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## U.N. to Recruit Men to Fight for Women's Equality

The United Nations agency promoting equality for women is launching a global campaign to get 100,000 men and boys involved in the fight to achieve gender equality.

U.N. Women said the campaign, spurred by the unfulfilled U.N. goal of achieving gender equality by 2015, will begin Saturday when Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon activates an online map to track the progress of countries in promoting equality of the sexes. Ban will be accompanied by British actress Emma Watson, a goodwill ambassador for the agency who played Hermione Granger in the "Harry Potter" films.

According to U.N. Women, the "HeForShe" campaign hopes to get each of the 100,000 initial supporters to bring at least 100 other men and boys into the campaign to end the persistent inequalities faced by women and girls globally.

"Our main goal is to increase the involvement of men and boys in the struggle to achieve gender equality," Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka, head of U.N. Women, said in an interview with The Associated Press.

"It cannot be that women will do this alone," she said. "It remains an important women's issue that requires the whole of society, men and women, to be involved."

Mlambo Ngcuka, who announced the "HeForShe" campaign in March, called on the world's fathers, sons, husbands and brothers to stand up and support equality for women in all areas of life.

Read more:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/148222-u-n-to-recruit-men-to-fight-for-women-s-equality>

## Kurdish female fighters face Islamic State militants in Iraq's north

*Women have been fighting alongside men in the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) to wrest Mount Makhmur in northern Iraq back from Islamic State (IS) militants, whose treatment of women makes the fight especially personal for the dozens of female fighters on the mountain.*



Tekoshin stands on a mountain in north Iraq with a rifle slung over her shoulder and a grenade tucked into her belt, facing jihadists in "a struggle to liberate women".

Women have been fighting alongside men in the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) to wrest Mount Makhmur in northern Iraq back from Islamic State (IS) militants, whose treatment of women makes the fight especially personal for the dozens of female fighters on the mountain.

IS-led militants have overrun large areas of Iraq, and the group also controls significant territory in neighbouring Syria, enacting its harshly restrictive and brutal interpretation of Islamic law in both countries.

Read more:

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/kurdish-female-fighters/1360460.html>

## **Saudi women significantly more likely to 'strive to achieve' than their male counterparts**

*Saudi females were significantly more likely to be motivated by 'striving to achieve' than their male counterparts (35% cf. 20%), found the latest survey commissioned by Oxford Strategic Consulting.*

The survey released by the UK/Dubai-based HR consultancy consisted of nearly 1,000 responses from Saudi nationals living in Saudi Arabia. The survey asked participants what three things motivated them most in life as well as what three things discouraged them the most in life.

Saudi females were also significantly more likely than males to feel discouraged by their own negative feelings (49% cf. 35%) and lack of personal achievement (24% cf. 14%). These results demonstrate that while Saudi females crave achievement, certain factors are disproportionately hampering their ability to succeed in Saudi Arabia. More research needs to be done to identify exactly what factors are contributing to these 'negative feelings' and whether this internal factor is common from females across the world.

'There is a tremendous amount of untapped female talent in Saudi Arabia, with one of the challenges being internalised negative feelings. Subject to more detailed research, it may be possible to help adjust these feelings using advanced, but simple, interventions such as attribution style training – even in school,' explained Professor William Scott-Jackson, Chairman of OSC.

Read more:

<http://www.oxfordstrategicconsulting.com/saudi-women-significantly-likely-strive-achieve-male-counterparts/>

## **Arab Women Leaders Call for Global Action for Peace and Security**

Just days before the 69th General Assembly commences, Arab women leaders convened high-level policy makers in New York to issue key recommendations on women, peace, and security and call upon the international community for their urgent support in ensuring women's participation at all levels of the peace and transition processes, and women's protection and security in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Responding to the marginalization, discrimination, and brutal violence committed against women both during and post-conflict, the briefing event, titled "Women's Action for Peace," was hosted by regional women's rights organization Karama, in partnership with the Post 2015 Women's Coalition, a global coalition focused on feminist movement building. The event provided international stakeholders with first-person accounts of the realities for women, and for their families and communities on the ground, as a means to foster effective dialogue and develop lasting solutions.

