



United Nations International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People  
November 29, 2014

The World Young Women's Christian Association (World YWCA) and its member association, the YWCA of Palestine, join women and men around the world in observing the International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian people which falls on November 29th.

The Israel military occupation with its ongoing policies of colonialism, apartheid, and now genocide in Gaza, "shoot to kill" policies in Jerusalem, and attacks on Al Aqsa Mosque have severely violated the Palestinian people's human rights, sense of dignity, freedom, and security. The world leaders led by the United States tried once again to facilitate a peace process which led to the confiscation of more land and more settlements and no peace. Palestinians have called for not just an end to the military occupation, but the guarantee of their civil rights, and the Right of Return of its refugees. They have also demanded accountability towards Israel to guarantee internationally recognized rights.

Palestinian women are not only routinely harassed, intimidated, and abused by soldiers at checkpoints and gates but are now being attacked on public transport including buses, and denied access to worship at Al Aqsa along with men. Their movement has been restricted leading to a decrease in the number of women seeking formal education or employment outside of their immediate settings. In addition women and their families continue to live well below the poverty line in occupied East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza. Due to the increase in number of people being held in administrative detention including children, they are also often the bread winners for their entire family. All of these issues related to the Israeli military occupation exacerbate violence against women and children.

Finally, we are distressed by the escalation of violence in East Jerusalem and the West Bank and outraged by the world's complicity in remaining silent thus condoning Israel's incitement and provocations. Since the adoption in 1977 of November 29<sup>th</sup> as the annual observance of solidarity with the Palestinian People, we have stood firm that human rights and international law be affirmed and protected for all. In addition, as called for from our recent International Conference on Women's Freedom, Peace, and Dignity in Palestine in Bethlehem, we affirm the role of women in the peace building and conflict resolution at all levels as protected in Security Council Resolution 1325. We also reconfirm our commitment to working for the Right of Return for refugees as protected in UN Resolutions 181 and 194. We also continue to support Palestine's right to self determination as guaranteed in UN Resolutions 242 and 338.

We demand that these resolutions and international laws be implemented and that measures including economic, political, and cultural measures and sanctions be considered and enforced. We congratulate Sweden, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Spain who have recognized the State of Palestine and support other countries voting to do the same. They join over 135 countries which recognize and support Palestine's right to self determination and have sovereignty.

We commend the Human Rights Commission for appointing the Independent International Commission for Inquiry, delegated to investigate the latest military operations the "Protective Edge" in Gaza, and express deep concern that Israel again challenges this decision and bans entry of this team into Gaza, which of course constraints it from conducting its mission thus constituting a serious impediment to justice.

On this special day we call on governments and civil society to take every measure to:

- End the military occupation of all Occupied Palestinian Territories
- End the siege on Gaza and support its reconstruction by holding Israel financially responsible;
- Stop the forced transfer of Bedouins from their lands;
- End settlement expansion and the annexation of East Jerusalem;
- Support and promote UNSCR1325 with the Palestinian Authority securing women's role in all levels of the peace process;
- Support the Right of Return for refugees;
- Free all detainees, especially women and children detainees
- Join the global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement to put economic pressure on Israel until it respects international law.

For peace to have a chance justice must be pursued, demanded, and guaranteed otherwise we will continue to see an increase in violence that will put all at risk especially the most vulnerable who are women and children.

As organizations that have a long history of working for peace with justice and who have witnessed the Israeli/Palestinian conflict since 1948, we stand in solidarity today with our Palestinian sisters and brothers by seeking a rights based solution rather than a power based solution.