

EXPERT GROUP MEETING

Women, Peace and Security

Beirut, 4-5 December 2018

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia



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الأمم المتحدة
ESCWA

National Women's Machineries, Conflict, Occupation and Transition in the Arab Region

Introduction: The Changing situation in the Arab Region

- **Objective:** Presenting the changing context in the Arab region since the 2010/2011 events.
- **Focus:** The manifestations of the “Arab Spring” in the region ranged between political transitions, democratization processes, and armed conflicts, in addition to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. For example:
 - Tunisia: a context of political transition to a secular democratic state but with challenging socio-economic and political situation
 - Egypt: a context of many political changes
 - Libya, Syria, and Yemen: Contexts of long-term conflict with a heavy toll on the population.
- State institutions, initially “weak and therefore easily manipulated or changed by autocratic incumbents”, are at the same time a cause and a consequence of conflicts and transitions in general. Public institutions in the region had been suffering from an enduring state of frailty.
- State institutions, including National Women’s Machinerys (NWMs), are at the heart of the political debate.
 - CEDAW Committee: expressed concern over the limited capacities of NWMs emphasizing the importance of giving urgent priority to strengthening the institutional capacity of the national machinery for the advancement of women and providing it with the mandate, decision-making power and human, technical and financial resources necessary to work effectively and successfully influence the formulation, design and implementation of public policies

Session I: NWMs: Background, Roles and Relation to WPS (Chapter One)

This session aims at presenting Chapter One of the Study while providing a background to NWMs with focus on their important roles and sharing examples of NWMs from the region.

The presentation and discussion will address the following:

- What are the elements in the status of NWMs that guarantee best roles and functions?
- What are the roles of NWMs in the implementation on and follow-up on Beijing Platform of Action?
- What are the roles of NWMs today as the experience has developed?
- What is the specific role of NWMs in the WPS Agenda (including WPS Security Council Resolutions, international law, and the 2030 Agenda)?
- What are the essential relations for the NWMs that enable them carry out their work?
- What are the resources needed to achieve that?

SESSION II: NWMs in Arab countries and the WPS Agenda (Chapter Two)

This session aims at presenting the changing situation in the Arab Region since 2011 and its impact on the NWMs in some of the countries while focusing on their resilience mechanisms, and suggesting case studies from Yemen, as a case of conflict; Jordan, as a case of a country affected by a conflict in a neighbouring one (Syria); Palestine, as case of occupation; and Tunisia as a case of political transition.

The session and discussion will address the following:

- Each country has a different model in relation to the status and legal foundation of the NWM; how does that affect the NWM?
- How does the situation in each country affect the role, priorities and capacities of the NWM?
- How do linkages affect the work of the NWM in each context?
- What is the work in each country on the WPS Agenda?
- What are the concerns and issues of relations and resourcing from each country?
- Observations from each country.
- General observations.

SESSION III: Drivers of Resilient NWMs (Chapter Three)

This session introduces a set of suggested drivers, both internal and external, that contribute to reinforcing and maintaining the institutional resilience of NWMs with reference to international standards and good practices. The presentation and discussion will address the following:

What are the issues that affect the resilience of NWMs in relation to the following in the specific context of the WPS?

- Their legal foundation
- Mandates
- Powers
- Structures, staffing and capacities
- Roles and areas of work
- Resources
- Linkages.

SESSION IV: Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

This session aims to discuss the policy recommendations emanating from the case studies, shared experiences and good practices addressed in the study.

Discussion and recommendations can be focused on the following:

- Legal foundation and status of NWMs
- Roles and responsibilities
- Relations and linkages
- Resourcing (human, expertise, and financial)
- Specific work on the WPS Agenda (including NAPs, implementation on the ground, linking with other international frameworks)

Thank you



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