

# **IASMUN**

## **Background Guide**



**Arab League**

# **IASMUN ARAB LEAGUE BACKGROUND GUIDE**



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# Welcome Letter From The Dias

DEAR ESTEEMED DELEGATES OF THE ARAB LEAGUE,

WE, LAILA MOHAMED, HEAD CHAIR, AND FRANK TOH, CO-CHAIR OF THE ARAB LEAGUE COMMITTEE, ARE PLEASED AND DELIGHTED TO WELCOME EACH ONE OF YOU. WE ARE INDEED HONORED TO HAVE YOU WITH US FOR THIS YEAR'S IASMUN CONFERENCE, WHERE WE GATHER TO DISCUSS THE MOST CRITICAL ISSUES AT HAND AFFECTING THE ARAB LEAGUE AND THE WORLD COMMUNITY IN GENERAL.

AS YOU GO FORTH TO DELEGATE AND ENGAGE IN CAPTIVATING DEBATES, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO BRING YOUR KNOWLEDGE, PASSION, AND DEDICATION TO THE TABLE. YOUR INPUT IS ESSENTIAL AS WE WORK OUR WAY TOWARD THE SOLUTIONS WE WILL BE SEEKING IN THIS COMMITTEE. WHETHER THROUGH FACILITATING DIPLOMATIC DISCOURSE, OVERCOMING OBSTACLES, OR NEGOTIATING A RESOLUTION, WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT YOUR COMMITMENT WILL MAKE THE DISCUSSIONS OF THIS COMMITTEE BOTH INSIGHTFUL AND EFFECTIVE.

WE WILL BE THERE TO HELP YOU AND GUIDE YOU THROUGH EVERY STEP AS PROMISED. OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS INCLUSIVE, ENGAGING, AND RESPECTFUL, WHERE ALL VOICES ARE HEARD, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOUR LEADERSHIP AND TEAMWORK SHINE THROUGHOUT THE CONFERENCE. AND OF COURSE ONE OF OUR PRIORITY OBJECTIVES IS WINNING THE BEST COMMITTEE AWARD WHICH WON'T BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT YOUR ENTHUSIASM AND DIPLOMATIC SKILLS!



## Welcome Letter From The Dias

SO DELEGATES, ARE YOU READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP AND BECOME GREAT DIPLOMATS? WE SHALL FIND OUT AT THE CONFERENCE. SEE YOU THERE! WE WISH YOU ALL THE VERY BEST IN YOUR PREPARATIONS AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE JOURNEY AHEAD WITH YOU.

WARM REGARDS,

LAILA MOHAMED

HEAD CHAIR, ARAB LEAGUE

FRANK TOH

Co-CHAIR, ARAB LEAGUE



## Committee Overview

THE FORMATION OF THE ARAB LEAGUE WHICH IS KNOWN AS THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES WAS ON MARCH 22ND IN THE YEAR 1945 WITH THE AIM OF FOSTERING POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES BETWEEN ITS MEMBER STATES. EGYPT, IRAQ, JORDAN, LEBANON, SAUDI ARABIA, SYRIA AND YEMEN WERE AMONG ITS FOUNDERS BUT THE LEAGUE GREW TO HAVE 22 MEMBER COUNTRIES, ALL OF WHICH ARE LOCATED IN NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST. THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE ARAB LEAGUE IS TO INCREASE THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES AS WELL AS ACTING AS A FORUM FOR DISCUSSING AND ADDRESSING COMMON ISSUES. ANOTHER PRIORITY OF THE ORGANIZATION IS TO PROMOTE NATIONAL UNITY AMONG THE ARABS FOR THE PURPOSE OF COUNTERING REGIONAL THREATS AS WELL AS DEVELOPING THE REGION'S ECONOMY.

IN THE LAST COUPLE OF DECADES, THE ARAB LEAGUE WIDENED ITS SCOPE THUS ALLOWING IT TO PLAY AN MEDIATING ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICTS AND ALSO ENDORSED THE DEPLOYMENT OF PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN COUNTRIES LIKE SUDAN, SYRIA AND YEMEN. THERE WERE ALSO ATTEMPTS AT ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION THROUGH, FOR INSTANCE, THE CREATION OF THE GREATER ARAB FREE TRADE AREA (GAFTA), WHICH ENDEAVORED TO CREATE A SINGLE ECONOMIC MARKET AMONG THE ARAB COUNTRIES AND FREE UP TRADE WITHIN THE REGION.

FURTHERMORE, THE LEAGUE'S OBJECTIVES EXTENDED BEYOND NATIONALISM, AS IT ALSO SOUGHT TO CREATE A COMMON CULTURAL SPACE AROUND THE PROMOTION OF ARAB IDENTITY AND VALUES AMONG ITS MEMBER COUNTRIES. THE ARAB LEAGUE HAS BECOME A VOICE FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND GENDER EQUALITY AS WELL AS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AS THE GLOBAL TRENDS AFFECTING ITS MEMBER STATES CHANGE.



## Committee Overview

GIVEN ITS ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE, THE ARAB LEAGUE HAS HAD A NUMBER OF CONSIDERABLE OBSTACLES ESPECIALLY IS THE INTERNAL UNITY AND COHESION AND EFFORTS TOWARDS COLLECTIVE DECISION-MAKING. THE LEAGUE HAS GRAPPLED WITH MAKING UNANIMOUS DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS DUE TO THE DIVERSE POLITICAL INTERESTS OF MEMBERS, ESPECIALLY DURING CRISES, FOR EXAMPLE THE CIVIL WARS IN SYRIA AND LIBYA. CONFLICT AMONG MEMBER STATES, PARTICULARLY ON ISSUES OF REGIONAL HIERARCHY AND POLITICS, AND EVEN ON SPECIFIC IDEOLOGIES LIMITS THE LEAGUE'S ABILITY TO ACT UNILATERALLY. HOWEVER, THE ARAB LEAGUE REMAINS A MAJOR DIPLOMATIC ACTOR IN THE REGION AND CONTINUES TO WORK TOWARDS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF ITS MEMBERS. THE LEAGUE HAS ALSO BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN PROVIDING AID FOR JOINT COOPERATION IN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND SCIENCE THROUGH ITS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES, INCLUDING THE ARAB MONETARY FUND AND THE ARAB ORGANIZATION FOR EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SCIENCE.

IN RECENT YEARS, THE ARAB LEAGUE HAS TRIED TO CONFRONT NEW THREATS SUCH AS CHANGE OF CLIMATE AND SECURITY WITHIN THE REGION. THEY HAVE ALSO TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION THE INCREASING NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT ON MIGRATION, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND CYBER SECURITY. HOWEVER, THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE ARAB LEAGUE AS AN ORGANIZATION IN THE FUTURE WILL ALSO REST ON THE CAPACITY OF ITS MEMBERS TO ADDRESS INTERNAL CHALLENGES AND ENHANCE THEIR ROLE IN THE GEOPOLITICALLY DIVERSE ENVIRONMENT OF THE ARAB REGION. NOTWITHSTANDING THE CHALLENGES IT IS FACED WITH, THE ARAB LEAGUE STILL SERVES AS A VERY IMPORTANT PLATFORM FOR REGIONAL COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION IN SOLVING THE EMERGING PROBLEMS RELEVANT TO ITS COUNTRIES OF MEMBERS .

