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Arab NGO Network for Development
شبكة المنظمات العربية غير الحكومية للتنمية



Joint Statement on UPR Lebanon Second Cycle Review

Universal Periodic Review of Lebanon: The Rights of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon were overshadowed by the “refugee crisis”.

November 2nd 2015, during the 23rd Working Group session of the Universal Periodic Review the situation of human rights in Lebanon were reviewed by the UN member states. During the interactive dialogue several member states directed recommendations to Lebanese Delegation headed by Permanent Representative of Lebanon to UN Mission in Geneva Mrs. Najla Riachi Assaker on the issues of women’s rights, torture, migrant workers, establishment of a moratorium on the death penalty.

Three and a half hour session provided the occasion for both national delegation representatives and the UN Member states to shed light on the ‘extraordinary challenges’ the country is facing, namely the Syrian crisis and the terrorism in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately as civil society groups engaged in the UPR process and working on issues of human rights and development, we believe that these challenges cannot be ‘excuses’ for non-implementation of recommendations accepted back in 2010 and in overall providing maximum available resources for ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights in the country. In addition we remain highly concerned on the “refugee” conceptualization in the UPR process of Lebanon, particularly domination of the concerns on the humanitarian needs of the Syrian refugees and this undermining the focus on the Palestinian refugee rights and Palestinian Refugees fleeing Syria to Lebanon. We believe that UPR should rather be an opportunity to recognize the universality of the human rights but as well to stress the particularities of each country and equally treat to different groups of refugees who have different needs and necessities.

Presentations made by the Lebanese delegation failed to adequately respond to civil society recommendations with regard to Palestinian Refugees. Currently Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and those who have recently fled conflict in Syria do not have access to the basic human rights they deserve. We would encourage the Lebanese delegation to take on board the recommendations tabled by those seven members of the Human Rights Council who mentioned the problems faced by Palestinian refugees in access to the labour market and access to basic services. This should be complemented with genuine implementation of the 18 recommendations on Palestinian refugees that were directed to Lebanon in 2010 review. Those recommendations were tackling key violations faced by the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, with regard to the right to work, identification documents, freedom of movement, and the right to own land, housing and property.

In relation, we note our extreme concern regarding the lack of recognition by all states of the problems faced by Palestinian refugees from Syria who have limited protection status in Lebanon and are at risk of being pushed further and further into poverty.

While we recognise Lebanon’s position as the highest per capita host country of Syrian refugees, it must be acknowledged that the long term human rights denials which have faced Palestinians in Lebanon must be addressed if Lebanon is sincere in meeting its human rights obligations and commitment towards to promotion and protection of human rights for all.

List of signatories:

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