

# **Civil Society Organizations Dialogue on the Regional Review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 30 Years After Adoption**

**27-28 May 2024**

**Amman - Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan**

We, the representatives of some Civil Society Organizations in the Arab States, have met in Amman the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on 27 and 28 May 2024, upon the invitation of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the League of Arab States, and the UN Women Regional Office for Arab States, to discuss the progress achieved in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action after thirty years of its adoption at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. Through our review of the past five years, we:

- A. Affirm that the Arab region continues to face numerous challenges since the last review. Six countries within the region are affected by internal conflicts and wars, leading to significant refugee movements and forced displacement. These events have heavily impacted host countries, further deepening the suffering of women and girls who continue to bear and endure the brunt of these crises. The war in Palestine is among the most brutal and fierce on the peoples of the region, accompanied by the breakdown of international justice systems, and inconsistent application of international law.
- B. Reaffirm our solidarity with Sudanese women who are enduring displacement, as well as psychological, physical, and sexual violence. We call upon international organizations to provide the necessary protection and assistance, including financial and food aid.
- C. Express our concern about the collapse of the international justice system, and emphasize the urgent need for its reform and consistent application of international law. We stress the importance of ending militarization in both the Arab region and the world.
- D. Affirm that the region continues to suffer from the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic and global conflicts, which have significantly impacted its economy, leading to increased unemployment, poverty and violence, which affect women directly and indirectly.
- E. Emphasize that the aforementioned challenges have been accompanied by the exclusion of civil society, leading to an increase in hate speech directed against feminist movements. This situation has resulted in threats to activities and defenders of women's rights, a reduction in the space for civil work, and a decline in the environment conducive to collective action.
- F. Acknowledge the specific challenges faced by women, especially feminist movements in the region. Recognize the unique circumstances and common challenges that the people of the region are enduring. We direct our messages to decision-makers in Arab states, the international community, international organizations, civil society organizations at the national, regional, and international levels.
- G. While affirming our solidarity with the peoples of the region, especially those in Palestine and Sudan, and with women and the feminist movement across all Arab states, we reject the use of funding that undermines women's institutions to advance the policies of occupation. We emphasize the following messages:

### General Messages:

1. Stop the genocide waged by Israel on Gaza, protect civilians, deliver relief and humanitarian aid, and ensure there is no impunity. This includes efforts to stop all forms of whitewashing of the occupation, such as greenwashing, and work towards isolating and criminalizing the occupation.
2. Recognize the diversity of the feminist movement and support the new generation of feminists, acknowledging their contributions
3. Involve women, feminist movements, and civil society organizations in identifying and establishing national and regional priorities.
4. Review the Sustainable Development Goals to make them more sensitive and responsive to gender equality.
5. Adopt the principle of intersectionality in development and rights approaches and respond to the diverse needs of women and girls, especially those who are most marginalized.
6. Develop early warning plans that ensure mechanisms to respond to women's needs in situations of natural disasters and emergencies resulting from armed conflict.
7. Develop a gender-responsive budget to ensure women's access to health, education and economic services. Ensure these services meet the needs of women and girls, with particular focus on the most marginalized. Promote gender equality.
8. Strengthen the role of statistical agencies and research centers by making clear and transparent data available regularly and comprehensively. This data should contribute to identifying the realities faced by women, including time-use surveys to monitor and value women's care work in the national income. Ensure the right to access data and information for all.
9. Amend the comprehensive review mechanisms for progress made in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Use both quantitative and qualitative indicators to provide a critical view of existing structures and their impact on women, rather than narrating the procedures.
10. Establish mechanisms for monitoring and following up on national strategies and the progress made in policies related to women in economic, political, and social fields through participatory processes. This includes the creation of a regional observatory to monitor the situation of working women and their access to decent work.

### Messages on development, shared prosperity, and decent work:

11. Establish new economic approaches based on a social solidarity economic model that enhances cooperation and mutual support among productive women to combat poverty and enhance their economic role.
12. Access to and control over resources are crucial for achieving comprehensive development and prosperity of all and recognizing how Palestinians, women under occupation are particularly impacted.
13. Access to quality education for all girls in all regions.
14. Facilitate women's access to climate change green support funds.
15. Reconsider the legislative system in light of the International Labour Organization conventions and international agreements, with a particular focus on respecting human rights and protecting women from harassment and violence in the workplace.

### Messages on eradication of poverty, social protection and social services:

16. Regulate and recognize informal work.

17. Enact laws to enhance shared caregiving roles, including paternity leave, and invest in infrastructure and caregiving services to reduce the caregiving burden on women. This can be achieved by involving husbands in caregiving or by utilizing state-provided caregiving services.
18. Amend financial, tax, and investment policies to ensure they are responsive to the needs of women. Support small and medium enterprises managed by women and enhance social responsibility initiative that support women.

#### Messages on freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes:

19. Expand the design and provision of qualitative research and studies on the impact of violence on women and society.
20. Change the prevailing culture that tolerates violence against women by revising educational curricula and implementing awareness programs on equality issues in clubs and the media.
21. Enact and enhance laws to combat, prevent and protect against violence, including political violence against women. Provide executive programs to translate these laws into action, offering services for prevention and protection, and ensuring punishment for offenders.
22. Amend and enact laws to ensure they reflect the principles of equality and justice between women and men, and all citizens, especially in family laws.
23. Amend discriminatory laws that violate women's rights.

#### Messages on participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions:

24. Act in accordance with Recommendation 40 of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which emphasizes the participation of women in all councils and committees of negotiation, as well as in the public and private sectors, on the basis of parity.
25. Reconsider the requirement to resign from work before running for elections, as stipulated in several electoral laws in the region, which leads to women's reluctance to participate in politics.
26. Raise women's awareness of union organization and encourage participation in training. Additionally, raise men's awareness to change the stereotypical perceptions of the roles of men and women in the public sphere.
27. Support civil society institutions without imposing restrictions. Maintain and enhance their role in negotiation, leadership, and mediation to achieve civil peace.
28. Enact laws and legislation to enhance and guarantee the effective participation of women in political life and their access to decision-making positions. Take measures and actions to activate these laws and ensure they do not conflict with the system of laws regulating public work.
29. Work on changing the societal culture related to women's political participation and their roles in leadership and positions of authority.

#### Messages on peaceful societies where no one is marginalized:

30. Activate the implementation of Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security. Allocate appropriate financial and human resources for its implementation and review its effectiveness in the context of war in Gaza.
31. There is a necessity for issuing a subsequent resolution specific to Palestinian women, addressing the unique and evolving situation following the war in Gaza.
32. Enact laws that confront hate speech against feminist discourse.
33. Build the capacity of workers in traditional and non-traditional media to raise awareness of women's issues and enhance their role in combating hate speech directed against feminist movements.

#### Messages on conservation, protection and restoration of the environment:

34. Reduce investments in armaments and the manufacturing and use of weapons due to their role in destroying the agricultural environment and spreading diseases and health problems, especially among women
35. Involve women in negotiations at climate change conferences.
36. Enhance the efficiency and capability of women to work in the fields of recycling and renewable energy.
37. Develop observatories to monitor the impact of climate change on women and girls. Provide rapid responses to combat adaptive practices that violate the rights of women and girls, such as child marriage and the exploitation of women in labor.