

Beijing+25: Has the Mask of Gender Equality Fallen?

TALK 6: Women and Armed Conflict – Solutions on Paper but Failure on the Ground!

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(Translated)

Dear Sisters,

When talking about areas of armed conflict, it jumps to mind images of destruction, blood and bodies, tears of bereaved mothers and orphaned children, separation and dispersal of families, painful scenes of displacement and seeking refuge, suffering from torture, captivity and enforced disappearance, and physical and psychological effects whose impact is lifelong and continued for successive generations as a result of the use of destructive chemical and nuclear weapons, as well as other effects affecting all aspects of economic, living and political life. What are the goals and mechanisms set by the Beijing Declaration to improve the lives of women in areas of armed conflict, and how effective and successful are they on the ground?

By looking at these goals and mechanisms, we find that:

1. The Declaration makes gender equality and women's empowerment by her access to decision-making positions in war-related bodies, organizations and committees related to the field of war and peace negotiations a focus of its goals and proposes them as a solution to alleviate the suffering of women in areas of armed conflict. Article 134 of the document states: "If women are to play an equal part in securing and maintaining peace, they must be empowered politically and economically and represented adequately at all levels of decision-making." By this, they mislead women and burden them beyond their ability instead of relieving them of their suffering; thus, making them run behind the mirage. Gender equality is a flimsy idea that does not take into account the differences between male and female that Allah has created within both and distributed duties and rights accordingly, thereby He (swt) oppressed neither of them and did not burden them with anything over their capacity. The Almighty says: ﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا﴾ **"Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity"** [Al-Baqara: 286]. Moreover, it is an idea that its people have recognized as failing and unattainable so far or even in the near future.

As for women's access to decision-making positions and their participation in negotiation or reconstruction committees or international courts to try war crimes perpetrators or any other decision-making position, they will not have a real impact on ending wars and alleviating the suffering of civilians in general and women in particular, because the system on which these committees are based and the laws that govern them come out of the niche of the capitalist system embraced by the colonial states, the ignitors of wars and conflicts. These committees and institutions are removed from the power of change, and whoever accesses these positions (man or woman) is shackled and ruled by these policies and the will and interests of the major countries. Moreover, the idea that women's access to decision-making positions will improve the condition of women in that country has proven to be a failure on the ground, for instance, look at the situation of Bangladesh and its women under Hasina's rule.

2- The Beijing Declaration requires governments to reduce military expenditures and allocate funds for social and economic development, especially for the advancement of women, but we do not know which advancement they want and on what basis it will be? We

know with certainty that no significant progress will be made in this area, because we are talking about colonial capitalist states that give value only to material, and also the ruling regimes in the world today, the “dependent” and those which are “followed” are taxation regimes, not regimes of care, and this is supported by what Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, who said: “Feminist organizations have repeatedly called for disarmament, arms control and shifting military spending to social investment. Still these calls have gone unanswered (by the international community)”.

3- And on the other hand, the Beijing Declaration requires countries to sign non-proliferation treaties, especially nuclear weapons, but the major countries do not sign or abide by them, because these countries have no interest in human safety or the environment or any false slogan they raise, as their criterion for actions is only benefit. So, we find them using all ways and means to achieve that benefit and even if this leads to committing the most heinous crimes against peoples, for they have used this weapon in Iraq, Japan, Vietnam and Syria without any regard for the agreements or protocols related to the prohibition of destructive weapons or related to the rights of civilians such as the Geneva Convention.

4- The Beijing Declaration stipulates that action to be taken to investigate and punish members of the police, security and armed forces and others who perpetrate acts of violence against women, violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women in situations of armed conflict, but the truth is that the perpetrators of these crimes have not been punished, nor have they been curbed, but rather the United Nations, the sponsor of this conference (the Beijing Conference), has committed crimes on a large scale in the world under the legal immunity enjoyed by its employees. So, is it above the law and accountability?! On 12/12/2018, the Turkish Anatolia Agency published a report stating, “The past two years have witnessed an alarming increase in the number of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers.” In addition to widespread hunger and insecurity in conflict areas, sexual violence committed by “Peacekeepers” exacerbated the harsh conditions for victims in countries such as Haiti, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, more recently, in the Central African Republic. How can we expect from those who violated human rights and violated the honors of women and abused children to be trustworthy for women, and form commissions of inquiry to issue sanctions against the perpetrators?

The matter is not limited to condoning the crimes committed by its employees, but rather the United Nations and its affiliated institutions deal with great duplicity and stand on the side of the oppressors, not on the side of the oppressed. Since its inception, it has been a tool in the hands of the major powers, and evidences of the complicity and duality of the United Nations are too numerous to be accommodated here, but of which we mention is its support for the Jewish entity since its inception and issuance of resolutions that recognize it and its existence and condoning its crimes against the people of Palestine, the American occupation and destruction of Iraq under the umbrella of the United Nations resolutions and its support for the criminal Bashar and its silence on his crime and his use of the chemical warfare in Ghouta and elsewhere, while still investigating whether these constitute war crimes or not?!

5- The document provides for providing international protection, assistance and training for refugee and displaced women, but on the ground the support and assistance that was provided did not match the magnitude of the wars and conflicts that were ignited and ensuing devastation and problems, and even the crumbs that have been provided were from the pockets of the peoples of the countries that donated their money in Donor conferences. Negligence and failure to provide protection and care to refugees have affected host countries as well as the UN organizations, so refugee women have lived in camps named

death camps due to their poor living conditions. Also, there have been reports of abuse and exploitation of refugee women in order to have access to food and basic services.

