

Message from Ambassador Dina Kawar

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Guests,

With the strong belief, that we all share, that women in the MENA region are endowed with the same capacities and creativity as their counterparts in the rest of the world, and, if given the opportunity and space to fulfill their potential in the economic and political life of their countries, they can make a significant contribution in the socio economic development of MENA societies.

Despite the commitment made by countries of the region to gender equality, the disparity remains prevalent throughout the region, and gender gaps persist in access to education and quality healthcare, employment and business opportunities, political participation and decision making.

Therefore, the necessity of fact finding, and identifying the snags, inadequacies, and idiosyncrasies prevalent in MENA societies in dealing with women's issues, have become mandatory, in particular, after the events and upheaval that is permeating the MENA region; Thus the task force creation was the tool and means by which we all can tackle all matters facing all of us today.

I am so proud of all the tremendous efforts undertaken by OECD and all MENA countries to formulate the Country Task Force's, as this setting will enable all of us involved in the WBF to deal with the reality on the ground.

Facts and data that are transmitted in your findings will become the core issues to be examined, diagnosed and dealt with; I am sure, with the most effective and professional way.

In Jordan, serious steps with short and medium term are being implemented through various programs including capacity building, activities initiating small and medium productive projects, home based companies, access to markets micro credit activities, all in cooperation with local civil society organizations. Keeping in mind that all realms mentioned are closely related to women and I am sure that the Jordanian task force will highlight these activities in there reports and findings.

Finally, I believe that this meeting will spark the beginning of a new era in the way we are facing and dealing with women issues in the MENA region, simply because we all have alleviated the barrier between what we thought we knew in theory and the new reality on the ground that we have to face, and may I say that nobody deals with reality better than women.

Thank you and good luck on all your endeavors.



Ambassador Dina Kawar
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