



## **Arab Declaration**

**Issued by the Arab Regional CSW Preparatory Meeting for the 64<sup>th</sup> Session of Commission on the Status of Women**

***"Towards Beijing +30 Declaration and Platform for Action"***

**Under the chairmanship of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Chair of the Arab Women Committee (39<sup>th</sup> Session), and the leadership of the League of Arab States, we have gathered on Sunday, February, 9<sup>th</sup> 2020 in Riyadh, to coordinate and reach a common Arab position and identify priorities of the Arab region towards issues that will be raised during the work for the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women on the "25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women", to be held from March 9 to March 20, 2020 in New York.**

**We, ministers and women's authorities' representatives of Member States of the League of Arab States participating in the Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 64<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW64),**

**We appreciate** the achievements accomplished by Arab women at all levels, and we applaud the establishment of Arab Women national mechanisms concerned with women's affairs, which have further reflected the determination of Arab States countries to enhance the role of Arab women in all fields,

**We value** the efforts of Arab states and their determination to submit their national reports on "the progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action after twenty-five years, as 20 Arab countries submitted their reports during the fifth regional review."

**Taking into account** all the unusual social, economic, and political situations taking place in some Arab States in terms of armed conflicts, the exacerbation of terrorism, the high numbers of displaced persons and refugees, as well as the continued Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories and the occupied Golan. As a result, such situations had negative impacts, particularly on women and children, being the most vulnerable link in society.

**Emphasizing** the importance of strengthening a joint Arab action based on a clear plan with solid foundations, presented through the Arab Women Committee established by the League of Arab States, which aims to empower women in the Arab region,

**We renew our commitment** towards the implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted in 1995 during the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing as one of the major International Declaration concerned with the advancement of the status of women,

**Recognizing** the close link between the twelve critical areas of concerns of the "Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action" and the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals that were adopted in 2015 at the international level,

**And based on the fact that** the fifth review of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2020 is an important occasion to monitor progress towards achieving gender equality, five years after the adoption of the goals and plan for the 2030 sustainable development,

**Acknowledging** the importance of working in a comprehensive and coherent framework by linking the areas of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in particular paragraphs 131-149 on women and armed conflict and Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, which coincides with the twentieth anniversary of its issuance in 2020 with the fifth regional review of Beijing after twenty-five years,

**Reaffirming** that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is essential for achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and for Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions,

In the context of defining a unified Arab position in international forums, and agreeing at the regional level on the final conclusions paper for the current session (64),

**We agreed to set the priorities of the Arab region for the next five years in light of what has been achieved during the fifth regional review of the "Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action" in terms of the achievements accomplished and challenges that still exist through the following areas:**

*1. Enhancing women's political participation in the Arab region:*

- 1.1 Continue working on developing, enforcing and activating legislation, policies and laws that support women's access to leadership positions in official institutions and legislative, executive and judicial bodies at all levels with a minimum of 30%.
- 1.2 Build women's capacity to conduct election campaigns by designing the necessary training programs for them to gain skills as candidates.
- 1.3 Support the adoption of positive discrimination policies (quotas) in quotas for women in the legislative and executive bodies and adopt reforms in the internal rules of parties that consider gender equality and work to support motivational policies for political parties that include women candidates.

*2. Promoting the economic conditions of women and combating the phenomenon of the feminization of poverty for a comprehensive and sustainable development:*

- 2.1 Promote women's participation in the national formal economy in the public and private sectors, and develop and enforce policies that ensures equal opportunities in having access to decent work, and take the necessary measures to reduce gender wage gaps,

provide a safe and appropriate work environment, and work to adopt a perspective that takes into account the needs of women in any employment- related policies and that supports women's access to decision-making positions.

- 2.2 Work on establishing the necessary development programs to integrate women in rural and remote and marginal areas to work to improve their economic conditions and to develop policies to create a supportive work environment for women and develop more flexible work systems.
- 2.3 Allocate specific percentage of government tenders and services to small and medium-sized companies led by women and young women to encourage women entrepreneurs and investors.
- 2.4 Enforce policies and mechanisms to ensure that there is a system that guarantees the allocation of no less than 30% of women on company boards, and the promotion of integrated and financial inclusion programs for women.
- 2.5 Build national capacities and allocate the necessary financial resources to develop a sex-disaggregated statistical database to support decision makers in identifying areas of imbalance and develop policies necessary to advance the conditions of women.

