



**UNITED
NATIONS**

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**World Conference
of the United Nations
Decade for Women:**

Equality, Development and Peace

A/CONF.94/STATEMENTS/COUNTRIES

**Copenhagen, Denmark
14-30 July 1980**

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Speech of Her Excellency

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Minister of Social Development

Head of the Jordanian Delegation

to the World Conference of

the United Nations Decade for Women:

Equality, Development and Peace

Madam

Mrs. President

Mrs. Secretary General

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me pleasure to begin my speech by congratulating

Mrs. LISE ØSTERGAARD on presiding over this

important Conference. ^{we are confident of} ~~I have confidence in~~ her ability and

wisdom in ~~successfully~~ managing and directing this Conference,

^{ensuring its success in taking further}

thus ~~taking another few~~ steps on the way of improving the status

of women and helping them undertake a more active and positive

role in society. ^{at the opening session} The attendance of Her Majesty the Queen of Denmark and His Excellency the Prime Minister is a clear indication of the importance that our host country attaches to the Conference.

Mrs. President

This Conference comes in the midst of the United Nations

Decade for Women, five years after the Mexico Conference in 1975,

which called for "equality, development and peace" as essential

principles for the achievement of a better life for the human

3. To pay special attention in the proceedings and the working program for the second half of the Decade to the difficult situation which the Palestinian woman suffers from as a result of the Israeli occupation and to the African woman who suffers from racial segregation and imperialism in South Africa and Namibia, and to crystallize special procedures to help the Palestinian woman overcome the hardships, additional problems and tyranny practiced on her by the Israeli occupation authorities and to help the African woman face the oppression that the racist regime in South Africa exercises on her.

Madam

~~Mrs.~~ President

The progress achieved in the implementation of the plan of action

~~Real accomplishment through the execution of the working~~

~~program~~ of the Mexico Conference may vary from one country to

another according to the prevailing circumstances. But clearly

the issue of women and their involvement in the development pro-

cess has ^{been met with} ~~not~~ a great interest at all levels ^{including the highest levels.} This applies to ~~the~~

of Jordan, which participated in the Mexico Conference and has taken

measures in accordance with its ^{national plan of action.} ~~working program.~~ A seminar on

manpower development centering around the role of the Jordanian

woman was held in April 1976. Several working papers dealing

with the different aspects of the role of the Jordanian woman

were presented to the seminar. The most important recommendation

of the seminar was to establish a Department for Women's Affairs

in order to keep abreast of women's problems and collect data, research results and studies related to them as well as launch projects, training programs and a national organization for women. The Department was established in February 1977 with emphasis on studies, research and coordination in addition to conducting seminars and proposing legislative amendments aimed at increasing the effectiveness of women in economic and social activities.

The door was also opened to wider participation by the Jordanian woman in the official sector. A number of women became members of the National Consultative Council and I ^{enjoyed} ~~gained~~ that privilege until I was appointed the first woman's ~~honor before I became a~~ Minister. Moreover, necessary legislative amendments were enacted to give women access to the membership of local councils and municipalities.

The participation of women in the Jordanian labor force increased from 4% in 1974 to 15% ^{in 1980} ~~this year~~. Several opportunities in official departments, public agencies and the private sector ^{became accessible} ~~were opened~~ to women, ^{in addition to} ~~besides~~ the traditional fields of education and nursing. ~~Studies on the labor market indicate a~~

~~continuation of this trend, particularly, as the number of trained and graduate women is increasing at the same time.~~

Towards the end of last year the Government of Jordan established the Ministry of Social Development ~~to replace the Department of Social Affairs. The Ministry has defined its plan of action and organization in such a manner that its functions will go beyond social care in the traditional sense towards social development in its broader aspects. This would~~

open up vistas for the different groups of society to participate in the process of development, especially families and women in urban as well as rural areas and in local communities. It would create institutions for training hitherto unproductive citizens and place them in the mainstream of productive labor.

