

**19<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **Palestinian and Israeli women should be integral to any peace process**

Muslim Women's Network UK (MWNUK) appeals to the British government to use all its power to bring peace between Palestine and Israel, including all they can do to influence the US administration to obtain an immediate ceasefire on both sides.

Yet again we are witnessing terror and destruction in a situation where many of the victims are women and children. Without the active involvement of the UK government, future generations of Palestinians will be doomed to suffer endless destitution and grief through the destruction of their communities while Israelis live in fear of rocket attacks. World leaders cannot continue to stand by and watch as almost 2 million people are gradually killed or starved and deprived of basic needs such as electricity, water, food and medical supplies.

The conflict is also having repercussions in the UK. Even though the actions of the Israeli government have nothing to do with our Jewish friends in Britain, they are being subjected to anti-Semitic abuse. We were appalled watching the footage of the abuse that took place over last weekend, which showed Jewish women threatened with rape by some Palestine supporters. Anti-Semitism has no place in any Freedom for Palestine movements. We condemn all forms of anti-Semitism and no community should live in fear.

Women and girls tend to be the targets of abuse no matter what the political context; whether it's racism in the UK or conflicts abroad. However, their voices are largely absent from political discussions and decisions despite the impact on their lives. The involvement of women is critical. On 31st October 2000, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) unanimously adopted Resolution 1325 which recognises the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women while also recognizing the under-valued and under-utilized contributions women make to conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building. It stresses the importance of their equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security. We therefore demand a greater gender focus in peace efforts and call for Palestinian and Israeli women's perspectives to be centre-staged in any negotiations.

**Muslim Women's Network UK**

[www.mwnuk.co.uk](http://www.mwnuk.co.uk)