



Office of the Special Coordinator
for Lebanon

Bureau du Coordinateur Spécial
pour le Liban

Press Release

Statement of UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Jan Kubis on International Women's Day 2020

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Beirut, Lebanon

This year, the commemoration of International Women's Day takes place at a pivotal moment in Lebanon's history. Having historically stood at the forefront of rights movements, Lebanon's women have, once again, proven to be a catalyst for social progress by taking the lead in calls for change and reform. Their efforts to protect the non-violent character of Lebanon's popular movement and their united stance against a downslide towards strife demonstrated their essential role in building peaceful societies.

Yet, the contributions of women to the social, economic, political, legal, academic and all other spheres in Lebanon can only attain its optimal level once the barriers still hindering gender parity in leadership positions are lifted. The United Nations has already achieved gender parity in its senior management team, and work is ongoing to apply that to the Organization's entire ranks. Similarly, Lebanon is encouraged to take measures to ensure women are more involved and allowed to actively take part in the realization of change and in shaping the image of their country's future through greater inclusion and participation in decision-making processes.

While the 30% women rate in the newly-formed government and the adoption of the 1325 National Action Plan constitute positive leaps and can be effective tools for women's empowerment, a long way is still ahead. Women in Lebanon continue to face many forms of discrimination, while inequality in different fields is still predominant, gender-based violence is not adequately combatted, and their concerns, rights, and interests are only rarely prioritized.

Achieving gender equality is a key factor for the establishment of a stable, peaceful and prosperous Lebanon. Bold political, legal, economic and social steps are needed, especially through the adoption and effective implementation of the necessary relevant laws, to ensure women get to exercise their role as half of society and as pioneers of change and advancement on all levels.

The United Nations in Lebanon, through its different agencies, funds and programmes will continue to press for the equal rights of women and will maintain its unwavering support for their empowerment, participation and representation in all fields.