

International  
Review of  
Contemporary Law



**IADL**  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF DEMOCRATIC LAWYERS

Revue  
Internationale de  
Droit Contemporain

Edited by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers  
Vol. 6, March 2024

Revue Internationale de Droit Contemporain Editée par l'Association  
Internationale des Juristes Démocrates vol. 6, mars 2024



**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY SPECIAL EDITION**

**VOICES**

**OF RESILIENCE**



## IADL INTERVIEW PALESTINIAN POET DAREEN TATOUR:

# “BEING A WOMAN AND A POET IN PALESTINE MEANS THAT I CARRY IN MY WRITINGS THE MESSAGE OF FREEDOM”!

First of all, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for accepting to conduct this interview with us. Every year on March 8th, as IADL, we prepare a specific online publication for International Women's Day. And this year, we decided to dedicate our issue to the voices of Palestinian women.

**IADL: First, could you tell our readers what it means to be a woman in general, but then a woman poet, in the occupied territories of Palestine?**

DT: Being a woman means being a teacher, graduating at her hands of doctors, teachers, craftsmen, and workers, but being a Palestinian woman, in addition to all of these, will graduate at her hands of free people and resistance fighters, and I will participate on the path to achieving freedom. Being a Palestinian woman means being the mother of a martyr or a prisoner or the wife of a fighter pursued by the occupation. The Palestinian woman is the patient woman, she is the key to freedom and its light, she is the mother, the sister, the prisoner and the martyr, she is the whole of life, she is Palestine. The Palestinian woman is the factory of men. She is the one who gives birth to resistance fighters and raises them to love freedom and to love Palestine and dignity. She is the supportive sister who stands in support of those seeking freedom. She is the lover and waiting lover of her imprisoned husband who has been sentenced to several life terms. She is the first spark that exploded in the face of the occupation to fight side by side with the man in the battle for freedom and the struggle against occupation. As for the Palestinian woman who did not have the opportunity to participate in direct struggle, she has another job, which is to teach the steadfastness of the Palestinian people and build generations that know well the meaning of Palestine and the meaning of the homeland. Being a woman and a poet in Palestine means that I carry in my writings the message of freedom, that I resist the occupation with every letter I write, that I support my people, and that I know that I will be a target for the occupation authorities whenever I write something, because the pen is the truth that this occupation fears and does not want to see me reach. It means that I am part of the formation of political and cultural awareness, and that my poems become a memory.



**IADL: As a Palestinian woman, your poetry not only focuses on the struggles and sacrifices of women but also consistently emphasizes resistance. How do you define the relationship between your poetry and your identity? Can you explain to our readers the emotional and cognitive conditions that determine the prominent themes in your poems?**

DT: One of the most important things that distinguishes Palestinian poetry is that it has an important and fundamental role in preserving identity and shaping the Palestinian national consciousness. Once I was born in Palestine and became a poet, my poetic identity was formed by writing resistance poetry and political poetry. My poems carry a special rhythm to the Palestinian story and document it through poetry. The story has become a new synonym for the absence of justice and the feeling of stability, freedom, and security. I consider my poems to be artistic documentation of the life I live and the identity that represents me.

Palestine in my poems is me and I am Palestine.

I consider poetry to be one of the most important cultural sources that define identity. Through my poems, I present my personal experience and the experience of my community and country, which reflects the social, cultural and historical reality of Palestine and enhances belonging and loyalty to it. The poetry I write also includes mention of many Palestinian figures and cultural values that express national identity. This is how I contribute to preserving the cultural, political, linguistic and historical heritage of Palestine, disseminate it and contribute to introducing others to it. I write about everything I experience and document it in an artistic way. The people who inspire me to write poems are my people and the air of my country.

**IADL: You were imprisoned for three years and convicted due to your poem “Resist my people, resist them.” Could you share the story behind this poem and its significance to you?**

DT: It is a poem that documents my feelings for what I experienced in 2014, when the incident of the martyrdom of the child Muhammad Abu Khudair from Jerusalem occurred at the hands of settlers, after they kidnapped him from the street in the dawn hours while he was heading to pray in the mosque during the month of Ramadan, and then they tortured him to death and then burning his body. Likewise, the incident of burning the child, Ali Dawabsha, while he was sleeping with his mother and father from the village of Duma, at the hands of a group of settlers who burned this family's house. This fire led to the martyrdom of the infant, Ali Dawabsha, along with his mother and father. In the same year, while I was watching television, I was greatly affected when I saw a scene documenting the moment the young woman, Hadeel Al-Hashlamoun, from Hebron, was sniped at one of the checkpoints by one of the occupation soldiers because she refused to take off her hijab and submit to search. The scene was very difficult for me as a woman.

