



Amman Center for Human Rights Studies

Annual Report 2017

Prepared by
SARAH RIHANI
MORTEN HANSEN
HU, CHUN-YUAN

Table of Content

About the Center	3
Our Fundamentals and Priorities	3
Welcome and Farewell to Interns from the International Relations Unit.....	4
The Center's Activities in 2017	6
The Right to Life	6
Conference on the Death Penalty	6
Report on the Death Penalty in the Arab World.....	7
Parliamentary Roundtable Discussion at the Jordanian Parliament	8
Conference on Migration in Berlin.....	9
The Right to Speak	10
Declaration for Peace	10
Empowering the Women of Egypt	11
The Right to Think	12
ACHRS is a founding member of the Arab Coalition to combat hatred, intolerance, and extremism in the Arab region	12
Seminar on Emancipatory Education in Jordanian Universities	13
The Right to Participate.....	14
Seminar on the French and Korean Elections	14
Training Session on the Right to Peaceful Assembly.....	14
ACHRS in Paris During the French Election	15
SouthMed Call for Proposal	15
Women's Rights	17
Women Leadership Project	17
The 10 th Group of Women Leaders Program.....	18
Syrian Women Leadership Project.....	19
Jordanian Institute for Women Leaders-Survey Results.....	20
Conference on Women's Economic Empowerment	21
Lecture on Feminism.....	22
International Women's Day	23
ACHRS Attended "Women on the Front Lines – MENA Chapter" Conference.....	24
Other Activities	25
Roundtable Discussion in Berlin on the EU and the MENA Region	25
Meeting Between ACHRS and AIESEC from the Netherlands.....	26
Lecture on Human Rights at IATA's Amman Office	27
Conference at Al-Bayt University.....	28
Board Members and Partners	29

About the Center

Our Fundamentals and Priorities

Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS) is an independent non-governmental organization advocating for the enhancement of democracy and human rights in Jordan and the MENA region. The center's five priorities are the right to life, the right to speak, the right to think, the right to participate, and women's rights. The Center works to achieve its goals by lobbying; spreading awareness via conferences and symposiums; writing official statements, declarations, reports, articles, and booklets; and establishing and maintaining relations to international organizations and embassies.

Furthermore, ACHRS has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) which means that the center participates in various UN conferences and makes annual reports for the UN, for example through the Universal Periodic Review.

Objectives

- Disseminating human rights and spreading knowledge about international human rights and humanitarian law in Jordan and the Arab region
- Contributing to a more democratic society and enhancing the rule of law in a way that respects human rights
- Providing a free platform for dialogue for coordinating efforts undertaken by governmental and non-governmental organizations that are active in human rights
- Aiding governmental and non-governmental organizations in monitoring, documenting, and following up on human rights, as a step towards enforcing these rights on all legislative and executive levels
- Participating in the revision of local laws and regulations in order to support and uphold human rights
- Dedicating attention to those segments of society in need of special protection
- Protecting and encouraging human rights activists

Welcome and Farewell Interns from the International Relations Unit



Throughout 2017, ACHRS has hosted interns from all over the world with different academic backgrounds ranging from political science and Middle East studies, to psychology and law. Though it is very different backgrounds, they all contribute to the field of human rights in a unique way. This year, the center has hosted 26 interns from the countries of USA, Turkey, UK, Italy, South Korea, Switzerland, China, Palestine, Australia, Germany, France, Greece, Romania, Taiwan, and Denmark. The interns at ACHRS have different tasks and responsibilities such as writing reports, updating the English website, fundraising, making drafts for proposals, writing news articles and statements, arranging conferences and symposiums, establishing and maintaining relations to other organizations and embassies, it is important to the center to give interns responsibilities in order to strengthen their academic skills and knowledge. Interns continue in the amount they wish, to be ambassadors for the center and to participate in conferences and events in their own home region.





