



## REPORT

### EURO-MED WOMEN'S RIGHTS CONFERENCE

### WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY BUILDING PROMOTING A COMMON AGENDA FOR EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN

7 - 8 June 2013  
Amman Jordan



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REPORT  
Euro-Med Women's Rights Conference

Women's Rights and Democracy Building: Promoting a common agenda for equality between  
women and men  
7-8 June 2013  
Amman Jordan

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## ACRONYMS

AN	Association Najdeh
ATFD	Association Tunisienne des Femmes Démocrates
AWO	Arab Women Organization
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
EACPE	Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
EP	European Parliament
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FEMM	European Parliament Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee
Euro-Med	Euro Mediterranean
IFA	Istanbul Framework of Action
IFE-EFI	The European Feminist Initiative
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NAP	National Action Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
RDFL	Rassemblement Démocratique des Femmes Libanaises/ Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering
SIGI	Sisterhood is Global Institute
SWL	Syrian Women's League
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WR	Women's Rights
WSC	Women's Study Centre



## CONFERENCE BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

### BACKGROUND

With gender equality being either impossible to achieve or harshly questioned and with the rights women have attained facing threats by religious fundamentalism and political conservatism, needless to say the Euro-Med region has been experiencing some major setbacks. This brings attention to a lack of women's presence in public life and the need for common strategies to elevate women's voices. Bridges must be built and solidarity and cooperation must be achieved in order to have a democratic, peaceful world across borders and cultures. These are necessary steps to create democratic alternatives with equality between women and men as a priority issue on political agendas.

In September 2011 European Feminist Initiative IFE-EFI together with 7 partners from the MENA began implementing a European Union funded regional project: *"Promoting a Common Agenda for Equality between Women and Men through Istanbul Process"*.

This project initiated a process to promote the Istanbul Framework of Action as the first common political document agreed upon and signed by all the States in the Euro-Med Region themselves. With this document Euro-Med governments have indicated a commitment to support women's rights and gender equality. The Istanbul Marrakech Process on strengthening the role of women in the society was launched in Istanbul in 2006. The second Ministerial Conference that took place in Marrakech in 2009 affirmed the Euro-Med governments' commitment to work towards gender equality. Through acting for implementation of women's rights with regional and international gender equality *instruments* as common referential framework, the project aims to contribute to democracy-building by strengthening women's rights in the MENA and Euro-Med regions. *"Equality First"* is the motto campaigning in the Euro-Med and spearheaded by IFE-EFI and its partners to advocate for gender equality as a priority on political, social and cultural agendas.

The **overall objective** of the project is to achieve a gender-equal environment that contributes to strengthening democratic development in the Euro-Med region and to promote women's rights as a constitutive part of sustainable development. The specific goals of the common action are:

- Increased awareness of IFA and capacity of women's NGOs to lobby and advocate for its implementation by the governments.
- Strengthened women's grassroots NGOs and their capacity to use IFA in connection with other international instruments (CEDAW, UNSCR1325, 1820) in their everyday work and in the local communities, thus empowering their participation in the public and political life (fill the existing gap).



- Strengthened cooperation among women’s NGOs, governmental institutions and gender equality bodies over the implementation of IFA together with the other international instruments promoting women’s rights.

These three objectives are planned to be reached before the 3rd Euro-Med Ministerial Conference on *“Strengthening the status of women in the society”*.

The activities themselves have inspired insightful and open debates on women’s civil, political, economic, cultural, and social rights as prescribed in the Ministerial Marrakesh Conclusions.

They highlighted the need to address democracy from a women’s rights perspective and emphasized in all the countries, as well as regionally and with the State, that women’s rights are both a cornerstone and safeguard for democracy. They demonstrated that multilayered dialogue and cooperation between State actors and women’s rights activists is instrumental to achieving the needed changes on policy and legislative levels. Through this project IFE-EFI and its partners developed a strong common regional Euro-Med discourse, contextualizing Istanbul Frame of Action (IFA) and the International Conventions in the present political developments; promoting IFA as a tool that enhances women’s rights as universal human rights and thus taking a step towards achieving the overall objective of the project.

The Euro-Med conference was therefore a culmination of the project, having the aim to provide the needed space for interaction, strategizing and moving forward.

## CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

- Bring together the most active participants throughout the project period from all the participating countries.
- Broaden participation from the Euro-Med region to share the process of carving common strategies for strengthening women’s involvement using the international and regional instruments for gender equality.
- Share acquired knowledge and expertise amongst women and men from the Euro-Med region to strategize for the future.
- Contribute to the visibility of women’s rights activism and give a voice to the common efforts in this aspect.

The achievement of these goals has enriched the overall advocacy efforts to lobby Euro-Med governments for the implementation of women’s rights and gender equality by issuing recommendations to the Ministerial meeting in Paris, completing all the other recommendations accumulated until now by the process. The conference focused on raising the need of implementing gender equality and women’s rights in countries of the Euro-Mediterranean political space and demanded the recognition and implementation of basic rights to full citizenship for women.



Finally, the conference has also enhanced the dialogue between State actors and civil society for the promotion of women's rights in the ongoing reform processes. This helped to promote international conventions and regional agreements as a common *framework* and as a tool to improve the status of women's rights as well as to make the governments accountable for their implementation in the whole Euro-Med region.

## CONFERENCE DISCUSSION TOPICS AND PARTICIPANTS

### DISCUSSION TOPICS

The following issues were discussed during the two day conference of over 120 participants from 17 countries, based on recommendations gathered throughout the two year process:

- **Transition from dictatorships**, but towards what? In the midst of reform processes where are women's rights? Many participants emphasized that women's rights are a question of democracy in the whole Euro-Med region. Exclusion of women in decision-making is problematic both in consolidating democracies (EU countries) and in transitional periods (Mashreq and Maghreb) where new policies need to be formulated and where gender analyses and gender mainstreaming are almost entirely missing.
- **Constitution and legislation:** the need to enshrine women's rights and gender equality and the principle of non-discrimination in all the constitutions: what are the main conditions for having a true democratic constitution and non-discriminative laws and the link with the lifting of all reservations on CEDAW? In Europe, where there is existing legislation, there is a need to adopt stronger and binding laws, especially concerning violence against women. Drafting recommendations are not enough and security policies should incorporate violence against women as a security issue.
- **Women's participation in public and political spheres:** new election laws and quotas are urgently required to ensure representation and meaningful participation towards full equality. Parity in laws is not enough: there is a need to adopt gender mainstreaming mechanisms and bodies in the whole Euro-Med region in order to make women's rights and gender equality implementable; i.e gender equality laws, gender equality commissions and committees in the national assemblies as mechanisms *supporting the adoption of* gender sensitive policies *by* the governments.
- **Common agenda for implementing women's rights and gender equality:** NGO strategies advocating for women's rights and gender equality in all political agendas and policy-





making in the Euro-Med, based on the acknowledgement of the differences of the contexts and therefore the different forms of discrimination, but also based on the similarity of the root causes of oppression of women in the patriarchal structures of Euro-Med and therefore based on the regional and international women's rights mechanisms and norms

