

# **LEBANON**

**Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review**

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**This report is jointly submitted by the following NGOs:**



**ALEF** “l’Association Libanaise pour l’Éducation et la Formation” (Lebanese Association for education and training) is a non-governmental human rights organization registered in 2004, which aims at monitoring, protecting and promoting Human Rights through education, training, advocacy and lobbying activities.

<http://www.alefliban.org/>



**IKV Pax Christi Netherlands:** is cooperation between the IKV (Interchurch Peace Council) and the peace movement Pax Christi Netherlands. IKV Pax Christi works for peace, reconciliation and justice in the world & join with people in conflict areas to work on a peaceful and democratic society. <http://www.ikvpaxchristi.nl/>



**Pax Christi International:** is a non-profit, non-governmental Catholic peace movement working on a global scale on a wide variety of issues in the fields of human rights, human security, disarmament and demilitarization, just world order and religion and violent conflict.

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## **Executive Summary:**

The following report highlights Lebanon's improvements and setbacks in the most pressing human rights issues over a period of 4 years 2006-2010. Lebanon government has shown willingness to comply with certain human rights, however it clearly lacks capacity and funds to improve legislation enforce laws, and report to UN properly. On other human rights issues (torture/ refugees and asylum seekers/ discrimination and inequality of women; the political will is absent. The Government has shown good cooperation with some NGOs to improve situations in prison; with juveniles, with disabled persons; moreover it passed a law to remove religion from the ID as a step in the fight against discrimination.

Lebanon still lacks a comprehensive institutional and legislative framework for the universal protection of human rights. Although for the most part, legislation is in conformity with international law, implementation is lacking while some outstanding treaties such as the UNCAT are yet to be transposed into the national law. After a period of suspension of legislative activity due to internal political stalemate, parliamentary elections were held in June 2009. No major violations were recorded.

Civil and political rights were jeopardized in the past four years due to internal conflicts and occasional armed clashes. Impunity is still widespread in Lebanon as a result of a weak judicial system that has left crimes (mainly of political nature) committed in the far and more recent past, with no prosecution. Interference of the executive in the judicial system as well as the unconstitutional military courts is a violation of international law. Meanwhile, torture is systematic and is practiced by state officials and members of security organs coupled with insufficient legal prohibition/criminalization of torture.

Although statistically Lebanon is progressing towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, vulnerable factions of the Lebanese society face discrimination in quality and accessibility of basic services.

Refugees, mainly Palestinians, Iraqis and Sudanese suffer from poor protection and limited access to rights; they are denied practice of civil and some economic rights. Migrant workers in Lebanon face widespread violations and poor protection.

Lebanon has 12 overdue reports to the UN treaty bodies, with a delay period ranging from 3 to 14 years.

## **I. Normative and institutional framework for the promotion and protection of human rights**

### **1. Constitutional and Legislative Background:**

Lebanon is a parliamentary democracy, with three branches of government: the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The political system is based on a power-sharing formula, whereby the 18 officially recognized religious groups share power on the basis of equitable representation among Muslims and Christians. The three leading government positions are divided as such: the president to be a Maronite Christian, the speaker of Parliament to be a Shiite Muslim and the head of government

to be a Sunni Muslim. Similarly the Parliament's 128 seats are divided in half among Muslims and Christians and quotas are specified for all other government posts.

The power-sharing system was re-formulated at the close of the 1975-1989 conflicts according to the Taef Accord (September 1989). This accord called for the gradual elimination of the confessional system, as well as administrative decentralization, and the strengthening of the independence of the judiciary, among other things.

The preamble of the Lebanese constitution states that Lebanon abides by UN covenants and pledges to preserve human rights in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It guarantees public liberties and freedom of expression and religion; and clearly states that Lebanese are equal (though in practice this is not the case). Also according to the constitution, international law is paramount to national law and judges can invoke international treaties in their rulings but this rarely happens.

