and a section for funding peace building operations. The office assists also in sustaining peace in countries affected by conflicts through providing international support to the national activities for building peace.

This includes providing support to the Peace building Commission and mobilizing on behalf of the Secretary General the efforts of the UN system, as well as participating with external parties in developing strategies for peace-building and pooling resources, and enhancing international coordination. This support is decisively dependent on the mission of the office which is a center of knowledge for lessons learned and best practices of peace-building.

2. The Carnegie Foundation for International Peace

The Foundation is a private non-profit organization established in 1910, dedicated to promoting cooperation between nations and advocating the effective commitment of the United States on the international scene, the Foundation has five offices around the world one of them is in Beirut. The Carnegie Foundation for International Peace seeks to achieve practical results through research, publications and meetings, and sometimes the creation of new institutions and international networks. The Foundation researchers formulate new policy approaches reflecting their interest in various geographic regions and the relations between governments, business, international organizations and civil society with a focus on economic, political and technological forces that drive global change[3].

(3) http://www.carnegieendowment.org.

3. The Institute for Peace Studies:

Based in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina was opened in 15 February 2006. The Institute is the academic tributary of the International Movement for Peace and Security. It aims at helping the Movement promote its activities through forging many partnerships with institutes and specialized institutions to conduct research, studies and training programs in all areas and issues related to peace, In addition to its role in training the young generation and providing them with necessary skills for integration to enable them to participate in reconciliation processes and the establishment of lasting peace, as well as providing a wider space for the roles that women can play in peace-building operations[4].

4. The One Thousand Women for Nobel Peace Prize Association:

The 1000 Women for Nobel Peace Prize Association is an international association chaired by Dr. "Ruth Gaby", a member of the European Parliament, as well as a member of the Swiss Parliament. The Association aims to achieve international recognition of efforts made by women, all over the world, in the service of their societies in all walks of life for the achievement of justice, equality and peace in their communities with complete impartiality and with no interest for political or personal gains.

The Association had nominated in 2005 "1000 women from different parts of the world for the Nobel Peace Prize. Nominations were based on the criteria developed by the supervising body.2000 women from all over the word were nominated for the award , but the Authority responsible for the project decided to choose only (1000) of them. Nominations were presented to the international Committee concerned with examining the nominations for the Nobel Peace Prize for Peace and the Committee adopted the nomination of (1000) women.

Out of the list of 1000 nominations, 53 women represented the Arab world. Topping the list was Sudan with 16 nominees including one women organization concerned with peace issues, followed by 8 Palestinian nominees and four nominees from Jordan, and three from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Syria, and two for each of Algeria, Iraq, Mauritania, Morocco, in addition to one nominee from the Western Sahara, as well as one candidate from each of Bahrain, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Somalia and the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, while the Israeli list included 3 Arab women out of eight nominees[5].

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(4) http://womenforpeace.bibalex.org/ar/events/index.htm.

(5) http://www.1000peacewomen.org/index.php.

5.The United Nations University for Peace:

The UN University for Peace was established by UN General Assembly resolution in 1980. The university was established to provide mankind with an international higher education institute for peace building and to promote a spirit of understanding, tolerance and coexistence between all human beings. The university seeks to promote cooperation among peoples, to ease the obstacles and threats to world peace, and to move forward in line with the noble aspirations proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations.

The University charter emphasizes that the continuous wars throughout human history and the growing threats against peace in the recent decades put the survival of the human race at risk necessitating the end of conflicts. The University charter confirms that peace is a primary obligation that cannot be revoked by states and is not the fundamental objective of the United Nations, but is a raison-d'être.

6. The UN Institute Disarmament Research:

It is an independent institute within the United Nations that carries out research in the field of disarmament and security. It aims to help the international community to think about disarmament. The Institute seeks to promote creative thinking and to enhance dialogue on disarmament and security challenges in the world of today and tomorrow. The Institute activities include studies and research in a variety of topics such as: tactical nuclear weapons, the security of refugees, computer war, and confidence building measures. It works with researchers, diplomats and government officials, NGOs and other institutions. It constitutes a bridge between the research community and UN member states .It is funded through contributions from governments and donor institution. The Institute's headquarters is based in Geneva.

7. The Peace Building commission:

The Peace Building Commission was created under two resolutions 60/180 and 1645 (2005) of 20 December by which the General Assembly and the Security Council, assigned to the Commission, inter alia, bringing together relevant parties to mobilize resources ,advise and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peace building and recovery ,such as helping to ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities and sustainable financial investments on the medium and long terms ; and developing the best practices in various topics in collaboration with political, security and humanitarian developmental parties. The resolutions also defined the Commission's need to extend international attention to post-conflict countries, where needed, and to highlight any gaps threatening to undermine peace-building.

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