- **The ministerial conference 3-4<sup>th</sup> July in Paris:** the importance of sending the recommendations from women's rights organizations accumulated throughout the process for the consideration of experts and *State* actors, and recognition of *women's rights NGOs as full rank interlocutors*.

## PARTICIPANTS

### Over 120 participants from 17 countries:

- Civil Society (advocacy and grassroots NGOs from the project countries and EU) as well as academics
- Female and male politicians at the local and national levels and members of parliaments, decision-makers, political leaders, and ambassadors
- State actors from Euro-Med Ministries involved in Istanbul Marrakech Process, EP, EC Delegation Amman
- Representatives of the media
- Participating countries: Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Palestine, Sweden, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Iraq, Albania, Spain, Greece, France, Germany, Bulgaria, and Belgium

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS DAY ONE

### Opening Session: Commitment to international and regional mechanisms that promote and protect the universal human rights of women: changing contexts after Marrakech 2009

**H.E. Reem Abu Hassan** - Minister of Social Development in Jordan, provided a brief of women's rights achievements in Jordan including the lifting of reservations on CEDAW Article 15, the issuing of a new law on violence against women, implementing a quota system in Parliament, and the Government's willingness to address gender inequalities as part of the reform process. She outlined the importance of women in making change and achieving progress for women's rights.





**H.E. Joanna Wronecka** - the EU Ambassador to Jordan, stressed the importance of dialogue between the public sector and civil society and outlined the role of the EU in implementing international agreements and its commitment to Istanbul framework of action.

**H.E. Asma Khader** - Secretary General of the Jordan National Commission for Women, highlighted the importance of the conference as a platform to evaluate past work but also to re-energize efforts towards achieving equality. However she pointed out that when we look at numbers and statistics, it shows us a sad situation for women and its lack of impact in formulating policies and in addressing real change. She noted that there is slowness in effecting change with regards to gender, especially in inclusion of equality in constitutions and in applying laws. She spoke about challenges facing women in the region including violence, wars and racial and ethnic affiliations. In Jordan, the National Strategy for Women faces many challenges including a lack of financial means for implementation as well as the lack of political willingness to adopt it. She also spoke about CEDAW and how it is challenged by the new wave of religious extremism that is opposing the lifting of reservations and is also calling for canceling the ratifications themselves. She emphasized the need to endorse Government commitments and stand collectively to preserve women's rights.

**Mrs. Lilian Halls French** - Co-President of the European Feminist Initiative IFE-EFI, drew attention to the changes that occurred since the Marrakesh 2009 Ministerial Meeting, including the stalemate of the peace process, the global economic crisis, and the so-called Arab spring where women endured many repercussions. At the same time, women who were at the forefront demanding change are now excluded from decision-making. With the Ministerial Conclusions 2006-9 the Governments acknowledged the existence of inequalities and the need to take measures to address them. The feminist movement in the Arab world and in Europe have monitored the implementation of the conclusions through common frameworks such as citizenship, women's participation, civil legislation, and/or violence against women. Therefore there is a need to work together through Euro-Med networking to present strong recommendations to the third Ministerial Conference that will take place in Paris and have women's voices heard there. She stressed the need for solidarity with women in Syria and the daily struggles that women go through as women suffer the most during times of armed and violent conflicts.

**Session 1: Equality First – Enhancing democracy through equality between women and men as a priority on decision makers' agendas: challenges and strategies. Strengthening of Istanbul-Marrakech process**

**Dr. Mervat Tallawy** - Head of the National Council of Women in Egypt, stressed the need for solidarity with women NGOs who are fighting extremists groups that have become entrenched in our societies and who are determined to undermine women's rights and the progress made as a result of CEDAW and Beijing Conference; those rights that were gained through many years of endless struggles. She called on the delegates to participate in the preparatory regional conference building up to the global population and development conference on the occasion of



the passing of 20 years of the UN Population and Development Conference that took place in Egypt in 1994. There is a need to focus on reproductive rights because around 800 women die on a daily basis as a result of complications in pregnancy. She also reminded the participants of the 57<sup>th</sup> document prepared on women's rights and the need for Euro-Med countries to support women facing revolutions and civil unrest not just financially and morally, but also through real political and strategic support that has direct impact on decision makers. Democracy is still unfulfilled in the region and women are still suffering as a result of inequality in citizenship and they are still the most illiterate and poor. A quota system is therefore crucial so that women integrate their issues on political, social, economic, and health agendas. We also need to show the Muslim Brotherhood that it has failed politically and economically to maintain the illiteracy and inactivity of women.

**Mrs. Moufida Misseoui** - Association Tunisienne des Femmes Démocrates from Tunisia, reminded conference participants of the slogans that the Tunisian people held during the Tunisian revolution that were then completely ignored in the draft constitution. She stressed that linking religious doctrines with constitutional articles limits freedoms, diminishes people's rights and challenges their universality. The issues of child marriage and polygamy are now open for abuse by politicians and decision-makers and the constitution allows for discrimination as it addresses the issue of exclusivity as opposed to human rights and international agreements.

**Mr. Bassam Salhi** - General Secretary of the Palestinian People Party in Palestine, underlined the link between women's issues and social and political issues and addressed the status of women in Palestine over three stages; the independence document which established equality and citizenship, the electoral period in 2006, and the post elections where Gaza was controlled by extremists and discrimination was rooted in schools. Young girls were pushed to wear the hijab and the terminology of "masculine levels" became widespread. He emphasized the need to reform educational curriculum and the need to bridge the gap between political parties and the women's movement.



