

Human Rights Council – 31st session

Item 6: Universal Periodic Review Outcomes: Lebanon



Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development

Action Canada makes this statement in collaboration with Arab Foundation for Freedoms and Equality-AFE and the Sexual Rights Initiative.

During this review, Lebanon received many recommendations calling for the reform of existing laws that criminalize homosexuality, including article 534 of the Lebanese Penal Code that criminalizes "sexual acts against nature". All recommendations received by Lebanon on these issues were noted, providing neither explanation nor comments on the lack of acceptance of them. While the Lebanese government recognized that article 534 does not apply to homosexuals, such legislation is still used for harassment, intimidation, arrest and torture of LGBTI persons by police forces and government officers.

Also, while Lebanon accepted recommendations calling for the promotion of gender equality, the State did not accept specific recommendations related to domestic violence, rape, adultery, abortion, inheritance, personal status and nationality, among others. Hence, all measures taken to promote gender equality will be limited in scope and effectiveness, and women in Lebanon will continue to experience discrimination and violence.

We urge the Lebanese Government to:

- a) Take all necessary legislative measures to impose appropriate criminal penalties for violence, incitement to violence and related harassment, based on sexual orientation or gender identity, in all spheres of life, including the family and the state agencies;
- b) Criminalize marital rape, decriminalize seeking and providing abortion, ensure that contraceptive information and services are accessible for all women and adolescents, and implement the Reproductive Health Education and Gender curriculum in all schools.
- c) Address this Council on the specific measures it will take to address the issues of women's human rights and the human rights of LGBTI people in Lebanon in keeping with its International human rights obligations.
- d) Take necessary measures to allow LGBTI and women's rights NGOs to register, and consult and collaborate with them to facilitate their meaningful participation in the policy making process.