Farewell party for Georgiana, from Romania



Farewell party for Kim, from Australia



Birthday Party for Valmera, from Greece

The Center's Activities in 2017

► The Right to Life Conference on the Death Penalty



The panel (L-R): Mr. Mustafa Yaghi, Member of the Jordanian Parliament, Dr. Nizam Assaf, Director of the Amman Center for Human Right Studies, Sophie Bel, Director and Cultural Cooperation Counselor of the French Institute, Dr. Hamdi Murad, and Dr. Mohammed Al Tarawneh, President of the Arab Coalition Against the Death Penalty (ACADP).

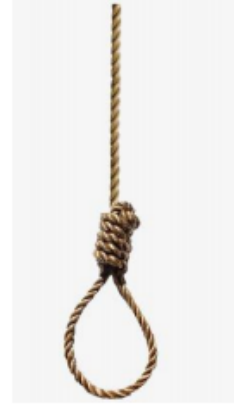
The 10th of October 2017 was the International Day for the Abolition of the Death Penalty, and in relation to this, the center held a conference at the French Institute in Amman on October 9, 2017.

The aim of this conference was to spread awareness of the injustice that comes with this article in which poor people often are target of injustice trials because they lack the resources for a fair trial. Hopefully, someday this will lead to the abolishment of death penalty articles in the Jordanian law.

The center invited different people from the civil society such as embassies, international organizations, judges, lawyers, and imams, in order to let decision making people of the Jordanian society to lead the debate of pro-abolition. The conference concluded with a panel discussion where audience members had the opportunity to ask questions. The panel concluded by stressing the need to abolish the death penalty, and their continued commitment to work toward this.

Report on the Death Penalty in the Arab World

The Death Penalty in the Arab World



Annual Report of 2015/2016

By Sarah Rihani Petersen, International Relations Intern

Every year, the center writes a report on the death penalty in the Arab world, and this year the center has written a report for the years 2015/2016. This is done to spread awareness and to register the numbers of death sentences and death penalties carried out.

The center uses updated and reliable numbers from international organizations such as Amnesty International. In 2015/2016 there was an increase in number of death penalties as 1,634 people were executed in 2015. Compared to 2013/2014, this number of executions increased by 50%.

This is mainly due to terrorism, especially the threat of the so called Islamic State. In 2015 Jordan carried out a mass execution of 15 people who were sentenced to death for terrorism. This was a huge decline for the country as the death penalty in Jordan had not been carried out for years. The aim of the center is for all Arab countries to become abolitionist countries and the center will continue to work on this.



The Death Penalty in the Arab World 2015/2016

Parliamentary Roundtable Discussion at the Jordanian Parliament



L-R:

Dr. Nizam Assaf: director of ACHRS,

Wilma Mittendorf: International Relations Unit intern,

Jeppe Koester: International Relations Unit intern

On Monday November 6, 2017 ACHRS participated a roundtable discussion held in the Jordanian Parliament, initiated by the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA). Among the invited guests were government delegates, international guests, abolitionists, and death penalty experts, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The aim and theme of the gathering was to “help foster a stronger shared culture of legality and human rights in which the death penalty has no place and justice is not revenge.” The event was divided into four parts where topics such as traditions, barriers by the government, and justice for victims were discussed.

The wanted outcome of the death penalty, which is lower crimes, is not working and there is a need for raising awareness about this, which Dr. Cattin from the Swizz embassy in Amman tried to do. Dr. Cattin “shared with audience that in those states in America allowing the death penalty by law have a higher crime rate than those that abolished the capital punishment in their constitution.

Furthermore, he argued, that the capital punishment not necessarily reinstall a strong feeling of justice for the victim’s families, when compared to a fair and proper trial.” Why have the death penalty which is a cruel and inhuman act, when it does not even prevent or change the number of crimes?

To conclude on the roundtable discussion at the parliament, it must be stated that the panel seemed open-minded in reducing the death penalty or of a complete abolition, but it remains as a question of the future what the parliament is going to implement.

Conference on Migration in Berlin, Germany



Conference in Berlin, Germany

In June 2017, ACHRS participated in the 8th International Consultation of Churches Witnessing Migrants (CWWM8) in Berlin, Germany to discuss the Global Social Contract on Migration and Development.