I could not bear these scenes. I felt intense anger sweeping over me. I wanted to express this anger, so I only felt this feeling while writing the poem “Resist, My People,” which tells about these three incidents. The images of child martyrs did not leave my imagination for a moment, so the poem was a dedication to their souls.

**IADL: Can we ask for details about your trial process and the conditions of your imprisonment?**



DT: I prefer not to go into details, because they are very long and boring. It is better to talk about poetry and poems, not about how a poet and a poem were tried and imprisoned. I will sum it up and say that it was three very difficult years. I lived through hell. The occupation authorities arrested me and imprisoned me for three years. Because of a poem,.. I came out of prison with three books, which I wrote in their prison. One of these books contains 168 poems. They imprisoned me because of a poem and I left prison with 168 poems. This sums up the whole issue.

“

**EVERY WOMAN IN THE WORLD MUST KNOW WHAT PALESTINIAN WOMEN SUFFER BECAUSE OF THE OCCUPATION, AND REMEMBER WHAT PALESTINIAN WOMEN SUFFER TODAY IN GAZA AND THEIR LACK OF PRIVACY WHILE THEY ARE IN THE DISPLACEMENT CENTERS IN THE BESIEGED SOUTHERN GAZA STRIP, AMIDST THE HARSH CONDITIONS THEY FACE TO PROVIDE THE MINIMUM NECESSITIES OF LIFE, THE SIMPLEST OF WHICH IS THEIR INABILITY TO USE BATHROOMS OR SLEEP ALONE IN A PRIVATE ROOM. WITH THE PREVENTION OF THE ENTRY OF AID BY THE OCCUPATION, WOMEN'S SANITARY SUPPLIES WERE NOT PROVIDED TO THEM.**

”

**IADL: Your poem “Detaining a poem” essentially encapsulates the severe injustice you’ve faced. However, it’s not just a narrative of injustice but the poem itself is protesting. Can we say that poetry serves as a call to action and a means of resistance for you?**

DT: Yes, I resist with poetry. In Palestine, we are all resisting the occupation in our own way. I resist with culture and writing, by spreading the truth that the occupation always and forever tries to suppress.

Here, the role of resistance poetry is highlighted, which enhances the national image of the homeland, its components, and its resistance, in confronting the occupation and the tools it possesses to confront the occupation’s practices.

Palestinian resistance literature is a very special exception, as it deals with the issue of a homeland that was stolen 80 years ago.

**IADL: Are you still in exile?**

DT: In fact, I am not in exile. I decided to return to Palestine and stay with my people in everything they are going through. I could not bear to remain in exile any longer and decided to return even though I was threatened with death and imprisonment, and even though since the beginning of the war I have been receiving dozens of death threat messages every day from Zionist parties calling themselves the Price Tag Group. I decided to go back and said to myself, “What will happen to my people will happen to me.”

Today, thank God, I am in Palestine. A true intellectual must expose himself to dangers and make sacrifices. With this conviction, I decided to return to Palestine.

Regarding genocide and the international community, I will say it frankly. This is the community that gives the green light to the occupation to kill and exterminate us. The double standards are crystal clear in the way it deals with the Ukraine-Russia war. We Palestinians do not have white skin and blue eyes. And we are still waiting until this international community stands with our right to freedom and stops this war of extermination.



Instead, it appears to be the job of this international community to protect Israel and provide it with all the weapons, equipment and material support it needs to complete its war of annihilation against us. Every crime committed by the occupying army exposes the bad behavior of the international community, which practices intentional double standards towards the Palestinian people on the one hand, and towards the “Israeli” occupation on the other hand.