## **2. The institutional framework and foundation of human rights**

Beyond the monitoring and reporting of violations conducted by international and national NGOs, there is no independent monitoring of human rights. Additionally, lack of information and systematic data collection by the government hinders the formation of evidence-based policies for the improvement of the human rights situation in Lebanon.

Several treaty bodies have urged the establishment of such a national human rights institution that would ensure effective monitoring and implementation of human rights in Lebanon. In 2004 a law for the creation of an Ombudsman was elaborated through an organizational decree in 2008 but approval by the Council of Ministers is still pending. The human rights parliamentary committee launched in 2004 a process to devise a national human rights action plan. The process involved various stakeholders but was not inclusive, especially with regards to government stakeholders. 19 sectoral baseline studies have been published to date, 4 additional studies yet to be released. The 23 baselines will constitute the national Human rights action plan to be endorsed by the government in 2011.

The establishment of a human rights division within the Internal Security Forces in March 2008 can be described as a positive step; however, the division remains in need of more funds and resources to activate it. Several national steering committees, including the national steering committee for migrant domestic workers, prevention of violence against children, and trafficking, have produced positive but small-scale results.

Lebanon is party to numerous international treaties and conventions, and it has ratified six core international human rights treaties<sup>1</sup>, thereby committing to the obligation of transposing their provisions into national law. At the time of writing, Lebanon has 12 overdue reports to the UN treaty bodies, with a delay period ranging from 3 years to 14 years.<sup>2</sup> A period of prolonged delay precedes

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1 ICCPR, ICESCR, CAT, CEDAW, CRC, CERD

2 See annex 2

the submission of most of Lebanon's reports as there is no systematic procedure to prepare state reports.

Overall, the Lebanese judiciary failed to meet international standards on a routine basis over the past four years especially in dealing with political crimes. The large jurisdiction of military court<sup>3</sup> and the proceedings of the Judiciary Council<sup>4</sup> are of particular concern. The military courts in Lebanon are unconstitutional as they address cases in a manner inconsistent with international human rights standards. (See section below)

Some laws have granted impunity to officials in security agencies with regards to allegations of human rights violations they have committed. Military personnel and security officials cannot be taken to court as they benefit from impunity granted from legislation such as Law No. 401 of the criminal code pertaining to infliction of violent practices.

The establishment of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) following Security Council Resolution 1757 of May 30 2007, raised expectations for the provision of justice and crime prevention, as reflected in its mission. However, the Tribunal's mandate is limited to the prosecution of persons responsible for the attack of 14 February 2005 and connected crimes, and consequently it will apply selective justice.

## **II. Promotion and protection of human rights in practice:**

### ***Civil and political rights***

#### **Rights to Life, Liberty and Security of Persons**

1. Since late 2004, Lebanon underwent political hurdles and a clear decrease in security and citizens' safety. A series of crimes and riots, not all politically motivated, resulted in the death and injury of many as well as the destruction and vandalizing of public spaces and property. Civilians, army and security officials, political party members and journalists as well as the UNIFIL peace-keeping forces in the South of Lebanon were targets of violent attacks. Investigations into these crimes have rarely been concluded. Most investigations are either pending or progressing slowly.
2. Death penalty is still legal in Lebanon. There were still approximately 40 persons awaiting execution in Lebanon in according to amnesty international's 2009 country report. The latest executions dated back to January 2004. Lebanon has not signed the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR (1989). Nevertheless in a communiqué by the permanent mission of Lebanon to the United Nations<sup>5</sup> in 2006, it is stated that Lebanon has declared a moratorium on public executions as a first step leading up to the abolishment of the capital penalty.
3. Over 17000 Lebanese persons are estimated to have disappeared during the civil war (1975-1990) with reports placing many of them in Syria, Israel, with Palestinian factions and others with their

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3 Article I of the decree No. 24/68 of 1968 known as Military Sentences Law details the creation and the jurisdiction of the military court.

