

Women's International Day March 8, 1991

The Association of Makassed Women «The Participation of Women in Secular Society»

The Women's chapter of the Makassed Philanthropic Islamic Association held a panel to describe and discuss the participation of Lebanese women in the secular sectors of society. The panels discussed the participation of women in: (1) the public sector, namely in the Diplomatic Corps and the Judicial body; (2) the sector of social services, namely NGOs and other social work associations; (3) political parties; (4) the syndicates.

The panelists concluded that women's participation in the relevant sectors in Lebanon is still low and minimal. They called upon society and the law to take the necessary steps to encourage and increase women's active and decisive involvement in the development of the Lebanese society. Maitre Laure Moghaizel emphasized four general principles needed for progress: Equality, Development, Peace and Participation. ●

The Role of the U.N. in Women's Development

The Cultural Committee of the Beirut Alumni Chapter of the American University of Beirut organized a panel discussion on the involvement of the United Nations in women's development in the world. The U.N. Media delegate in Beirut, Mr. Nabil Abou Dargham discussed the U.N.'s international resolutions dealing with women's rights. He touched upon political rights, the right of citizenship for married foreigners (women),

legal age of marriage and non-discrimination laws against the female gender.

Mr. Abou Dargham also emphasized that the degree and quality of equality between the sexes has improved significantly thanks to the U.N. Decade for Women (1976-1985). Thus, the number of females enrolled in schools had risen from 37% in 1975 to 41% in 1985, and the number of women working in the public sector has risen from 31% in 1950 to 35% in 1985. ●

A Unified Plan of Action and Goals for the Lebanese Women's Movement

The National Council of Lebanese Women called for a general press conference to declare unified goals and a unified plan of action for the Lebanese Women's Movement which was approved by the majority of Lebanese Women's Association groups.

The unified plan demands the elimination of laws and legislations which discriminate against women in modern society. The major demands of the plan emphasize: the elimination of laws regarding crimes of honor, the establishment of a law which acknowledges the testimony of a woman in court as full and independent of a male witness. Last but not least the unified plan calls for the establishment of a civil code which would be an optional alternative for personal status codes. We hope that the government and all the concerned and able members of society will contribute to these achievements of these goals. ●