The Ministry also established a ^{Directorate of Women's Affairs} ~~Women's Department~~ with a view to making ^{this Directorate} ~~the~~ the official and specialized arm of government for women's programs and projects as well as giving it the task of coordination between and among the parties concerned and follow up of all efforts related to the Jordanian woman. ~~The~~ With the full support of His Majesty ~~the~~ King Hussein, the official government's policy ~~emphasized the necessity of~~

pursuing "an acceleration of the steps that would ensure the complete integration of women in the development process and in overall progress at the national level." ^{Furthermore, the government stated that} ~~it added,~~ "The time has come for women to rise firmly and with determination to undertake their responsibilities on an equal basis with men and within the frame of full participation with them in the building of a new nation."

Directorate of Women's Affairs

The ~~Women's Department~~ functions within an overall institutional set up which consists of a higher ^{Steering} ~~guidance~~ committee for women's affairs linked directly to the Prime Ministry. The Department is assisted in the ^{implementation} ~~execution~~ of its programs by a general secretariat which consists of ^{the} heads of liaison offices for women's affairs at the ministries, ^{and} official agencies, ~~and~~ In addition, ~~local women's groups~~ institutional machineries exist for non-governmental women's organisations.

In Jordan, we base our approach to women's affairs on two main principles. The first is the necessity of dealing with the different issues concerning women's affairs within the ^{framework of} ~~frame of~~ a very comprehensive ^{outlook rather than one which might be confused by} ~~look that avoids getting bogged down in~~ details. The second is the necessity of translating our ideas

concrete
with regard to women into projects in accordance with ~~well~~ established
~~thought out~~ priorities and within the general ^{framework} ~~frame~~ of the
overall development plan. It has become clear to us, through
experience, that this approach does not run counter to the
pursuance of specific issues, such as the difficulties faced
by the working woman, the issue of vocational training for
women and other related issues.

A careful reading of the teachings and principles of
Islam reveals that Islam advocates women's rights and calls
for the education of women and their ^{right} ~~enablement~~ to share with
man, on an equal basis, jurisdiction over money and contracts in
addition to the enjoyment of the right to work. The cultural
handicaps that might hinder the promotion of women's partici-
pation in Moslem societies do not stem from Islam itself but
from practices through long years under ^{colonialism} ~~imperialism~~ and back-
wardness. Changing these attitudes has become a must.

Madam

~~Mrs.~~ President

^{held with the themes}
This Conference is ~~conducted under the motto~~ of equality,
^{goals}
development and peace which stand as ~~aims~~ we all desire to

achieve. ~~But~~ For the Palestinian woman these ^{goals} ~~aims~~ remain a distant hope frustrated by occupation and dispossession. Hence our Conference has the responsibility of singling out a special item for the study of the Palestinian woman's social and economic conditions inside and outside the occupied territories and to look into ^{specific measures} ~~particular procedures~~ which need to be adopted in order to help the Palestinian woman cope with the pains and hardships which ^{are unfamiliar to other} developing societies that live on their lands and enjoy political freedom, ~~have long been unfamiliar with.~~

The first Zionist settlement was established on Arab land in Palestine in 1878. The Zionist Movement planned to take over the land and root out its Arab citizens by all available means, including murder and expulsion. Thus the Zionist Movement succeeded in establishing the Jewish state of Israel in 1948 not through the judaisation of land, labor or market but through harsh military actions. This resulted in subjugating part of the Palestinian people to Israeli rule, driving away and rooting out hundreds of thousands of people from their homeland, thus breaking down the social structure of the Palestinian people,

~~which of course added to the suffering of the Palestinian women.~~

(Israel occupied the West Bank of Jordan and Gaza and)

After the 1967 war the whole people of Palestine came to be divided into three segments: those dispersed in Arab and other countries, those under occupation in Palestine of 1948 and those who suffer from occupation in the West Bank and Gaza.

The Israeli occupation authorities exercised all kinds of pressures on these people in order to disperse them and take over their lands and water resources, thus violating agreements, resolutions and international conventions relating to the treatment of civilians under occupation. The Palestinian woman suffered all kinds of oppression as she saw her home destroyed, her farm confiscated, her husband or relative imprisoned, tortured or expelled and herself driven to mercenary work in agriculture or industry under the hardest conditions of manipulation. She saw her culture looked down upon as being backward while she was prevented from any real interaction with her society. She still suffers from daily terrorism practiced by the Israeli occupation authorities on Arab children in camps and schools

and in their daily life. According to the reports of the International Labor Organization, about 20% of the Arab work force in the occupied territories consists of children who are under age.

