



Press Release [For Immediate Release]

UN Convenes Open Day for the Women of Gaza

Gaza 12 July - The UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert Serry, received a group of 20 women leaders and peace activists in Gaza, for a consultation on their concerns regarding peace and security in the Gaza Strip. The meeting was the last of a series of [Global Open Days](#) on Women and Peace, held around the world in the context of the [10th anniversary of Security Council Resolution \(SCR\) 1325](#). A High-Level UN delegation, comprising of UNIFEM Executive Director, Ines Alberdi, UNFPA Deputy Executive Director, Mari Simonen, and Director of UNRWA Operations Gaza, John Ging, attended the Open Day which took place at the offices of UNRWA in Gaza City .

Speaking at the event, Mr. Serry said, "*Women must be active participants in addressing the full range of political challenges facing the Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza, and the international community needs to be partners in their empowerment*". He also commended Gazan women's efforts, stressing the difficult environment in which they are operating, "*an environment compounded by the blockade and internal political division*".

During their discussions with the UN delegation, the women activists highlighted the impact of the humanitarian crisis and dire health situation on Gazan women and girls; the exacerbation of violence against women and economic despair in times of conflict and under siege; as well as the need for greater support to women's political participation.

"This meeting is very important for Palestinian and Gazan women in the sense that it gives us a chance, though besieged, to address the Security Council and call for a concrete and full application of Resolution 1325" said Amal Syam, Executive Director of the Women's Affairs Centre-Gaza.

The outcomes of the Gaza Open Day will be communicated to the Security Council in October 2010 in order for it to be fully informed of the needs, concerns and recommendations of women in conflict and crisis settings, as part of the Council's discussions on the acceleration of the implementation of SCR 1325.

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