The theme of the conference was “Towards a Global Social Contract on Migration and Development” with a focus on the difficulties that migrants and refugees encounter when they reach Europe, such as lack of recognition, lack of security, and the struggle for survival.

Dr. Assaf addressed the CWWM8 with a presentation about the links between humanitarian aid and religious extremism within refugee communities. Dr. Assaf thanked the international aid community for the emergency shelter, food, health services and countless other services provided to refugee communities. However, he also highlighted that one area that lacked attention was culture.

The conference included a panel discussion on the policies and practices of the EU regarding the myths that come with migration. The conference with delegates from 29 countries concluded with an outcome of upholding inherent human rights backed by sustainable solutions where migrants and refugees must be involved in all platforms and developments.

► The Right to Speak

Declaration for Peace

On the International Day for Peace on September 21, 2017 ACHRS made a statement titled “ACHRS' appeal to the UN and the world for the Reduction of Military Spending and the Promotion of Peace and Development” which was posted on the center’s website.



The aim of the appeal was to end military spending and war advocating which only result in famine and refugee crisis. To make changes NGO’s need more funding to uphold the international standards of human rights. ACHRS wrote this statement to raise awareness on military spending as well. In 2016 all of the world’s countries spent 1,69 trillion dollars on military expenditures in total.

While the world is spending this amount of money on military, the largest number of refugees since WWII were struggling to survive and create a better life. Other fatal events were the civil war in Yemen and the persecution and ethnic cleansing of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar.

In August this year, the World Health Organization reported 5000 instances of cholera in Yemen along with the number of 17 million people in an exposed condition. The persecution and violence against the Rohingya Muslims increased massively, and estimated 1 million people fled the country across the border to Bangladesh and are now refugees.

Therefore, we at the ACHRS appeal to the UN to take these essential steps: 1) To adopt a resolution fixed with an action plan that seeks to a total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction all over the world, especially chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. 2) To adopt a resolution that will enforce each country of the international community to decrease their military budget by a 10 % pr. annum.

We would also apply to the UN to secure that the 10 % budget decrease will be allocated to A) humanitarian relief work and the better treatment of refugees worldwide. B) Better health service in general, to raise the average life expectancy in the world. C) Development of third world countries. D) To combat the effects of climate change and reduce further changes to the environment.

Empowering the Women of Egypt



The Egyptian Center for Women's Rights in Cairo, Egypt

On October 22, 2017 two interns from the international relations unit at ACHRS went to Cairo, Egypt to draft a full application for a proposal to the EU in cooperation with the Egyptian organization “the Egyptian Center for Women’s Rights”. The proposal was for a possible future project on women’s political and economic empowerment in Egypt.

The idea for the project was to mirror ACHRS’s success with the Jordanian Institute for Women Leadership Program, and refit the structure to an Egyptian context, combining it with economic empowerment trainings and media outreach elements. The organization in Egypt has since 1995 been working on improving the political, cultural and economic rights of women in Egypt, and have conducted several projects under the UN and the EU.

The two interns worked with the project coordinator Mrs. Noha Farag for four days and in two meetings, the chairwoman of the organization, Mrs. Nehad Abolkamsan participated, where key issues regarding the organizational structure, the calendar, and the nature of the training programs within the proposal was discussed. The interns returned to Amman on the 28th of October and are awaiting the final decision by the EU.

► **The Right to Think**
ACHRS is a founding member of the Arab Coalition to combat hatred, intolerance, and extremism in the Arab region



Conference in Dubai, UAE (L-R): Mr. Mohamed Salem Al-Kaabi, chairman of the Board Council of the Emirates Human Rights Association, Dr. Nizam Assaf, Director of the Amman center for Human Rights Studies, Dr. Hafez Abu Se'da, Board Chairman of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, Dr. Sunni Sayari, Association for the defense of Human Rights – Tunisia, Dr. Omar Rahal, the Director of the Human Rights & Democracy Media Center 'SHAMS', and Mr. Murad Agarati, President of the Foundation for the Empowerment of development-Yemen.