**H.E. Majeda Al-Masri** – Minister of Social Development from Palestine, spoke about Political Islam and that it gives legitimacy to discrimination against women. Women's issues are a question of human rights and democracy. Democratic processes are not only about electoral processes. In 1988, the Independence Document provided a platform for Palestinian women participation in all spheres of life and in decision-making. However the Israeli occupation is the main obstacle to the progress of women, including the right of choice, which is at the cornerstone of women's rights. She recommended the set-up of an International women's network that



would work towards freedom and equality. She also emphasized the need to present a strong recommendation against ending occupation as an obstacle to achieving equality.

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

This session addressed the issue of violence against women as a core problem for women in the Euro-Med region.

**Mrs. Azza Kamel** - Executive Director Appropriate Communication Techniques for Development Egypt, spoke about the use of women's bodies for political reasons both in Egypt and Syria on religious precepts. Violence was used strategically to harm women's reputations and legitimize violence, girls' marriage and trafficking. She proposed a set of recommendations to address violence against women including the need to strengthen partnerships, improve services, establish systems of keeping records and improving the database, promote research, call for governments to implement international agreements, establish constitutional courts, and mainstream affirmative measures. In addition, political parties should integrate women into their ranks, activate UNSCR 1325, and develop action plans and set up specialized committees to follow up on governments' commitments and monitor their fulfillment of the Istanbul – Marrakech Ministerial Conferences.



**Mrs. Magali Thill** - Euro-Med Human Rights Network from Spain, emphasized that violence against women is a result of gender inequality. Statistics show that 20-25% of women in the EU have experienced physical violence. She highlighted a number of EU agreements and articles that condemn violence against women including the EU Council Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence which was ratified by only 4 European countries and needs the signature of 10 countries before it becomes legally binding. She pointed out that disparity in the definition of gender violence provides room for more discrimination. There is a need to harmonize standards and activate the role of police and the judiciary. She also emphasized the need to establish constitutional courts to use International agreements to protect women's rights.

**Mr. Nasser Abou Lteif** - Adviser to Minister of Social Affairs in Lebanon, spoke about the draft Lebanese law on violence against women that was developed by the women NGOs and that includes 21 items that need to address inequalities.

**Session 2: International Conventions and regional documents as unique and common frame reference for national legislations and Constitutions – Towards a binding frame**



## MAIN POINTS OF DISCUSSION

1. Universality of women's rights versus cultural relativism  
**Introduction and facilitation: Mrs. Zahira Kamal General Secretary Fida Palestine**
2. Democracy to where? Freedom for whom? Whose choice?  
**Introduction and facilitation: Mrs. Marie Therese El Mir RDFL Lebanon**
3. International binding frame for promotion of women's rights and their indivisibility in laws and constitution  
**Introduction and facilitation: Mrs. Sawsan Zakzak, Syrian Women's League**

## CONCLUSIONS OF THE DEBATE DAY ONE

- The need to harmonize national legislations with CEDAW and other UN Conventions and International agreements.
- The need to lift reservations on CEDAW especially Article 16.
- The universality of human rights and women's rights and the need to challenge the calls to place women rights in the context of cultural exclusivity.
- The importance of democratic *movements* and political parties to uphold *their* principles and position of separating State and religion.
- The challenge to women's rights is not just *Islamic Sharia* but *interference of any religion in the law*, therefore the focus should be on challenging the patriarchal structures which *are* the root cause for discrimination against women.
- Appeal to EU countries to pressure governments in the region and hold them accountable for the implementation of women's rights.
- Educational curriculum and systems need to be reformed and be stripped of gender inequalities.
- Integrate equality and non-discrimination in constitutions and ensure that decision-makers do not compromise women's rights.



## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS DAY TWO

**Session 3: Feminist alternatives to preserve and promote women's rights as constitutive part of democracy, peace and social justice**



**Mrs. Valborg Linden Jonsten** - Political Adviser Committee for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in the EU Parliament, emphasized the need to continue fighting for maternity rights, integrate the gender equality principle in the law, develop laws to protect women against violence and improve both civil and criminal procedures, and teach parliamentarians that it is mostly women who are victims of violence (1 in 3 women in the world are victims of violence and 1 in 4 in Europe). She pointed out that signing and ratifying laws are essential, but laws without actions on the ground will not change the reality. She also spoke about the need to activate a quota system as part of the business leadership boards and companies. Quotas in political decision-making are also essential (30% as a minimum) and women must be present in constitutional preparation. Employment and economic empowerment are crucial.

**Dr Théophano Papazissi** - Professor of civil law at the Faculty of Law of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, underlined the link between economics, social justice and democracy. Without financial independence and equal access to resources, social justice and social peace are not possible. It is essential to develop common actions between feminist and women's movements from the Maghreb, Mashreq and Europe based on solidarity and mutual interest in order to address patriarchal structures that hinder women's full enjoyment of their human rights. Despite legal equality, social equality still has a long way to go: real equality presupposes a change in mentality and ideology, but even this is not enough. If the EU intends to be the bearer of a democratic project, a binding legal framework is needed and not only recommendations to ensure equality between the genders and to protect women from violence. The EU must submit its partnerships to the respect of universality of rights for women and men.

**Mr. John Azzi** – Judge from Lebanon, emphasized the need to change old, outdated laws in Lebanon which have remained from the Ottoman rule, especially those related to marriage, custody, divorce. He underlined also the necessity to support women legally and financially, especially with financial procedures related to divorce. In this regard it is urgent to also change the citizenship law as it is a harsh violation of human rights.



#### Session 4: Dialogue between womens' rights NGOs, political and State actors

**Ms. Diana Chuli** – Former MP, President of Independent Forum of Albanian Women, Tirana, reviewed the progress of women in Albania from the rule of dictatorship, the fall of the authoritarian regime, the transition to democracy, and the many ways women played an essential role. She emphasized that when laws are constructed, political parties have to ensure



that women are involved. She highlighted the role of the civil laws that incorporate gender and compared the achievements and progress of women in different countries.

**Dr. Tareq Rasheed** - General Director Interior Ministry KRG; Chairperson Drafting Committee for the development of the National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR1325 in Iraq, highlighted the achievements of women in Iraq. He stated that Iraq has a unique experience in the region on promoting dialogue and cooperation between civil society and State actors for development of a NAP1325 in Iraq and shared some main lessons learned, like when the process of cooperation between civil society and State actors is strong, efficient outcomes are guaranteed as in the case of Iraq. He also referred to the drafting of the new constitution in Kurdistan that granted certain rights to women and provided an opportunity to develop a progressive set of laws.



