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EGYPT

Contribution of

PARTNERSHIP NETWORK INTERNATIONAL (PNI)

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A UPR WRITTEN PNI'S CONTRIBUTION
to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of EGYPT

**INTENSIFYING EFFORT TO ENSURE ABSOLUTE EQUALITY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR
WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITY
IN THE ECONOMICAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PROCESS OF EGYPT**

PRESENTATION:

1. PARTNERSHIP NETWORK INTERNATIONAL (PNI), submits written comments on Egypt for consideration by the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at its 34th session (November 13, 2019).

2. PARTNERSHIP NETWORK INTERNATIONAL (PNI) is an NGO based in Geneva, Switzerland. It was founded in 2014 to promote human rights and sustainable development through capacity building, project sponsorship, and international advocacy transmitting to the United Nations (UN) the concerns of the civil society. HOMENA is one of PNI section working in Human rights and Development in the Mena region.

3. PNI active in some fifteen countries, has been actively involved with a nearly constant presence at the UN multilateral forum Geneva and was representing its Egyptian partners during the 2nd UPR of Egypt. PNI is partnering with **THE EGYPTIAN HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COALITION**¹ which submitted a 2019 UPR report on the issue of *the improvement of standard of living*.

INTRODUCTION

4. In the third cycle of the UPR of Egypt in November 2019, PARTNERSHIP NETWORK INTERNATIONAL (PNI) submits a report focusing inter alia on *the promotion of women, youths and persons with disabilities' economical, social and cultural rights*.

The report highlights the main concerns related to the issues directly related to PNI's Egyptian field partners in their respective work *for the protection and promotion of human rights and improvement of peaceful, sustainable, inclusive and participative development in Egypt*.

The data and information obtained for this presentation come from various sources and provides first hand information to both women, youth and persons with disabilities from Egyptian partners associations and organizations

¹ *Participatory Development Solutions (PDS), Abnaa AlMahrousa for Development and participation; (AlMahrousa); Mashreq Foundation for Development and population; Doing, Al-Galala association for Development; Alsalam association for community development, Cedaww association for development and human rights; Egyptians without borders foundation for development; Ehsebha Sah association for inclusive development; Elhadaf association for human rights; Herak association for development; Homena; Al-Farah foundation for development; Horas association for development and training; Justice association for development and human rights; Local community development association; Mehna Mostakbal association for development; Qadroun for comprehensive development; Shabab alkheir association for development and services; The arab centre for human rights; The Egyptian arab association for cooperation and sustainable development; The Egyptian youth council; The social association for media professionals; Upper Egypt development association; Voice of youth for training and development; Women for development association.*

This report takes into account data from various sources, including first-hand information collected by partner organizations working in the field.

It notes the remaining gaps in the progressive realization of the right to participate in economical, social and cultural process and the effective presence and participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities in Egypt's economy and society. Particular attention is devoted to the challenges of citizen equality and inclusive effective participation in Egypt.

Every Egyptian citizen, as well as women, youth, persons with disabilities have played an important role in the economical, social and cultural process. Nevertheless the existing legal frameworks, politics and programs do not fully protect their rights and are not enough for citizen needs.

The real pursuit of the defense of the right of citizen to full economical, social and cultural participation in Egypt, requires *executing laws and policies that aim at ensuring that all citizen have same social and economical rights particularly women, youth and people with disabilities..*

SITUATION

5. Egyptian citizen and more specifically women, youth and persons with disabilities, have participated extensively in the economical, cultural and social life of Egypt. It is also their right to hold public office and senior administrative positions in the state and to appoint them in judicial bodies without discrimination against them.

However, the presence of women, youth and persons with disabilities in Egypt's in administrative institutions is still limited and does not reflect the real percentage of citizen. Despite the wide changes that have taken place in Egyptian society over the past few years, the actual role of citizen, especially women, youth and persons with disability in society is not appreciated and has not received enough attention.

I. **THE ECONOMICAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PROCESS: WOMEN IN EGYPT**

31. Economic empowerment of women: Egypt has taken positive steps towards the establishment of citizenship and women's rights by issuing the Egyptian Constitution 2014 ..., which included 21 articles for Egyptian women, the most important of which is Article 11, which guarantees the State guarantee equality between women and men in all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights,

32. Equal pay and equal opportunity in leadership positions. There is a gap in the legislative and leadership positions between women and men, although the Egyptian labor law ensured non-discrimination in basic wages, but on the ground there is discrimination because the "basic wage" at best does not represent more than 30% of total income or remuneration And the rest are allowances, rewards and the like, which is the source where there is a disparity in privileges, these privileges are the main portal for inequality in incomes in Egypt, and we also suffer from "male thinking" through the shortness of women's work in certain areas, and deprivation Of the work in other areas.

