

Dear representatives of the UN Missions in Geneva,

This statement is based on the joint submission prepared by the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) along with Lebanon Support, Housing and Land Rights Network and Lebanese Observatory for Workers and Employees Rights that focuses on economic and social rights situation in Lebanon.

Lebanon's third-cycle Universal Periodic Review takes place at a time when the country is caught in multifaceted systemic and structural crisis and should be the occasion to address their root causes.

The statement should be taken as a reminder of the ongoing economic and social rights violations inherent in the structurally flawed economic and political system of sectarianism and corruption embraced by decades of successive governments since Lebanon's independence.

The failure of Lebanon in its obligations to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of every person living on the Lebanese territory became apparent since October 2019 revolution and August 4 2020 Beirut explosion and even more complex with the global COVID-19 pandemic than what we reported in our submission:

- **More than 55% of the population live in poverty,¹**
- **55% of all workers in Lebanon were informally employed in 2018–19, prior to the COVID-19 crisis, with a 55.4% informality rate is among women and 54.8 per cent among men²**
- **Unemployment estimates is over 50%³, whereas unemployment among women in Lebanon has risen from 14.3% before the crisis to the present rate of 26%⁴**
- **Inflation rates reached unprecedented levels, accompanied by the collapse of the national currency, which lost 80% of its value.**
- **The total number of damaged buildings amounting to 39 to 40 thousand and the fact that close to 200 thousand citizens lost their homes exacerbates the right to adequate housing, while Lebanese authorities have long refrained from developing and implementing a housing policy based on the principles of social responsibility**

¹ <https://www.unescwa.org/news/Lebanon-poverty-2020#:~:text=ESCWA%20warns%3A%20more%20than%20half%20of%20Lebanon's%20population%20trapped%20in%20poverty,-19&text=Estimates%20reveal%20that%20more%20than,year's%20rate%20which%20was%2028%25.>

² https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_754666.pdf

³ <https://www.euromesco.net/publication/the-socioeconomic-impact-of-covid-19-on-lebanon-a-crisis-within-crises/>

⁴ <https://arabstates.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/10/press-release-women-unemployment-in-lebanon-increases-due-to-compounded-crises>



In short, despite its human rights obligations being state party to international human rights treaties; and despite over hundreds of recommendations accepted in the first two UPR cycles and voluntary commitments made under Agenda 2030 the state has failed to ensure development, and to respond effectively to Lebanese people demands for transition from a rentier economy to a productive economy.

Short term and necessary economic, financial, and monetary reforms should be carried by an independent government that manages the political transition. These reforms should ensure a shift in the development paradigm reflected within a nationally owned rights-based sustainable development strategy adopted by Lebanon.

Delivered by Mrs. Zahra Bazzi
ANND Program Director
www.annd.org