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**Legislative Decree No. (24) of 2002 ratifying the Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organisation**

We, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Having reviewed the Constitution;

The Charter of the League of Arab States;

And the Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organisation approved by the Decision of the Council of the League of Arab States No. (6126) in its ordinary session No. (116) on 10/9/2001;

Upon the submission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

And after the approval of the Council of Ministers;

Hereby Decree the following Law:

Article One

The Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organisation approved by the Decision of the Council of the League of Arab States No. (6126) in its ordinary session No. (116) on 10/9/2002 has been ratified.

Article Two

The Ministers -each within his jurisdiction- shall implement this Law, and it shall come into force from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

**King of the Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa**

**Prime Minister**

**Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa**

**Minister of Foreign Affairs**

**Mohammad bin Mubarak Al Khalifa**

Issued at Riffa Palace:

On: 5 Jumada al-Akhir 1423 A.H. Corresponding to: 14 August 2002

**The Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organisation**

Minutes of the Kingdom of Bahrain’s Signature on the Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organisation

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On Sunday, the nineteenth of Rabi' al-Akhir 1423 A.H. corresponding to the thirtieth of June 2002.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has signed, at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States in Cairo the "Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organization" approved by the Economic and Social Council pursuant to its Decision No. 1435 issued on 13/2/2002 at its sixty-ninth ordinary session.

Based on the authorization issued by His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Convention was signed by His Excellency Ambassador Ibrahim Ali Al-Majed, Permanent Representative to the League of Arab States.

In witness whereof, this minutes has been drafted in two original copies, one of which was delivered to His Excellency, and the other was deposited with the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States.

**His Excellency Ambassador / Ibrahim Ali Al-Majed                                        Dr. Sayed Abdul Hakim**

**Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Bahrain                           Deputy Head of the General Directorate of Legal Affairs at the League of Arab States**

**Statement of Signature and Ratification of the Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organisation**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **State** | **Signature date** | **Date of deposit of the ratification document** |
| Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  | 5/5/2002  |  |
| United Arab Emirates  | 24/4/2002  |  |
| Kingdom of Bahrain  | 30/6/2002  |  |
| Republic of Tunisia  | 2/5/2002  |  |
| People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  |  |  |
| Republic of Djibouti  |  |  |
| Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  |  |  |
| Republic of the Sudan  | 25/6/2002  |  |
| Syrian Arab Republic  |  |  |
| Democratic Republic of Somalia  | 19/6/2002  |  |
| Republic of Iraq  |  |  |
| Sultanate of Oman |   |  |
| State of Palestine  | 30/5/2002  |  |
| State of Qatar  |  |  |
| United Republic of Comoros  | 6/6/2002  |  |
| State of Kuwait  |  |  |
| Republic of Lebanon  | 24/6/2002  |  |
| Libyan Arab Republic  |  |  |
| Arab Republic of Egypt  | 28/4/2002  | 23/6/2002  |
| Kingdom of Morocco  |  |  |
| Republic of Mauritania  |  |  |
| Republic of Yemen  |  |  |

**The Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organisation**

Pursuant to the Cairo Declaration issued by the Conference of the first Arab Women’s Summit held in November 2000, and in response to the invitation of the Egyptian First Lady Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, co-organized by the National Council for Women in Egypt, Hariri Foundation in Lebanon and the League of Arab States, and with the participation of nine Arab States, the governments of the Member States of the League of Arab States that are signatories to this Convention:

Recognizing the status of women as creators and educators of generations, and for the important role they play in the framework of the family as the basic cell of Arab society, and desiring to enhance cooperation among these States in the field of developing and upgrading the status of Arab women;

Convinced that strengthening the status of Arab women is a fundamental pillar and an essential element for achieving the economic, social and human development of the Arab States and their national objectives;

Emphasizing the importance of coordination between the efforts, policies and plans of the Arab States aimed at developing the status of Arab women and enhancing their contributions, and in order to achieve cooperation and joint Arab action in this important field within the framework of the League of Arab States;

In line with the provisions of the Charter of the League of Arab States to enhance cooperation between Member States in all fields;

And upon the approval of the Council of the League of Arab States regarding the establishment of the Arab Women Organization by virtues of its Decision No. (6126) of its ordinary session (116) held on 10/9/2001, and the approval of the Economic and Social Council by virtue of its Decision No. (1426) on 12/9/2001;

The undersigned Member States of the League of Arab States, hereby have agreed on the following provisions:

**Part One**

**Definitions**

**Article (1)**

The following expressions shall have the meanings assigned to them below:

**Organization:**The Arab Women Organization.

**Conference:**The summit conference of the Member States of the Organization, which is its supreme authority, and is held at the summit level on a regular basis every two years during the meeting of the Supreme Council of the Organization, and it shall be responsible for coordinating the high policies related to women in the Arab States.

**Supreme Council:**The Council of the Member States of the Organization, which includes all Arab First Ladies or their representatives.

**Supreme Council:**The Executive Council of the Organization, which is the body including representatives of Member States who specialize in women's affairs.

**General Directorate:**The Technical Secretariat of the Arab Women Organization.

**General Secretariat:**General Secretariat of the League of Arab States.

**League:**The League of Arab States.

Part Two

Establishment and Headquarters of the Organization

Article (2)

Within the framework of the League of Arab States, an intergovernmental organization shall be established with a legal entity and financial and administrative independence called the "Arab Women's Organization" .

Article (3)

The headquarters of the Organization shall be the State of the headquarters of the League and it shall be permitted to establish branch offices in the Arab Member States, and specialized centres in other States when necessary.

**Part Three**

Membership

Article (4)

1- Membership in the Organization shall be for the Member States of the League.

2- The Organization shall have the right to agree to accept membership as an observer of Arab regional and international intergovernmental organizations based on consensus and in accordance with the criteria approved by the Organization.