33. Violence and unsafe working environment are two main reasons for depriving women of their right to decent work. Women in the workplace are exposed to many forms of violence and discrimination. Their contribution to the labor force remains weak. Official data indicate that the unemployment rate for men reaches 8.2% and women 24.7% during the first text of 2017. Statistics for 2015 The percentage of men working in cash rose by 59.2% compared with 39.2% for the whole of the Republic, while the percentage of those working in the family was 30.4% for women compared to 5.1% for men, For women, compared to 7% for men, while the gender gap in the private sector for

men is 17.7% higher than that of women, and the gender gap widens. Despite the fact that Labor Code No. 12 of Article 35 states: "It is prohibited to discriminate in wages because of differences of sex, origin, language, religion or creed.

9. PARTNERSHIP NETWORK INTERNATIONAL (PNI) RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

9.1 Producing laws to ensure equal pay for men and women and ensure their application.

9.2 Combating violence as a social phenomenon is a collective responsibility that must be carried out through the state agencies.

9.4 Providing legal protection for working women by ensuring fair wages, safe workplace, decent work, and the right to be organized.

9.5 Enacting law criminalizing sexual harassment, including specific articles on the criminalization of sexual harassment in the workplace.

9.6 Promoting the provision of adequate means of transportation for all workers in different workplaces to protect women from exposure to many forms of violence.

9.8 Calling for a social dialogue between trade unions and employers in order to develop employment policies that guarantee fair opportunities for women and men and expand the fields of work for women especially in areas where women do not exist or are weak.

II. THE ECONOMICAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PROCESS: THE YOUTH IN EGYPT

10. The Egyptian youth have proved since January 25, 2011 revolution that they are one of the most important pillars of the reform process in Egypt, by guiding the state and society capabilities in shaping the future policies of the state to manage it effectively, As youth have the potential to influence society, While ensuring the freedom of active participation based on respect of their fundamental rights and freedoms.

11. The Egyptian Constitution 2014 stipulates in Article 82 that, "The State shall guarantee the provision of care to the youth and shall endeavor to discover their talents; develop their cultural, scientific, psychological, physical and creative abilities, encourage their engagement in group and volunteer activities and enable them to participate in public life"

12. Hence, we should consider engaging youth in all the social, economic and political life as an essential part in building the society and to assure their rights that state is committed to provide, the state role is to employ the energies of youth through awareness of rights and duties imposed on youth as they are members of society which will reflect positively on society. And it will have a significant impact on the performance of the government and the activation of the principle of censorship. We can see the size of the youth in Egypt through the official data issued by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics for 2017, where the number of youth in the age group (18-29 years), 20.2 million people, representing 21% of the total population, the number of households headed by young people was more than 2.8 million families, with 12.3% of the total Egyptian households. The percentage of unemployment among young people was 25.7% (20.5% males, 38.7% female), the percentage of illiteracy among young people in the age group (18-29 years) was 16% of the total number of youth, 13.5% was males and 18.5% were females. Youth participation in the labor force

reached 46.1% by the end of 2017, of whom 63.4% were males and 27.5% were females). Of the total youth who participate in the labor force during 2017, 9.1% are illiterate, 43.8% have an average qualification, and 24.2% have a university qualification or higher.

All these figures shows that we have a big responsibility towards the youth to ensure their access to their social and economic rights in light of the important stage that Egypt is going through which needs to employ these capabilities to achieve economic and social development for the Egyptian society.

13. The needs of the Egyptian youth are focused on obtaining educational opportunities matching the requirements of life and their aspirations to self-affirmation and achieving good social status, find job opportunities that provide economic and social stability and enable them to feel appreciation and respect among other needs that must be provided. And provide a suitable environment to ensure the achievement of these rights. On the basis of these needs, youth programs should be designed within the framework of development plans.

14. State Efforts to Ensure Economic and Social Rights for Youth:

o The Government adopted a comprehensive economic reform plan aimed at providing a decent life for all citizens according to the role of the Egyptian State to guarantee, respect and protect the economic, social and cultural rights of all Egyptian citizens. The Egyptian Constitution in Articles 92 and 93 is in line with Egypt's international obligations in accordance with the two International Covenants.

o A new Investment Law No. 72 of 2017 was issued to encourage more cash flows required for the development process to reduce unemployment rates, emphasize on gender equality in investment opportunities and to encourage social responsibility for investors by allowing them to allocate more than 10% of their annual net profit to be used in the establishment of a community development system that includes protection and improvement of the environment, provision of health, social and cultural services or programs or other areas of development, support of technical education and financing research, studies and awareness-raising campaigns aimed at developing and improving production.