The Palestinian woman participated in the Palestinian people's struggle for liberation. Hundreds of women suffered imprisonment, torture and expulsion.

Thus, for the Palestinian people equality means giving them, in their independent state and on their own land, equality with the other peoples of the world, enabling them to set up their own structure of relations among individuals and groups. Development in the present situation of the Palestinian people requires different types of support, projects and priorities within the frame of the dispersed geographic existence inside and outside the occupied territories. Peace for the Palestinian people is predicated on justice which enables them to return to their homeland and enjoy their legal rights which the international community advocated in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the ~~rights of man~~ Human Rights Convention.

Several resolutions have been adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Security Council, the International Labor Organization, UNESCO, the World Health Organization and other specialized international agencies, all of which called for putting an end to Israeli violations of the Palestinian people's rights, halting the establishment of new Israeli settlements and dismantling existing ones. Resolution No. 32 of the Mexico Conference ^{reaffirmed the condemnation of} ~~condemned~~ Zionism, urged women around the world to support the Palestinian woman in her struggle against the Israeli violation of the principles of human rights in the occupied territories and requested the United Nations and its specialized agencies as well as national and regional organizations to give moral and material assistance to the Palestinian woman and all her institutions.

I look to this Conference with the hope that it will rise up to its responsibilities and look into the situation of Palestinian women, within the framework of the overall suffering of the Palestinian people. I hope it will do this with a sense of ~~fair~~ justice and equality, and will take a ^{positive} ~~sympathetic~~ stand by approving the working program proposed in the document

presented to it in order to help the Palestinian woman inside and outside the occupied territories and allocate necessary resources to implement these programs.

Madam
~~Mrs.~~ President

As we look to the future, to the second half of the first Decade for Women ~~and to the second decade~~, we hope to arrive at specific and practical steps which take into consideration the necessary measures to be taken in order to deal with women's affairs and meet their needs in the fields of education, health, training, national legislation and the like. We deem it necessary that this approach should not be isolated from international efforts aimed at creating a new international economic order and setting up an international development strategy for the 1980's. Accordingly, we strongly support the working program for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women 1981-1985 adopted by the preparatory regional meeting of the Economic Commission for Western Asia. We also emphasize the recommendation which that meeting forwarded to our Conference and which calls for,

- a. Supporting efforts of the United Nations to change the presently prevailing economic relations between the industrial world and the developing world in order to establish a new international economic order with the social, cultural and scientific changes it will bring about, and requesting the United Nations to pursue efforts to establish this desired pattern of international relations, which represents an essential framework^{work} for women's participation in the issues of equality, development and peace in the developing countries.
- b. Urging the advanced industrial countries to increase their contribution to the requirements of international cooperation by providing technical and material assistance to developing countries to enable them to expedite their efforts to achieve the requirements of self development and enlist their human capabilities, in particular, those of women.
- c. Conducting international and regional seminars on the participation of women in political activities and liberation movements and on the impact thereof on their economic and social conditions.

Out of its commitment to real development which depends on human resources as a continuing source of wealth for the developing countries, the Government of Jordan has paid a great deal of attention to the issues of women. I, in turn, urge this Conference to give a hand to the African woman in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa to help her face the consequences of ~~imperialism~~^{colonialism} and the oppressive burdens of racial ~~segregation~~^{discrimination}.

I avail myself of this opportunity to announce the commitment of the Government of Jordan to donate the amount of (US \$3000) ^{Voluntary} to the fund of the United Nations Decade for Women as an expression of our support to the work programs related to women and to the development projects they entail.

Allow me, ^{Madam} ~~Mrs.~~ President, to close with an expression of thanks to the people of Denmark and its leaders for their kind hospitality and for providing all the necessary facilities which have helped make our Conference a success. I would also like to express my thanks to Mrs. Lucille Mair the Secretary General of the Conference, for the great efforts she exerted in preparation for the Conference and for her fair and just handling of the different issues here discussed.

I wish you all success and I thank you.