# **Agenda 1: Combating Gender-Based Violence: Strategies for Protecting Women's Rights in the Arab World**



## **INTRODUCTION:**

GBV HAS CONTINUED TO BE ONE OF THE MOST DAUNTING CHALLENGES THAT FACE WOMEN IN THE ARAB REGION. IN A SITUATION WHERE WOMEN FACE DEEP-SEATED CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND LEGAL BARRIERS, THEY ARE OFTEN SUBJECTED TO VIOLENCE WITH LITTLE SUPPORT OR AVENUES FOR REDRESS. EFFORTS AGAINST GBV HAVE GAINED STEAM IN RECENT YEARS, AND MUCH REGIONAL AND NATIONAL STRATEGY ON THIS HAS FOCUSED ON BOTH CHANGES IN THE LAW AND THOSE WITHIN SOCIETY. THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES HAS TAKEN STEPS IN THIS REGARD, SUCH AS DRAFTING A CONVENTION TO COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN THAT WOULD SERVE AS A BINDING REGIONAL TREATY. THIS IS THE FIRST SUCH CONVENTION WITHIN THE ARAB WORLD, AND IT WOULD AIM TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS FOR PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO GBV ACROSS THE REGION.

ONE OF THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THESE EFFORTS IS THE INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL WOMEN'S RIGHTS GROUPS AND PARLIAMENTARIANS IN PUSHING FOR LEGAL REFORM. FOR EXAMPLE, THE COALITION OF ARAB WOMEN MPs HAS PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN ADVOCATING FOR CHANGES TO NATIONAL LAWS, INCLUDING REPEALING PROVISIONS THAT ALLOWED PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE, SUCH AS MARITAL RAPE, TO GO UNPUNISHED. THIS KIND OF BOTTOM-UP ADVOCACY IS SEEN AS INTEGRAL TO PROVIDING MEANINGFUL LEGISLATIVE CHANGES THAT PROTECT WOMEN FROM VIOLENCE. MEANWHILE, COUNTRIES SUCH AS JORDAN AND IRAQ HAVE ALREADY TAKEN A LEAD IN IMPLEMENTING PROTECTIVE LAWS AND ENHANCING POLICE RESPONSES TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.

# **Agenda 1: Combating Gender-Based Violence: Strategies for Protecting Women's Rights in the Arab World**



WHILE SOME PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE THROUGH LEGAL REFORMS, COMBATING GBV IN THE ARAB WORLD REQUIRES MUCH MORE THAN THAT; IT ALSO REQUIRES AN ALL-ROUNDED APPROACH ENTAILING ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN, CULTURAL SHIFTS, AND SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS. IN COUNTRIES FACING CRISES, LIKE SYRIA, ECONOMIC INSTABILITY MAKES WOMEN EVEN MORE VULNERABLE TO VIOLENCE. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT CAN THUS BE A CRUCIAL ELEMENT IN LOWERING THE RATE OF WOMEN'S EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE. PROGRAMS AIMED AT WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT, SUCH AS VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS, HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN EQUIPPING WOMEN WITH THE MEANS TO LEAVE ABUSIVE SITUATIONS. WHAT IS NEEDED IS A MULTI-PRONGED APPROACH THAT INVOLVES LEGAL REFORM, EDUCATION, AND SOCIAL SUPPORT IF THE ROOT CAUSES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE ARAB WORLD ARE TO BE ADDRESSED EFFECTIVELY. IT IS PART OF THE BROADER AGENDA ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE REGION, NEEDING FURTHER INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION, LOCAL LEADERSHIP, AND SUSTAINED ADVOCACY TO ENSURE THAT WOMEN ACROSS THE ARAB WORLD ARE PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE AND CAN LIVE WITHOUT FEAR.



# **AGENDA 1 HISTORY AND PARTIES INVOLVED**

**1979: CEDAW (CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN) ADOPTED BY MANY ARAB COUNTRIES.** ALTHOUGH RATIFIED, MANY COUNTRIES INITIALLY STRUGGLED TO IMPLEMENT ITS PROVISIONS EFFECTIVELY DUE TO CULTURAL AND LEGAL BARRIERS

**1990s: GREATER RECOGNITION OF THE PREVALENCE OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE ARAB REGION; INCREASED AWARENESS ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AND CRIMES COMMITTED IN THE NAME OF HONOR. VISIBILITY INCREASES, BUT MINIMAL OR NO ENGAGEMENT FROM FORMAL LEGAL MECHANISMS**

**2004: ANTI-HARASSMENT LAWS ENACTED IN EGYPT AFTER EXTENSIVE PROTESTS BY THE PUBLIC FOR ADDRESSING STREET HARASSMENT. THIS USHERS IN LEGAL REFORMS ACROSS ARAB COUNTRIES AIMED AT COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

**2010: THE ARAB SPRING INCREASES CASES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, ESPECIALLY SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN AREAS OF CONFLICT LIKE EGYPT, SYRIA, AND LIBYA. SEXUAL VIOLENCE IS USED AS A WEAPON DURING POLITICAL TURMOIL, WHICH INCREASES INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION TO GBV**

**2013: LEBANON PASSES A LAW CRIMINALIZING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. ENFORCEMENT REMAINS WEAK, AND VICTIMS CONTINUE TO FACE BARRIERS IN ACCESSING LEGAL SUPPORT**

**2014: EGYPT PASSES AN ANTI-HARASSMENT LAW THAT CRIMINALIZES SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES**



# **AGENDA 1 HISTORY AND PARTIES INVOLVED**

**2017: TUNISIA PASSES THE LANDMARK LAW ON ELIMINATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT TO SURVIVORS, INCLUDING LEGAL PROTECTION, MEDICAL CARE, AND ACCESS TO SHELTERS. TUNISIA BECOMES THE FIRST ARAB COUNTRY TO ENACT SUCH COMPREHENSIVE LEGAL REFORMS**

**2018: JORDAN ENACTS A LAW AIMED AT REFORMING PROVISIONS RELATED TO HONOR KILLINGS, REDUCING LENIENCY IN SENTENCES FOR PERPETRATORS OF SUCH CRIMES**

**2020s: CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES CONTINUE THEIR PUSH FOR STRONGER ENFORCEMENT OF EXISTING LAWS AND THE CREATION OF NEW ONES TO COMBAT GBV. CHALLENGES REMAIN IN IMPLEMENTATION DUE TO SOCIETAL ATTITUDES, UNDERREPORTING, AND INADEQUATE INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT .**

