

ARAB WOMEN PIONEERS

Aziza Hussein : Egypt

Aziza Hussein's role in public life began as early as 1943, when after her graduation from the University, she joined some women's welfare societies as a volunteer.

Mrs. Hussein may be said to have indirectly contributed to various aspects of human rights and fundamental freedoms through her full involvement with the needs of her community, and her attempt to play a role in the uplift of the masses of the Egyptian population, especially women and children in the rural areas. She was able, in team work partnership with other women, to contribute small pilot projects in rural areas which later proved to be of far-reaching significance for the welfare of the nation. She is known to have been instrumental in the promotion of rural child welfare, family planning, and women's rights; in addition to her international contribution in those fields, as well as in the field of international understanding and peace.

Mrs. Hussein received professional recognition by the Egyptian government which appointed her in 1954 as

the first Egyptian woman to be a member of the Egyptian delegation to the U.N General Assembly in 1954. She was later appointed Egypt's representative to the United Nations Commission on the status of women, a post she kept from 1962 to this day. Aziza Hussein equally received international recognition by the U.N which nominated her on four different occasions, in a personal capacity, as a member of Expert committees and on advisory missions; and by the International Planned Parenthood Federation which elected her Vice-President for the Middle Eastern and North African Region, and later Vice Chairman of the Governing Body.

(continued on p.23)

continuation of Aziza Hussein

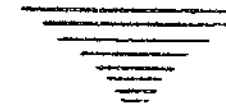
In 1975, Mrs. Hussein was awarded the FAO Ceres Medal for her contribution to the status of women .

Mrs. Hussein has been invited to give lectures and papers by various groups, such as, women's social welfare groups , political groups and academic institutions .

The following are some of her writings:

- " The role of women in the Egyptian Social Reform " (1953)
- " Women in the Moslem World " (1956)
- " Status of Women in Family Law in UAR " (1964)
- " Volunteer Work and Family Planning " (1965)
- " Family the Social Unit-Responsibilities of Husband-Wife " (1967)
- " Status of Women and Family Planning in a Developing Country , Egypt " (1968)
- " The Role of the Village Girl Leader in Family Planning " (1973)
- " The Role of Women in the Arab World " (1974)

* I W S A W thanks Mrs. Hussain for taking the trouble of collecting her writings from 1952 to 1975 , (lectures and papers delivered in national and international meetings or conferences), and sending them to our Documentation Center in order to make them available to interested readers and researchers.



The movement for equal rights for women has been underway for a long time and has , by now, resulted in widespread abolition of legal barriers to women's participation in the affairs of modern society . Nevertheless , even where full legal rights exists , the unspoken traditional bias against women tends to persist . Moreover, it tends to become pronounced in the course of development.

Ester Boserup