On February 6-7 2017, ACHRS participated in the conference “The Role and Responsibility of the Civil Society in Combating Racism and Hate Crimes” in Dubai, UAE. The conference organized and held by the Emirates Human Rights Association resulted in the establishment of a civil society coalition consisting of the committee from the conference on May 23, 2017 in order to combat hatred, intolerance, and extremism in the Arab region.

The first initiative by the civil society coalition was a public statement on May 28, 2017 condemning the terrorist attacks targeting Christian people in Egypt on May 26. The terrorists opened fire against Christian Copts who were being transported in buses to the monastery of Anba Samuel, west of the city of Adwa in Maghagha in Minya Governorate which tragically killed 28 people including many children.

This recent event clearly shows that terrorist groups in Egypt are targeting civilians based on religion. Therefore, the coalition requires action by civil society organizations to combat rhetoric of hatred and extremism as terrorism and these hate-crimes prosper intolerance and hatred in the Arab region and the rest of the world.

Seminar on Emancipatory Education in Jordanian Universities



On December 13, 2017 the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies organizes a seminar titled “Emancipatory Education in Jordanian Universities” where professors, researchers and post graduate students participated from different universities, university institutes and centers from the private and public sectors.

Before the seminar, the center had conducted a study on emancipatory education in 28 Jordanian universities where 400 teachers and students had participated. The aim was to use this research at the seminar in order to discuss the outcome. In the time to come, ACHRS will publish a book containing all the interviews and dialogues.

This project is sponsored by the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung with funds of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany.

► The Right to Participate

Seminar on the French and Korean Elections



The international relations unit participating in the seminar at the center

2017 was marked by political elections all over the world. In May, both France and Korea had presidential elections. On the basis of these two elections, the center arranged a seminar on the French and Korean elections which was presented by two international relations unit interns from the respective countries.

Mr. Laur and Mrs. Jung arranged the seminar by giving lectures on proposals and debates on women's issues during the electoral period. After the lectures, a roundtable discussion followed where it was possible to discuss and reflect on the function of the Korean system and the changing politics of France.

Training Session on the Right to Peaceful Assembly



Dr. Nizam Assaf, director of ACHRS

On October 20, 2017 the center held a training session in cooperation with the National Center for Human Rights to shed light on the right to peaceful assembly.

This was done within the framework of the international standards and discussed the Jordanian legislation. Dr. Nizam Assaf from ACHRS participated and delivered a speech in the session which was held for new employees from the National Center for Human Rights.

ACHRS in Paris During the French Election



Polling station in Paris, France

On June 11-12, 2017 Attorney Roula Abou Chabke and Dr. Nizam Assaf, both members of the Election Network in the Arab Region (ENAR) went to Paris to participate in the observations of the French parliamentary elections and to develop a deeper understanding of the French electoral system that can be useful in future political aspects of Jordan and the MENA region. The visit to Paris was organized with support from the French embassy in Jordan along with the invitation from Direction of International Cooperation (French Ministry of Interior).

At the polling station in the Third Arrondissement Municipality of Paris, Attorney Chabke and Dr. Assaf met with various French stakeholders and institutions where they improved their skills and knowledge in electorate monitoring. After their return to Amman, a report in cooperation with the French embassy was drafted to report on the experience.

SouthMed Call for Proposal

In September 2017 ACHRS together with the Jordan based Fajrouna Film Production Company applied for a call for proposal by the SouthMed WIA (Women in Audiovisual in the Southern Mediterranean).

The title of the call for proposal was:” Towards Greater Gender Equality: Promoting the Role and Image of Women in the Southern Mediterranean Audiovisual Sector.” It was designed to promote gender equality and support the film sector in seven Southern Mediterranean countries: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia.

The overall objective of SouthMed WiA is to strengthen the capacities of the audiovisual operators in the target countries to contribute to sustainable development and cultural diversity, by promoting gender equality and enhancing the image of women in the film sector.