**GBV HAS BEEN IN CONSTANT COMBAT IN THE ARAB WORLD FOR YEARS, AND DIFFERENT REGIONS AND COUNTRIES HAVE MADE IMMENSE PROGRESS AT VARYING LEVELS. A KEY STARTING POINT FOR MUCH OF THE ARAB WORLD IS THE RATIFICATION OF CEDAW IN MOST ARAB STATES DURING THE LATE 20TH CENTURY. NEVERTHELESS, SOCIETAL NORMS AND LEGAL LACUNAE CONTINUED TO THWART PROGRESS ON GBV. IN SOME COUNTRIES, SUCH AS EGYPT, WHERE WOMEN HAVE LONG SUFFERED FROM HIGH LEVELS OF STREET HARASSMENT, THE INTRODUCTION OF ANTI-HARASSMENT LAWS IN 2014 MARKED A SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATIVE MILESTONE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST VIOLENCE.**



# THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT AGENDA 1

RECENTLY, THE ARAB LEAGUE ISSUED A LANDMARK DECLARATION TO TACKLE GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN NATIONALITY LAWS IN THE MENA REGION. THE MOVE CAME AFTER A CONFERENCE WAS HELD IN CAIRO AND JOINTLY HOSTED WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS UNHCR, UN WOMEN, AND UNICEF. THE DECLARATION CALLS ON MEMBER STATES TO CHANGE LAWS THAT PROHIBIT WOMEN FROM PASSING THEIR NATIONALITY ONTO CHILDREN AND SPOUSES, AS PER COMMITMENTS UNDER INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS SUCH AS CEDAW AND THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.

THE REGION HAS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CONCENTRATIONS OF GENDER-DISCRIMINATORY NATIONALITY LAWS, WITH 14 COUNTRIES DENYING WOMEN THE RIGHT TO PASS ON THEIR NATIONALITY EQUALLY. THESE LAWS OFTEN RESULT IN STATELESSNESS, FAMILY SEPARATION, AND RESTRICTED ACCESS TO EDUCATION, HEALTHCARE, AND OTHER RIGHTS. THE DECLARATION EMPHASIZES EQUAL CITIZENSHIP FOR WOMEN, ADVOCATES FOR LIFTING LEGAL BARRIERS, AND CALLS FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION TO ACHIEVE REFORMS.

PARTICIPANTS, INCLUDING CIVIL SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS, POINTED TO SUCCESSFUL REFORMS IN COUNTRIES SUCH AS MOROCCO, ALGERIA, AND TUNISIA THAT HAVE SHOWN HOW GENDER-EQUAL NATIONALITY LAWS HAVE BENEFITED SOCIETY. THE ARAB LEAGUE'S ENDORSEMENT REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARD GENDER EQUALITY IN CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS ACROSS THE REGION.



## THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT AGENDA 1

IN ADDITION, THE ARAB LEADERSHIP ACADEMY FOR WOMEN, LAUNCHED BY THE UNDP AND ITS PARTNERS, IS A NEW INITIATIVE THAT SEEKS TO STRENGTHEN WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP ACROSS THE ARAB REGION. THE FIRST MEETING TOOK PLACE IN MADRID IN NOVEMBER 2023 AND BROUGHT TOGETHER A WIDE ARRAY OF WOMEN LEADERS FROM GOVERNMENT, CIVIL SOCIETY, AND THE MEDIA IN BAHRAIN, JORDAN, MOROCCO, AND SUDAN.

THE FIVE-DAY PROGRAM CENTERED ON TRANSFORMATIONAL AND COMPASSIONATE LEADERSHIP, WITH AN EYE TOWARD INTERGENERATIONAL COLLABORATION, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION, AND NAVIGATING CHALLENGES IN VOLATILE AND COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTS. PARTICIPANTS CO-DEVELOPED THE CURRICULUM TO FOCUS ON REAL-WORLD CHALLENGES. THE PROGRAM FACILITATED PEER LEARNING AND CREATED AN ALUMNI NETWORK TO SUSTAIN MENTORSHIP AND SUPPORT.

THE ACADEMY AIMS TO NORMALIZE WOMEN'S PRESENCE IN LEADERSHIP AND EQUIPS PARTICIPANTS WITH THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS REQUIRED TO LEAD EFFECTIVELY IN THE RAPIDLY CHANGING DIGITAL ERA. THERE ARE PLANS FOR NATIONAL-LEVEL ROLLOUTS IN PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES, ENSURING THE CONTINUED IMPACT AND SCALABILITY OF THE INITIATIVE.



# AGENDA 1 POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

1. ADOPTING AND ENFORCING COMPREHENSIVE GBV LAWS TO INTRODUCE LAWS THAT CRIMINALIZE ALL FORMS OF GBV, INCLUDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AND MARITAL RAPE, WITH CLEAR PENALTIES.
2. ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS SUCH AS THE CEDAW AND THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION TO GUARANTEE WOMEN'S RIGHTS.
3. IMPLEMENT RESTRAINING ORDERS AND VICTIM PROTECTION SERVICES INCLUDING SHELTERS AND LEGAL AID.
4. EQUIPPING POLICE OFFICERS, JUDGES, AND LEGAL PERSONNEL WITH SKILLS TO HANDLE GBV CASES SENSITIVELY AND WITH MORE EMPATHY.
5. ESTABLISH STRATEGIES FOR CONSISTENT REPORTING AND MONITORING GBV INCIDENTS.
6. RAISING AWARENESS WHICH INCLUDES CONDUCTING CAMPAIGNS TO EDUCATE MEN AND BOYS TO PREVENT GBV.
7. PROVIDING WOMEN WITH ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO REDUCE ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY.
8. INCLUDE WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS IN POLICY MAKING DISCUSSIONS

# **Agenda 2: Sustainable Urban Development: Planning Smart Cities In The Arab World**



## **INTRODUCTION**

THE ARAB WORLD IS EXPERIENCING URBANIZATION AT AN UNPRECEDENTED RATE OF GROWTH, WHICH IS INDUCED BY INCREASING POPULATIONS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND INDUSTRIAL GROWTH. WITH THIS TRANSFORMATION COMES A NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES, ESPECIALLY AROUND SUSTAINABLE URBAN PLANNING. THEREFORE, AS CITIES BECOME LARGER AND MORE CROWDED, COMPREHENSIVE AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO THE CHALLENGE OF URBANIZATION HAVE NEVER BEEN NEEDED MORE. "SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT: PLANNING SMART CITIES IN THE ARAB WORLD" ZEROES IN ON HOW TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES BY INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND URBAN DESIGN IN BUILDING SMART CITIES CAPABLE OF OFFERING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES WITH REDUCED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT. THIS INVOLVES NOT ONLY MODERNIZING INFRASTRUCTURE BUT ALSO CREATING URBAN ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE RESILIENT, RESOURCE-EFFICIENT, AND LIVABLE FOR ALL.