**IADL: Where do you see the role of your art in the struggle against occupation and genocide? How do you define the responsibility of artists in the current situation?**

DT: From the first moment of the occupation's aggression against Gaza and the beginning of the genocide, I began writing and documenting everything I see. A book was published in the English language entitled:

A Balcony Over a City Engulfed by War

<https://www.drunkmusepress.com/product-page/a-balcony-over-a-city-engulfed-by-war-1>

I had to write about everything I saw, document the stories so that the truth would remain.

A poet or writer who does not write about genocide does not deserve the title of writer or poet. This is our role in the awareness battle to support the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in Gaza.

In the face of the blood, sacrifices, massive destruction, stifling siege and genocide in Gaza, cultural, cognitive and public support remains below the required level, because the battle is extremely cruel and important.

The true intellectual is not separated from reality, and does not reside in extreme isolation, but rather is motivated by the principles of truth and fair justice in defense of the weak.

**IADL: Do you have a special message for women around the world in the context of International Women's Day?**

DT: Every woman in the world must know what Palestinian women suffer because of the occupation, and remember what Palestinian women suffer today in Gaza and their lack of privacy while they are in the displacement centers in the besieged southern Gaza Strip, amidst the harsh conditions they face to provide the minimum necessities of life, the simplest of which is their inability to use bathrooms or sleep alone in a private room. With the prevention of the entry of aid by the occupation, women's sanitary supplies were not provided to them.

Remember that Palestinian women in light of this war are doing very difficult jobs, such as searching for food in order to save their children or chopping firewood to cook food, sitting in front of a fire that emits smoke for long hours in the open, and that they suffer from difficult psychological conditions because of being forced to leave her home, or because it was bombed by soldiers, or because of the loss of the necessities of life, or because of the loss of family members and children.

Remember that Palestinian women have been subjected, for 80 years, to a multifaceted attack of racial discrimination, systematic violence, and denial of the right to self-determination due to the occupation.



# Dareen Tatour

Dareen Tatour is a Palestinian poet, photographer, filmmaking, political, and social media activist from Reineh, Palestine. She has spent more than two years in jail or under house arrest since October 2015 and was convicted in an Israeli occupation court for inciting violence and supporting a terrorist organization, following the publication of a poem on social media. She was released in 2018 after serving a prison term.

Since then, world opinion has drawn attention to her case. Tatour is the recipient of the OXFAM Novib/PEN award 2019 for freedom of expression. A Hebrew online magazine, Maayan, awarded Tatour the 2016 prize for creativity in struggle, and she was also awarded the Danish Carl Scharenberg Prize for standing against injustice through her poetry in 2017. In 2020 she won the Freedom of Expression Award in Norway - Oslo.

Here is a list of her publications:

- The Last Invasion, Nazareth: El Wattan Books, 2010
- My Threatening Poem, Arabic, Tunis: Dyar Publishing and Distribution House, 2018.
- Threatening Poem - Memoir of a Poet in Occupation Prisons, English Version. Scotland: Drunk Muse Press, 2020
- I Sing From the Window of Exile - English and Arabic. Scotland: Drunk Muse Press, 2023
- A Balcony Over a City Engulfed by War - English. Scotland: Drunk Muse Press, 2023

Other Artistic Ventures:

- Survivors Recount, a documentary film on the uprooted village Al-Damoun in the Galilee, 2015, aired in Tamra, in the Galilee
- Tell Me About My Homeland, 2012, an exhibition of photographs and poems displayed in Nazareth, Haifa, Tamra, Renne, Shefar'am, Amman (Jordan) and the Palestinian refugee camp Al Yarmouk in Syria. The exhibition was slated to open in Gaza in 2015, but was curtailed after Tatour's arrest in October, 2015.
- Survivors Recount, a documentary film on the uprooted village Al-Damoun in the Galilee, 2015.
- I, Dareen Tatour", 2018, a play in collaboration with theatre artist Einat Weitzman, directed by Nitzan Cohen and performed by Weitzman. This play has been shown at Tamu-na Theatre, Tel Aviv since October 2018 to packed audiences, and also abroad.
- Min Hotfulla Dikt, 2022, a play in Sweden.

