

PERMANENT
OBSERVER MISSION OF
PALESTINE
TO THE
UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Sameh Barabanti, Senior Adviser, before the
United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, 59th Session, 28
February 2011: (Please click on the link below)**

My delegation is honored to address this Commission and would like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the efforts of the Bureau and your election; we pledge our full support and cooperation.

Before proceeding with our statement, my delegation wishes to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General (SG) for his report on the situation and assistance to Palestinian women and stress the importance we place on his report. Having said that, we regret having to repeat our deep concern on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, which is unequivocally one of the root causes of the current crisis. This situation, unquestionably impacts all aspects of the situation on the ground and on the humanitarian and socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian population under occupation. This trend of distorting and/or omitting the real facts on the ground in reports to the United Nations, including those of the Secretary-General to the CSW such as the one before us, must be rectified in future reports.

Mr. Chairman,

The role of Palestinian women in the advancement of their empowerment have been influenced, and to a certain extent, undermined in the past 43 years of military occupation. This situation of Palestinian women have borne the brunt of Israel's illegal policies and practices that have impeded their economic, social and development. Day in and day out, we are suffering and flagrant human rights violations against the Palestinian civilian population, which has made for severe problems not only on their advancement and empowerment of Palestinian women, but their well being even their survival. Their right to life, to return to their homes and property, to their livelihood, to housing, to education, to health, to development and to freedom of movement, just to name a few, have all been consistently and systematically infringed by the occupying Power in gross violation of international law and fundamental humanitarian law.



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Statement by H.E. Ambassador Sameh Fahmy, Egyptian Ambassador to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, 50th Session, 28 February 2011 (Press Clerk Amina El-Sayid)

My delegation is honored to address the Commission and would like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chair, and the other members of the Bureau and your excellent work in pledging our full support and cooperation.

Before proceeding with our statement, my delegation would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General (SG) for his report on the situation and assistance to Palestinian women and stress the importance we place on this report. Having said that, we regret having to report our deep concern regarding the continued violation of the context of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which is unequivocally one of foreign occupation, the root cause of this conflict. It is a situation that unjustifiably impacts all aspects of the situation on the ground and of the Palestinian and socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian population under occupation. This trend of disturbing and erasing the role of women on the ground is reported by the United Nations, including those of the Secretary-General to the CSW such as the one before us, must be recorded in future reports.

Mr. Chairman,

The role of Palestinian women, their advancement and empowerment have been influenced, and to a certain extent, determined in the most significant way by the military occupation. It is without a doubt that Palestinian women have been the bearers of Israel's illegal policies and practices that have severely impacted the Palestinian people and social development. Day in and day out, we continue to witness inhuman and suffering and flagrant human rights violations committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian civilian population, which have had severe implications not only on the advancement of women, but also on the survival of the Palestinian people, even their survival. The denial of the right to education, to health, to development and to freedom of movement, just to name a few, have all been consistently and systematically infringed by the occupying Power in gross violation of international law and international humanitarian law.

Mr. Chairman,

The situation in the besieged Gaza Strip remains horrific and tragic. For more than three years, Israel, the occupying Power, has collectively punished, imprisoned and deprived more than 1.5 million Palestinians living under one of the most inhumane, economic Mass unemployment, extreme poverty, and a sharp increase in food prices caused by shortages have left over half a million people dependent on humanitarian aid. To compound the already grave situation, more than two years have passed since the December 2008 Israeli military aggression in the Gaza Strip, and the Palestinian people are still being persecuted, humiliated and intimidated in their communities and lives. The debilitating effects of that military aggression and the blockade continue to impair the socio-economic and humanitarian conditions and to cause serious psychological trauma among the Palestinian civilian population, in particular women and children. We've come to call this the "Silent Occupation" and call for accountability for the crimes perpetrated by the Israeli occupying forces and for justice to be reached for the victims.

At the same time, in the occupied West Bank, the confiscation of Palestinian land and the construction of settlements, also called edposts, the building of a separation wall, demolitions and evictions, the construction of the wall, the imposition of numerous checkpoints and other colonial measures have not ceased for a single moment, and in fact have intensified, especially in Occupied East Jerusalem. The tumultuous impact of this illegal Israeli policy on the continuity, integrity, unity and viability of the West Bank territory has been irreversibly destructive. Moreover, it has a frequent and lasting impact on the drive for the peace that the entire Palestinian population yearns for, and poses the most serious threat to the prospect of achieving the two State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders.

Mr. Chairman,

The formidable and daunting challenges posed by the Israeli occupation and all of its illegal and brutal policies continue to make the achievement of a gender focus towards the advancement of Palestinian women improbable, if not impossible to realize. However, with great resilience and determination, Palestinian women are making every effort to overcome all these challenges and accomplish their goals.

At the national level, Palestinian women continue to strive to reach the goal of national liberation and social emancipation by integrating human rights, equality and empowerment in national policies, development frameworks and laws. They have also recognized the necessity of improving the technical and organizational capacity of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and civil society organizations in order to institutionalize gender equality and empowerment. This era also marks a major step as women have emerged against women through the "Empowerment of Community Based Organizations" and other initiatives, which aim at eliminating the gender-based violence in Palestinian society within the framework of Security Council Resolution 1325. Moreover, the issue of full equality between women and men has been set as a top priority in the state building program launched by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad in August 2009 entitled, "Ending the Occupation,

During the State PM Fayyad has called and stressed for the equal involvement and participation of women in achieving this internationally backed initiative.

Mr. Chairman,

It cannot be overemphasized the importance of increased assistance and support to Palestinian women by the international community and the United Nations, including the Commission on Status of Women and UN Women, especially at this critical time. We call on men and women world-wide to march hand in hand with the Palestinian people to demand an end to Israeli occupation in order to allow for the true advancement and empowerment of Palestinian women to occur in their independent, free and democratic State of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.