A SMART CITY INTEGRATES DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING TO ENHANCE URBAN SERVICES, MAKING THEM MORE EFFICIENT, ACCESSIBLE, AND SUSTAINABLE. IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ARAB WORLD, WHERE MANY CITIES FACE ACUTE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES LIKE WATER SCARCITY, EXTREME HEAT, AND ENERGY DEMANDS, PLANNING SMART CITIES INVOLVES CAREFULLY ADDRESSING THESE ISSUES THROUGH INTELLIGENT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.

# **Agenda 2: Sustainable Urban Development: Planning Smart Cities In The Arab World**



FOR EXAMPLE, RENEWABLE ENERGY INVESTMENT, WATER RECYCLING SYSTEMS, AND GREEN BUILDINGS WILL CONTRIBUTE TO DECREASING THE BURDEN ON THE ENVIRONMENT. BESIDES, SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB REGION MEANS THAT CITIES MUST BE INCLUSIVE-NOT ONLY TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED BUT ALSO SOCIALLY EQUITABLE-ENSURING THAT ALL INHABITANTS, INCLUDING THE MOST VULNERABLE, HAVE OPPORTUNITIES. DIFFERENT REGIONS HAVE DIFFERENT NEEDS, SO SMART CITY SOLUTIONS SHOULD BALANCE RAPID GROWTH WITH ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL PROGRESS.

A FEW ARAB COUNTRIES HAVE ALREADY EMERGED AT THE FOREFRONT IN THIS FIELD, INCLUDING THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, SAUDI ARABIA, AND QATAR, UNDERTAKING AMBITIOUS PROJECTS LIKE MASDAR CITY IN ABU DHABI AND NEOM IN SAUDI ARABIA. THESE ARE A SET OF INITIATIVES BUILT ON THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY, INTEGRATING SOLUTIONS ON RENEWABLE ENERGY, SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES, AND DATA-DRIVEN MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS TO PROVIDE THE MOST EFFICIENT URBAN SPACE. BUT THE SMART CITY CONCEPT IN THE REGION WILL FURTHER BE ENCAPSULATED BY INNOVATIONS IN GOVERNANCE, HEALTHCARE, TRANSPORT, AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE. FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT, THERE IS A NEED FOR COLLABORATION. THEREFORE, FINANCING, KNOWLEDGE SHARING, AND BEST PRACTICES IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT ARE POSSIBLE THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AMONG GOVERNMENTS, PRIVATE SECTORS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE UN-HABITAT.

# **Agenda 2: Sustainable Urban Development: Planning Smart Cities In The Arab World**



THE NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING OF SMART CITIES IS KEY TO SOLVING MOST OF THE CHALLENGES POSED BY RAPIDLY GROWING URBAN POPULATIONS IN THE ARAB WORLD. BY INTEGRATING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES ALONG WITH SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES, THE ARAB WORLD HAS THE POTENTIAL TO CONSTRUCT URBAN CENTERS THAT ARE NOT ONLY SMART AND EFFICIENT BUT ALSO SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE-A MODEL FOR THE REST OF THE WORLD OF WHAT THE FUTURE OF CITIES COULD BE. THE SUCCESSFUL REALIZATION OF THESE INITIATIVES WILL DEPEND ON CONTINUED INNOVATION, COLLABORATION, AND LONG-TERM COMMITMENT FROM ALL STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED.



## **AGENDA 2 HISTORY AND PARTIES INVOLVED**

**1980S:** WITH THE ARAB WORLD EXPERIENCING RAPID URBAN GROWTH, ESPECIALLY THROUGH RURAL MIGRATION TO CITIES, THE NEED FOR BETTER URBAN PLANNING BECAME APPARENT. AT THIS TIME, ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNs STARTED TO GAIN ATTENTION; HOWEVER, THERE WERE LIMITED INITIATIVES THAT FOCUSED ON "SUSTAINABILITY" OR "SMART CITIES." MANY OF THE CITIES FACED PROBLEMS IN TERMS OF OVERCROWDING, POLLUTION, AND INEFFICIENCY IN INFRASTRUCTURE.

**1992:** GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES BECAME AVAILABLE WITHIN THE ARAB WORLD FOLLOWING UNCED IN RIO DE JANEIRO, KNOWN AS THE "EARTH SUMMIT." IT RAISED CONSIDERABLE AWARENESS IN ARAB COUNTRIES OF THE CONCEPT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY; PRACTICAL URBAN APPLICATIONS STILL HAD A LONG WAY TO GO.

**LATE 1990S:** WHILE OIL WEALTH WAS RISING IN PLACES LIKE THE UAE, SAUDI ARABIA, AND QATAR, GOVERNMENTS THERE STARTED FOCUSING ON URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE. HOWEVER, EARLY ATTEMPTS AT SUCH URBAN DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT ADVANCED SUSTAINABILITY OR SMART TECHNOLOGIES DOMINATED THE INITIATIVES.

**2006:** THE UAE LAUNCHED THE CONCEPT OF MASDAR CITY IN ABU DHABI, WHICH LATER ON WOULD SET ONE OF THE FIRST MAJOR EXPERIMENTS IN SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB WORLD. MASDAR WAS DESIGNED AS A CARBON-NEUTRAL, ZERO-WASTE CITY THAT WOULD RELY COMPLETELY ON RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES. THIS PROJECT MARKED THE BEGINNING OF A SHIFT TOWARD INTEGRATING GREEN TECHNOLOGIES WITH URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION.



## **AGENDA 2 HISTORY AND PARTIES INVOLVED**

**2007-2008:** QATAR BEGAN PLANNING THE LUSAIL CITY, A FUTURISTIC CITY DESIGNED TO BE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE AND TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN. LUSAIL AIMED TO INTEGRATE RENEWABLE ENERGY, GREEN BUILDINGS, AND ADVANCED INFRASTRUCTURE TO MAKE IT ONE OF THE MOST SUSTAINABLE URBAN AREAS IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

**2010:** THE CONCEPT OF SMART CITIES BEGAN TO TAKE GREAT INTEREST IN THE ARAB WORLD; COUNTRIES LIKE THE UAE AND SAUDI ARABIA STARTED PROMOTING TECHNOLOGY USE TO IMPROVE URBAN LIVELIHOOD. DUBAI LAUNCHED THE SMART DUBAI INITIATIVE IN 2014, WHICH AIMED TO TRANSFORM THE CITY INTO THE WORLD'S SMARTEST AND MOST SUSTAINABLE CITY BY MAKING USE OF TECHNOLOGIES SUCH AS IoT, AI, AND RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES.

**2011:** SAUDI ARABIA ANNOUNCED A MEGA-PROJECT, NEOM, AT AN INVESTMENT OF \$500 BILLION. THIS INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW, FULLY AUTOMATED, SMART CITY RUNNING SOLELY ON RENEWABLE ENERGY. NEOM WILL SERVE AS AN ARCHETYPE FOR THE URBAN CENTERS OF THE FUTURE BY IMPLEMENTING STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGIES IN TRANSPORTATION, HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION, AND ENERGY SYSTEMS.