The ACHRS applied for the LOT 2 of the proposal, more precisely the Center aimed at the training of young women. For this training the ACHRS designed a program that would involve two phases, for two separate teams of women that would have ultimately end with the production of two documentaries on women’s rights.

The trainings would have firstly involved a theoretical part, with education in human rights, journalistic approaches and research that would have been taught by the centers associate staff.

The second part would have included a practical part, being the shooting and production of the documentaries, with assistance, guidance and used equipment from the Fajrouna Production Company.

The overall objective of this project was to increase the qualification and resume of young Jordanian women with a background in journalism, film production and science of the arts.

In order to have a higher participation of Jordanian women in the audiovisual sector in general and change stereotypical associations connected to women in film production. The requested contribution from the EU was 83.000 EUR out of a total budget of 104.000 EUR. Out of 69 submitted proposals, 21 got selected.

Within these the ACHRS got the placed in the reserve list, only a 1 point mark from receiving the grant being number 6. ACHRS will apply for the second round ultimo February.

الثقافة للجميع
SouthMed CV

WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE PUBLIC **VALUE**
OF **CULTURE** IN THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN

► Women's Rights

Women Leadership Project



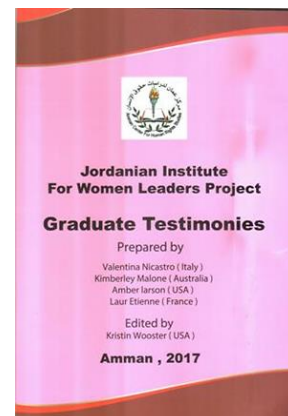
Female graduates

We, at ACHRS have formerly established similar projects in the empowerment of women, in which 105 women were trained in becoming an active part of society through different training programs.

The participants were trained in theoretical topics, such as the constitution, the law, citizenship, democracy, human rights, the role of political parties, the Jordanian political system, electoral systems, legislative power, the role of civil society, the role of civil society organizations, women's movement and women's leadership skills.

The program included eleven local courses; one training course each month which included different issues of state, society, power, citizenship, democracy, human rights, elections, parties, trade unions, different civil society organizations, women's rights, gender, and leadership skills. After the eleven courses, the programs were concluded with a fieldtrip to one of the Arab countries.

The fieldtrips have varied with different destinations from Beirut to Tunisia, but they have all included series of meetings with political parties, women associations, and specialized training centers. Unfortunately, due to a lack of funding, the center was not able to carry out fieldtrips in the programs of 2015 and 2016. In order to ensure different geographical, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, the women from the program were chosen from different governorates of the Kingdom.



They were in the age group of 25-40 years, and from different backgrounds which varied from university professors, school teachers, lawyers, engineers, media workers, pharmacists, master's and doctoral students, and human rights activists.

The goal of the empowerment of women is not only at a local level in Jordan, but also at a regional Arab level. We look forward to continuing the program and we are doing our best to ensure that the program is encompassing all the Arab countries.

The program could not have been possible without the Finn Church Aid (FCA) for their help during the years of 2010-2014, and Karama and FFF for their help during the years of 2013-2014. The project was fully granted by the FCA of 160,000 euros from the 1st of July 2010 to the 30th July 2014 with the budget of 40,000 euros each year. From 2014 to 2016, the program continued on a voluntarily basis.

Following the implementation of the program in 2017, five international relations unit interns from Italy, Australia, USA, and France compiled a booklet on the testimonies of the graduated women from the Jordanian Institute for Women Leaders Project to inspire other women from Jordan and other Arab countries.

The 10th Group of Women Leaders Program



Female graduates

This year, ACHRS has decided that the center will continue to assist the work of the Jordanian Institute for Women Leadership for the benefit not only of Jordanian women, but women from different Arab countries such as Iraq, Sudan, Yemen, Syria and Palestine. The center had commenced the activities for the 10th group of the program for the Jordanian Institute for Women Leadership in January 2017. The program was a continuation of the Jordanian Institute for Women Leadership. Hence, the teaching programs and schedules would be similar to the above mentioned project.