"There is a major disconnect between governments and communities," said Karama founder Hibaaq Osman. "Governments must listen to the voices on the ground and their actions must reflect the realities of the people to create long-term peace and foster sustainable progress."

Since the Arab Uprisings, a more severe normative climate has emerged in the region, fueled largely by growing extremist influence. Recently, women have faced increasing and targeted violence and discrimination, including attacks on women human rights defenders.

Read more:

<http://bridgesyr.cmail2.com/t/ViewEmail/i/1446CAA652D194F7/F78BE261CABAE1152540EF23F30FEDED>

## Egypt Court Suspends Top Activist's Jail Sentence



An Egyptian court Sunday suspended the jail sentence of prominent activist Mahienour el-Massry convicted for taking part in an illegal protest, paving the way for her release, her lawyer said.

An appeals court in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria in July had already cut Massry's initial two-year term to six months and a fine of 50,000 Egyptian pounds (about \$7,000).

Defense lawyer Mohamed Hafez told Agence France-Presse his team had asked for the six-month verdict to be suspended and for a review of her case.

Sunday's verdict was "the result of the mass campaign against the protest law ... and the verdict is an attempt by the ruling regime to boost its image abroad," he said.

While behind bars in June, Massry was awarded France's 2014 Ludovic Trarieux award for defending human rights.

Read more:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/148316-egypt-court-suspends-top-activist-s-jail-sentence>

## Lifting the barriers for economic progress of women in Jordan



About 70 percent of Jordanians are under the age of 29. While in some scenarios this statistic might reflect a strong workforce and an economic opportunity for the country, in Jordan this is not the case—because one out of three of those youth are unemployed. The youth bulge has left young people frustrated and unable to become economically active members of society, without the dignity and sense of worth that they desire.

Women and girls are especially affected. Female participation in Jordan's workforce is extremely low; indeed at 15 percent it is the lowest in the region. Female unemployment stands at 46 percent compared to 23 percent for men. Jordan's female literacy rate is among the highest in the Middle East—97.3 percent—and females achieve higher grades than males in almost all levels of education, yet they are notably absent in the workforce.

Read more:

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/education-plus-development/posts/2014/09/15-economic-progress-women-jordan-jaber>

## GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

### Meet the Female Recruiters of ISIS



Ubaydah with her friends, Umm Haritha and Umm Layth.

Umm Ubaydah doesn't have a blue checkmark verifying her as *amuhajirah* on Twitter. And yet, she's become, along with a group of other young Western muslim women, an active online surrogate for the terrorist group ISIS.

While their husbands are out fighting, these women communicate ISIS's message to the outside world, and particularly to other women curious about the same cause. Because of their youth and Western upbringings, they do so in slang and emoji, intermixed with a handful of Islamic phrases that they have picked up. As the recent widespread distribution of beheading videos on U.S. social media has shown, ISIS brings plenty of propaganda savvy to its brutal campaign. Women like Umm Ubaydah, who uses the handle @al\_Khanssaa (possibly a reference to the poet) are a critical component of that effort.

Read more:

<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2014/09/meet-the-female-recruiters-of-isis.html>

### Iraq: Lawyer and human rights defender Samira Saleh Al-Naimi executed by ISIS in Mosul



With utmost sorrow and grief, the Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR) received the news of the execution by the so called Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham (ISIS) of lawyer and human rights defender **Samira Saleh Al-Naimi** in the city of Mosul, Iraq.

Reports confirmed that on the evening of 22 September 2014, a group of masked armed men who belong to ISIS opened fire and killed her in a public square in the very heart of Mosul. She was kidnapped by ISIS from her home last week after she described as "barbaric" the widespread damage that ISIS inflicted on ancient features of her city.

Samira Saleh Al-Naimi is a prominent lawyer and human rights defender and famous for her activities that include defending detainees and supporting the disadvantaged families in the city.