**2013:** EGYPT ANNOUNCED THE NEW ADMINISTRATIVE CAPITAL, A SUSTAINABLE URBAN PROJECT THAT WILL HELP REDUCE CONGESTION IN CAIRO AS THE COUNTRY'S POPULATION IS GROWING VERY FAST AMIDST ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES. THE CITY IS DESIGNED WITH GREEN SPACES, RENEWABLE ENERGY, AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN MIND.

**2015:** THE DUBAI EXPO 2020 OF THE UAE, WHICH TOOK PLACE IN 2021 BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, PUT MUCH EMPHASIS ON SUSTAINABILITY BY HAVING A FULL SECTION ON INNOVATIONS IN SMART CITY PLANNING. THE EVENT SHOWCASED IDEAS AND TECHNOLOGIES THAT WOULD HELP ARAB CITIES MOVE TOWARD MORE SUSTAINABLE AND SMART URBAN ENVIRONMENTS



## **AGENDA 2 HISTORY AND PARTIES INVOLVED**

**2016:** IN LIGHT OF THE UN'S 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, MANY ARAB COUNTRIES CONTINUED WITH THE INTEGRATION OF POLICY AND PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT INTO NATIONAL POLICIES. COUNTRIES LIKE SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UAE STARTED OUTLINING VISIONS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE GLOBAL CLIMATE AGREEMENT AND IN PURSUIT OF SUSTAINABILITY TARGETS TOWARDS SMART AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES.

**2018-2019:** THERE WERE SEVERAL PROJECTS IN THE ARAB WORLD THAT TARGETED SUSTAINABILITY AND SMART CITIES. THE EXPANSION OF MASDAR CITY, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS BEEN CONTINUING IN ABU DHABI, POSITIONING IT AS THE GLOBAL HUB FOR CLEAN ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN PLANNING. IN SAUDI ARABIA, WORK ON NEOM ACCELERATED WITH THE VISION TO CREATE A "CITY OF THE FUTURE" POWERED BY SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION.

**2020-2021:** MANY ARAB GOVERNMENTS BEGAN TO EXPEDITE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND THE APPLICATION OF SMART CITY TECHNOLOGIES DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, IN ORDER TO ENSURE CONTINUITY IN PUBLIC SERVICES. FOR INSTANCE, SMART DUBAI HAS UPDATED ITS DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE, INTEGRATING AI INTO HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION, AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES.

**2022:** QATAR'S HOSTING OF THE FIFA WORLD CUP 2022 HAS ACCELERATED SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT, WITH THE COUNTRY DETERMINED TO ADOPT GREEN BUILDING METHODOLOGY, SOLAR ENERGY, AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION FOR THE MEGA EVENT. LUSAIL CITY WAS ONE OF THE MAINSTAYS IN DEPLOYING SMART CITY TECHNOLOGIES WITH A HOST OF ENERGY-EFFICIENT BUILDINGS AND AN ALL-INTEGRATED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.



## AGENDA 2 HISTORY AND PARTIES INVOLVED

2023: AS THE ARAB WORLD CONTINUES TO GRAPPLE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES, CITIES ARE INCREASINGLY FOCUSING ON REDUCING THEIR CARBON FOOTPRINTS. NEOM IN SAUDI ARABIA REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST AMBITIOUS SMART CITY PROJECTS IN THE WORLD, BLENDING TECHNOLOGY WITH SUSTAINABILITY ON AN UNPRECEDENTED SCALE. MASDAR CITY AND LUSAIL CITY CONTINUE TO EVOLVE EXEMPLARY EXAMPLES OF HOW CITIES CAN APPLY SMART TECHNOLOGIES TO CREATE MORE SUSTAINABLE URBAN ENVIRONMENTS.

DURING THE PAST DECADES, THE ARAB WORLD HAS MADE GREAT DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING SUSTAINABLE SMART CITIES. FROM THE EARLY 2000s, WHEN SMALL CITIES BEGAN PIONEERING SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT, TO THE CURRENT ERA WHERE MAJOR PROJECTS SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE REGION, THERE HAS BEEN A SHIFT TOWARD INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY WITH SUSTAINABILITY. WHILE CHALLENGES REMAIN, SUCH AS POLITICAL INSTABILITY, FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS, AND VARYING REGIONAL PRIORITIES, THE COMMITMENT TO CREATING SMARTER, MORE SUSTAINABLE URBAN SPACES IN THE ARAB WORLD IS STRONGER THAN EVER.



## AGENDA 2 LATEST DEVELOPMENT

AFSD IS AN ANNUAL REGIONAL PLATFORM ORGANIZED BY ESCWA IN ORDER TO REVIEW PROGRESS AND ENHANCE COLLABORATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB REGION. IT INVOLVES GOVERNMENTS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND A DIVERSE RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS. IT FOCUSES ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES UNIQUE TO THE REGION.

THESE ARE ATTAINED BY KEY THEMES, SUCH AS ADDRESSING POVERTY AND INEQUALITY, ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, AND ALIGNING REGIONAL EFFORTS TO ATTAIN THE GLOBAL SDGs. EVERY YEAR, THE FORUM DISCUSSES SPECIFIC SDGs UNDER REVIEW AT THE HLPF TO ENSURE THAT THE REGION'S CONCERNs ARE REPRESENTEDON THE GLOBAL STAGE. THE AFSD PUTS AN EMPHASIS ON PARTNERSHIPS, INNOVATION, AND INCLUSIVE APPROACHES FOR TACKLING DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES.

FURTHERMORE, THE ARAB SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2024 ASSESSES THE PROGRESS OF THE ARAB REGION TOWARD THE SDGs BY BRINGING INTO FOCUS BOTH ACHIEVEMENTS AND REMAINING CHALLENGES. IT MAPS NATIONAL POLICIES AND TRENDS, WITH A FOCUS ON HOW INTEGRATED APPROACHES ARE NEEDED FOR ISSUES SUCH AS GENDER INEQUALITY, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, AND ECONOMIC DISPARITY. WHILE THE REPORT HIGHLIGHTS SUCCESSES RELATED TO RENEWABLE ENERGY ADOPTION, DIGITAL ACCESS, AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS, IT POINTS OUT THE URGENT NEED TO BRIDGE GAPS IN AREAS LIKE PEACEBUILDING, SOCIAL PROTECTION, AND MECHANISMS FOR FINANCING. IT UNDERLINES THE VALUE OF REGIONAL COLLABORATION AND PROVIDES ILLUSTRATIONS OF SOUND POLICIES WITH WHICH TO INFORM FUTURE EFFORTS. THIS IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS IS SUPPOSED TO INSPIRE JOINT ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE ARAB REGION.