15. PARTNERSHIP NETWORK INTERNATIONAL (PNI) RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

15.1 Adopting plans for education and vocational guidance for youth and change the stereotypical negative image of society regarding vocational work.

15.2 Enhancing the entrepreneurial environment required for youth innovation, creativity and leadership.

15.3 Transferring international expertise in the field of economic empowerment for youth.

15.4 Providing more space and remove obstacles facing civil society organizations in their interventions to provide awareness and education to youth.

15.5 Increasing the current percentage allocated to young people in parliament, since the current quota allocated to them is not adequate with the percentage of youth in the voting age who need more empowerment.

15.6 Facilitating procedures for young people to set up small and medium enterprises.

17.7 Accelerating the amendment of the law of Personal Status, which caused sufferings and challenges for youth and trapped them in legal cycles.

15.8 Integrating peace education at all levels and promote it as it is one of the goals of sustainable development and a crucial opportunity to advance youth empowerment by ensuring fundamental freedoms and ensuring accountability and participation in decision-making processes.

III. THE ECONOMICAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PROCESS: PERSONS WITH DISABILITY IN EGYPT

The Issue of disabilities is a community issue that should be faced with efforts from government, civil society and private sector.

16. The Constitution of Egypt provided an article for the rights of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life, other article in the Constitution added disability as a reason for discrimination, and third one ensured appropriate representation of the Persons with Disabilities in local and parliamentary elections.

17. The last four years have witnessed a great progress in the issue of disability, Egypt announced for the first time in its history an estimated statistics of the number of persons with disabilities during the Housing and Population Conference, where it was announced that the number of persons with disabilities is estimated at 10.3% of the total Egyptian population, About 10 million people. The first law guaranteeing the rights of persons with disabilities was made and approved by the parliament and ratified by the President, Law No. 10 of 2018 for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in December 2018.

In the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and its objectives, beginning with the right to education, and with Egypt 2030 Strategy, we find that the most pressing issue in this stage is the promotion of inclusive education and the developments of decrees affiliated to it lead to the issuance of Ministerial Decree No. 42 of 2015 on the implementation of inclusive education For students with minor disabilities in regular classes in schools.

In addition to the decision of the Supreme Council of Universities to accept students with hearing disabilities in Egyptian universities, which is consistent with the objective four of the sustainable development Goals. Health services in Egypt are provided to people with disabilities like others without any kind of discrimination on the basis of the type of disability. The Ministry of Health has also begun to include the disability in the National Health Strategy. The strategy includes early intervention services for the detection of disability.

18. With regard to equality and the right to ensure an adequate standard of living for persons with disabilities through ending poverty in all its forms and ending hunger, for the first time a pension called “Karama pension” has been allocated to the person disability within community protection programs. Also the Ministry of Housing in their social housing projects has allocated 5% of the units to persons with disabilities.

19. As for the empowerment of all women and girls with disabilities, the Egyptian Constitution guaranteed women’s’ right to hold leadership positions. So far two women held the Secretary General of the National Council for Disability, also the current parliament also has for the first time in Egypt history seven female parliamentarians’ with disabilities.

20. Also from the government efforts in this regard the launching of the Presidential Initiative for the Integration and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities in the communication and information

technology sector to provide ease educational and health services and to access employment opportunities, as well as making the public utilities accessible to people with disabilities and to make youth community centers integrate people with disabilities, in addition to the State current project to provide access to courts and judicial services.

21. The concept of state bodies and a large business sector and private institutions have changed in dealing with persons with disabilities as follows:

- Transition from care and guardianship to empowerment and equal opportunity;
- Transition from support and protection to employment, especially for those able to work;
- From the institutional and medical approach to the community approach;
- Disability and inability to different capacity.

22. PARTNERHIP NETWORK INTERNATIONAL (PNI) RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

22.1 Holding public agencies to the provisions of the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Law No. 10 of 2018 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

22.2 Promoting and activating the new disability law and its executive regulations.

22.3 Establishing branches for the National Council for Disability Affairs in each governorate as to facilitate to people with disabilities the following up of their problems and the following up with the ministries and concerned bodies until they receive answer.

22.4 Implementing of inclusive education in schools has not come into force as expected. We have more ambition to develop curriculum to suit the abilities of each child, and to raise the efficiency of teachers.

22.5 Providing a real classified data base for people with disabilities nationwide.

22.6 Giving more attention to accessibility in all state public utilities and public and government hospitals, as well as all kinds of public transportation such as buses, minibuses, metro and railways.