Prizes

- 2016: Maayan's Award for Creativity in Struggle
- 2017: Carl Scharenberg Prize for standing against injustice through poetry
- 2019: OXFAM Novib/PEN award 2019 for freedom of expression.
- 2020: The Freedom of Expression Award in Norway - Oslo.
- 2020: ICORN: She was a guest on the ICORN program for two years. 15-09-2020 - 01-11-2022: ICORN residency in Sweden.
- 2023: The Palestine Book Awards 2023 - Creative Award Winner - "I Sing From the Window of Exile".



## A Poem's Arrest

One day  
 They detained me  
 They shackled me  
 They chained both my body and shadow  
 No, all of me, being thorough  
 They then said, "Search her!"  
 Terrorism is what lies within her  
 My heart, they turned it upside down  
 They searched it through  
 My eyes, they searched those, too  
 They inspected my emotions and feelings  
 From my eyes, they ripped out the beats of my wishes and aspirations  
 From my heart, they forbid, on paper, pouring out the meanings  
 They then said, "Of her, beware"  
 In her pockets, a weapon she does hide  
 Inspect her  
 Take her bombs away  
 Inspect me, they did  
 To accuse me, they then said  
 In her pocket  
 We only found some letters  
 We solely found the poem

## اعْتِقَالُ قَصِيدَةٍ

ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ  
 أَوْقَفُونِي  
 قَيَّدُونِي  
 كَبَّلُوا جِسْمِي وَظِلِّي  
 بَلْ وَكُلِّي...  
 ثُمَّ قَالُوا: فَتَشَوْهَا  
 ...! إِنَّهُ الْإِرْهَابُ فِيهَا  
 ... قَلَّبُوا فِيَّ الْفُؤَادَ  
 وَالْعُيُونَ  
 فَتَشَّوْا حَتَّى الْمَشَاعِرِ  
 مِنْ عُيُونِي أَخْرَجُوا نَبْضَ الْأَمَانِي  
 مِنْ فُؤَادِي حَزَّزُوا رَسْمَ الْمَعَانِي  
 ثُمَّ قَالُوا: اخْذَرُواهَا  
 فِي الْجُيُوبِ إِنَّهَا تُخْفِي سِلَاحًا  
 فَتَشَوْهَا  
 انزَعُوا مِنْهَا الْقَنَابِلَ  
 ... فَتَشَّوْا نِي  
 : ثُمَّ قَالُوا لِاتِّهَامِي  
 لَمْ نَجِدْ  
 فِي جَيْبِهَا إِلَّا حُرُوفًا  
 لَمْ نَجِدْ إِلَّا الْقَصِيدَةَ



## A Woman's Scream

Oh, my life, that lives  
 In the heart of pages  
 Look here—  
 Our sorrows have shut the doors of  
 Our wishes and desires,  
 And their ghosts have embraced our  
 color  
 Until, combined, we appeared to be  
 one —  
 The ink is in the poetry of anxiety.  
 Look at them, sinking their fangs  
 Into my waist  
 Sucking out my flowers and their  
 aroma  
 To my youth, my springtime,  
 They gave it a death blow  
 They stole my life—  
 Erased it from existence  
 Setting the season of insomnia  
 Free  
 Oh, life, I got tired  
 Let me travel to be away  
 And self-isolate  
 In my land's silence for good  
 Let me as I can't beat it—  
 It is charged by an eye of the sun  
 Or a twilight  
 Oh destiny, you will not break the cuffs  
 Shackling me  
 Hope doesn't quench the trees of my  
 Repression's thirst  
 I will keep on living in isolation  
 Feeding on the fires of time and burn  
 Oh, how long I lived in poverty

The flower of life haunts me  
 I water it with the fountain of struggle  
 I build it out of the determination of  
 the youth  
 I play and sing for existence  
 I stare at the birth of peace  
 In my eyes, I show all types of  
 Beams and lights  
 Yet they are the sorrows, oh,  
 My life  
 Which have haunted me just like  
 Names in the middle of a place  
 Just like the sound of echoes.  
 Oh, my haunted letters  
 In the sea of drowning  
 Let me struggle and fight in the  
 nothingness  
 Alone with the sorrows, with the tears  
 of regret  
 The pain shall remain within me,  
 alive,  
 As long as I 'm pleased with silence  
 Oh, my dream, which from its youth  
 Was seized —  
 Our silence wreaked havoc in us  
 And our tears turned into seas—  
 Our patience has had enough of us  
 We, together, will definitely rebel  
 If we want to be  
 Come on—  
 Let's shout louder  
 In the face of the ghosts of darkness.  
 Until when, oh my pain  
 Will you burn my heart with tears?  
 Until when, oh screams, will you  
 Remain in women's hearts