Syrian Women Leadership Project

ACHRS, in collaboration with Amman Forum Society for Human Rights, initiated Syrian women leadership project from October 2017 to February 2018 with support from the Canadian Local Initiatives Fund (CLIF). The training sessions have been taking places in Amman and Mafraq with altogether 40 participants.



Training session in Amman



Training session in Mafraq

Jordanian Institute for Women Leaders

Survey Results

Considered one of the most prominent ventures of the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies, the Jordanian Institute for Women Leaders (JIWL) project aims to train and empower women in political life, focusing on issues such as democracy, human rights, elections, civil society and gender equality. Established in 2010 in coordination with Finn Church Aid, JIWL has had 105 graduates from different Arab countries over the past six years, many of whom have since assumed a leadership position in public life or their career since completing the program.

In a survey sent to all Jordanian participants in the JIWL, all 64 respondents agreed that since completing the program they have discussed the knowledge and skills gained from the training sessions with other people in their work and personal lives. Similarly, a clear majority also agreed that they have been involved in advocacy for women's rights and human rights since completing the program, and feel that they are better positioned to advocate for their own interests within their family structure.

While only 30% of respondents have joined a political party since graduating from the JIWL, over 95% agreed that they felt they were better informed as voters for future elections. Furthermore, all participants in the survey acknowledged that the program had impacted their participation in public life, notably in their ability to monitor elections and conduct human rights campaigns.

In addition to monitoring elections, JIWL graduates also gained knowledge about electoral processes more broadly, and became more familiar with political mechanisms at local, regional and international levels. High number of participants also noted that the training improved their understanding of political parties, secular politics and political analysis.

In terms of professional skills gained from the JIWL program, the top 2 skills that participants improved on were time management and negotiation skills. Following these job satisfaction, advocacy skills and communication skills were also enhanced.

Overall, the respondents from Jordanian women who participated in the JIWL program have been overwhelmingly positive, and felt the program influenced their lives politically, professionally and personally.

Conference on Women's Economic Empowerment



Conference at Royal Hotel Amman, Jordan

On March 8, 2017 ACHRS participated in Women's Economic Empowerment Conference at the Royal Hotel Amman to celebrate International Women's Day and the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW).

The theme of the conference was "Women's Economic Participation in the Changing World of Work" and the theme was dealt with through a series of panel discussions. The panel discussion began with an overview and introduction to the status of women in Jordan and how they are represented in the Jordanian economy. It elaborated on the inequality of income and opportunity for women, an issue which needs to be dealt with on a legislative basis.

The inequality derives from harassment of women, as most employers believe that women are less effective and skilled because they may take maternity leave, as well as women's lack of own financial resources and social networks. Other obstacles for women discussed at the conference was women's participation in the workforce where Mr. Rani Khoury presented a study conducted on traditional gender roles in Jordan which concluded that the lack of women's participation in the workforce is mainly due to the responsibilities of marriage.

ACHRS was glad to participate in the conference as women's participation in the workforce is one of the most important issues in the Jordanian society, and the center found that the discussion at the conference is very solution orientated.

Lecture on Feminism



Lecture at ACHRS for female participants

On April 15, 2017 the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies held this year's first Monthly Women's Meeting. The monthly women's meetings are conducted to engage women from different backgrounds to discuss different relevant topics that can help women to talk about – and to combat different issues.

The first topic of this year was 'perceptions of feminism: feminism in the West and the Arab world'. The women discussed feminism in Jordan; how feminism can be promoted in Jordan, the relatively new term of feminism, the obstacles of social traditions in Jordan in relation to family and marriage, as well as the often misperceived pictures and ideas of Arab women and feminism.

The women expressed the need for a clear definition and goals of feminism in Jordan and the Arab world due to the emergence of this new term, as well as ideas on how to combat the challenge of feminism in Jordan, such as the empowering of women in politics in order to promote feministic reforms, an economic empowerment of women to change power relations, and to educate women better to teach coming generations about gender equality. Concludingly, the women all agreed on the fact that high diversity of Jordanian women such as language, culture and religion need to be considered at all times.

