

On International Women's Day, the Suffering of Palestinian Women Continues

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, March 08, 2009

8 March 2009

Theme: [Women's Rights](#)
In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

On 8 March, the world celebrates International Women's Day. This event highlights issues particularly affecting women, including their collective struggles for equality, and a universal commitment to women's enjoyment of all their rights in accordance with international standards and conventions.

This year Palestinian women continue to face extremely difficult personal and political circumstances due to human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) against all Palestinian civilians, including women.

The most recent form of systematic violence by IOF was the twenty two day military offensive against the Gaza Strip. Throughout the offensive, the lives of Palestinian women were endangered by IOF excessive and indiscriminate use of lethal force. Civilians, including women, were killed without any consideration for the principles of proportionality and distinction as prescribed by international humanitarian law in order to minimize civilian casualties during military operations.

According to PCHR documentation, 120 Palestinian women were killed by IOF during the offensive in Gaza, which constituted 8.3% of the total number of Palestinians killed by IOF during the offensive. In addition, 735 women were injured (17% of the total) Dozens of these women were maimed.

Many of the female victims were killed or injured whilst at home, or else in shelters at UNRWA schools, which had been transformed into temporary accommodation for internally displaced civilians. It is civilians who continue pay the real price of Israel's systematic acts of reprisal and retaliation against Palestinians and their property. During the recent Israeli military offensive, hundreds of women also witnessed the horrific deaths of their husbands or children.

The suffering of Palestinian women during the IOF offensive in the Gaza Strip was not limited to killings. IOF perpetrated a range of human rights violations that directly affected the lives of women, including house demolitions and destruction of local sources of income.

In addition, Palestinian women continue to be seriously affected by the IOF policy of collective punishment, and the siege imposed by IOF against the civilian population of the Gaza Strip, especially since June 2007.

In the West Bank, Palestinian women continue to suffer due to human rights violations perpetrated by IOF, including inter alia extra-judicial executions, willful killings, house raids

and demolitions, settlement activities and restrictions on freedom of movement.

In addition to these violations, Palestinian women continue to face systematic discrimination and violations within their own society which also need to be addressed urgently.

PCHR reiterates its support for Palestinian women in the face of the obstacles they face from the continuing occupation of the IOF. The Centre believes that the international community, particularly the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, have failed to fulfill their obligations, including the obligation to ensure Israel's respect of the Convention in order to provide protection for all Palestinian civilians. Accordingly, PCHR calls upon the international community:

- 1) To fulfill their obligations towards the Palestinian people as a people living under a belligerent occupation;
- 2) To provide the necessary protection for all Palestinian civilians, including women;
- 3) To force Israel to respect the Fourth Geneva Convention especially with regard to protecting civilians during military operations;
- 4) To hold Israel accountable for its violations against Palestinian civilians, which caused hundreds of civilian deaths during the recent military operation.

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