4 A special body that reviews allegations of a political nature, and which seized exclusively and selectively by the government. Recourse to appeal against decisions of this body is not allowed.

<sup>5</sup> Permanent mission of Lebanon to the UN, Ref: 1066A/06, April 25<sup>th</sup> 2006

fate still unknown. Despite creation of a Lebanese Syrian joint committee to deal with this issue between the two countries, the last release dates back to 2000 (54 prisoners released)<sup>6</sup> and no concrete actions were made in years. Nonetheless individual releases of prisoners have occurred on an ad hoc basis over the past few years.

4. During the armed conflict that took place in the northern refugee camp of Nahr El Bared between the Lebanese army and the Palestinian military group Fatah el-Islam (20 May- 2 September 2007). Both parties committed violations of International Humanitarian law including: Attacks against civilians, indiscriminate attacks, obstruction of the passage of humanitarian aid and preventing the collection of the dead and wounded<sup>7</sup>.
5. In May 2008, the Official armed forces were not able to interfere during the six days of violent clashes between armed groups aligned to political parties of the opposition against the pro-government armed groups, which killed over 80 people and wounded 250. Militants on both sides were heavily armed with several types of weapons, ranging from AK47 to Rocket-propelled grenades and light artillery. No investigations or arrests were made due to political compromise; putting human rights and human security of the Lebanese at stake.
6. The absence of a unified civil personal status code allows for discrepancies and discrimination on religious, cultural and regional grounds; moreover, it denies the right of free choice amongst the Lebanese citizens.
7. There exists a rapid proliferation of weapons among citizens in Lebanon; most people own at least light weapons for personal protection. Use of medium weapons was witnessed during the May 2008 armed clashes by both pro-government and opposition supporters. Furthermore, Hezbollah is equipped with heavy weaponry that enables it to engage in international conflicts, similar to the July 2006 war with Israel. Palestinian refugees are also heavily armed within camps. Weak armament restrictions and poor enforcement of the gun control law are allowing for serious threats to human security and obstructing law enforcement.

### **Freedom of association, thought, conscience, and religion**

8. The laws governing associations are outdated and often restrictive. The Ministry of Interior retains large authority to control and curb the activities of associations.
9. Freedom of association is not granted to foreigners, migrant domestic workers and civil servants; all groups are not allowed to form unions. Restrictions are also placed on organizations considered by the religious authorities as “outlawed”<sup>8</sup>.
10. In general, TV stations in Lebanon are owned and/or affiliated to political parties, public figures and religious institutions. Several media outlets were subjected to direct violence and forced closure during the armed clashes that took place in 2008 amongst were the Future TV station (affiliated to the future party)
11. Political censorship in Lebanon is assigned to the General Security, while religious and ‘moral’ censorship is delegated to official religious bodies<sup>9</sup>. Moral censorship has led to actions and protests

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<sup>6</sup> S.O.L.I.D.E., support of Lebanese in detention and exile, basic facts.

<sup>7</sup> “Displacement and Return Monitoring Unit: A Preliminary Report on Mandates and Challenges” ALEF August 2007

<sup>8</sup> Jehovah witnesses, Islamic groups of particular affiliation, Buddhist groups..

<sup>9</sup> SKeyes (Samir Kassir Eyes) center for media and cultural freedoms.

against numerous comic TV shows that featured some religious /political figures, and in two separate incidents schools were obliged to change their curriculum<sup>10</sup> due to political pressure.