## AGENDA 2 POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

1. INCORPORATE PRINCIPLES FROM THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) INTO NATIONAL AND MUNICIPAL LAWS.
2. PROMOTING COMPACT CITY MODELS TO REDUCE URBAN SPRAWL, OPTIMIZE INFRASTRUCTURE, AND PRESERVE NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS.
3. IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS THAT PRIORITIZE ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ECO-FRIENDLY CONSTRUCTION, INCLUDING MANDATORY GREEN CERTIFICATIONS.
4. REQUIRE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (ESIAs) FOR ALL LARGE-SCALE URBAN PROJECTS TO ENSURE LEGAL COMPLIANCE WITH SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES.
5. MANDATE THE SEGREGATION, RECYCLING, AND PROPER DISPOSAL OF WASTE, SUPPORTED BY PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE.
6. DEVELOPING INTELLIGENT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS, PROMOTING ELECTRIC VEHICLES, AND INCORPORATING SHARED MOBILITY SOLUTIONS TO REDUCE CONGESTION AND POLLUTION.
7. IMPLEMENTING ADVANCED DESALINATION, WATER RECYCLING, AND SMART METERING TECHNOLOGIES TO ADDRESS WATER SCARCITY.
8. PROVIDING SOLAR RESOURCES IN THE REGION TO POWER URBAN CENTERS AND REDUCE RELIANCE ON FOSSIL FUELS.
9. ENSURE THAT URBAN DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT DISPLACE VULNERABLE POPULATIONS AND ADDRESSES HOUSING AFFORDABILITY.
10. ESTABLISH LEGAL INSTITUTIONS TO MONITOR ADHERENCE TO URBAN SUSTAINABILITY LAWS, WITH AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS



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## **SUBTOPICS FOR AGENDA 1**

- 1. REFORMING LAWS TO CRIMINALIZE ALL FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV), INCLUDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AND HONOR CRIMES.**
- 2. ADDRESSING CULTURAL BARRIERS AND SOCIETAL STIGMAS THAT PERPETUATE GBV.**
- 3. INCORPORATING GENDER EQUALITY EDUCATION INTO SCHOOL CURRICULUMS.**
- 4. CHALLENGING HARMFUL PRACTICES SUCH AS CHILD MARRIAGE AND FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM).**

## **SUBTOPICS FOR AGENDA 2**

- 1. INCORPORATING GREEN SPACES AND SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING IN CITY PLANNING.**
- 2. ESTABLISHING LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY IN SMART CITIES.**
- 3. DESIGNING CITIES TO BALANCE MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE WITH CULTURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION.**
- 4. USING AI AND BIG DATA ANALYTICS FOR URBAN DECISION-MAKING AND PREDICTIVE MAINTENANCE.**
- 5. INTEGRATING SOLAR, WIND, AND OTHER RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES INTO URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE.**
- 6. ENCOURAGING THE USE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND INSTALLING EV CHARGING STATIONS.**
- 7. ESTABLISHING URBAN POLICIES TO PROTECT BIODIVERSITY AND REDUCE CARBON FOOTPRINTS.**



# FAQ'S FOR AGENDA 1

## 1. WHAT IS GBV, AND HOW IS IT MANIFESTED IN THE ARAB WORLD?

- GBV INVOLVES AN ACT OF VIOLENCE COMMITTED AGAINST A PERSON BASED ON THEIR GENDER. THIS MAY INVOLVE WOMEN AND GIRLS IN LARGE PROPORTIONS. THE MANIFESTATIONS IN THE ARAB WORLD INCLUDE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGES, HONOR CRIMES, AND FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION. MOST OF THESE PRACTICES HAVE BEEN PERPETUATED THROUGH SOCIETAL NORMS, GAPS IN THE LAW, AND IGNORANCE. IT REQUIRES ADDRESSING THROUGH MULTI-DIMENSIONAL STRATEGIES OF LEGAL REFORMS, AWARENESS OF SOCIETAL ROLES, AND SUPPORT MECHANISMS FOR SURVIVORS.

## 2. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MAJOR LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AGAINST GBV IN THE ARAB WORLD?

- A NUMBER OF ARAB COUNTRIES HAVE IMPLEMENTED LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AGAINST GBV, SUCH AS LEBANON'S LAW 293 CRIMINALIZING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND EGYPT'S LAW 164 OF 2015 ADDRESSING SEXUAL HARASSMENT. HOWEVER, THE MAJOR GAP STILL LIES IN PROPER ENFORCEMENT AND A GENERAL LACK OF COMPREHENSIVE LEGAL PROTECTION IN MANY COUNTRIES. FOR THE EFFECTIVE FIGHT AGAINST GBV, NATIONAL LAWS NEED HARMONIZATION WITH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS SUCH AS CEDAW AND AN IMPROVEMENT IN IMPLEMENTATION AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL.

# **FAQ'S FOR AGENDA 1**



## **3. HOW CAN CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ATTITUDES BE CHANGED TO PREVENT GBV?**

- THE CHANGING CULTURAL AND SOCIAL NORMS THAT CONDONE GBV REQUIRE WIDE-REACHING PUBLIC EDUCATION AND AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS THAT CHALLENGE TRADITIONAL GENDER ROLES AND FOSTER EQUALITY BETWEEN GENDERS. THIS IS A RATHER COMPLEXLY INGRAINED APPROACH, AND ENGAGING MEN AND BOYS AS ALLIES WILL BE VERY IMPORTANT. PROGRAMS TARGETING YOUTH EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DIALOGUE MAY HELP DISMANTLE HARMFUL STEREOTYPES AND BUILD A SOCIETY THAT VALUES AND PROTECTS WOMEN AND GIRLS.

## **4. HOW DO WOMEN'S SHELTERS AND THEIR SUPPORT SERVICES CONTRIBUTE TO COUNTERACTING GBV?**

- WOMEN'S SHELTERS AND SUPPORT SERVICES ARE KEY IN PROVIDING BOTH IMMEDIATE SAFETY AND LONG-TERM RECOVERY TO SURVIVORS OF GBV. SERVICES INCLUDE LEGAL ASSISTANCE, PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING, AND HEALTHCARE. EXPANDING AND SECURING FUNDING FOR SUCH SERVICES IS NEEDED ACROSS THE ARAB WORLD, OR MANY SURVIVORS WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE TO REMAIN IN ABUSIVE SITUATIONS DUE TO RESOURCE LIMITATIONS OR FEAR OF SOCIAL STIGMA. SUCH SERVICES MUST BE INVESTED IN AND PROMOTED BY GOVERNMENTS AND NGOs ALIKE.



## FAQ'S FOR AGENDA 1

### 5. WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE THE CURRENT LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE ARAB WORLD FOR BETTER PROTECTION AGAINST GBV?

