

**Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security**  
**Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2000, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)**

*Statement by Mr. Samban, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations*

At the outset, I wish to express our gratitude to you, Sir, for your efforts to strengthen the role of women in the sphere of international peace and security. We support the statements made by Ms. King and Ms. Heyzer, which reflect the international community's concerns about the advancement of women in the area of peace, security and sustainable development.

In recent decades, women in many States throughout the world, the United Nations, its specialized agencies and regional and international organizations have been assigned important posts. They have played a leading role equal to that of men in reconstruction and in economic, social, cultural and human development. They have demonstrated sufficient scientific and technical knowledge and competence to allow them to adapt to events and developments in their societies and the world at large.

However, despite all the regional and international conferences that have been held on the topic of women in the past two decades, which have addressed all the problems and attempted to meet all the challenges that have been encountered in seeking to enhance women's participation at the national, regional and international levels, the role of women in the maintenance of international peace and security still falls short of our aspirations for contemporary international relations. These various developments have highlighted the gravity of the situation of women, who suffer from racial discrimination, ethnic cleansing, rape, forced displacement and other phenomena, particularly in countries where war, internal conflict and occupation continue to rage. Furthermore, the imbalances in economic and social relations between the developed and the developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, have their own negative impact. These phenomena have aggravated illiteracy and poverty, which in turn have increased the suffering of women and children.

If this situation persists, particularly in regions of Africa, Asia and the Middle East that still labour under the yoke of occupation and war, it will present enormous challenges to the international community. This requires the Security Council to follow up the implementation of its resolutions on these various conflicts. The Council must coordinate its work with international, national and regional organizations and agencies in order to find peaceful solutions to these conflicts as soon as possible. Without such a commitment, the people of those States — especially women and children — will continue to suffer the effects of instability and insecurity, which in turn fuel violence, extremism and frustration.

The United Arab Emirates has closely followed the situation in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, which has experienced a serious exacerbation of violence and aggression, including the Israeli blockade against the Palestinian people, in which women and children suffer the most. My country deplores this situation and calls on Israel to end its massive violations of human rights in the Palestinian territories. For the fourth week running, the international press has been broadcasting images and reports highlighting these criminal abuses and violations. I refer in particular to the Palestinian mother who was killed in the presence of her nine children. Another woman, old and infirm, who was merely trying to get to her workplace, was also gunned down. Furthermore, an unprecedented number of Palestinians have died or been wounded.

These examples speak volumes about the serious human rights violations being committed by the Israeli forces, particularly against women and children. The persistence of this situation demonstrates that certain States of the international community use double standards in their approach to these events. The international community has rejected such behaviour through resolutions recently adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly. Israel's actions run counter to the letter and spirit of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, to international humanitarian law and norms, and to the primacy of respect for international law.

We therefore demand that an independent, neutral commission of inquiry be established and that an international criminal tribunal be set up, on the model of those already created by the Security Council, to prosecute and try the perpetrators of the crimes committed against the Palestinian people, in particular Palestinian women and children. This international mechanism of deterrence could help to limit the growing violence and the serious violations of the fundamental human rights of women and children.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates believes that the acts of violence and massive violations of the human rights of powerless innocent civilians, particularly women and children, are creating abnormal conditions of bloodshed, oppression, inequality and racial and religious discrimination. We therefore stress the importance of disseminating a culture of peace, respect for the basic international norms and standards for the treatment of women, and the legitimate rights guaranteed by religions and national and international laws and norms.

We also believe in the vanguard role that women can play in international affairs, especially in the area of economic, social and human development. The participation of women should be guaranteed in international decision-making and in peacekeeping operations in order to ensure security, stability and sustainable development at the regional, national and international levels.