



Office of the Special Coordinator
for Lebanon

Bureau du Coordinateur Spécial
pour le Liban

UN Deputy Special Coordinator Najat Rochdi Briefs a Security Council Informal Expert Group on the situation of Women, Peace and Security in Lebanon

25 May 2021

Today, Ms. Najat Rochdi, the Deputy UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, briefed a virtual meeting of the Security Council's Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security on the situation in Lebanon, particularly with regards to impact of the current crisis on women and how women are working to sustain peace and security in the country. It is the first time the Security Council's Informal Expert Group discusses the situation in Lebanon.

“Without addressing gender equality and women’s rights issues in Lebanon, we will not be able to sustainably and genuinely address the current multi-faceted crisis that the country is facing,” Ms. Rochdi said. While women in Lebanon are at the forefront of many current initiatives aimed at making peace, gender inequality in Lebanon is uniquely intertwined with the political and social structures that contribute to the cyclical nature of crisis in the country, she added.

Noting how Lebanon’s unprecedented socio-economic crisis compounded by the COVID-19 lockdown and last year’s tragic Beirut Port explosions have further deepened gender inequalities, Ms. Rochdi insisted that any recovery efforts in Lebanon must be inclusive of women in order to be sustainable. Standing at 145 out of a total of 153 countries, Lebanon has one of the highest overall gender gaps in the world, and amongst the lowest rates of women’s political participation and labor market participation.

The meeting discussed the importance of strengthening the participation of women in peace, security, and political processes, including in Lebanon’s parliamentary and municipal elections in 2022, as part of broader efforts to consolidate peace and bring stability to Lebanon.

According to Ms. Rochdi, the adoption of Lebanon’s first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in September 2019 offered a ray of hope for increasing women’s participation in decision-making at all levels, including in the security and defense sectors and in conflict prevention and promotion of social cohesion, to contribute to sustainable peace in Lebanon. She also highlighted the prominent role played recently by women whether at the forefront of the popular protests and political movements or in local peacebuilding and mediation efforts.

Ms. Rochdi reiterated the UN's repeated calls for the formation of a reform-oriented government in Lebanon to address the country's urgent needs, including those related to women's rights. "Lebanon needs a Government that is competent, empowered, and representative of its people – naturally, also women. The longer Lebanon is without a government, the deeper this crisis becomes," Ms. Rochdi said.

About the UN Security Council's Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security:

In October 2015, the Security Council adopted resolution 2242 and called for an Informal Expert Group (IEG) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). This mechanism is intended to enable the Security Council to receive more detailed and nuanced information and analysis related to WPS in specific countries affected by conflict and on how the UN is implementing its WPS mandate on the ground. The IEG began its work in 2016 and holds periodic meetings with the UN in several countries.