- THE LEGAL SYSTEM WILL BE IMPROVED BY ENFORCING STRICT LAWS AGAINST ALL FORMS OF GBV, ENSURING THAT PERPETRATORS FACE TRIAL AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE WITH FAIR JUSTICE, AND PROVIDING EASIER MEANS OF REPORTING. POLICE, JUDGES, AND OTHER LEGAL PERSONNEL MUST BE TRAINED IN THE ART OF DEALING WITH GBV WITH CARE AND ENSURING THAT WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE RESPECTED. ADDITIONALLY, VICTIM PROTECTION LAWS NEED TO BE ENACTED THAT WOULD PROTECT SURVIVORS FROM RETALIATION AND ENSURE THEIR SAFE SEEKING OF JUSTICE.

### 6. WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES TO BE FACED WHILE IMPLEMENTING POLICIES TO COMBAT GBV IN THE ARAB WORLD?

- KEY CHALLENGES INCLUDE DEEP-ROOTED PATRIARCHAL ATTITUDES, INADEQUATE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS, UNDERREPORTING DUE TO STIGMA OR FEAR OF RETALIATION, AND LIMITED AVAILABILITY OF SUPPORT SERVICES FOR SURVIVORS. THE BREAKING OF THESE BARRIERS REQUIRES POLITICAL WILL AND A SOCIETAL WILLINGNESS TO QUESTION NORMS. BESIDES, NOT ONLY IS THE APPLICATION OF LAWS SPORADIC, SO ALSO ARE SAFE CHANNELS THROUGH WHICH WOMEN CAN REPORT, MAKING THE TASK OF DEFENDING WOMEN'S RIGHTS EVEN MORE DIFFICULT.



## FAQ'S FOR AGENDA 1

### 7. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN COMBATING GBV IN THE ARAB WORLD?

- REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, LIKE THE ARAB LEAGUE AND UN WOMEN, CAN FACILITATE DIALOGUE, BUILD TECHNICAL CAPACITY, AND ENCOURAGE ADOPTION OF POLICIES RELATED TO GBV ACROSS THEIR MEMBER STATES. THEY CAN HELP FOSTER REGIONAL COLLABORATION ON SHARED ISSUES RELATED TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY. IN ADDITION, THESE ORGANIZATIONS CAN SUPPORT GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES AND RAISE AWARENESS REGIONALLY ABOUT THE NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE GBV LAWS AND SERVICES.

### 8. WHAT DOES GBV PORTEND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARAB WORLD?

- GBV HAS GRAVE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS THAT CAN IMPEDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARAB WORLD AS A WHOLE. IT LIMITS THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE, DAMPENS THEIR POTENTIAL, AND LEADS TO LONG-TERM HARM PSYCHOLOGICALLY AND PHYSICALLY. APPROACHES TOWARD GBV CONCERN NOT ONLY THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN BUT ALSO BROADER OBJECTIVES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH, SOCIAL COHESION, AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



## FAQ'S FOR AGENDA 2

1. WHAT DOES THE TERM “SMART CITY” ENTAIL AND HOW CAN THIS BE ACHIEVED IN THE ARAB WORLD?

- ANSWER: A SMART CITY IS DEFINED AS ONE THAT LEVERAGES THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND DATA, APPLICABLE IN SUSTAINING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ITS RESIDENTS THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT, PUBLIC SERVICES, AND RESOURCE USE. APPLICATION IN THE ARAB WORLD REGION WOULD BE THE USE OF IoT SENSORS, AI FOR CONSUMPTION OPTIMIZATION, AND ESTABLISHING E-GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS. FOR INSTANCE, DUBAI AND ABU DHABI CITIES HAVE STARTED INCORPORATING SMART CITY CONSTITUENTS LIKE AUTONOMOUS TRANSPORT SYSTEMS, GREEN ENERGY, SMART GRID IN AN EFFORT TO ENHANCE SUSTAINABLE AND LIVABLE URBAN ENVIRONMENTS.

2. WHAT MEASURES DO YOU RECOMMEND TO THE SMART CITIES POLICY FOR THE PROLIFERATION OF THE SCARCITY OF WATER IN THE ARAB WORLD?

- WATER SCARCITY IS ONE OF THE MAJOR DRAWBACKS IN THIS REGION OF THE WORLD, THE ARAB REGION. THIS PROBLEM CAN BE ADDRESSED BY SMART CITIES THROUGH THE PROVISION OF SMART APPLIANCES THAT CONSERVE WATER SUCH AS SMART CONSUMPTION METERS, ENERGY POWERED DESALINATION PLANTS AND EFFICIENT IRRIGATION SYSTEMS. IN ADDITION, USE OF PLASTICS FOR WATER RECYCLING AND HARVESTING RAINWATER AMONG OTHERS CAN HELP REDUCE THE IMPACT OF DROUGHT IN THESE URBAN CENTERS.



## FAQ'S FOR AGENDA 2

### 3. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES IN THE SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARAB WORLD?

- RENEWABLE ENERGY IS A VERY IMPORTANT BASIS FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB WORLD, CONSIDERING THAT THE REGION ENJOYS A LOT OF SOLAR ENERGIES. SOLAR PANELS CAN BE INTEGRATED ON BUILDING ROOFTOPS IN SMART CITIES, AND SOLAR FARMS CAN BE DEPLOYED, BOTH OF WHICH WILL HAVE THEIR ENERGY DISTRIBUTED EFFICIENTLY BY SMART GRIDS. THIS DECREASES THE CONSUMPTION OF FOSSIL FUELS, THUS REDUCING EMISSIONS AND MEETING THE SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES OF PROJECTS LIKE MASDAR CITY IN THE UAE.

### 4. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF GREEN BUILDINGS IN ARAB SMART CITIES?

- GREEN BUILDINGS SAVE ON ENERGY CONSUMPTION, CONSERVE RESOURCES, AND OFFER A HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT TO THE PEOPLE IN THEM. IN THE ARAB WORLD, WHERE THE TEMPERATURES ARE OFTEN VERY HOT, THE BUILDINGS INCORPORATE MATERIALS AND DESIGNS THAT DECREASE THE DEMAND FOR AIR CONDITIONING, CONSERVE WATER, AND IMPROVE VENTILATION. LEGAL FRAMEWORKS, LIKE THE BINDING BUILDING CODES FOR ENERGY-EFFICIENT BUILDING DESIGNS, CAN ALSO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN SPREADING THE CULTURE OF GREEN BUILDINGS.



## FAQ'S FOR AGENDA 2

### 5. THE QUESTION IS HOW TO CONSIDER TRANSPORTATION IN THE SMART AREA MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY?

- ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE, SUCH AS INCREASING CHARGING STATIONS, PUBLIC TRANSIT OPTIONS LIKE ELECTRIC BUSES, TRAMS, AND METROS, WILL GO A LONG WAY IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION IN ARAB SMART CITIES. IN THIS REGARD, CYCLING, PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY WALKWAYS, AND CAR-SHARING PROGRAMS CAN ALSO MINIMIZE CONGESTION AND POLLUTION. NEW SMART CITY PROJECTS IN RIYADH AND CAIRO ARE INCREASINGLY FOCUSING ON EXPANDING PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPING ECO-FRIENDLY TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS.