Read more:

<http://gc4hr.org/news/view/758>

## Teen girls recall horrors of Isis captivity



A young Yazidi woman bides time in a refugee camp after fleeing ISIS's murderous

Teenage girls who escaped the brutal clutches of ISIS terrorists have recounted a harrowing nightmare of beatings, torture, rape and degradation that included being forced to watch videos of men being beheaded.

The girls, members of the persecuted Yazidi minority from northern Iraq, say they were captured and sold or given as gifts.

“We would try to make ourselves look ugly,” an escaped girl, 15, told the Global Post news service. “Some women would cry or scream or fight, but it made no difference. They were always taken anyway.”

She said they were debased so badly that death, even by suicide, was more appealing than living under ISIS’s barbaric control.

“One girl hanged herself,” the teen said. “Another tried, but the ISIS guards stopped her and beat her very badly. No one else tried after that.”

One of the young victims said she became frail and sick because her guards gave them so little to eat.

Read more:

<http://nypost.com/2014/10/01/teen-girls-recount-rapes-torture-severed-heads-in-isis-captivity/>

## Sexual violence as a war strategy in Iraq



In the last few days, while the world has been overwhelmed by the flow of information about atrocities committed by Islamic State (IS) jihadists, public officials and local media channels have confirmed that hundreds of Yezidi and Christian women have been abducted, some of them buried alive and others subjected to rape and sexual slavery.

On 2 August, the IS attacked Sinjar and its surrounding areas, inhabited for more than 4000 years by peaceful Yezidi community, who practice a faith reminiscent of Zoroastrianism. Later in the week, the attacks were extended to other areas in the Nineveh plain, including Qaraqosh, Iraq’s Christian capital. The jihadists have murdered thousands of civilians, buried some alive in mass graves, burnt their homes, pillaged and destroyed their holy shrines, prompting a mass exodus.

We have seen long columns of women, men and children fleeing their homeland, trapped in barren Sinjar Mount without basic necessities and vital supplies and facing death.

Read more:

[http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/columns/article/sexual-violence-as-a-war-strategy-in-iraq\\_25812](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/columns/article/sexual-violence-as-a-war-strategy-in-iraq_25812)

## Draft law to fight violence against women on National Women's Day



As Tunisia Celebrates National women's day in the wake of new progressive constitution, National Constituent Assembly held a conference on the drafting of a law to fight violence against women, a further step to consolidate Tunisian women's rights and to respond to their existing problems.

"These are the first steps for the drafting of an outline law fighting violence against women and girls," Nadia Chaabane, member of the NCA, told Tunisia Live.

In Tunisia, the state has set up a wide panel of laws, mechanisms and programs to provide rights to women, although according to Chaabane, the application of these laws lacks efficiency.

The National Women's Day marks the 58th anniversary of promulgation of Code of Personal Status enacted on August 13, 1956. A series of laws deemed as one of the most progressive Laws in the region in ensuring women's right and institutionalizing equality between men and women.

Read more:

<http://www.tunisia-live.net/2014/08/13/draft-law-to-fight-violence-against-women-on-national-womens-day/>

## GENDER & HUMAN RIGHTS

### Turkey Lifts Ban on Headscarves at High Schools



The Turkish government announced it was lifting a ban on female students wearing the Islamic headscarf at high schools, in a move denounced by opponents as undermining the basis of the country's secular society.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who co-founded the ruling Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party (AKP), has long been accused by opponents of eroding the secular values of the modern Turkish state.

Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Arinc, a close Erdogan ally, said that an amendment was made to the dress code regulations for female students to say they will not be forced to keep their heads uncovered.

"I know that some female students were longing for (this amendment) to high school regulations," Arinc told reporters after the cabinet meeting late on Monday.

Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu welcomed the amendment as an effort for "democratisation."

Read more:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/148474-turkey-lifts-ban-on-headscarves-at-high-schools>

## Lebanon to consider new laws to make it harder for child marriages to take place



... but draft expected to face strong resistance from religious leaders

The alarming increase in number of child marriages has prompted Lebanon to look at new legislation to curb it, giving give civil authorities a role in an area that is usually the preserve of clerics.

