H.E. Dr. Awad highlights the status of the Palestinian Woman on the Eve of the International Women's Day on 08/03/2025

H.E. Dr. Ola Awad, President of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), on Thursday 06/03/2025, highlighted the reality of the Palestinian women on the eve of the International Women's Day on 08/03/2025 under the theme "For All women and girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment", as follows:

The Palestinian Woman is Half of the Society and a Pillar of Resilience

The Palestinian woman represents half of the Palestinian society and its backbone, where its percentage reached 49% of the total population in Palestine by the end of 2024, equivalent to 2.71 million females (1.65 million in the West Bank and 1.06 million in Gaza Strip). Palestinian women play a vital role in various aspects of life, being a basic partner in economic and social development, as well as an essential pillar in strengthening national resilience and confronting the challenges imposed by the Palestinian reality.

471 Days of Suffering and Hardships: Palestinian Women are caught between two fires: the Israeli Aggression and the Challenges they face while Supporting their Household

Since the beginning of the Israeli aggression against Gaza Strip on October 7th, 2023, and until the ceasefire agreement in January 2025, a period of 471 days until this day, the Palestinian women have continued to face immense challenges to recover and restore normal life. Women and children constituted 70% of the victims of the Israeli aggression and the war of genocide, with 12,316 female martyrs among the total of 48,346 martyrs up to this date. Women and children also constituted 69% of the total number of 111,759 injured. Furthermore, 70% of the missing persons in Gaza Strip due to the Israeli aggression are women and children, amounting to 14,222 missing individuals. Reports from Gaza Strip indicate that nearly 2 million individuals were forcibly displaced from their homes during the Israeli aggression against Gaza strip, half of whom are women.

Amid these severe humanitarian challenges, 13,901 Palestinian women are living a tragic reality after losing their husbands due to the genocide, and becoming the sole providers for their households that have lost their primary breadwinner. These women are now bearing the heavy burden of securing a living along with caring for their children amidst suffocating economic conditions that are worsened by the siege and destruction. In addition to the difficulty in maintaining household stability, they face compounded challenges in supporting households that have lost their pillar, raising children among the rubble of homes, and struggling with a scarcity of resources exacerbated by the ongoing siege. In the West Bank and as of the date of this press release, 923 individuals including 26 women have been martyred since October 7th, 2023, due to the attacks by the Israeli occupation forces and settlers.

Palestinian Women between the Hammer of Arrests and the Pain Hidden in the Numbers: Resilience that Defies Prisons

A report released by the detainees rights institutions[1], revealed an unprecedented rise in the Israeli occupation arrests of the Palestinian women. In 2024 alone, 266 cases of arrests were recorded, bringing the total number of arrests[2] since the beginning of the genocide to over 450. As of February 25th, 2025, the Israeli occupation continues to detain 18 females detained. Based on the ceasefire agreement in January 2025, 69 female detainees were released on January 20th, 2025 as part of the first round of a detainee's exchange deal.

Between the Ruins and Hope: The Struggles of the Palestinian Women Post the Israeli Aggression

Losing 17,861 Palestinian children is not just a number, but it is a deep wound etched into the memories of their mothers who carried their children's dreams beneath the rubble of the Israeli aggression. Despite the cessation of aggression, scenes of loss remain an enduring witness to the tragedies that cannot be forgotten for their beloved children snatched from their households, leaving behind hearts bleeding with sorrow and souls burdened with deep trauma.

Mothers in Gaza Strip live between daily nightmares and entrenched depression, as they spent their nights worrying as they try, with shattered hearts, to hold the hands of survivors and heal wounds that can't be seen. They face a tremendous challenge that goes beyond rebuilding stones of the walls to restoring and healing the souls and rekindling trust in a harsh world that forced them to live between the pain and unwavering hope.