### 6. WHAT ROLE DO DATA AND TECHNOLOGY PLAY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SMART CITY?

- DATA AND TECHNOLOGY ARE ESSENTIAL FOR SMART CITY PLANNING AS THEY ENABLE CITIES TO OPERATE MORE EFFICIENTLY. BY COLLECTING AND ANALYZING DATA ON TRAFFIC PATTERNS, ENERGY USAGE, AND WASTE MANAGEMENT, CITIES CAN MAKE DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS TO OPTIMIZE SERVICES. TECHNOLOGIES LIKE AI, MACHINE LEARNING, AND IoT ARE KEY IN AUTOMATING PROCESSES, IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE, AND PROVIDING REAL-TIME SOLUTIONS, AS SEEN IN CITIES LIKE DUBAI'S SMART DUBAI INITIATIVE.



# SAMPLE POSITION PAPER

DELEGATE: JOHN DOE

COMMITTEE: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

COUNTRY: RUSSIAN FEDERATION

TOPIC: IMPROVING LITERACY RATES AMONG INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

APPROPRIATE EDUCATION ENABLES INDIGENOUS CHILDREN AND ADULTS TO EXERCISE AND ENJOY THEIR ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS. IT ALSO IMPROVES THEIR ABILITY TO EXERCISE THEIR CIVIL RIGHTS AND INFLUENCE POLITICAL POLICY PROCESSES TO IMPROVE THE PROTECTION OF THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS. HOWEVER, IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD, THIS BASIC NEED IS FREQUENTLY UNMET, THERE ARE HUGE GAPS IN EDUCATION AND POVERTY AND NOTHING IS BEING DONE TO COMBAT THIS. THIS IS WHERE RUSSIA DIFFERS BECAUSE THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S CONSTITUTION (2008) ESTABLISHED THE COUNTRY AS A MULTINATIONAL STATE, WITH AUTHORITY CONCENTRATED IN THE HANDS OF THE SEVERAL NATIONS WHO OCCUPY IT. FOR THE MOST PART, THE STATE HAS COMMITTED TO GUARANTEE THESE RIGHTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ESTABLISHED PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.



# SAMPLE POSITION PAPER

THE CHANGES, LAWS AND REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTED OVER THE YEARS INCLUDE: THE NUMBER OF NORTHERN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES EMPLOYED AS LABORERS, CLERKS AND BY COLLECTIVES INCREASED BY 22.6 PER CENT OVER ALL SECTORS OF PRODUCTION. THERE ARE SEVERAL FEDERAL LAWS AIMED AT ASSISTING THE ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SMALL PEOPLES OF THE NORTH WERE DRAFTED BY CENTRAL BODIES AND ENTERED INTO FORCE IN, FOR EXAMPLE, "THE LAND LAW OF THE RSFSR"; "ON THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT"; "ON EDUCATION"; "ABOUT GUARANTEES OF THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF RUSSIA"; AND THE PROJECT OF THE FEDERAL TARGET PROGRAMME OF "ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTH. " THEY EMPHASIZED THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE NORTH'S SPECIFIC RIGHTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES, KNOWLEDGE, AND EDUCATION. GOSKOMSEVER - THE RUSSIAN STATE COMMITTEE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTH - IS NOW PROMOTING THE SPECIAL FEDERAL PROGRAMME "CHILDREN OF THE NORTH" FOR THE YEARS 1999-2000 IN COLLABORATION WITH THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION, CULTURE, AND FEDERATION AND NATIONAL AFFAIRS.



# SAMPLE POSITION PAPER

A NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS PROTECT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHT TO A HIGH-QUALITY AND CULTURALLY RESPECTFUL EDUCATION, INCLUDING THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD, ILO CONVENTION 169, THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, AND SOCIAL RIGHTS, AND THE UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. ACCORDING TO THESE CONVENTIONS AND DECLARATIONS, STATES ARE REQUIRED TO SUPPORT AND COLLABORATE WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES BY INCORPORATING THEIR PERSPECTIVES, CULTURES, AND LANGUAGES INTO MAINSTREAM EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS AS WELL AS BY RESPECTING, FACILITATING, AND PROTECTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHT TO TRANSMIT KNOWLEDGE TO FUTURE GENERATIONS

THROUGH TRADITIONAL MODES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING. THERE ARE NUMEROUS VIABLE SOLUTIONS THAT MIGHT BE IMPLEMENTED TO HELP INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY, PARTICULARLY BY DRAWING INSPIRATION FROM VARIOUS EXISTING LEGISLATION. AS AN EXAMPLE: IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, IN URBAN AND RURAL SETTLEMENTS AND IN OTHER AREAS WITH THE CONSIDERATION OF THE HISTORICAL AND OTHER LOCAL TRADITIONS. THE STRUCTURE OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT BODIES SHALL BE DETERMINED BY THE POPULATION INDEPENDENTLY; THIS LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT PROVIDES INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MORE FLEXIBILITY AND LIBERTY TO GO ABOUT THEIR EVERYDAY LIVES AND LEARN THE WAY THEY HAVE ALWAYS DONE, WHICH HAS OFTEN BEEN BY WORD OF MOUTH FROM THEIR ELDERS. OTHER POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS INCLUDE: FOR SCHOOLS LOCATED CLOSER TO AND ON NATIVE LAND, PARENTS MIGHT BE OFFERED THE CHOICE OF ENROLLING THEIR CHILDREN IN MAINSTREAM CLASSES OR THOSE TAUGHT IN THEIR TRIBE'S NATIVE TONGUE, WHICH WOULD HELP THEM BETTER TRANSITION INTO CONTEMPORARY CULTURE. THESE CHOICES GIVE THE FAMILIES THE OPTION OF CHOOSING BETWEEN INCLUSION INTO SOCIETY AT LARGE OR THE PRESERVATION OF THEIR HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE.



## BILBOGRAPHY

[HTTPS://WWW.TANDFONLINE.COM/DOI/FULL/10.1080/03057925.2020.1834350](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03057925.2020.1834350)

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## RECOMMENDED READING

[HTTPS://UNHABITAT.ORG/THE-STATE-OF-ARAB-CITIES-REPORT-2022](https://unhabitat.org/the-state-of-arab-cities-report-2022)

[HTTPS://WWW.BAKERINSTITUTE.ORG/RESEARCH/TOWARD-SMART-SUSTAINABLE-CITIES-MENA-REGION](https://www.bakerinstitute.org/research/toward-smart-sustainable-cities-mena-region) [HTTPS://WWW.UNDP.ORG/ARAB-STATES/STORIES/UNITE-ELIMINATE-VIOLENCE-AGAINST-WOMEN-ARAB-REGION](https://www.undp.org/arab-states/stories/unite-eliminate-violence-against-women-arab-region)

[HTTPS://WWW.UNESCWA.ORG/PUBLICATIONS/ARAB-SUSTAINABLE-DEVELOPMENT-REPORT-2024](https://www.unescwa.org/publications/arab-sustainable-development-report-2024)