Arguably, the large influx of refugees from Syria has had a huge impact on the phenomenon but the fact that the practice is happening in Lebanon is enough to trouble lawmakers and women's rights groups who are concerned about how poverty is the driving force behind it – with many child brides allowed to marry simply to pay the rent on the family home.

There are no official statistics on child marriage in Lebanon, but it takes place in several rural areas in the country and has risen with the influx of Syrian refugees, experts say.

Read more:

<http://en.annahar.com/article/165456-lebanon-to-consider-new-laws-to-make-it-harder-for-child-marriages-to-take-place>

## Flight Chaos as Ultra-Orthodox Jews Refuse to Sit Near Women



Hundreds of ultra-Orthodox Jewish men delayed take-off of a transatlantic flight by refusing to sit next to women, and then caused chaos once it was airborne, a report said Friday.

The El Al flight from New York, with non-Orthodox and secular Jews also on board, eventually arrived at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport before dawn Wednesday in time to celebrate the Jewish new year, according to news website Ynet.

But as one female passenger described her trip, "it was an 11-hour-long nightmare."

As people boarded the flight, ultra-Orthodox men began asking women to change seats so they did not have to sit next to them, some even offering them money to do so, witnesses told Ynet.

When some women refused, including one who was sitting with her husband and identified herself as Galit, the men stood in the aisles, delaying the flight's departure.

The men eventually sat down, allowing the plane to take off, but then many got up and blocked the aisles.

Read more:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/148935-flight-chaos-as-ultra-orthodox-jews-refuse-to-sit-near-women>

## Spain opens door to ban on burqas

*Spain's interior minister Jorge Fernández Díaz on Wednesday said the Spanish government would consider including a ban on burqas as part of a packet of planned new security reforms.*

Speaking at a press conference, Díaz said that a ban on burqas could be included in the final version of Spain's draft Citizen Security Law, Spain's 20 minutos newspaper reported.

The draft bill, yet to be passed in the country's parliament, already includes provisions banning people from hiding their faces in demonstrations, Díaz noted.

Now could be a "good moment" to look to obtain "a level of consensus" on this issue, the interior minister noted.

Díaz stressed his department had no powers when it came to issues affecting the dignity of women, but could rule against the wearing of burqas and other full face veils on the grounds they made identification of people difficult.

"I don't want to say a ban is necessary," the minister said, but repeated this could be "a good moment" to consider such a prohibition.

Riay Tatary, the head of Spain's Islamic federation, the CIE, responded by saying the ban was "unnecessary" as use of the garment was not widespread in Spain.

Read more:

<http://www.thelocal.es/20140904/spain-opens-door-to-burqa-ban-catalonia-women-rights>

## Iran detains UK citizen over ban on women watching sports alongside men



Ghoncheh Ghavami, a 25-year-old British-Iranian woman, was kept in solitary confinement for more than 40 days after she was detained outside the Azadi stadium.

Earlier this summer, Ghoncheh Ghavami stood outside Tehran's majestic Azadi (freedom) stadium, wearing a white scarf and holding up a placard.

With Hassan Rouhani promising a more moderate stance in Iran, she wanted to enter the stadium alongside male fans, hoping that the Islamic republic's ban on women attending big sporting events would finally be over.

As Iran's volleyball team hosted Italy later that Friday, Ghavami, 25 – who holds dual British and Iranian citizenship – was arrested with a number of other female fans who were peacefully demanding to be allowed into the match. She was released after several hours in detention but re-arrested in late June when she went back to collect her mobile phone, which had been confiscated after the protest. Nearly three months on, she remains in jail.

Amnesty International says she is being held in Tehran's notorious Evin prison, where she was kept in solitary confinement for more than 40 days before being moved to a shared cell.

Read more:

<http://www.wluml.org/news/iran-detains-uk-citizen-over-ban-women-watching-sports-alongside-men>

## Unpaid, unrecognized, undervalued: women and girls care work



Nafula, a young twenty-five year old from Chavakali, Kenya begins her day at 4a.m. Before the sun rises, she walks more than 2 kilometres to the borehole where 20 other women are already in the queue. It takes one hour for her to collect water for the day. With a 5 month old child on her back, a twenty litre container on her head and a small five litre container, she hurries home to prepare breakfast for her husband and two children. After completing the housework and tilling the family land, Nafula will make her way to the nearby hospital which is ten kilometres away. It is also her responsibility to care for her father-in law's health. After his daily doctor's appointment, her husband and children will arrive at home for dinner. Although every life is unique, Nafula's story is similar to many women and girls.