### *3. Providing social protection schemes that are responsive to the needs of women in all stages of their lives and facilitating access to them:*

- 3.1 Allocate sufficient funds to support social protection systems and scale up of investments in social protection programs and extend them to the informal sector, including social insurance, universal health care umbrella, quality public services and disability allowance, unemployment benefits, paid maternity leave, old-age benefits, pension and injury compensation work, and take the necessary measures to facilitate access for women and girls, especially in rural and remote areas.
- 3.2 Call upon decision makers to adopt a perspective that considers the needs of women when designing social protection programs and when identifying the weakest and first priority social strata by providing support and developing social security policies for women in the formal, public and private sectors, and informal sector and ensuring universal health coverage in all stages of life.
- 3.3 Take the necessary measures to ensure a decent and safe life and provide the minimum basic services such as food, clothing and shelter in the asylum areas, design social care programs for women in refugee and displacement situations and ensure that health care services reach affected women in conflict areas, especially reproductive health services.

### *4. Combating all forms of violence and discriminatory practices against women:*

- 4.1 Enacting legislation, developing, designing and implementing laws, legislations and policies that are necessary to combat all forms of violence against women in the public and private spheres and amending all discriminatory provisions that conflict with other laws at the national level.
- 4.2 Develop cultural structures to produce social patterns to end violence against women by adopting new strategies in educational curricula and the media to break stereotypes about women and building a social culture in support of them.

- 4.3 Provide specialized training programs for service providers for survivors of violence, enabling them to take the necessary measures to ensure their protection, provide them with legal support, treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration into society.
- 4.4 Support the "Arab Convention on combating Violence against Women, Girls and Domestic Violence" and put it into practice and develop action plans to combat violence at the national level.
- 4.5 Call upon the international community to provide protection for women and girls living under Israeli occupation and implement UN resolutions related to protecting them from the abusive practices, violence and forms of violations they face.

#### *5. Promoting the rights of the girl child:*

- 5.1 Prioritize the development of legislation, laws and policies to eliminate the phenomenon of marriage of minors, early and forced marriage, and child labor.
- 5.2 Ensure the provision of education services as a mean to achieve peace, especially girls' education.
- 5.3 Ensure the rights of the girl child by providing nutrition, health care, education and protection from all forms of discrimination and physical violence, including the phenomenon of female genital mutilation, early and forced marriage.
- 5.4 Provide educational services to children in refugee status or displacement and taking the necessary measures to complete their education.

#### *6. Moving forward with the implementation of Women, Peace and Security Agenda:*

- 6.1 Follow-up on the implementation of the regional strategy: protecting Arab women peace and security and its operational action plan for the implementation of the national action plans in the context of implementing Security Council Resolution 1325 and its subsequent resolutions.
- 6.2 Follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations of the first high-level ministerial conference on "Enhancing the role of women in post-conflict societies in the Arab region: lessons learned from all over the world" to advance the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the Arab region in consideration of the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 and other subsequent resolutions.
- 6.3 Build women's capabilities in the field of negotiation by designing the necessary training programs at the national and regional levels to create female cadres in the field of political participation, mediation, negotiation and conflict resolution, and supporting women's formal participation in all stages of peace processes, mediation and national dialogue in recognition of the important role that women's participation plays in making success and continuity of peace operations.
- 6.4 Support the initiative of the League of Arab States to establish the Arab Network for Peace Mediators "as an important nucleus that supports women's participation in decision-making processes and in presenting the needs of women in times of conflict and beyond, and working to develop a regional strategy for peace mediators and drawing on them in preparing national strategies in this field."
- 6.5 Activating the tasks of the "Emergency Committee for the Protection of Women during Armed Conflicts in the Arab Region" by holding the first meeting of its members.