## صِرْحَةُ أَنْثَى

يا عُمرِي الْمَسْكُونِ فِي قَلْبِ الْوَرَقِ  
:أُنْظُرْ هُنَا  
أَخْرَانَا قَدْ أَوْصَدَتْ بَابَ الْمُنَى  
وَتَعَانَقَتْ أَشْبَاهُهَا مَعَ لُونِنَا  
حَتَّى بَدَوْنَا مِثْلَهَا  
الْجَبْرَ فِي شِعْرِ الْفَلَقِ  
أُنْظُرْ إِلَيْهَا كَيْفَ تَغْرَسُ نَائِهَا  
فِي خَاصِرِي  
ثُمَّتْصُ زَهْرِي وَالْعَيْقُ  
قَتَلَتْ رَبِيعِي كُلَّهُ  
سَرَقَتْ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا حَيَاتِي  
أَعْتَقَتْ فَصَلَ الْأَرْقِ  
يَا عُمرُ إِنِّي قَدْ تَعَبْتُ  
دَعْنِي أَسَافِرُ لِلرَّحِيلِ وَأَنْزَوِي  
فِي صَمْتِ أَرْضِي لِلْأَبْدِ  
دَعْنِي فَلَنْ أَقْوَى عَلَيْهَا إِنَّهَا  
مَشْحُونَةٌ مِنْ عَيْنِ شَمْسٍ أَوْ شَفَقِ  
لَنْ تَكْسِرَ الْأَعْلَالَ عَيْيَ يَا قَدْرُ  
لَا تَرْتَوِي أَشْجَارُ قَهْرِي بِالْأَمَلِ  
سَأَطْلُ أَحْبَابًا بِالنَّطْوَاءِ  
أَقْتَاتُ مِنْ نَارِ الرِّمَانِ وَأَحْتَرِقُ  
مَا دَامَ يَسْجُنُنِي السُّكَاثُ  
مَا دَامَ يَفْطُنُنِي الْحَزَنُ

كَمْ عَشْتُ فِي تَرْبِ الْمَالِ  
يُنْتَابِنِي زَهْرُ الْحَيَاةِ  
أَسْقِيهِ مِنْ نَبْعِ الْبِضَالِ  
أَبْنِيهِ مِنْ عَزْمِ الشَّبَابِ  
أَلْهُو.. أَعْنِي لِلْوُجُودِ  
أَرْنُو لِمِيلَادِ السَّلَامِ  
أَبْدِي بِعَيْنِي كُلِّ نَوْرٍ  
لَكِنَّهَا الْأَخْرَانُ يَا عُمرِي أَنَا  
ظَلَلْتُ ثَلَاثِينَ كَمَا الْأَسْمَاءُ فِي صَدْرِ الْمَكَانِ  
وَمِثْلُ أَصْوَاتِ الصَّدَى  
يَا حَرْفِي الْمَسْكُونِ فِي بَحْرِ الْغَرْقِ  
دَعْنِي أَصَارِغُ فِي الْعَدَمِ  
وَحْدِي مَعَ الْأَخْرَانِ مَعَ دَمْعِ النَّدَمِ  
سَأَطْلُ يَسْجُنُنِي الْأَلَمِ  
مَا دُمْتُ أَرْضِي بِالسُّكَاثِ  
يَا حُلْمِي الْمَخْطُوفِ مِنْ جِذْنِ الصَّبَا  
قَدْ عَاثَ فِينَا صَمْتُنَا  
قَدْ صَارَ بَحْرًا دَمْعُنَا  
قَدْ مَلَّ مِنَّا صَبْرُنَا  
إِنَّمَا مَعَا حَتْمًا نَنُورُ  
إِنَّمَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نَكُونَ  
هَيَا بِنَا نُغْلِي الصُّرَاخِ  
فِي وَجْهِ أَشْبَاحِ الظَّلَامِ  
فَالِي مَتَى يَا حَرْفَتِي تَكْوِينِ  
صَدْرِي بِالْبُكَاءِ؟ وَإِلَى مَتَى يَا صِرْحَةُ  
إِتْبَعِينَ فِي قَلْبِ النَّسَاءِ



