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Follow-up and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

Written statement* submitted by Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, a non- governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.


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The role of the National Human Rights Council in the implementation of the Sustainable Development goals

Egypt's vision 2030 to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In 2016, the Egyptian government launched Egypt's Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS), Vision 2030, which is the Egyptian version of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2015, which sets a number of development goals in several areas to be achieved internationally by the year 2030.

The SDS adopts the concept of sustainable development as a general framework intended to improve the quality of life at present, without prejudice to the rights of future generations to a better life. The concept of development adopted by the strategy is based on three main dimensions (economic, social and environmental). The strategy is based on the concepts of inclusive and sustainable growth and balanced regional development, which ensures the participation of all in the process of construction and development, while ensuring that all parties benefit from the fruits of this development. The SDS takes into account the principle of equal opportunities, closing development gaps, optimizing the use of resources and supporting and using social justice to guarantee the rights of future generations.¹

SDS is characterized by the following: First, defining quantitative goals for most of the indicators contained in the dimensions and axes provided for in the strategy. Second, it set two stages to achieve these goals gradually in 2020 and 2030. The importance of this is that it facilitates the evaluation process during the years of implementation of the strategy and helps to review mechanisms and development efforts on the one hand or review the same goals on the other hand.²

Egypt's Vision 2030, in relation to the social dimension, includes a number of basic goals and strategies as follows:

- Promoting the social integration and reducing the negative polarization by establishing an effective partnership between development partners represented by the state, civil society and the private sector.
- Achieving equal rights and opportunities and stimulating the opportunities of the social mobility through an institutional system that achieves economic, social and political equality among all.
- Protecting the most-favored-care groups by ensuring justice in distribution, reducing the gap between classes and improving the living conditions of marginalized segments of society.³

The Role of the National Council for Human Rights in Monitoring the Implementation of the SDGs

In accordance with the Paris Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions of 1993 on the promotion and protection of human rights, a number of national councils with legal personality such as the National Council for Human Rights, the National Council for Women and other councils have been established to promote, develop and protect human rights, to promote their awareness and to contribute to ensuring their exercise. Furthermore, they work to spread the culture of human rights and to raise awareness of citizens through cooperation with international and national human rights organizations.

¹ - استراتيجية التنمية المستدامة 2030، موقع رئاسة مجلس الوزراء المصري، الرابط،

<http://www.cabinet.gov.eg/Arabic/GovernmentStrategy/Pages/Egypt'sVision2030.aspx>

² - حسين سليمان، رؤية مصر 2030 .. مؤشرات ايجابية، مركز الاهرام للدراسات السياسية والاستراتيجية، 31 اكتوبر 2018، الرابط،

³ <http://sdsegypt2030.com/العدالة-الاجتماعي/العدالة-الاجتماعية: رؤية مصر 2030، الرابط،> <http://sdsegypt2030.com/العدالة-الاجتماعي/العدالة-الاجتماعية/>

The National Council for Human Rights and other national councils contribute to the implementation of the SDGs, especially these goals are closely linked to human rights, whereas human rights are integrated into development until they become one thing. Development has enabled man to obtain all his political and civil rights, as well as his economic, social and cultural rights. The SDGs affirm the full and profound commitment to human rights. The National Council for Human Rights, in cooperation with other national councils, can contribute to achieving these goals through the following:

1. Women's rights

The vision aims at, by 2030, that women become key players in achieving sustainable development in a society that guarantees equal opportunities and full protection. The economic axis is one of the main axes of the vision, which is based on several axes, including: increasing the economic participation of women through training and raising their capacities, empowering women to access inheritance, reducing the problem of female debtors, stimulating women's entrepreneurship and increasing their access to financial services, and supporting women working in the agriculture and private sector. The protective axis includes: the protection of women's basic rights, the elimination of violence against women, the elimination of female circumcision, the elimination of sexual harassment, the elimination of early marriage, the guarantee of a decent life for marginalized women and the protection of women from the consequences of climate change.⁴

The National Council for Human Rights has continued to developments in this area, enacting new legislation to support the terms of reference of the National Council for Women and support its independence, in addition to enacting new legislation aimed at promoting women's inheritance rights and combating the phenomenon of inheritance deprivation that prevails in some areas. The legislation provides for penalties of deprivation of freedom and fines for those involved in the commission of such crimes.⁵

