

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
Ligue Internationale de Femmes pour la Paix et la Liberté
Liga Internacional de Mujeres por la Paz y la Libertad

Consultative Status with UN ECOSOC, UNCTAD and UNESCO; Special Consultative Relations with FAO, ILO, and UNICEF.



February 26, 2015

Re: Security Council consideration of Yemen and Women, Peace and Security

Dear Ambassador:

As stated by the Secretary-General during a Council briefing in early February, “Yemen is collapsing before our eyes.” As Yemen faces a potential civil war, possible economic collapse, and rising violence, the current situation only further exacerbates the devastating reality that negatively impact women throughout Yemen. Women in Yemen have limited access to healthcare, economic opportunities, education, and are often victims of child marriage and other forms of sexual and gender based violence. Yemen’s penal code, personal status act, citizenship act, and criminal code all contain provisions that discriminate against women.

Given the current crisis, the Security Council must make immediate efforts to ensure a peaceful solution and exert pressure on the political factions. Within the ongoing political processes, however, there remains a systematic exclusion of women. Those who risk their lives to renounce violence and struggle for peace are excluded. The international community, including UN Special Advisor Jamal Benomar, has failed to ensure adequate efforts to include women, despite their work and contributions to the national dialogue and other processes.

With the recent adoption of resolution 2140 (2014), the upcoming Security Council meeting and Member State obligations under the Women, Peace, and Security agenda, we urge the Council to strengthen consideration of Women, Peace, and Security obligations in all aspects of the Council’s work on Yemen.

WILPF, together with our partners in Yemen, specifically urge on the Security Council to:

- Call for women’s participation and inclusion of women’s rights and gender perspectives in all political efforts to resolve the conflict, and stronger consultation of women groups and civil society representatives to inform the content and outcome of the negotiations. The Council can be specific and emphasize the importance of the 30%-women inclusion in political decision-making, as well as in conflict resolution processes.
- Request updates from UN Special Advisor on “on progress in inviting women to participate, including through consultations with civil society, including women’s organizations, in discussions pertinent to the prevention and resolution of conflict, the maintenance of peace and security” (as per UNSCR 2122 OP2).
- Condemn the killing of civilians as well as violations of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law, specifically with regards to violations against women, and to seek accountability for all crimes including investigations, prosecution and reparation. As humanitarian conditions deteriorate, the Council should ensure an urgent increase to gender-sensitive humanitarian access, aid, and services, in particular access to adequate healthcare provisions.
- Increase focus on determining fair and just resolutions for national issues resulting in this crisis, especially with regards to the issues facing the Southern region of Yemen. Strongly denounce actions taken by the Houthis to dissolve Yemen’s parliament on 6 February and the takeover of government institutions. Additionally, measures must be taken in order to improve on accountability and transparency with regards

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to compliance of political negotiations agreed upon by both parties.

- Guarantee the complete implementation of UNSCR 2204 by ensuring that sanctions are placed on those threatening stability within Yemen. We implore the immediate imposition of a comprehensive arms embargo on all parties to the conflict and believe the Council should seek further concrete steps to be taken for the immediate removal of all weapons, including the transfer of small arms and light weapons; bearing in mind the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women.
- Call upon neighbouring states, regional powers, the United Nations and the broader international community to support all the above recommendations and contribute by providing the necessary support while also ensuring that financial and military support is not being funneled to the militias, tribes, and non-state armed actors that are aggravating the current crisis situation.

Ambassador, the people of Yemen are faced with utter chaos as the country continues to deteriorate and over 16 million civilians are faced with the need for aid and a political solution. Within this context, the current crisis means that the ongoing, systematic discrimination facing Yemen's women will only worsen as women continue to be absent from the negotiations and peace processes overall. Women's civil society organizations in Yemen are ready to be an active partner and participant in every process of conflict resolution.

We urge you, in your capacity as a member of the Security Council and as a United Nations Member State, to ensure that bolder action is taken and the people of Yemen are not abandoned to the fate so many other face in conflict. We look forward to your rapid action on the points above.

Yours Sincerely,

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