

Hanan Ashrawi Moves Away from Politics

Ms. Hanan Ashrawi, member of The Palestinian Delegation at the Middle East peace talks has refused any political post in the Palestinian administration. Ashrawi declared that her role as speaker for the delegation and member of the Palestinian Liberation Organization ended with the signature of the peace treaty between Israel and the PLO.

Instead, Ashrawi will concentrate on the newly established Independent Palestinian Committee for Human Rights. According to Ashrawi, the Committee will act as the "conscience" of the Palestinians in their era of self-determination.

Ashrawi indicated that the Committee is due to receive funding from Norway and expects to open an office in Jerusalem in January 1994. Ashrawi also stated that leading and international Palestinian personalities like ex-delegate, Mamduh al-Aakr; poet Mahmoud Darwish; political scientist Edward Said, and lawyer Raja' Shehadeh have all agreed to join the Association.

Our Source: Al-Nahar daily newspaper, Saturday December 11, 1993. Beirut, Lebanon.
Original Source: Reuter, AP.

Toujan Faysal: First Female Deputy in Jordanian Parliament

Toujan Faysal is the first woman to be elected to the Jordanian Parliament. She had lost the race in the previous elections, and is said to have been strongly lobbied by fundamentalists. Her victory this time is largely due to a strong and aggressive support from women. Notably it is said that 15 women-supporters took over Ms. Faysal's campaign securing votes needed to see their candidate in Parliament.

Family Planning in Syria

The fertility is still high in Syria. On the average, there are 6 children per woman. However, according to Ms. Hajar Sadek, Secretary General of the Syrian Family Planning Association, family planning provision is weak but has relatively improved. There are now 560 maternal and child health clinics throughout the country.

In the past, the government had a law encouraging women to have as many as 10 children. Ms. Sadek, formerly a member

of Parliament, succeeded in repealing the pro-natalist law in 1988. Further policies for family planning are in process.

Source: abridged from "Girls Ahead in Syria" by Jeremy Hamand in People & The Planet, A Joint UNFPA, WCU and IPPF publication Volume 2, Number 1, 1993.

Iran Revives Family Planning

The Government of Iran allocated the equivalent of US\$150 million for population activities in 1992, evidence of its determination to revive the family planning programme suspended since 1978.

Family planning was pioneered in Iran by a Family Planning Association established in 1967. Although it ceased to function in 1978, the Government has not opposed birth control. The population grew at the rate of 3.9 percent in the decade 1976-1986 but has since declined to an estimated 2.7 percent in 1992, when contraceptive prevalence was expected to be about 41 percent of the population.

Source: People & The Planet, A Joint UNFPA, WCU and IPPF publication Volume 2, Number 1, 1993.