### **Freedom of Movement**

12. In some politically controlled areas, freedom of movement is controlled by armed factions and not by official Lebanese forces.
13. Freedom of movement of IDPs/ refugees including Palestinian and non-Palestinians, especially Iraqi refugees (most of whom did not have the refugee status as per UNHCR but were rather people fleeing the war in their country without legalizing their status in the host country), was greatly jeopardized. The proliferation of check-points prompted most Iraqi refugees not to leave their homes, and in doing so, giving up their ability to access education and health facilities.
14. Foreign domestic workers were severely curtailed by households in exercising their right to freedom of movement; in the absence of a provision in the unified contract guaranteeing this right. Of particular concern is the customary and normalized practice of confiscating the passports of migrant domestic workers upon arrival at the airport by the General Security and handing it to the employer of the migrant domestic worker.
15. Movement restrictions sometimes target human rights defenders, as in the case of the Security General confiscating the passport of lawyer and human rights activist *Nizar Saghiyeh* in February-March 2010.

### **Arbitrary Detention and Rights of Detainees**

16. The armed conflict in Nahr El Bared posed a clear set back in the rights of detainees; some individuals arrested during or in the aftermath of the conflict were reportedly tortured and their right of visit was denied.
17. A worrying trend that surfaced with regards to Iraqi and other refugees illegally entering the country was the use of detention as a tool to compel them to “*choose*” to return to their countries rather than be sent back to over-crowded detention places where they were held along with convicted persons. Other foreigners were subject to arbitrary arrest, especially migrant domestic workers fleeing from their employers, and foreigners waiting for regularization of their status; all of whom end up serving prison sentences longer than what is depicted by the law.
18. Detainees do not have easy access to medical doctors or lawyers, especially detainees who can be classified as belonging to vulnerable groups including but not limited to illegal migrants, drug addicts, sex workers, and homosexuals. Individuals are often detained in certain prisons for days without access to a lawyer or permission to contact a member of the family, thus amounting to *incommunicado* detention.
19. Prisons are over-crowded and sanitary conditions are very poor. A 1964 decree that could have transferred the running of Lebanon’s prisons from the Ministry of Interior’s Internal Security Forces to the Ministry of Justice was not implemented. Continuous violence outbreaks occur in the prisons by prisoners claiming more rights, and better detention conditions.

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<sup>10</sup> In October 2008, the government forced a private school to change content of a history book following a complaint by a former minister. In November 2008, the government censored “the diary of Anne Frank” from the curriculum of a private school

### **Administration of justice and rule of law:**

20. The justice system in Lebanon is subject to political pressures, (both when the political authority assigns the judges or in court proceedings) bribery, slow proceedings, prolonged detention; prolonged hearings in court proceedings and under numbered judges,
21. Military personnel and security officials cannot be taken to court as they benefit from impunity granted from some laws such as Article 401 of the criminal code pertaining to infliction of violent practices.
22. The Military Court is a judicial form outside the scope of ordinary law. The Lebanese government has exceeded on many instances the principles called upon by the UN Commission on Human Rights<sup>11</sup>, allowing the military Court to continue adopting a non-military task and try civilian individuals who are not related in to the military sector. Reported cases reveal frequent violations against the internationally recognized principles of fair, expeditious and public trial as well as violations of the decree No. 24/68 of 13/4/1968 itself, namely with regard to legal representation, physical integrity and security of detainees.<sup>12</sup>
23. The Military Court is a judicial organ under governance of the Executive, which violates the preamble of the Lebanese constitution<sup>13</sup>. Interference of executive, improper administration of justice and impunity allow all kinds of violations, including torture, protracted and arbitrary detention, and absence of contacts with family members or appropriate legal representation, violation of the right of due process etc.

### **Torture**

24. The state of Lebanon is responsible for systematic torture practices and improper punishment to those who are caught practicing it. The lack of institutional control on security forces and the persistent lack of consensus between the Lebanese contribute to the spreading of torture and undermine efforts by designated governmental committees and civil society actors to monitor detention facilities and eradicate torture. Local NGOs and associations that were forced to sign confidentiality agreements to access prisons are unable to detect and properly handle torture and ill-treatment cases.
25. The factors that facilitate the occurrence of torture and ill-treatment during interrogations and in detention centres and prisons include the absence of legal provisions of torture and ill treatment in domestic laws, resulting in the spread of impunity and the practice of torture and ill-treatment by state officials. Lebanese criminal law is expressed vaguely (especially Article 401 of the criminal code) and therefore is open for numerous interpretations and implementations. Additionally, it is important to note that Article 401 fails to include mental or psychological torture.
26. Detention places and police stations are the most common places where torture and ill-treatment are practiced. The ISF and other security institutions, in particular the military intelligence, are not trained in forensic investigation and interrogation techniques that respect human rights standards.

