

Caucus of Women in Politics in the MENA Region

Press Release

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Women in Lebanon witnessed several challenges in the previous year on different levels. They face political, economic, and social pressures exacerbated by the deterioration of the financial situation and the worsening of the political scene. The past two years were harsher on women living in Lebanon. Since October 2019 and the beginning of the revolution, they have been on the frontline of the revolution. They took the streets and were the key speaker for the revolution demands, highlighting the citation for women and men citizens and society and a voice of the repercussions and pain of the port explosion victims.

Despite that, the recent period witnessed a sharp decrease in women's representation in the public sphere, whether in women's representation within the current government or on the level of the current electoral lists' formation. On the occasion of the first anniversary of the Beirut explosion, [the Caucus for women in politics](#) in the MENA Region took the initiative to engage with the politicians in Lebanon to adopt collective feminist agenda for Lebanon.

The process began with a solidarity delegation from the Caucus' members to listen to feminists' perceptions and provide solidarity with them from other feminists in the region. On the second visit, the delegation discussed with most of the political forces from parties, movements, and civil society how to empower women in Lebanon through a critical moment of history. The third delegation presented the feminists' agenda for the next Lebanese election, collected over more than a year, during three visits and discussions with feminists and politicians.

The agreed issues from political groups:

1. Working to increase women's representation in the upcoming government.
2. Submitting a draft law that protects women from defamation and political harassment

Other perceptions were accepted by some of the political forces and refused by other ones, where numbers of the parties, the revolutionary forces, and their candidates pledged to work on:

1. Submitting a draft law to grant citizenship to children of Lebanese mothers and enhance custody rights for women.
2. Submitting a draft law to reduce the voting and candidacy age to 18 years
3. Adopt the current law to combat domestic violence and sexual harassment to be more effective,
4. Submitting a draft law to obligate the Lebanese political forces to include at least one woman on each electoral list.
5. Increasing women's representation in political offices and leadership positions in their parties and movements and supporting them in a way that guarantees fair representation for them and enhances their women's rights agendas.

The Caucus of women in politics in the MENA Region will continue working with its partners from the civil society and feminists' movements in Lebanon and the region to support women's issues in the Lebanese public sphere.