Dear Sisters,

The provisions and laws of Islam have brought mercy, guidance and life for humankind even with regard to wars and fighting.

1- Jihad in Islam is to revive human beings by spreading Islam between them, not to destroy and abolish them. Fighting in the Muslim's perception is defined and bound by Allah's orders and prohibitions and its goal is linked to the goal set by the legislator, which is removing physical barriers that stand in the way of the call and carrying it to the world, on the authority of Ibn Omar (ra), from Rasulullah (saw) who said: «أَمَرْتُ أَنْ أَقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ، فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَّا بِحَقِّ الْإِسْلَامِ، ***I have been commanded to fight against people, till they testify Laa ilaha illa Allah Muhammadur Rasulallah. And when they do it, their blood and riches are guaranteed protection on my behalf except where it is justified by law, and their affairs rest with Allah.***” (Agreed up on, the words by Al-Bukhari)

This is in terms of legislation, but in terms of implementation, the Khilafah State (Caliphate) is not a colonial state that lives on sucking the blood of peoples and plundering their wealth, and does not fight for the domination of oil wells, or coal mines, gold, diamonds, etc., nor to dominate strategic places that enable it to unjustly control everywhere; history has witnessed the justice of the Khilafah State with the peoples of the countries it conquered, and how it was calling them to Islam first, but if they rejected, it offered them to pay Jizyah and enter the authority of Islam, and if they rejected, it fought them.

2- Islam's policy in jihad is not a policy of extermination of civilians, trees, and stones, and fighting in Islam does not mean the destruction of crops and animals by means that the colonial states and their agents have used unchecked, such as poisonous gases, nuclear, biological and other weapons. Islam regards the killing of one soul as the killing of all people, as Allah Almighty said: «مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا» ***Whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely.*** [Al-Ma'ida: 32]. Our Messenger (saw) used to advise the armies set out to fight, as Muslim and Abu Dawood narrated from Suleiman bin Buraydah, from his father: that the Prophet (saw) said: «اغْرُزُوا بِاللَّهِ، وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، وَقَاتِلُوا مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ، اغْرُزُوا وَلَا تَعْدِرُوا، وَلَا تَغْلُوا وَلَا تَعْتَلُوا وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا وَلِيدًا» ***Fight in the name of Allah, and in the cause of Allah. Fight those who disbelieve in Allah. Fight and do not be treacherous, do not steal from the spoils of war, do not mutilate and do not kill children.*** And the caliphs followed his approach after him.

3- Islam set rules for security seekers (*musta'min*) and asylum seekers and preserved them and their money, and established the rights of the refugees before the United Nations set them. The Almighty said: «وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ» ***And if any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the words of Allah. Then deliver him to his place of safety. That is because they are a people who do not know.*** [At-Tawba: 6].

The Khilafah State was opened to them and its armies moved in support of all the oppressed and overpowered Muslims or the citizens of the state or others who sought its help, and the incident of Sultan Bayezid II saving the Jews who fled from the Inquisition in Spain is a witness to this.

4- The Khilafah State makes defending and protecting the honor of women a top priority, and it does not place civilians, especially women in the midst of the fire, to achieve its goals as is the case today in Syria, Yemen, and other countries, and a single cry of distress by a Muslim woman would move a strong army to support her, as the Prophet (saw) did when he banished Bani Qainuqa, and the Caliph al-Mu'tasim did when a Muslim woman sought help in a Roman prison.

5- In the Khilafah State, there is no conflict between spending on the military aspects of the state, and spending on other sectors such as health, education, and providing basic needs for people, because taking care of people's affairs and providing their needs is one of the state's duties, as is the military preparation.

It has become evident to us that the policies of the Beijing Declaration failed to improve the lives of women in areas of armed conflict. The problem does not lie in equality or lack thereof, or in women's access to decision-making positions or lack thereof, nor by joining international agreements related to arms prevention or human rights, but rather the problem is in the ideology adopted by the controlling states in the international community and its policies, and what it produced of ideas, policies and colonial ambitions that sparked the conflicts and wars that consumed everything on land and caused catastrophic consequences for the countries in which they ignited, especially for women and children. Then these countries came and offered solutions through international institutions, so the remedy was corrupt because it was taken from the source of the disease. So, the problem is the problem of a corrupt man-made system, and the problem of states that give no value except to the material things, and therefore it is necessary to replace it with the divine ideology from the One who is Wise and Acquainted.

This ideology is al-Islam, and it is imperative to establish a state that implements it in the reality of life so it provides the practical solutions for those problems rather than mere solutions on paper and futile agreements, and this State is the second Khilafah Rashidah (rightly guided Caliphate) on the method of the Prophethood, that is coming soon Bi'ithnillah.

So, shall we exert our efforts and work with the workers to establish it, for I swear it is the path of salvation in this world and the Hereafter.

﴿لَا يَسْتَوِي مِنْكُمْ مَنْ أَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَاتَلَ أُولَئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ بَعْدُ وَقَاتَلُوا﴾

“Not equal among you are those who spent before the conquest [of Makkah] and fought [and those who did so after it]. Those are greater in degree than they who spent afterwards and fought...” [Al-Hadid: 10]