**Mrs. Zahra Ouardi** – President L'Union de l'Action Féminine UAF Maroc, spoke of the women's movement history and how it stemmed mostly from leftist political parties. Although the Muslim Brothers issued a decree to assassinate members of the women movement, there remained political will to incorporate women's rights, and for this reason the family and child code was endorsed. It is considered one of the most progressive personal status laws in favor of women's rights (granting women the right to divorce, prohibiting early marriage for girls and boys). However, in Morocco women's rights have regressed due to the conservative government in power. Laws need to be reviewed and amended, but at the same time we need to change mindsets and the way people are socialized and educated (which is the core of gender discrimination).

## WORKING GROUPS

1. Solidarity and international networking, tools against nationalisms  
**Introduction and facilitation: RDFL Lebanon**
2. Occupation, invasion, military interventions, sustainable obstacles to peace, freedom and democracy  
**Introduction and facilitation: Mrs. Inistar Abu Salem Association Najdeh Lebanon**
3. How we bring gender equality on decision-makers/political agendas? mechanisms  
**Introduction and facilitation: Mrs. Afaf Marej EACPE Egypt**

## MAIN POINTS OF DISCUSSION

- The need for firstly the harmonization of laws with international women's rights instruments, secondly the active implementation of laws, thirdly the monitoring of laws and finally accountability and advocacy to ensure continued implementation of laws.



- The need to educate and train lawyers, judges and police.
- The need for more men and young men to take part in demanding women's rights.
- The need for civil laws to dictate family matters (marriage, divorce, custody...etc.).
- The need to change article 308 of the Jordanian criminal law.
- Campaigning to take the shape of collective work and to adopt specific changes in order to become effective and impactful.
- Development of NAPs for implementation of UNSCR1325 in the region to empower the status of women's rights. Iraq provides a good example of best practices.
- The need to evaluate Sharia from a gender perspective, but at the same time remember laws are dictated by many religions, not just one and not just the Sharia.
- Dialogue between activists, NGOs and academics needs to be strengthened in the Arab world.
- Monitoring gender issues in the media need to be effective in order to address stereotyping.
- One of the important demands that this conference should make is the need for a framework that defends and provides protection for women's rights. This framework should provide consistent and continuous support and not just operate when crises emerge.
- The women's movement has realized that there is a degree of acceptance by Western and European governments of the conservative governments in the region under the excuse that they were brought through democratic processes. This position negatively impacts advocacy efforts by the women's movement in the face of conservatism, which undermines women's rights.
- Informal networks of support need to be enhanced or established between women in the EU and women in the MENA and support EU women to network with women in the Middle East. These networks, such as European Feminist Initiative, should be supported logistically, financially and politically. They also need to be a platform for real exchange of knowledge, experience and skills and should have an identity.



### Panel discussion: SO, WHEN EQUALITY IN EURO-MED?

#### GUESTS



**Mr. Hussam Al Hussein** - Director, European Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jordan – He underlined that Jordan is on its way to fulfilling all its national and international commitments towards gender equality and women’s rights and affirmed the commitment of Jordan to consider the recommendations from the conference to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ministerial Conference in September 2013.

**Mr. Ahmed Fawzy** - SG of Egyptian Social Democratic Party- Women were at the forefront of the Egyptian revolution. They led the struggle against the Mubarak regime, later against the military and now against the Muslim Brotherhood. Political parties need to integrate women in their leadership and assign them to the highest levels of decision- making in order to impact politics. Women’s struggles should not be separated from the struggles of marginalized groups as it weakens their demands. The labour rights movement was initiated by women because women were the ones most affected by discrimination and marginalization. Political parties need to take bold steps to integrate gender issues.

**H.E. Charlotta Sparre**- Ambassador of Sweden to Jordan- The challenge to achieve gender rights carries two important structural challenges; one is legal and the other is strategic. The economic debates need to be amplified and society needs to be educated of the reasons for increasing women’s economic participation: how and why economic growth will be achieved if women are included and how it is a loss if women are not included. Enabling young female leaders is vital for the continuation of the women’s movement as is supporting the next generation's ways of making changes.

**Ms. Sabah Hallaq** - Syrian Women’s League- Syrian women have an opportunity now to impose pressure for change and for inclusion of gender equality and women’s rights in constitutional documents. Women need to be part of the discussion, and Syrian women need to have international support to be part of the negotiation process and in all other steps to end violence and achieve real democracy in Syria. She presented the constitutional document “*Equality First: Looking towards a Democratic Constitution*” developed by the Coalition of Syrian Women for Democracy in cooperation with IFE-EFI.

**Mr. Ralf Erbel**- Friedrich Nauman Foundation for Liberty- The question of women’s rights is strongly linked to democracy. In the Arab world and since the downfall of Ottoman Empire, all Arab societies have operated under a social contract, not a citizenship contract, and privileges superseded equal rights. The result is the absence of social and equal rights. The separation of State and religion is important even though those demanding it are accused of being anti-religious. Nevertheless the separation is needed in order to protect State from religion as well as to protect religion from State.

**Ms. Wafa Khadra** - Professor American University of Madaba, Jordan- To address gender issues at the core we need to change educational curriculum and school books that reinforce stereotyping and define roles by masculinity and femininity. Social ethics need to be shaken and



we need to readdress how we define masculine identity versus feminine identity to allow for a new mind-set to emerge. Today most young people in the Arab world believe in the traditional definitions of gender roles. We need a clear plan of action and strategy for the educational system and curriculum.

## CONCLUSIONS OF THE DEBATE DAY 2

- The struggle to accomplish women's rights requires joint efforts across Maghreb, Mashreq and EU.
- Focus on employment and economic independence for women to bridge the gap between high attainment of education levels and low employment rates for women. By increasing the percentage of women's labour participation, better economic growth will be achieved for the country.
- Empowerment doesn't mean self-empowerment only. It also means the need to empower others. Empower young women leaders to be engaged in the discourse and feel empowered to take the lead.
- Invest and support male role models to carry the message of equality and share the responsibility for achieving women's rights.
- The need to revisit old and outdated laws. The need to readdress all laws from a gender perspective. Even if we demand civil laws, we have to ensure that these laws are not patriarchal in nature and are sensitive to gender.
- Place the work of the women's rights movement in the political framework. Do not separate the demands for women's rights from the general demands of social justice and equality.
- Monitor the stereotypes of women in the media and address them through joint efforts. Likewise address educational systems to combat gender stereotypes and the traditional definitions of feminine and masculine.
- Reinforce a culture of equal rights versus a culture of privileges.
- Demand for Syrian women to take part in the process of negotiations. Ensure women's rights are incorporated through pressuring international players to advocate for women to fully participate in the process of ending violence and in the transition towards democracy.



## RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE THIRD EURO-MED MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

### Introduction

1. The Euro-Med Conference of civil society organizations and networks “Women’s Rights and Democracy Building: Promoting a common agenda for equality between women and men” took place on 7 – 8 June 2013 Hotel Landmark, Amman Jordan. It was organized by the European Feminist Initiative IFE-EFI and the partners in the MENA region Arab Women’s Organization and Sisterhood is Global Institute from Jordan, Association Najdeh and Rassemblement Démocratique des Femmes Libanaises from Lebanon, the Association Tunisienne des Femmes Démocrates from Tunisia, the Egyptian Association Enhancing Community Participation from Egypt and Women’s Studies Centre from Palestine as a result of the two years regional process to promote a common agenda for equality between women and men through Istanbul-Marrakech Framework of Action.
2. During 2011 the regional Euro-Med campaign, “Equality First” was launched in order to preserve the fundamental women’s rights as universal human rights and to promote equality between women and men in the whole region. Many developments took place in the region, highlighting the link between women’s rights and democracy building in the follow-up of the Marrakech Ministerial Conclusions 2009: Around 2500 women and men had the opportunity to directly discuss women’s rights and democracy building and regional and international mechanisms that promote and protect them. During the process, civil society organizations, Ministers and ministries’ representatives and political leaders and decision makers from Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Tunisia, France and Sweden, EU diplomats, members of the European Parliament, legal experts and academics, municipality leaders and women’s rights organizations have together strengthened and furthered the discussion.
3. The goal of this process is to sustain the Istanbul-Marrakech Frame of Action as a major regional tool for improving of women’s rights; to contextualize it in the present developments in Euro-Med: political transitions in the MENA and economical and financial crises in Europe; to promote it as a part of the international women’s rights framework linked with the Millennium Declaration that reaffirmed gender equality as both a goal in itself and a condition for the achievement of other goals and development.
4. The Conference held on 7-8 June 2013 in Amman is a culmination of this process. It gathered over 150 representatives from women’s rights organizations and networks, State actors, political leaders, members of parliaments, academics and media from the Euro-Med region to discuss and finalize the recommendations to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ministerial Meeting to be held in September in Paris.
5. The participants acknowledged the role of Jordan in hosting this conference and welcomed the initiative of France, Jordan and the EU to organize the next Ministerial Conference on Women in September 2013 in Paris. They underlined the importance of making their voice heard in the Paris Ministerial Meeting and issued the following recommendations.



## Recommendations

The conference supports the conclusions from the Ministerial Meeting Marrakesh 2009 and calls upon the Governments at the Paris Ministerial Meeting in 2013 to further enhance and concretize the future steps towards achieving gender equality. The aim of gender equality policies is to ensure that women and men enjoy the same opportunities, rights and responsibility in all areas of life. The principle is that everyone, regardless of sex, has the right to work and support themselves, to balance career and family life, to participate in the political and public life on equal footing and to live without the fear of abuse or violence. Gender equality means that women and men are of equal worth and imply ensuring the knowledge and experience of both men and women to promote progress in all spheres of society.

### 1. On Democracy and Women's Participation

Gender equality is a pillar of democracy and therefore all the obstacles to its achievement across the regional, national and local contexts comprise a major hindrance to democracy and development. The conference emphasized that freedom, dignity, physical, psychological integrity, equal access of women and men to resources and opportunities, health education and decision making are prerequisites to democracy. Women's rights are at the core of all transitional and reform processes that take place in the MENA and at the core of all policies addressing the economic crises in Europe and therefore their implementation is not only an essential part but also a measure of democracy. Reform process towards democracy can only be successful if the values of gender equality and human rights are considered. Democracy demands equal participation and sharing of power, duties and responsibilities. But women face numerous obstacles due to discriminative patriarchal structures, practices and procedures as well as social and cultural attitudes. Moreover violence used against women to limit their participation is an extreme form of control and discrimination. Therefore a broader debate on defining democracy is needed in the whole region, mobilizing the communities for transformative changes and placing women's rights at the highest priorities for State action, political parties and civil society. Civil States where politics is separated from religion are a precondition to achieving equality, respecting diversities and protecting the beliefs of all.

- Adopting proportional electoral system, combined with legally and constitutionally binding gender quota of minimum 40% representation of women in order to ensure their application and overcome deficiencies in democracy. These mechanisms are transitory towards ensuring women's equal participation in decision making, policy-making and implementation. Follow-up on non-compliance through significant sanctions, including disqualifying the non-compliance lists.
- Applying the principle of separation of politics and religion, non-discrimination based on gender and equality between women and men as a guiding principle for all constitutions, as a necessary condition for achieving equality and women's rights. Incorporating clear provisions guarantying equal citizenship rights between women and men.
- Adopting gender equality laws in all the countries of the Euro-Med region, ensuring its Institutionalizing in the government policies and action plans to safeguard women's rights from regressive measures.
- Forming of women's rights or gender equality committees in the national assemblies.



- Engendering the national budgets and introducing gender based statistics.