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<sup>11</sup> See the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Emmanuel Decaux adopted by the Commission on Human Rights in its 62 session, held on 13 January 2006 and related to the administration of justice through military tribunals - E/CN.4/2006/58.

<sup>12</sup> See annex 1

<sup>13</sup> See the preamble of the Lebanese Constitution, (e): *The System is based on the principle of separation of powers.*



Although state funding of security institutions like the ISF is large, no funding or priority is given for such training.

27. Awareness raising for the prohibition of the crime of torture is absent on the community level and trends reveal that many individuals view torture as a needed interrogation tool whose use is justified by reasons of national emergency and crime prevention.
28. The military intelligence, which is under the command of the army, is responsible for violent practices in the military prisons targeting previous anti-Syrian opposition leaders and supporters, as well as perpetrators of terrorism and crimes threatening the national security, including collaboration with Israel, have been subjected to extreme conditions and closed solitary confinement for prolonged periods.<sup>14</sup>
29. Criminal Investigation Bureaus of the Internal Security Forces (ISF) and in particular the Drug Repression Bureau, are especially suspected of committing torture on an almost daily basis. Likewise the Bureau of Public Morals known as “Hobeich”.
30. Perpetrators of torture against dozens of detainees during the Nahr el Bared conflict, among whom where members of the military intelligence, were not brought to justice and victims did not receive compensation.

### ***Child rights***

31. Although progress has been made in the implementation of the CRC in Lebanon, not all children on the Lebanese territory enjoy their rights on equal basis. Problems of quality and access to education, health, and other social services exist especially in light of regional disparities. Several vulnerable groups of children including refugee and asylum seeking children, children living on the street, children with disabilities, child workers, and children living in poverty face a *de-facto* discrimination, as noted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2006.
32. Despite the existence of a law for free and compulsory education for all children less than 12 years of age, the implementation of this law is lacking as education is still not entirely free.
33. Lebanon is not party to the 1951 convention on the status of refugees, leaving refugee and asylum seeking children with a particular vulnerability. Children of refugees are of special concern due to their extremely harsh living conditions and restricted access to education and health care.
34. The government of Lebanon does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and currently there is no legislation that specifically addresses the crime of trafficking.
35. The numbers of children separated from their families in Lebanon and placed in residential care institutions amount to 1.92% of the total child population in Lebanon.<sup>15</sup> Institutional care in Lebanon is not limited to orphans or children with severe social problems within the family but rather there are large numbers of poor families who cannot afford to provide their children with basic needs and hence resort to placing their children in care institutions. Despite previous efforts, the Lebanese government has not yet provided a comprehensive solution for care of children within the family.

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<sup>14</sup> *Lebanon: The painful whereabouts of detention*, ALEF, June 2008.

<sup>15</sup> “Children deprived of family care in Lebanon: Institutional Care and Alternative Care, the current situation and available alternatives” presentation by the Consultation and Research Institution, UNICEF, MOSA April 2008 [title translated into English]

36. Child labor in Lebanon is on the rise due to severe economic conditions, poverty and illiteracy. There are over 100,000<sup>16</sup> children who are victims of child labor and illicit trade, vulnerable to exploitation and working in hazardous conditions.
37. There is no evidence that Lebanese children had taken part in combat as soldiers; however it is widely believed that children assumed different roles in combat operations ranging from logistical support to effective participation. Most Lebanese political parties' armed factions practice political indoctrination and train a number of under 18 on arms.<sup>17</sup> Hezbollah recruits children in political rallies running a group for under-15s called the al-Mahdi Brigades dressed in military fatigues and carrying toy rifles. The nearly 20 Palestinian factions in the 12 refugee camps practice military training and indoctrination of children though actual recruits of soldiers under 18 years are not evident.

