



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Distr.  
LIMITED  
E/ESCWA/SDD/2018/WG.1/L.1  
28 March 2018  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

Civil society dialogue series on social justice issues

*Electoral Justice: The Essence of Meaningful Participation in Lebanon and the Arab region*

Beirut, 23 April 2018

**Provisional Agenda**

Time	Agenda item
9.30 a.m.-10 a.m.	Registration of participants
10 a.m.-10.15 a.m.	<p><b>Welcome and introductory remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H.E. Mr. Jan Waltmans, Ambassador of the Netherlands in Lebanon</li> <li>• Mr. Gilbert Doumit, Founder and Managing Partner of the Beyond Reform &amp; Development Group (BRD)</li> <li>• Mr. Frederico Neto, Director, Social Development Division, ESCWA</li> </ul>
10.15 a.m.-11.15 a.m.	<p><b>Session I – Agents of Change, Youth and Women in Political Positions: Situation, Barriers and Challenges</b></p> <p><u>Setting the Context</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. Rania Al-Jazairi, First Social Affairs Officer, ESCWA</li> </ul> <p><u>Panelists</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Gilbert Doumit, Founder and Managing Partner, BRD</li> <li>• Mrs. Khoulood Wattar Qassem, Advisor &amp; Coordinator, Women Political Leaders Global Forum, Parliamentary Elections Candidate</li> <li>• Mrs. Josephine Zgheib, Parliamentary Elections Candidate</li> <li>• Mrs. Zeina Majdalani, CEO of ZMK landscape architects, Parliamentary Elections Candidate</li> </ul> <p><u>Moderator</u></p> <p>Mrs. Joelle Rizkallah, Director of “Women in Front”</p> <p><b><u>OPEN DISCUSSION</u></b></p> <p><i>This session is aimed at discussing the political participation of youth and women in the Arab region, efforts made towards advancing consensus and reforms in that regard, and avenues for citizen engagement. Panelists will tackle the barriers that prevent women and youth from running for elections and holding political positions in the Arab region, highlighting the case of Lebanon</i></p>

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	<i>and the recent candidacy of 111 women for parliament. They will finally examine the interventions needed to face challenges to the political participation of women and youth.</i>
<b>11.15 a.m.-11.30 a.m.</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>
11.30 a.m.-12.30 p.m.	<p><b>Session II – Good Practices and Success Stories on the Political Representation of Youth and Women</b></p> <p><u>Panelists</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H.E. Mr. Jan Waltmans, Ambassador of the Netherlands in Lebanon</li> <li>• Mr. Wissem Al-Sghaier, Activist, Trainer and Mentor on Youth and Cultural Activism, National Youth Observatory, Tunisia</li> <li>• Mrs. Nayla Geagea, lawyer and researcher</li> <li>• Mr. Talib Awad, President of the Arab World Observatory for Democracy and Elections</li> </ul> <p><u>Moderator</u></p> <p>Mr. Karam Karam, Regional Advisor, Emerging &amp; Conflict-Related Issues Division (ECRI).</p> <p><b><u>OPEN DISCUSSION</u></b></p> <p><i>This session is aimed at identifying the necessary tools and mechanisms (social, economic, political) and the proper means to enforce policies and systems that are gender sensitive and responsive to the needs of young people. The legal reforms required to increase the presence of women and youth in political positions will be addressed. Panelists will share good practices on the issue, particularly from Tunisia, Lebanon and other Arab countries, and will discuss the experience of the Netherlands.</i></p> <p><i>The session will include comparative presentations of interventions from regions or subregions that have succeeded in improving the political representation of women and youth. The different elements of success in each case, as well as areas of overlap and commonalities, will be underlined.</i></p>
12.30 p.m.-1 p.m.	<p><b>Wrap-up and Concluding Remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H.E. Mr. Jan Waltmans, Ambassador of the Netherlands in Lebanon</li> <li>• Mr. Gilbert Doumit, Founder and Managing Partner, BRD</li> <li>• Mr. Oussama Safa, Chief, Social Justice Section, ESCWA</li> </ul> <p><i>In the concluding session, a number of actionable recommendations will be presented and vetted, based on the deliberations of the first two sessions. This will be done with a view to following up on the outcome of this dialogue and setting the ground for campaigning and engaging with parliamentarians on how to promote the participation of youth and women in future elections in ESCWA member States.</i></p>

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