## **2. On Women's Rights, Regional and International Mechanisms to promote them**

In the present context it is more than ever important to apply international conventions, regional and activate national tools for gender equality. The Marrakech Ministerial Conclusions 2009 has been approached in connection with the other international women's rights mechanisms as parts of the same framework promoting women's rights as universal human rights. They articulate the political will to strengthen the action by governments for gender equality, following their obligations to other international conventions and resolutions that were signed. To make the connection between the Marrakech Conclusions and the International Conventions is important, as well as the connection between the International Conventions themselves. During the Ministerial Meetings the governments have agreed to fight discrimination. The Convention of Elimination of all forms of Violence against Women (CEDAW) provides a definition of discrimination and concrete measures on how to curb it; UNSCR 1325 addresses women's participation in the political sphere and their role in solving conflicts, while the Beijing Platform for Action, explains that a critical mass of minimum 30% of underrepresented is needed in decision making and in all spheres in order to be able to take into account the needs and interests of women. Enshrining women's rights and gender equality as well as the principle of non-discrimination based on gender in all the constitution enables legislative changes addressing existing discrimination. Equal recognition of rights and duties defines citizenship. Therefore affirming constitutional equality is nothing more than making both women and men full citizens, making gender equality a defining feature of the State. Holding reservations to sustain formal and legal discrimination of women in personal status matters (divorce, marriage, inheritance, property, and custody) is not possible as it amounts to denying women their full citizenship which is the purpose of the CEDAW. Introducing reservations is contrary to the purpose of the treaty and hence invalid according to Art 19 of Vienna Convention on the Laws of Treaties. In Europe the lack of implementation of existing legislation is an obstacle to full/real democracy.

- Meeting the long term demand of civil society by lifting all reservations on CEDAW and ratifying the optional protocol.
- Harmonizing national legislation with international laws and standards for women's rights, grounded in their universality.
- Developing National Action Plans for implementation of the Ministerial Conclusions as a channel for dialogue between State actors and women's rights organizations and monitoring mechanism. Allocating budgets for their development and implementation.
- Respecting gender equality and women's rights as a condition in every bilateral and multilateral agreement and in the ENP. EU must base partnerships on the full respect of human rights of both women and men and develop strict and reliable tools to assess their implementation as stated in the ENP.



### **3. On Education and Awareness Raising**

Changing attitudes and discriminatory patterns requires not only a political and legal intervention by the State but also a broad awareness raising action addressing cultural gender stereotypes. The educational system and curricula are framed by patriarchal values and gender bias and contribute to reproducing these stereotypes. Personnel in concerned authorities (diverse ministries) working on creating educational programs and curricula are often reproducing discriminatory patterns themselves.

- Exerting efforts to reform the educational system, the curricula and the educational programs to promote the values of citizenship, human rights and gender equality, to stop violence and discrimination, to promote women's rights as a human rights issue and not a family issue.
- Giving priority to providing training programs on gender equality and women's rights for professionals (teachers, police, security personnel, hospitals, and judiciary). Gender mainstreaming in the ministries, in particular Ministries of Education, should be put as a State priority with relevant policies and adequate budgeting.
- The women's rights NGOs, both national and international may provide needed expertise and advice in tailoring these programs.
- Legislating and developing mechanisms that ensure the fair distribution of work for women/men in the private and public sectors and development of social state services to allow women and men equal participation in economic and social life.

### **4. On Dialogue between Women's Rights Organizations and Decision Makers**

A vibrant and active civil society and independent women's rights NGOs play an important monitoring and advocacy role. The civil society is a critical partner in the reform processes bringing the voices of women to the reform agenda. The participants debated on the need to develop concrete and diverse mechanisms that enhance the dialogue between women's rights NGOs, the political players and State actors. Implementation of women's rights mechanisms require institutionalizing conclusions of the critical dialogue between civil society, political decision makers and State actors where the decision makers can consolidate the demands of women's NGOs for gender equality that come straight from their experiences with the grassroots.

Cooperation and dialogue between governmental and non-governmental actors is important for implementing what has been discussed thus far. In the process of strengthening women's role in society, it is crucial that everyone continues to play their part, in a broad and inclusive dialogue. It is important to engage governments, parliamentarians, officials, civil society organizations, women's associations, academia, professional associations, media and others to cooperate at local, national, regional and international levels. It is also essential that this dialogue include both women and men.



Women's rights NGOs independent status and functioning is a precondition for having a vocal civil society, Autonomy of the women's rights NGOs is a fundamental principle in the dialogue with the State's leaders.

- Enabling adequate legislation of women's rights organizations to play its leading role in reshaping the society that contribute to the fight against extremisms;
- Establishing channels for dialogue with NGOs as independent and full rank interlocutors, as encouraging the forming of cross sectoral committees enabling dialogue on gender equality of diverse actors.

## 5. On Violence against Women, Peace and Security

Violence against women in all its different forms and as a constitutive part of the patriarchal system is structural and exists everywhere. The structures of violence in war and in "peacetime" are constructed as poverty, unemployment and economic insecurity. The UN and the Commission for Human Security have launched the concept of *Human security* with the purpose to move the (security) focus from the State to the human being. But even this concept escapes the fact that the threat against women's security lies also within the relations of their affiliation. Women are the victims of violence committed by their nearest partners and men in their family and in their own home. At the same time violence used by armies and armed conflict in war justifies rape and sexual humiliation in addition to violence against women at home. Security problems constitute the everyday multi-layered discrimination women experience within societies that sustain their oppression, subordination, inequality, discrimination and the feeling of insecurity.

Studies show that in Europe, "violence against women is far more dangerous to the female population than terrorism or cancer"; as many as 45% of European women have been victims of physical and/or sexual violence. Cross-cultural studies have found that cultural norms endorsing male dominance; female economic dependency; patterns of conflict resolution emphasizing violence, toughness, and honor; and male authority in the family predict high societal levels of domestic violence and rape.

Conservative and traditional trends together with religious fundamentalist movements are hindering women from becoming full citizens and to live a life free of violence in the whole region. In the MENA countries many governments have reservations on CEDAW, which contributes to reproducing violence against women in the public and private sphere –family, in marriage, inheritance, property, etc.

Women's rights organizations are reporting abuse of women's rights and increasing violence against women in the public space in the contexts of ongoing occupation, political transitions and violent conflict with displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. All this makes it urgent to introduce binding legal measures regarding violence against women and provide protection according to UNSCR 1325.

- Introducing urgently binding legal measures criminalizing and penalizing all forms of violence against women in order to closing the gap between formal rights and substantial/real rights and to strengthening the public awareness on the violation of women's sexual and reproductive rights.



- Signing and ratifying the European Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), especially the EU and European Council States member states, in order to enter into force immediately, and provide a Task Force against violence against women with their resources and information to implement their mandate.

- Establishing of shelters, centers and hotlines for abused women under the supervision of specialized women's rights organizations. Providing special support to victims of violence through funding special programs at the psychosocial level.
- Introducing data and statistics, harmonization and publication on VAW and allocating budgets for curbing all forms of violence against women.
- Adopting special laws to protect women migrant workers from violence and exploitation.

