



Socialist International Women

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

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Socialist International Women denounces brutal attacks on Palestinian demonstrators

STATEMENT

The Socialist International Women strongly denounces the use of lethal fire by Israeli military forces against Palestinian demonstrators in Gaza on Sunday 14 May 2018. Thousands have been reported wounded and 62 protestors have been confirmed dead including eight children under the age of 16 and an eight month old baby. This brutal violence is the most recent shocking event during the last six weeks of protests and the worst Israeli attack on unarmed Palestinian civilians in Gaza since 2014.

International law is clear that lethal force may only be used as a last resort, not first response. The office of the prosecutor of the permanent international war crimes court has expressed 'grave concern' regarding the escalating violence in Gaza and has confirmed that alleged crimes could be subject to an international war crimes investigation. However, the Israeli government has so far rejected calls by the UN Secretary-General and members of the international community for a transparent independent inquiry into the use of lethal force in Gaza by their military forces.

The Socialist International Women strongly maintains it is vital an urgent investigation into Sunday's events is carried out to establish the facts and ensure an appropriate response to perpetrators of violations of human rights and international law. It is essential that the international community stands in solidarity against the brutalisation of vulnerable communities and protects the human rights of men, women and children within these communities.

The Socialist International Women is deeply concerned that these tragic events have severely damaged decades of delicate peace-making efforts within the region. The protests took place on the inauguration day of the United States' embassy in Jerusalem which it divisibly moved from Tel Aviv. Jerusalem is of profound significance to Jews, Muslims and Christians and holds a pivotal place in the negotiation of peace between Palestinians and Israelis. These factors made the move of the embassy to Jerusalem highly likely to result in protests by the Palestinian people who see the status of East Jerusalem as essential in peace talks and the future recognition of a Palestinian state.

The Socialist International Women confirms its solidarity with the Palestinian people and advocates the continuation of urgent diplomatic efforts to end the deadly violence against men, women and children in the Gaza Strip. It is critical that a peaceful resolution is achieved which respects the views and human rights of all parties.

The Socialist International Women urges all members and affiliated groups to proactively encourage the international community to continue to strive for sustainable peace and the urgent protection of civilians in the region.