International Women's Day



International Women's Day on March 8, 2017 was celebrated by Amman Center for Human Rights Studies, by issuing a statement to emphasize the need for empowering women economically and politically and to increase women's capacities. These capacities that the center finds important are the capacities to assist in building a world based on justice and peace.

This year, the theme of the international women's day was 'Women's Economic Participation in the Changing World of Work' with the goal of achieving 'Planet 50:50' by the year 2030. To focus on women is important as women face various discrimination based on sex, race, religion, and economic status.

Women in Arab countries especially suffer from exploitation, persecution and inequality. All these things among others result in women making up 70% of poor people globally. Therefore, ACHRS used this day to call upon governments to develop a plan in Jordan and the Arab countries in order to achieve sustainable development goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015.

The center calls on the adoption of a unified law criminalizing all forms of discrimination and violence against women away from any exemption, a ratification of international conventions on women's rights and international labor conventions, revising the citizenship law to ensure equality between men and women in the granting of citizenship to foreign husband and children.

ACHRS Attended

“Women on the Front Lines – MENA Chapter”



Morten Hansen and Danny Casprini
from the international relations unit

On December 7, 2017 two members of the international relations unit, Morten Hansen and Danny Casprini participated in the conference “Women on the Front Line – MENA Chapter” organized by the May Chidiac Foundation under patronage of the prime minister of Jordan, Dr. Hani Al Mulki.

The event aimed at celebrating and focusing on women in the MENA region who are in leader positions. The conference consisted of different panel discussion with panel members from different professional backgrounds such as politicians, international organizations, entrepreneurs, actors, journalists, and activists. The panelists all agreed on the poor quality of education in Arab countries which creates the underrepresentation of women in the workforce.

The often conservative approaches in the schools combined with the rise of extremist religious beliefs are only increasing the lack of female participation. The panel therefore stressed the fact that the region should improve its educational systems to achieve equality between gender and to acknowledge and contribute to women leadership.

We at the center believe that the Arab societies are suffering from the lack of female participation both economically, culturally, and educationally.

► Other Activities

Roundtable Discussion in Berlin on the EU and the MENA Region



Panel discussion in Berlin, Germany

On October 10, 2017 the German Development Institute held a roundtable discussion focusing on the ‘Perspectives for a renewed partnership between Europe and the Middle East and North Africa’. Morten Hansen, international relations coordinator, attended the event which was hosted in the European House in Berlin.

The aim of this roundtable discussion was to focus on how European countries can help improve development in the MENA region. This development was especially targeting the promotion of democratic governance and human rights. When the panel discussion ended, the different panelists came with their opinion and own views of what the EU should focus on in the positive development of the MENA region. This focus was directed at the strengthening of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) by supporting the CSOs that can hold their governments responsible, as well as a more political intervention rather than economical, where issues such as weapons sale should instead be linked to human rights.

We firmly believe that change and reform can only happen if the pressure that the civil society is putting on the governments from the inside, is bolstered and supplemented by pressure from organizations like the EU. We believe that change is possible, and we urge the EU and the European countries to act to help make a positive change in the MENA region.

Meeting Between ACHRS and AIESEC from the Netherlands



AIESEC visiting ACHRS
at the center in Amman

On March 10, 2017 Amman Center for Human Rights Studies received the Netherlands delegation of AIESEC (Association internationale des étudiants en sciences économiques et commerciales) for a meeting to discuss the prospects of hosting a Dutch student at the center for 6-8 weeks during summer.

To exchange students in this special way called the “NOUR project” is aiming at narrowing the gap and create understanding and respects between Arab and Western countries. The NOUR project targets different countries and in 2017 these countries included Jordan, Oman, Tunisia, and Morocco, with the aim of sending students from the Netherlands to different NGOs located in the MENA region.