#### **a) On Palestine**

Women are the most vulnerable during military conflict and occupations. The occupation of Palestine is an impediment for women to play their role in building their society. The occupation adds new responsibilities on women to build families and communities during and after the collective loss. The dominant culture is that women have no complains and therefore their psychological trauma is not recognized. Palestinian women suffer from tensions and worries, not only because of the social, economic and political conditions under which every Palestinian family lives, but also because of the fact that her husband or son or daughter is pursued, imprisoned, injured or murdered; or because her house is destroyed or she suffers from multiple losses. In addition women are excluded from the peace negotiation processes and therefore their needs, perspectives and demands are not taken into consideration.

- Immediate ending of the occupation and recognition of an independent and sovereign Palestinian State on occupied territories of 1967 war, with East Jerusalem as its capital and the respect of the right of the Palestinians to return to their home land according to the UN resolution number 194 and support the State of Palestine to be a member in the international agencies.
- Immediate end to the building of Israeli settlements on the occupied territories and the withdrawal of the established ones; setting up time agenda to finish the peace negotiation.
- Including women in a participatory and comprehensive peace process in accordance with UNSCR1325 on Women, Peace and Security, as a condition to allow transition towards democracy, enhancing respect of human rights of both women and men.
- Support Palestine in attaining its membership as a State within the United Nations.

#### **b) On Women and Syrian Conflict**

Syrian women in particular are living in tragic conditions. The participants call for a political solution based on a civil, pluralistic and democratic Syrian State free from oppression and dictatorship, through:

- Urging inclusion of women's rights and gender equality in the agenda of democratic transformation and for inclusion of the women's rights movement in the process of constituting a new constitution and transitional justice program.
- Protecting women from all kinds of violence.
- Integrating the needs of Syrian women refugees and displaced women in all humanitarian aid programs.



## Annex 1: Conference Agenda

### Women's Rights and Democracy Building:

#### Promoting a common agenda for equality between women and men

7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2013

Landmark Hotel Amman Jordan

<b>DAY ONE</b> <b>7/06/2013</b> <b>9:00 – 10:00</b>	<b>Opening Session: Commitment to international and regional mechanisms that promote and protect the universal human rights of women: changing contexts after Marrakech 2009</b>
<b>09:00 – 09:15</b>  <b>09:15 – 10:00</b>	<b>Registration</b>  <b>Welcome and Introduction</b> <p>With the Ministerial Conclusions 2006-9 the governments acknowledged existence of inequalities and the need to take measures to address them. The feminist movement in the Arab world and Europe have monitored the implementation of the conclusions, through common analyses on issues of mutual interest such as citizenship, women's participation, civil legislation and/or violence against women. A lot has changed since Marrakech 2009: Arab uprisings for social justice, economic crises in Europe, paralyses of peace negotiations for a Palestinian State. However, the commitments of the State towards gender equality and women's rights remain as a political issue in the heart of any process towards democracy.</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>  H.E. Reem Abu Hassan - Minister of Social Development, Jordan  H.E. Joanna Wronecka - EU Ambassador to Jordan  H.E. Asma Khader - Secretary General National Commission for Women Jordan  Ms. Lilian Halls French - European Feminist Initiative IFE-EFI</p>
<b>10:00 – 13:00</b>	<b>Session 1: Equality First – Enhancing democracy through installing equality between women and men as a priority on decision makers' agendas: challenges and strategies. Strengthening of Istanbul-Marrakech process</b>
	<p>European Feminist Initiative IFE-EFI and the partners and associate in the MENA region - AWO and SIGI in Jordan, Association Najdeh and RDFL in Lebanon, EACPE in Egypt, ATFD in Tunisia, WSC in Palestine, SWL in Syria, have launched a regional campaign <b>Equality First</b>. For the purpose of achieving firm steps in contributing to a more friendly gender equality environment, many actions took place in these countries elaborating the link between women's rights and democracy building. This session will examine the challenges and strategies that are needed to respect</p>



<p><b>10:00 – 10:30</b></p>	<p>and promote and preserve the women’s rights. The political context opened space for democratizing political systems and laws. However, conservative and traditional trends together with religious fundamentalist movements are confronting the right of women to be full citizens and to live a life free of violence in the whole region. To achieve democracy requests to increase political participation of women and to put equality between women and men as a priority on the decision makers’ agendas.</p> <p><b>Transition processes: Where are the women’s rights?</b>  <b>Keynote speakers</b>          Dr. Mervat Tallawy - Head of the National Council of Women, Egypt          Mrs. Moufida Misseoui - Association Tunisienne des Femmes Democratés, Tunisia          Mr. Bassam Salhi - General Secretary of the Palestinian People Party, Palestine</p> <p><b>Moderator</b>          Mrs. Rima Nazzal - Women’s Studies Centre, Palestine</p>
<p><b>10:30 – 11:15</b></p>	<p><b>Open discussion</b></p>
<b>Coffee Break</b>	
<p><b>11:45 – 12:15</b></p>	<p><b>Violence against women as a core issue in Euro-Med</b>  <b>Keynote speakers</b>          Ms. Azza Kamel - Executive Director Appropriate Communication Techniques for Development Egypt          Ms. Magali Thill - Euro-Med Human Rights Network Spain          Mr. Nasser Abou Lteif- Adviser to Minister of Social Affairs, Lebanon</p> <p><b>Moderator</b>          Mrs. Suzan Aref – Women Empowerment Organisation, Erbil, Iraq</p>
<p><b>12:15 -13:00</b></p>	<p><b>Open discussion</b></p>
<b>Lunch</b>	
<p><b>14:00 – 17:00</b></p>	<p><b>Session 2: International Conventions and regional documents as unique and common frame reference for national legislations and Constitutions – Towards a binding frame</b></p>