Read more:

<http://girlsglobe.org/2014/09/24/unpaid-unrecognized-undervalued-women-and-girls-care-work/>

## RESOURCES & CALLS BOOKS & REPORTS

### New feature available on the Civil Society Knowledge Centre (CSKC)

The Gender Collaborative Information and Knowledge Network is an online collaborative platform. It is part of Lebanon Support's Civil Society Knowledge Center (CSKC) and brings together civil society organizations, researchers, practitioners, and experts to enhance local and national capacities, improve access to knowledge and its development, and provide evidence-based research, information, and literature on gender issues and concerns.

Access it here:

<http://cskc.daleel-madani.org/gen>

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### Mapping of incidents of violence against women



This map has been developed as part of an active collaboration between Lebanon Support and KAFA - Enough violence and exploitation, to collect and map incidents and reports of violence against women in Lebanon. The data of the mapped reports are consolidated based on media reports and civil society sources.

This map is part of the Gender Equity Information Network on the Civil Society Knowledge Center.

Read more:

<http://cskc.daleel-madani.org/map/gen/kafa.vaw>

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### **Gender politics in Lebanon and the limits of legal reformism**

Women organizations in Lebanon have a long history of struggle towards gender equality. Perceptions concerning the achievements and status of women in Lebanese society suggests relative progress on issues related to rights and gender equality. This paper proposes an analysis of the status of women in Lebanon based on various indicators highlighting women's participation in politics and decision-making processes and examining gender equality from the legal perspective and in terms of women's economic status. It also looks into women's achievements in terms of gender equality, reviewing some strategies adopted to enhance women's status in Lebanon and highlighting their limits in the particular Lebanese socio-political context.

Read more:

<http://cskc.daleel-madani.org/paper/gender-politics-lebanon-and-limits-legal-reformism>

For a direct link to report:

[http://cskc.daleel-madani.org/sites/default/files/papers/genderpoliticsinlebanon\\_riwa\\_salameh\\_ls\\_cskc.pdf](http://cskc.daleel-madani.org/sites/default/files/papers/genderpoliticsinlebanon_riwa_salameh_ls_cskc.pdf)

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### **New Report on the Role of Women's CSOs at Geneva II**

The Geneva II conference which begins on January 22 represents a crucial opportunity for gender issues to be integrated into the Syrian peace process. Researches conducted with key

stakeholders indicate that women's groups view the Geneva II conference as an important opportunity for meaningful women's participation. They are skeptical however of the likelihood of positive outcomes of the conference, especially given the exclusion of women thus far in the peace process. Despite this, research conducted by Integrity, as well as analyses from other transition processes, suggests that women's involvement in Geneva may be crucial to the sustainability of the peace process.

This research report provides an overview of the current situation of women's non-governmental organisations throughout Syria and explores their views on, and identifies opportunities for engagement with, the upcoming Geneva II conference and the Syrian peace process.

Read more:

<http://cskc.daleel-madani.org/resource/new-report-role-womens-csos-geneva-ii>

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### **Informal Economy Monitoring Study**

The Informal Economy Monitoring Study (IEMS) is a major, longitudinal study of the urban informal economy being undertaken initially at two points in time, 2012 and 2016, in 10 cities around the world: Accra, Ghana; Ahmedabad, India; Bangkok, Thailand; Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Bogota, Colombia; Durban, South Africa; Lahore, Pakistan; Lima, Peru; Nakuru, Kenya; and Pune, India. The study combines qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide an in-depth understanding of how three groups of urban informal workers – home-based workers, street vendors, and waste pickers – are affected by and respond to economic trends, urban policies and practices, value chain dynamics, and other economic and social forces.

Read more:

<http://wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/IEMS-Sector-Full-Report-Street-Vendors.pdf>

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