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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by Family Health Association of Iran, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[01 February 2020]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Violation of women's rights in Yemen

War is an evil phenomenon which from various aspects leaves negative impacts on the lives of people especially right to life, right to security, right to health, right to education and right to employment. All these instances are deemed as violation of the human rights of individuals during conflict situations.

Overall, military conflicts, terrorism and internal and external interferences further threaten women. Violation of human rights for women and children in armed conflicts, clearly threaten the pillars of health and security of Mankind.

International humanitarian law is a branch of human rights which deals with the rights of individuals during war and or armed conflict, and its aim is to protect persons who are not directly involved in conflict. These individuals are the injured, patients, POWs and civilians. Therefore the impunity of civilians and civilian targets from impacts of war is a fundamental objective, and also human treatment of parties in conflict is also considered. But there are human rights violations against many civilians, particularly women during armed conflict.

Yemen is a country that in the last five years has suffered from the military intervention of other countries, a military attack which created countless problems for the country and grave human rights violations are committed, particularly against Yemeni women. This is while according to humanitarian law, women and children must be away from the impacts of war because they are not involved in conflict.

In its annual report, the World Economy Forum reported gender inequality in 144 countries, and Yemen is in the bottom of the list. This survey is based on information related to women's access to education, health, general medical treatment and participation in the specified country's economic and political matters. The conflict conditions in Yemen and violation of women's rights were factors in the position the country had in the list.

In 2018, the UN Secretary General reported that the Yemeni crisis had turned into the worst human crisis in the world and almost three quarters of the people which make up around 22 million, are in need of humanitarian assistance.

Also the UN representative in the same year reported that the impacts of airstrikes, bombardments and attacking civilians have become deeply concerning. He said that in view of the destroyed infrastructures and increase in displacement and destructive impacts on agriculture and the economy, three million women and girls are threatened with sexual abuse.

NGOs and experts have warned about Yemen conflict and violation of women's rights in the country. In this regard meetings have also been held. A number of NGOs took part in the commemoration programme of the International Day for elimination of violence against women in Sanaa. Representatives of these NGOs called for the protection of women and children during conflict. They reiterated that throughout the prolonged war, and violent acts of extremist groups, women and children have been subjected to all forms of violence and abuse. Experts believe that rape and early marriages are instances of abuse and exploitation of Yemeni women in war conditions, and the adoption of crucial and legal measures in the refugee camps is one of the steps towards the fulfilment of assurance for the protection of women towards prevention of all forms of violence in Yemen.

As well as the aforementioned instances, UNFPA has reported that more than 10 million Yemenis are in need of food and in this regard women's conditions, particularly pregnant and breastfeeding women is worse than men's, because this group of women do not have access to required food and do not get medical and health care. Therefore, concentration on women's rights in Yemen must be the centre of attention of the international community and Human Rights Council.

On this basis the role of NGOs in dissemination of information and informing the international community is very important. Therefore, Family Health Association of Iran as a leading Iranian NGO in health and reproductive rights and member of IPPF and member of World Hepatitis Alliance is one of the NGOs which calls on the international community and the Human Rights Council to focus their attention to the establishment of peace and human rights in Yemen and access to health care and medical treatment services for the

people of the country, particularly women and children and elimination of all forms of violence against them.
