

Democracy and Gender: The Role of Women in Politics, the Media and Education

In cooperation with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and Goethe Institut, the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) at the Lebanese American University held a seminar on Friday, November 18, 2005 on Democracy and Gender. Mr. Samir Farah, representative of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung started by welcoming the audience and introducing the event. Following that, Dr. Dima Dabbous-Sensenig, Acting Director of IWSAW, chaired the session. She introduced each of the three German speakers: Dr. Anke Martiny, former MP and Senator for Culture, Berlin, presented a paper on the role of women in politics. Mrs. Gisela Brackert, journalist and former president of the Journalists' Association, spoke about the role of women in the media. Dr. Hadumod Bussman, former responsible for Women's Affairs at the Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich, talked about the role of women in education. Dr. Dabbous-Sensenig concluded the session by highlighting key points raised by the presenters and then opened the floor for questions and discussion.



From left to right: Mr. Samir Farah, Dr. Dima Dabbous-Sensenig, Dr. Anke Martiny, Dr. Hadumod Bussman and Mrs. Gisela Brackert

Nationality Campaign: My Nationality a Right for Me and My Family March 29-30, 2006

In collaboration with the Collective for Research and Training on Development and Action (CRTD-A), the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) and the Human Rights Club at Lebanese American University (LAU) sponsored a nationality campaign on: My Nationality a Right for me and my Family. The campaign addressed the lack of rights of Lebanese women that marry non-Lebanese to transfer their nationality to their husbands or children.

The campaign was extremely positive and within four hours 216 students' signatures were secured for a petition demanding to change the Lebanese law on nationality and grant full citizenship rights to Lebanese women.

Following the campaign, a panel discussion was held with a Lebanese lawyer and representatives from the Rassemblement Democratique des Femmes Libanaise who discussed the subject with LAU students.



Priorities in Follow-Up to the Ten-Year Review and Appraisal of Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, New York City October 31 - November 3, 2005

Dr. Dima Dabbous-Sensenig, Acting Director of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World was appointed by the UN Secretary General, along with eight other international gender experts, to participate in the Expert Consultation on "Priorities in Follow-Up to the Ten-Year Review and Appraisal of Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action." Dr. Dabbous-Sensenig was the only expert from the Arab world.

During the Expert Consultation, organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), which lasted for four days, each expert submitted a country/regional report on the status of women and recommended ways of accelerating the implementation process of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Dr. Dabbous-Sensenig presented a paper entitled "Incorporating an Arab-Muslim perspective in the re-assessment of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action." In her paper, she tried to identify the reasons preventing major articles of the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) from being implemented in most Arab countries, namely those articles related to citizenship and family status laws. Moreover, she offered recommendations to accelerate the implementation of CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action, based on her own assessment of the specificities of the Arab world. The paper can be accessed at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/meetings/consult/10-review/EP9.pdf>



Dr. Dima Dabbous-Sensenig with the eight other gender experts at the UN headquarters where the report was presented on November 3, 2005

The four day meeting resulted in a unified expert report that assessed the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and identified priority issues and recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the Platform and to advance women's rights worldwide. The report was then presented at the United Nations headquarters in New York City to representatives from Member States and civil society. The report contains the following sections/priorities and related recommendations: Women and Economic Justice, Women and Armed Conflict, Human Rights of Women, and Women and Access to Information. The report can be accessed at [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/meetings/cosult/10_review/Expert Consultation Report Feb27.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/meetings/cosult/10_review/Expert_Consultation_Report_Feb27.pdf)

The Role of Higher Education in the Empowerment of Arab Women December 3, 2005

Dr. Dima Dabbous-Sensenig, BUC alumna and Acting Director of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW), participated in the forum organized by the Dubai LAU Alumni chapter on "The Role of Higher Education in the Empowerment of Arab Women." She presented a paper entitled "The Role of Higher Education in the Empowerment of Women in Politics in the Arab World." President Dr. Joseph Jabbara and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Abdallah Sfeir attended the event. Several BCW and BUC (now LAU) alumnae from different nationalities spoke on the pioneering role in higher education played by LAU in shaping their successful careers after graduation. All the speeches presented will be included in a forthcoming issue of Al-Raida on the Empowerment of Women in Higher Education.



From left to right: Dr. Dima Dabbous-Sensenig, Mrs. Magda Abu-Fadil and Mrs. Jeannette Mufti