### ***Women rights & Gender Equality***

38. Women face discrimination in the public sphere such as sexual harassment<sup>18</sup>, restriction of movement, wages, and social pressures arising from traditional norms. Unfortunately, these laws and the practices that emanate from them reflect an embedded cultural prioritization of "honor" and reputation; which is embedded in the penal code as a mitigating factor to "honor killings"
39. Women in Lebanon are subject to violence or abuse (IRIN reports some 35% of women have been exposed to some form of abuse)<sup>19</sup>; they lack protection and poor state interference on the basis of private family matters.<sup>20</sup> The Lebanese government approved on April 6<sup>th</sup> 2010 a law to protect women against domestic violence.
40. Lebanese women still face discrimination in providing her children with the Lebanese nationality. Discrimination also exists in the provisions of the Lebanese labor law and the social security benefits entitled to women as well as wages.
41. The legal gap governing the working conditions<sup>21</sup> of female migrant domestic workers, the lack of inspection and the absence of a complaints mechanism facilitate their exploitation.

### ***Economic, social and cultural rights***

42. Recent estimates of the number of people living below extreme poverty lines (less the 2.4\$ a day) is around 5% of the general population<sup>22</sup>. A plan prepared by the Ministry of Social Affairs was published in 2007, but actions were not taken due to the unstable political environment and

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.menassat.com/?q=en/news-articles/6781-child-labor-lebanon>

<sup>17</sup> Child soldiers global report 2008

<sup>18</sup> Naciri, Rabea and Isis Nusaair (May 2003). "The Integration of Women's Rights into the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Women's Rights in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia." Euro-Mediterranean HumanRights Network, Copenhagen. P. 6

<sup>19</sup> IRIN, Humanitarian news and analysis, [www.irinnews.org](http://www.irinnews.org)

<sup>20</sup> In a statement made on the occasion of the tenth international day for the elimination of violence against women by the Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Women it was reported that "At least 90% of women in Lebanon are, or have been in the past, victim of physical or psychological abuse."

<sup>21</sup> Migrant domestic workers are excluded from labor law protections under Article 7 of the Labor Code.

<sup>22</sup> "Social action plan: towards strengthening social safety nets and access to basic social services", ministry of social affairs, Lebanon jan 2007

- insufficient funds. In 2009 the government amended the minimum wage; however continuous inflation and weak government control on pricing still poses challenges to the Lebanese household.
43. Urban development is localized in Beirut and Mount Lebanon where economical, social and housing agglomerations are present the most. No major governmental development plans are noted to help regional developments.
  44. Service water is available to 45% of households during winter and 21% during summer<sup>23</sup>. Mineral bottled water remains the main source of drinkable water for more than a third of the population. For those who cannot afford it, they face a serious challenge in accessing safe drinkable water.
  45. The social security and the health care system are still problematic due to insufficient coverage and problems in hospital admissions. The Ministry of Health issued a memo forcing hospitals to provide at least first aid care to everyone in need even if they cannot provide sufficient financial compensation.<sup>24</sup>
  46. Lebanon abides by a law of reciprocity when it comes to the right to work. However, decree 17561 from 1964 restricts foreigners from working in over 70 jobs.

### ***Human Trafficking***

47. Lebanon is a destination country for internationally trafficked persons, primarily women. Women from Ethiopia, and other African states travel to Lebanon, in the belief that they will work as domestic workers and have reportedly been forced into domestic servitude and sexual exploitation. Women from the New Independent States (specifically Russia, Ukraine, and Moldova) have reportedly been forced into sexual exploitation.