The reality faced by Gaza Strip under the Israeli aggression goes beyond the loss of lives to enormous health and psychological challenges, adding an additional burden on women who bear the responsibility of caring for their children in the absence of basic services. According to the data from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, an average of 15 children daily[3] suffer disabilities that may last a lifetime due to the use of explosives during the Israeli aggression that began on October 7th, 2023. This means that approximately 7,065 children retained disabilities due to the attacks and bombing of the Israeli aggression, including the loss of limbs, vision, and hearing.

Additionally, women in Gaza Strip are struggling to secure their basic needs such as food and water, while being also unable to provide the necessary healthcare for their injured children due to the collapse of Gaza's health system, restrictions on the entry of vital medical supplies, and the targeting of hospitals and medical staff. This reality has made injured children more susceptible to attaining disabilities, such as amputations, which have affected more than 4,500 people, 18% of whom are children. Furthermore, the risks of health complications such as spinal deformities and bone fragility have increased due to the lack of prosthetics and medical care.

437,600 housing units have been damaged because of the Israeli aggression against Gaza Strip, leaving thousands of Palestinian women and households displaced. Many of these

[1]Includes Commission of Detainees and Ex- Detainees affairs, the Palestinian Prisoners Club, Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association.

[2]The number of arrests includes both those who are still detained by the Israeli occupation and those who were released later on.

[3]https://www.ochaopt.org/ar/content/humanitarian-situation-update-255-gaza-strip

women have been forced to live in temporary tents after losing their homes, which once served as safe sanctuary. Under these harsh conditions, women face compounded challenges, struggling to secure basic necessities such as food and water while caring for children and the sick in the absence of adequate healthcare. They bear the brunt of caring for their households in an environment lacking essential life services, exacerbating their physical and psychological suffering. The tents fail to provide even minimal security or privacy, deepening the humanitarian crisis.

With the absence of basic infrastructure, health and social crises are worsening, and women enduring harsh conditions, from bitter cold to extreme heat, with limited access to healthcare and essential services, turning their daily existence into a relentless struggle for survival.

In Gaza Strip, where destruction dominates every aspect of daily life, women find themselves trapped in unbearable circumstances. Tents have become their only sanctuary, but they offer neither security nor the dignity women deserve. Despite the ceasefire, this painful reality is expected to continue for a longer time, symbolizing ongoing daily suffering that strips women of most of their basic human rights.

In the West Bank, since October 7th, 2023, the number of martyrs among children has reached 186 amid the escalating Israeli attacks that have exacerbated the suffering of the population, especially women. The reality women in the northern West Bank are living reflects ongoing suffering due to the Israeli occupation attacks, including the displacement of residents, destruction and burning of homes, and damages they made to infrastructure. Since the start of the large-scale Israeli military operation in Jenin on January 21st, 2025, which was later extended to Tulkarm and its refugee camps on January 27th, 2025, and the subsequent operations in the Fara'a refugee camp in Tubas on February 3rd, 2025, the Israeli occupation forces imposed a curfew and closed the camp's entrances, allowing only about 100 households to either flee or be forced to leave. These operations have led to a widespread destruction of homes and infrastructure, resulting in mass displacement of residents. On February 13th UNRWA reported that the military operations had forcibly displaced more than 40,000 Palestinian refugees from Jenin, Tulkarm, Nur Shams, and Al-Far'a camps. Thousands of residents were displaced during the Israeli military operation in Jenin and its surrounding areas, and others were displaced as a result of the ongoing Israeli operations carried out by the Israeli occupation forces. Thousands of residents are still being forcibly displaced from the four camps, which collectively host more than 76,000 Palestinian refugees. Jenin camp is nearly empty today, while Nur Shams camp has witnessed almost complete displacement, and thousands of residents have been displaced from Tulkarm and Al-Far'a camps. Most of the households that were displaced from Al-Far'a camp sought refuge in the cities of Jenin, Tubas, and Nablus[4].

[4] https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-264-west-bank. Until 25 Feb 2025