2. Rights of persons with disabilities

Persons with disabilities have been taken into account in the different dimensions of the strategy in proportion to the goals to be achieved in 2030. For example, the main goals of education and training focal point were to include education without discrimination. A sub-goal of this main goal aimed at providing a comprehensive environment supportive of the integration of people with simple disabilities into pre-university education and improving the quality of special education schools for students with severe and multiple disabilities. The role of people with disabilities in the strategy has been studied in coordination with the National Council for Disability Affairs.⁶

In line with Egypt's commitments, it has passed the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is based on the perspective of their rights in line with Egypt's international commitments to this area and the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities provided for in the Constitution. The law includes binding articles that guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities in education, vocational preparation, rehabilitation, employment, social protection, adequate housing and cultural rights, and it includes penalties for abuses against them.⁷

In its annual report 2017/2018, the National Council for Human Rights called attention to the negative aspects of government decisions on human rights in Egypt and then the implementation of the goals of Egypt's Vision 2030. It called attention to the following:

4 - الاستراتيجية الوطنية للتنمية المستدامة لعام 2030، المجلس القومي للمرأة، الرابط، <http://ncw.gov.eg/ar/الاستراتيجية-الوطنية-للتنمية-المستدامة>.

5 - التقرير الثالث عشر للمجلس القومي لحقوق الانسان 2018/2017، الرابط، <http://www.nchregypt.org/media/ftp/annual%20report%202013.pdf>.

6 - <http://sdsegypt2030.com/الاستئله-الشائعه/>

7 - التقرير الثالث عشر للمجلس القومي لحقوق الانسان 2018/2017، ص19، الرابط، <http://www.nchregypt.org/media/ftp/annual%20report%202013.pdf>.

On the level of civil and political rights: the negative aspects of anti-terrorism strategies clearly contradict the objectives of the internal policy axis in Egypt's Vision 2030, namely, the protection and promotion of human rights through the support and empowerment of freedom of opinion and expression, the right to form parties and associations, freedoms related to public work and fundamental freedoms.⁸ These strategies have also affected public freedoms. Government decisions have restricted the rules relating to public freedoms in terms of the freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and the establishment of civil society organizations and human rights organizations.⁹

On the level of economic, social and cultural rights: the economic reform policies adopted by the Egyptian government affected the standard of living of citizens, especially the marginalized segments. In spite of the government's achievements in providing commodity and financial support to these segments, the lack of control of markets, the greed of traders, and the negative impact of the floating currency and the resulting increase in the prices in general and prices of basic services, in particular, have led to worsening the economic and living conditions of citizens.¹⁰

Recommendations

The National Council for Human Rights has to expand launching the awareness and cultural programs to clarify the concepts of sustainable development and development plans and their positive impact on the lives of citizens in a simplified and easy, so that citizens can receive information easily by clarifying the work, efforts, investments and projects of each ministry aimed at pushing the wheel of economic and social development, as well as the escalation of all people's complaints and claims to the government to discuss how to solve those problems or to develop urgent implementation plans to solve those problems to ensure convenience for citizens.

To review the social measures and objectives in the reform program and the SDS, in order to avoid the impact of social challenges on the implementation of the goals of Egypt's Vision 2030.

To balance the overall and social goals of the SDS to ensure that all of them ultimately lead to the implementation of the desired sustainable development.

The Egyptian government has to grant the National Council for Human Rights more independence in the performance of its work and to take in consideration the recommendations made by the Council for further protection and promotion of human rights.

⁸ - للمزيد من المعلومات حول محور السياسة الداخلية في رؤية مصر 2030 يمكن الرجوع للرابط التالي، http://www.crci.sci.eg/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Egypt_2030.pdf.

⁹ - التقرير الثالث عشر للمجلس القومي لحقوق الانسان 2017/2018، الرابط، <http://www.nchregypt.org/media/ftp/annual%20report%2013.pdf>.

¹⁰ - التقرير الثالث عشر للمجلس القومي لحقوق الانسان 2017/2018، الرابط، <http://www.nchregypt.org/media/ftp/annual%20report%2013.pdf>.