While the students are working at the organizations, they will be trained in leadership skills that can result in a positive way on their respective societies. AIESEC operates in 124 countries, relies on the coordination of 2100 universities and 2400 members, and has since its establishment in 1948 involved more than 945,000 people in its activities.

Lecture on Human Rights at IATA's Amman



The IATA office in Amman

International Air Transportation Association (IATA) in Amman has developed a new program called 'Mosaic' which focuses on diversity and meritocracy based on a three-year strategy.

Two of the center's international relations unit staff gave a lecture in human rights and human trafficking on December 11, 2017. The lecture given by Morten Hansen, the international relations coordinator at ACHRS, focused on the historical angle of human rights as he has a degree in history. Morten focused on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which was adopted by the United Nations in 1948.

He emphasized that the two world wars showed what mankind was capable of thereby highlighting that every human being is inherently free and equal before the law. Danny Casprini, international relations unit at ACHRS, continued the lecture with a more judicial point of view as he has a Master's degree in law and international law. Danny explained the legal concepts of the law regarding victims and perpetrators, as well as human trafficking.

Additionally, he also explained how national and regional stakeholders' initiative can help to combat human trafficking and help the most exposed victims of forced labor namely women and children. Amman Center for Human Rights Studies encourage other organizations and institutions from the private sector to do as IATA and take initiatives to engage and combatting in equal right and opportunities. Lastly, we would like to thank the IATA association for showing their interests in human rights and our center.

Conference at Al-Bayt University



Conference at Al-Bayt University entitled "Human Rights, Combating Intolerance and Incitement to Hate"

On the 69th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in cooperation with the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS), Al-Bayt University / Deanship of Student Affairs held a conference on "Human Rights and Combating Intolerance and Incitement to Hate" on Tuesday, 26/12/2017.

Dr. Omar Al-Atain, Dean of Student Affairs, spoke about the importance of fighting intolerance, hatred, violence, and extremism, particularly among students and youth. He also stressed the importance of raising awareness and educating democratic dialogue in discussing all social, economic, political aspects.

On behalf of the ACHRS, attorney Raed Al-Athamneh welcomed the attendance of the Deanship of Student Affairs at Al-Bayt University in cooperation with the Center in organizing this conference, looking forward to further cooperation in the field of human rights promotion.

The first session dealt with the impact of fanaticism and hatred on human rights and freedoms through a working paper presented by Dr. Abdulsalam Khawalda and students Asala Suelmin and Lajin Al Banna from Beit Hikma Institute, while the second paper was dealing with the United Nations strategy for the prevention of violent extremism presented by Dr. Nizam Assaf, Director of the ACHRS. The second session featured the role of the university in dealing with extremism and hatred presented by Dr. Qassem Al-Oun and the student Uday Anzaza from the Faculty of Law. The second paper was on religious discourse and its role in intolerance and hatred presented by Dr. Erwa Dweiri and student Abdullah Masoud Bani Khalid from the Faculty of Sharia. The sessions concluded with comments and inquiries provided by students of Beit Hikma Institute, the Faculty of Law, and the Faculty of Sharia. The Amman Center for Human Rights Studies cofounded the "Civil Society Coalition to Combat Extremism, Intolerance and Hatred in the Arab Region", which was initiated by the Emirates Human Rights Society on 23 May in Dubai.

Board Members and Partners

Members of the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies

- ACHRS has been granted with consultative status with UN ECOSOC since 2006
- Member of the CoNGO (The Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations)
- Member of the International Federation for Human Rights (fidh)
- Member of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC)
- Member of the Arab Coalition for the International Criminal Court
- Member of the International Federation of Workers' Education Associations (IFWEA)
- Member – Founder of Elections Network in the Arab Region (ENAR)
- Member – Founder of the Arab Coalition Against the Death Penalty (ACADP)
- Founder of Jordanian Human Rights Trainers Network
- Founder of Arab Society on Academic Freedom
- Member of Jordanian Network for Civil Society Organizations
- Founder of Arab Human Rights Trainers Network
- Cofounder of Iraqi League for Human Rights Trainers
- Member of the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Platform
- Member of the Arab Social Forum