**IADL INTERVIEW PALESTINIAN LAWYER MAI ATTALLAH:**

**“PALESTINIAN WOMEN AND GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN SAFETY AND PEACE LIKE OTHER WOMEN IN THE WORLD, AND TO ENJOY BASIC RIGHTS.”**

---

**IADL: Dear Mai, First of all, thank you very much for agreeing to do this interview with us in these difficult times. Can we start by talking about the conditions of women in Palestine in general?**

MA: Like other Arab societies, Palestinian society has been greatly affected by conflict, occupation, war and colonialism, all of which have greatly affected the situation of women and women's rights. The situation in Palestine is unique, because we are still under Israeli occupation and suffering from it on a daily basis. It affects every aspect of our lives, and it is impossible to speak about women's rights in Palestine without first and foremost addressing the occupation, the primary party responsible for the oppression of Palestinian women.

We are a society like other societies. We have violence, we have violations, and we also have deprivation. There are many girls and women who are still deprived of inheritance rights, and many are deprived of the right to education, the right to work, and the freedom to choose a partner. We have also seen major changes due to developments in society, which mean that women have obtained all or some of their rights on an internal Palestinian level, despite the ongoing suffering as a result of the scourge of the occupation.

The most prominent threat to Palestinian women and their rights remains the occupation. All the crimes committed by the occupation forces against the Palestinian people severely affect Palestinian women. Since October 7 and as a result of the collective punishment policy imposed by the occupation forces on the Palestinian people in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, many women and girls lost their jobs due to their inability to reach the workplace as a result of the closure of checkpoints and the placement of iron gates at the entrances to Palestinian cities, which obstructed the



access of school students and workers, including women, to the workplace, and as a result, these women's families fear that their daughters will be arrested, they are prevented from going to work by passing through these checkpoints.

To clarify: the Palestinian people are divided into four categories:

1. Palestinian identity holders/West Bank residents.
2. Palestinian identity holders/residents of the Gaza Strip
3. Holders of Israeli citizenship/residents of the occupied territories (Israel) are called Israeli citizens from the 1948 occupied Palestinian land, often called "Arabs of 1948" or "1948 Palestinians".
4. Holders of Israeli ID/residents of East Jerusalem (under Israeli rule) are called residents of Israel.

Each category is subject to specific laws and forms of oppression, and Palestinians in Category No. 1 and Category No. 2 cannot enter East Jerusalem or Israel. In addition to the classification of areas as A, B, and C stipulated in the Oslo Accords, and with all these complexities and challenges, Palestinian women are still struggling to obtain their rights amid an ongoing colonial occupation.

I would like to emphasize that my answers in this interview are my personal opinions and orientations:

**IADL: As a female lawyer representing the Palestinian Bar, how do you perceive the role of women in Palestine amidst the ongoing genocidal acts perpetrated by Israel, and how has this conflict affected their daily lives and safety?**

MA: The Palestinian women have participated and continue to participate effectively in various stages and forms of struggle, embodying their tangible national role since the beginning of the revolution in Palestine, and at all levels until the present day. The ones who made the most sacrifices were the Palestinian women, as they are the mothers of the martyr, the sisters of the martyr, the daughters of the martyr, and the Palestinian woman is also a martyr. Since the beginning of the aggression on October 7th of 2023, at least 8,570 women and 12,660 children have been martyred, meaning 65% of the martyrs of the aggression against the Gaza Strip were children and women. (Note, these figures are not complete and are based on earlier statistics from the ongoing genocide in Gaza.)

Given the situation of women today in light of the continuing state of aggression, they work side by side with men and more. Women in the Gaza Strip work to provide housing and food for their children. Many women sold their gold to pay for the expensive costs of life after displacement, and to provide food for the children, and we saw hundreds of women martyred while protecting their children. This aggression has greatly affected women's lives. None of the women anymore cared about the obvious matters that concern every woman. Every woman in Gaza Strip was displaced and left her home and her memories, and her only interest in this life became how to save her children. She no longer thinks about anything other than the survival of her children.