### ***Promotion and protection of the rights of: migrants, refugees...***

48. Palestinians refugees (estimates of 300,000 to 350,000) in Lebanon live in severe situation in 12 camps where living conditions are poor and inadequate; they lack basic human rights; civil, economic, social and cultural rights. The camps are ruled by Palestinian factions, continuous internal clashes between the factions place the human security and human rights of refugees at stake. Palestinian refugees also face restrictions on property ownership.
49. Palestinians also face labor restrictions, although ministerial decree 94/1 issued by the ministry of labor in 2008 allows Palestinians to practice a number of professions restricted normally to Lebanese nationals. No concrete improvements have been noticed and discrimination persists.<sup>25</sup>
50. Lebanon also hosts a number of Iraqi refugees who do not entirely enjoy refugee status as per the UNHCR criteria, but fled the violence in Iraq and are living in poor situations.

## **III. Recommendations for action by the state of Lebanon**

1. The state of Lebanon must immediately set in motion all of the procedures and measures within its legal system to expeditiously stop torture, bring perpetrators to justice, and compensate victims.
2. Improve the role of the judicial system in preventive and punitive measures thus allowing effective administration of justice as per the international standards

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<sup>23</sup> MoSA, The National Survey of Household Living Conditions 2004, (2006), p. 90

<sup>24</sup> Memorandum issued by Minister *Khalife* on 30 October 2006

<sup>25</sup> The follow up committee for employment of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, UNRWA

3. Limit the jurisdiction of the Military Court to try military personnel only, and transfer to national civil courts the jurisdiction of trying civilians for security issues, thus making the military court an integral part of the general judicial system.
4. Increase the budget of the Ministry of Justice, train judges, and lift political pressure so as to enhance the role and capacity of the judicial system.
5. Set up an impartial and independent fact-finding Commission, including representatives of civil society, to investigate past human rights violations (including the forced disappearances inside and outside Lebanon), complemented by a truth and reconciliation process.
6. Amend provisions of domestic laws that fall short of meeting the Convention on the Rights of the Child and issue implementation decrees for free and compulsory education till the age of 15.
7. Update legislation on domestic violence and introduce criminal penalties, provide civil remedies, remove the defense of honor<sup>26</sup> and create a comprehensive system allowing the transfer of citizenship for women and remove the reservations for CEDAW.
8. Improve conditions of public health care facilities and create an insurance plan promoting gender equality, equal access for Lebanese and foreigners, and an effective health system for prisoners.
9. Launch a process of disarmament of the civilian population and monitor activities of private security companies to ensure they operate under the rule of law.
10. Create a specific mechanism to prepare state reports to UN treaty bodies and provide training to parties concerned with preparing these reports in coordination with the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Implement a comprehensive data collection policy for the purpose of informed policy formation and establish an independent human rights monitoring mechanism.
11. Ratify and implement the provisions of the following conventions:
  - a. The optional protocol to the Convention on Civil and Political Rights concerning individual complaints
  - b. The second optional protocol to Convention on Civil and Political Rights concerning the death penalty
  - c. The Convention on the Protection of Migrant Workers and their Families
  - d. Convention relating to the status of refugees (1951)
  - e. The Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court
  - f. The second optional protocol to the Convention on Child Rights on Children in armed conflict
  - g. The convention on the rights of persons with disabilities
  - h. The International Labor Organization Convention no. 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize
  - i. The Slavery Convention The UN convention against corruption
  - j. The Convention on protection of children and cooperation in respect of inter-country adoption (1995)
  - k. United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (not ratified but compulsory because of the CRC)

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<sup>26</sup> Law N° 7 dating back to Feb 20<sup>th</sup> 1999 ratified article 562 of the penal code. Perpetrator of an honor crime was no longer exempt from penalty but received mitigated punishment instead depending on each case