



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. ELIESA S.B. TUILOMA, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, INTRODUCING THE DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE SITUATION OF AND ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN WOMEN, E/CN.6/2013/L4 AT THE 57TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (New York, 14 March 2013)

Madam Chair,

1. I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution on the "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian Women", E/CN.5/2013/L4 under agenda item 3, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2. The Group of 77 would like to express its appreciation to all delegations for their contributions that led to the finalisation of this draft resolution.

Madam Chair,

3. Please allow me to clarify certain issues and concepts behind this resolution in order to accurately address the harsh and tragic reality facing Palestinian women that have been living for more than 45 years under foreign occupation.

4. The resolution reaffirms the recognition by the UN membership of the problems faced by Palestinian women and girls, including the slow progress in the implementation of assistance from the United Nations systems, donors and civil society through and with the cooperation of the Palestinian Authority.

5. Amongst its objectives, the resolution endeavors to promote the Palestinian women's social, economic and political empowerment and reduction of gender based violence by encouraging their political voice, increasing their opportunities to obtain decent and productive work, and improving their access to protection and justice systems.

6. It also reflects upon the progress that contributes to reductions in poverty and job creation, as well as the insignificant gains made, particularly in improving access to education and health.

7. It highlights the challenges of insecurity and poverty that may exacerbate gender-based discrimination and abuse in the public and private spheres, as well as workplace, including the difficulties faced by Palestinian women and girls.

8. It also highlights ways to improve the effectiveness of the work of United Nations bodies, including those urgently needed assistance, to alleviate the dire socio-economic and humanitarian situation faced by Palestinian women and their families.

9. The draft resolution tries to lay the foundation for the important role that Palestinian women could play in peace building and decision-making, conflict prevention, peaceful resolution of conflicts and the maintenance and promotion of peace and security within Palestine.

Madam Chair,

10. The effect of armed and other kinds of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation, is one of the critical areas of concern covered under the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. One of the recommendations of this resolution is to call upon Governments, the international community and civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector to take strategic actions regarding all critical areas of concern, and to develop and implement mechanisms of accountability, as an important action to advance the goals of equality, development and peace for all women and everywhere.

11. No doubt that the world witnessed many significant achievements in the advancement and empowerment of women, yet, many challenges and constraints continue to hinder the full implementation of the strategic objectives of the Beijing Declaration. Such challenges and constraints are even more formidable and daunting in the case of Palestinian women, who has been living, for too long, under the most unbearable and harsh situation as a result of the continued Israeli military occupation. Against that backdrop, their status has been further affected by the overall deterioration of the political, economic and social development of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

12. The harsh policies by the occupying Power continue to exert detrimental ramification, not just, on Palestinian women advancement and empowerment, but also to their survival and well-being.

Madam Chair,

13. Violence against women remains a major obstacle towards the realization of their full equality and empowerment. Palestinian women are subjected not only to typical forms of violence, but also to political and psychological violence, unbearable human suffering and flagrant human rights violations which continue to have severe implications on the condition of Palestinian women and the consequent deterioration of their socio-economic condition on the ground.

14. It is without doubt that the assistance through the UN system will alleviate some of the suffering of the Palestinian women, but what is needed most is assistance and measures that will contribute significantly to the advancement and empowerment of Palestinian women and their families so that they can get closer to live normal life that is free from occupation, discrimination and violence.

I Thank You.