**IADL: In what ways do you think the international community can better support Palestinian women and their rights, particularly during times of war and heightened violence initiated by Israel?**



MA: Unfortunately, the international community has failed to hold the Israeli occupation accountable for the actual violations of international humanitarian law and human rights violations committed against Palestinian civilians, including women, and has failed to achieve justice and ensure protection and respect for human rights.

“

**HOW CAN I TALK ABOUT WOMEN'S RIGHTS WHEN MY FRIEND IS IN GAZA STRIP LOOKING FOR MILK FOR HER CHILD AND THE ENTIRE WORLD HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO PROVIDE A BOX OF MILK FOR HER CHILD? WHAT RIGHTS FOR WOMEN WILL I INTRODUCE OR PLAN FOR HER FUTURE WHEN SHE IS UNABLE TO PROVIDE MILK FOR THIS BABY FOR TWO MONTHS! IN MY OPINION, INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY EFFORTS SHOULD NOW FOCUS ON STOPPING THE AGGRESSION AND BRINGING IN AID IMMEDIATELY.**

”

**IADL: As you also know the 8th of March is celebrated globally as International Women's Day. Against the backdrop of the current humanitarian crisis and Israeli aggression, how do you see the significance of this day in highlighting the resilience and struggles of Palestinian women, especially during times of war?**

MA: Many graphic images and evidence of the crimes that were violated against Palestinian women in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip can be displayed them on this day everywhere around the world. On International Women's Day, raise the slogan, "Palestinian women and girls have the right to live in safety and peace like other women in the world, and to enjoy basic rights."

**IADL: Can you share specific examples of challenges or successes that have advanced women's rights in Palestine amidst the continuous violations of human rights and the ongoing conflict initiated by Israel?**

MA: Despite the occupation and its obstacles, Palestinian women were able to reach decision-making and leadership positions. Palestinian women also compete and enter elections side by side with men and compete with them to reach leadership positions and positions (we have women ministers, governors, leaders in political parties, associations and unions, judges, and lawyers, doctors, and there are many examples). Palestinian women embody outstanding steadfastness. Palestinian women are subjected to the most heinous crimes, especially in the occupied city of Jerusalem, the areas close to the settlements and the annexation and racist expansion wall, and in the Gaza Strip, which is subjected to massive crimes, including the crime of genocide. The genocide continues, and despite this, Palestinian women have persevered and contributed to building the institutions of the Palestinian state, defying the extreme oppressive circumstances of the Palestinian people under occupation and colonialism.

**IADL: How does the ongoing genocidal acts and political situation in Palestine impact women's access to basic necessities, healthcare, and education, especially during times of war when resources are scarce and communities are displaced?**



MA: Without talking or addressing what happens before the 7th of October, it is enough to mention a simple example that embodies the suffering of Palestinian women and their deprivation of the most basic rights: Women in Gaza Strip cannot find sanitary pads to use during their menstrual period, and they do not even find medications that postpone their menstrual period. This is a simple example of the suffering and denial of the right to health care which is followed by the violation and deprivation of all basic rights. You have all seen births in tents, without anesthesia, and without providing any kind of post-natal health care. I believe there is nothing worse than that in the world.

**IADL: What grassroots initiatives or community programs have been effective in supporting and empowering Palestinian women, particularly during periods of heightened conflict and aggression by Israeli forces?**

MA: There are many initiatives, whether from the official level or the private sector and international organizations working in Palestine, but because of the aggression and the destruction of all local institutions in the Gaza Strip by the Israeli genocide, none of them can be activated at the present time.

**IADL: Gender-based violence tends to increase during times of war and conflict. How do Palestinian communities address such cases, and what additional measures are needed to protect women, especially in the context of Israeli aggression and the displacement of Palestinian communities?**

MA: International humanitarian law grants women in times of conflict general protection, as they are civilians, and special protection, given that women can be exposed to specific types of violence. This need for special protection focuses on the needs of women, especially if they are mothers, and on the need to protect them from sexual violence in particular. In the Palestinian case and the ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip, the occupying power is flouting all international human rights conventions. This comes in addition to cases of violence within families, which have increased, especially after displacement and with the presence of dozens of families in one place of displacement and without providing the minimum necessities of life. The pressures resulting from deprivation have increased the rates of this violence within families and even between women and men.