	<p>Women’s rights are universal human rights. International documents are a major tool to support the work towards improving discriminatory legislation, often justified with culture or traditions. The working groups will examine the link between the implementation of the international and regional women’s rights documents and democracy building. These instruments provide a common frame to promote the guiding principle and value of universality of rights. Among them the most important ones: CEDAW, the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and the Beijing Platform for Action. The Ministerial Conclusions from the Istanbul and Marrakech Ministerial Conferences, 2006, respectively 2009, reaffirmed the commitments of the governments in Euro-Med region to strengthen women’s rights. They are essential references to the obligations of governments and societies. They opened the way for a strengthened common action of the women’s movements in Maghreb, Mashreq and Europe.</p>
<b>14:00 – 15:30</b>	<p><b>Working Groups:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Universality of women’s rights versus cultural relativism <b>Introduction and facilitation: Ms. Zahira Kamal, General Secretary “Fida”, Palestine</b></li> <li>2. Democracy to where? Freedom for whom? Whose choice? <b>Introduction and facilitation: Mrs. Marie Therese El Mir, Rassemblement Démocratique des Femmes Libanaises, Lebanon</b></li> <li>3. International binding frame for promotion of women’s rights and their indivisibility in laws and constitutions <b>Introduction and facilitation: Mrs. Sawsan Zakzak, Syrian Women’s League</b></li> </ol>
<b>15:30 – 16.30</b>	<p><b>Plenary Session:</b> Reports from the working groups and recommendations <b>Open Discussion</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Mrs. Aida Touma, Director “Women against Violence” SALMA Network</p>
<b>16:30 – 17:00</b>	<p><b>Wrap up first day</b> Mrs. Lilian Halls French and Mrs. Caroline Succar</p>
<b>19.30 -</b>	<b>Reception Sky Bliss Terrace Landmark</b>
<b>DAY TWO 08/06/2013 09:00 – 10:30</b>	<b>Session 3: Feminist alternatives to preserve and promote women’s rights as constitutive part of democracy, peace and social justice</b>



<p><b>09:00 – 09:30</b></p>	<p>It is essential to develop common actions between feminist and women’s movements from Maghreb, Mashreq and Europe based on solidarity and mutual interest in order to address patriarchal structures that hinder women’s full enjoyment of their human rights. This session will examine the need of a common action and a comprehensive approach to the international tools with a permanent link between democracy, citizenship, peace, economic and social justice. We approach these instruments together, as a common frame and use them to monitor the governments’ commitments and implementation, while mobilizing and promoting international cooperation and feminist alternatives.</p> <p><b>Key note speakers</b>  Mrs. Theofano Papazissi - Teacher of Law, University of Athens, Greece  Mrs. Valborg Linden Jonsten - Political Adviser Committee for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality in the EU Parliament  Mr. John Azzi - Judge Lebanon</p> <p><b>Moderator</b>  Mrs. Ms Amal Khreishe, General Director Palestinian Working Women’s Association</p>
<p><b>09:30 – 10:15</b></p>	<p><b>Open discussion</b></p>
<p><b>10:15 – 11:30</b></p>	<p><b><u>Session 4: Dialogue between womens’ rights NGOs, political and State actors</u></b></p>
<p><b>10:15 – 10:45</b></p>	<p>During the Ministerial Meeting in Marrakesh 2009, the ministers encouraged “the establishment of a dialogue between the governmental entities and the civil society organizations and highlighted the important role of civil society as valuable partners in the irreversible process started in Istanbul.” The dialogues launched within the frame of the project “<i>Promoting a common agenda for equality between women and men through Istanbul Process</i>” demonstrated that dialogue between civil society and State actors on democracy, without compromising women’s rights is not only possible but fruitful when achievement of womens’ rights is acknowledged as a need for the sustainable development. This session will examine the challenges and the channels to sustain this dialogue, while preserving the full independency of women’s rights organizations.</p> <p><b>Keynote Speakers</b>  Ms. Diana Chuli – Former MP, President of Independent Forum of Albanian Women, Tirana  Dr. Tareq Rasheed - General Director Interior Ministry KRG; Chairperson Drafting Committee for the development of the National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR1325 in Iraq  Mrs. Zahra Ouardi – President L'Union de l'Action Féminine UAF Maroc</p> <p><b>Moderator</b>  Mrs. Fatima Chahine - Najdeh, Lebanon</p> <p><b>Open Discussion</b></p>



<b>10:45 – 11:30</b>	
<b>11:30 – 12:00</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>
<b>12:00 – 13:00</b>	<p><b>Working Groups:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Solidarity and international networking, tools against nationalisms <b>Introduction and facilitation: RDFL Lebanon</b></li> <li>2. Occupation, invasion, military interventions sustainable obstacles to peace freedom and democracy <b>Introduction and facilitation: Mrs. Inistar Abu Salem, Najdeh Lebanon</b></li> <li>3. How we bring gender equality on decision makers/political agendas? mechanisms <b>Introduction and facilitation: Mrs. Afaf Marej, EACPE, Egypt</b></li> </ol>
<b>13:00 – 14:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>14:00 – 15:00</b>	<p><b>Plenary Session: Reports from the working groups and recommendations</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Mrs. Amal Abdel Hadi, Coalition Equality without Reservations</p>
<b>15:00– 16:30</b>	<p><b>Panel discussion:</b> <b>So, when equality in Euro-Med?</b></p>
<b>15:00 – 16:30</b>	<p>In the whole Euro-Med and globally, equality between women and men remains still an unreachable goal and demands for equality are faced with biggest resistance, even if there is a general negation of it. Always delayed, because there are more “relevant” or “urgent” issues to be solved first, or because of culture, tradition, people habits. Prominent figures coming from different backgrounds and walks of life- from the fields of diplomacy, political leadership, academics, media, and civil society will share their reflections and ideas.</p> <p><b>Guests</b>  Mr. Hussam Al Hussein - Director, European Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jordan  H.E. Majeda Al-Masri - Minister of Social Development, Palestine  Mr. Ahmed Fawzy - SG of Egyptian Social Democratic Party  H.E. Charlotta Sparre, Ambassador of Sweden to Jordan  Ms. Sabah Hallaq - Syrian Women’s League  Mr. Ralf Erbel - Friedrich Nauman Foundation for Liberty  Ms. Abla Abu Elbeh - SG Hashem Party, Jordan  Ms. Wafa Khadra - Professor American University of Madaba Jordan</p> <p><b>Leading the discussion</b>  Mrs. Boriana Jönsson, IFE-EFI</p>
<b>16:30 – 17:30</b>	<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE 3<sup>RD</sup> MINISTERIAL MEETING, PARIS 2013</b></p> <p>Mrs. Layla Hamarneh and Mrs. Boriana Jönsson</p>
<b>17:30 – 18:00</b>	<p><b>Wrap up</b> <b>Mrs. Lilian Halls French and Mrs. Afaf Marej</b></p>



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