



Geneva, 22 June 2012 “Ending Discrimination and Enhancing Women Peace and Security in the MENA region”

"Alaan walaysa gadan" - “Now not tomorrow”

We, women human rights defenders from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen, met this week, June 20-22, in Geneva after a process of 8 national consultations. We reaffirm our commitment for women’s equal rights throughout the Arab world to promote peace and security, and that UN Security Council Resolution 1325 be implemented in our region today.

We, women of Middle East North Africa (MENA) region, stand at the front line of peaceful protests in our countries and demand for peace, dignity and human rights. Violence in all its forms, including gender-based violence, threatens women’s safety and security now more than ever. We condemn all assaults, arbitrary detention and military trials of civilian protestors and human rights defenders in our region. We condemn the impunity of human rights violators and call for them to be brought to justice in fair trials. We call for justice for Azza Helal Soliman (Egypt), who is with us this week, and for all other women and men attacked as they peacefully exercise their rights. Our right to live in peace and dignity, which includes our right to access public spaces and decision-making positions, must be respected.

Militarization, increased defence spending and the global arms trade, violate human rights and dignity, and create human insecurity across the region. Social and economic justice must be prioritised.

We stand in solidarity with women and men struggling against occupation and oppression in Palestine. We also express our solidarity with women and men struggling against dictatorships, oppression and violence in our region, and in all situations of conflict worldwide.

We remind our Governments, all States and international actors of obligations ratified in international human rights law, the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW and SC Resolutions on women, peace and security. We urge the following:

- 1) Consult with women’s civil society on all matters of state and regional security.
- 2) Refuse to fund or support any UN sponsored peace negotiations that do not have women as legitimate participants around the table.
- 3) Increase the numbers of representative women as part of all security reform processes and disarmament initiatives including national and UN efforts.
- 4) Harmonize national constitutions and legislation with international law (including CEDAW) to guarantee non-discrimination and promote women’s rights and gender equality.
- 5) Develop 1325 National Action Plans, in partnership with civil society, with accountability mechanisms and ensure adequate and sustained funding for women’s organisations.
- 6) Stop arms sales to any country that violates human rights. In this regard, support a criterion on preventing gender-based violence in the upcoming July 2012 Arms Trade Treaty negotiation.

Now, not tomorrow.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR
PEACE & FREEDOM