**IADL: The theme for International Women's Day this year is "Break the Bias." How do you interpret this theme in the context of Palestinian society during times of war, and what are the specific challenges faced in breaking such biases amid ongoing conflict initiated by Israel?**

MA: Given the crimes of genocide committed in the Gaza Strip, and the collective punishment imposed by the occupation forces in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, we see that Palestinian women often make the greatest efforts and sacrifices during the aggression, side by side with Palestinian men. Hundreds of thousands of women in the Gaza Strip were displaced with their children in search of security and protection. Women and children make up 65% of the total martyrs in Gaza today, which confirms that women are fulfilling their social role as well as the traditional roles of men during the genocidal war and the state of aggression against the Gaza Strip. There are many scenes and examples in the Gaza Strip that prove this. The most prominent challenge to



Palestinian women remains the occupation.

**IADL: Looking ahead, what are the key priorities or goals for advancing women's rights and gender equality in Palestine amidst the ongoing occupation, aggression, and war initiated by Israel, both within the community and through international advocacy efforts?**

MA: Looking at the legal environment in occupied Palestine, you find it very complex. It is a mixture between the laws left by the British Mandate, the Jordanian laws that were applied during the period of Jordanian rule in the West Bank, and the Egyptian laws that were applied in the Gaza Strip after Egyptian rule of the Strip. The Israeli occupation, also imposes new sets of military orders of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This comes in addition to Palestinian laws issued by the Palestinian Legislative Council as well as international laws and conventions that apply to the Palestinian situation. I believe that with this complex mix of laws and the classification of areas into A, B, and C in Palestine, it makes it difficult to talk about the future priorities related to women's rights and equality. How can I talk about women's rights when my friend is in Gaza Strip looking for milk for her child and the entire world has not been able to provide a box of milk for her child? What rights for women will I introduce or plan for her future when she is unable to provide milk for this baby for two months! In my opinion, international advocacy efforts should now focus on stopping the aggression and bringing in aid immediately.

---

## Adv. Mai Attallah

Adv. Mai Attallah is a prominent figure in the legal landscape of Palestine, holding key positions in the administration of legal profession. Currently serving as the Head of Public Relations and Media at the Palestinian Bar Association since 2016, she has demonstrated exceptional communication skills in promoting legal advocacy and awareness within and out of the community.

In addition, Adv. Attallah has been entrusted with the responsibility of heading the Palestinian Bar Association's President's Office since 2018, further showcasing her capacity for strategic management and administrative acumen.

With a longstanding dedication to the legal field, Adv. Attallah became a member of the Palestinian Bar Association in 2005, laying the foundation for her illustrious career. Her commitment to legal excellence is underscored by her academic achievements, having earned a Bachelor of Arts in Law from Alquds University in 2005, followed by a Master of Laws from Birzeit University's Faculty of Graduate Studies in 2009.

Beyond her professional endeavors, Adv. Attallah is deeply engaged in promoting social justice and human rights in Palestine. Her passion for advocacy extends to various community initiatives aimed at empowering marginalized groups and fostering a more equitable society.



# IADL

The International Association of Democratic Lawyers is a global organization of lawyers' associations, individual lawyers and judges from over 90 countries committed to equality amongst peoples, the elimination of imperialism and colonialism and the protection of the rights of all. IADL is a Non-Governmental Organization accredited to ECOSOC and UNESCO.

**[www.iadllaw.org](http://www.iadllaw.org)**  
**[info@iadllaw.org](mailto:info@iadllaw.org)**



Editor-in-chief/éditrice en chef: Evelyn Dürmayer

email: [evelyn.duermayer@gmail.com](mailto:evelyn.duermayer@gmail.com)

[www.iadllaw.org](http://www.iadllaw.org)

IADL, International Association of Democratic Lawyers, is a Non- Governmental Organization (NGO) with consultative status to ECOSOC and represented at UNESCO and UNICEF. The IADL was founded in 1946 by a gathering of lawyers who had survived the war against fascism and participated in the Nuremberg Trials. The International Review of Contemporary Law is a digital legal journal published by IADL. It does not follow the mainstream, but instead analyzes legal questions in their cultural, economical, political and social context.

©2024 International Association of Democratic Lawyers

Design: Bertan Koyuncu