3- The Organization shall be able, by consensus, to invite non-member States or intergovernmental Arab, regional and international organizations relevant to its work to attend its meetings as observers.

**Part Four**

Objectives of the Organization

Article (5)

The Organization aims to contribute to strengthening joint Arab collaboration and coordination in developing the status of women and their empowerment ... In particular:

1- Achieving solidarity of Arab women as a cornerstone for Arab solidarity.

2- Coordinating common Arab stands regarding Arab and international public affairs and when dealing with Arab women issues in regional and international organizations.

3- Raising awareness regarding economic, social, cultural and legal issues pertaining to Arab women.

4- Fostering joint cooperation and exchange of experience to enhance the status of women.

5- According women issues priority in developmental policies and plans of comprehensive development.

6- Developing women potential and building their capacities as human beings and citizens to play an effective role in societal institutions, in the labour market, in all fields of work and in decision making.

7- Enhancing essential health and education services for women.

Article (6)

Means and Measures

The Organization shall take the means and measures to achieve its objectives and carry out the activities necessary to carry out its duties ... In particular:

1- Collecting and disseminating data regarding the status of Arab women.

2- Following up various local and national efforts pertaining to women issues.

3- Following up on various developments taking place in international gatherings in their field of competence.

4- Setting integrated and model programmes to alleviate Arab women in all fields.

5- Networking and cooperating with relevant Arab and international intergovernmental and non-governmental, organizations.

6- Holding seminars and workshops to coordinate joint Arab action regarding women issues.

7- Conducting research on women and their role in society.

Bodies of the Organization

Article (7)

The Organization shall consist of the Conference (Summit), the Supreme Council of the Organization, the Executive Council of the Organization and the General Directorate.

Supreme Council

Article (8)

The Supreme Council of the Organization shall be composed of all Arab First Ladies or their representatives, and shall be competent to adopt general policies for the work of the Organization and follow up and monitor their implementation.

- Each member of the Council shall have one vote. The chairmanship of the Council shall alternate in accordance with the alphabetical order in force at the League, and the term of the chairmanship shall be two years.

- The Supreme Council shall hold a meeting in an ordinary session once every two years during the Arab Women's Summit, where its presidency shall be transferred to the following States, and the meeting shall be held at the headquarters of the Organization - or in one of the Arab States that offer to host.

- It shall be permissible for the Supreme Council of the Organization to hold exceptional extraordinary sessions at the request of one-third of the Member States.

- Two-thirds of the members of the Organization shall constitute a quorum for the meetings of the Supreme Council. Decisions shall be taken by consensus or by a two-thirds majority of the members present, in accordance with the rules of procedure.

- It shall be permissible for the Supreme Council to seek the assistance of a number of counsellors from the disciplines it deems necessary.

Executive Council of the Organization

Article (9)

The Executive Council of the Organization shall be composed of representatives of Member States, provided that the representation of States shall be from those concerned with women's affairs or the like, and each State shall have one vote.

The chairmanship of the Executive Council shall alternate in accordance with the alphabetical order in force at the League, and the chairmanship shall be for a period of one year.

The Executive Council shall meet in and ordinary session once a year.

It shall be permissible for the Council to hold extraordinary sessions at the request of at least one-third of the Member States.

Two-thirds of the members of the Organization shall constitute a quorum for meetings of the Council and decisions shall be taken by consensus or by a two-thirds majority of the members present, as provided in the rules of procedure.

Competences of the Executive Council of the Organization

Article (10)

The Executive Council of the Organization shall be competent to propose the general policy lines followed by the Organization and to submit recommendations thereon for approval by the Supreme Council.

The Executive Council shall follow up the implementation of the determinants of the general policy of the Organization, coordinate its activities, monitor its financial and administrative affairs and report thereon to the Supreme Council.

It shall propose the decisions and procedures it deems necessary to achieve the purposes of the Organization in accordance with Articles (4) and (5) of this Convention for approval by the Supreme Council ... In particular:

1. Establishing financial and administrative regulations and rules of procedure that ensure the performance of its stipulated mission.

2. Proposing plans, policies, programmes and activities of the Organization.

3. Proposing the formation of permanent and temporary committees.

4. Reviewing the reports of the Director General.

5. Reviewing the closing accounts and annual budget of the Organization.

6. Coordinating cooperation between the Organization, Member States and Arab, regional and international organizations.

7. Reviewing subsidies and donations to consider their approval by the Supreme Council.

General Directorate

Article (11)

The General Directorate shall consist of the Director General of the Organization, assisted by a number of technical and administrative staff.

When appointing the cleaners, it shall be taken into account that the selection shall be based on the criteria of geographical distribution among the Arab States and the required efficiency.

Director General

Article (12)

The General Directorate shall be headed by the Director General, who shall be selected by the Executive Council of the Organization from among the nominees of the Member States and whose appointment shall be approved by the Council.

The appointment of the Director General shall be for a period of four years, renewable once, and he shall be responsible for the work of the General Directorate before the Executive Council.

The Director General or his representative shall manage the work of the Organization and implement its decisions, and shall carry out the tasks entrusted to him by the Executive Council, in particular:

1. Proposing the names of employees and experts in accordance with the regulations set by the Executive Council to approve their appointment in accordance with the regulations and standards set by the Executive Council in the description of the duties of the employees of the General Directorate and contracting in the name of the Organization.

2. Submitting an annual report to the Executive Council on the work of the Directorate and such other reports as it deems necessary.

**3.** Preparing the drafts of the annual program of the Organization and presenting them to the Executive Council and then to the Supreme Council.

4. Preparing the draft annual budget and submitting the closing account report to the Executive Council and then to the Supreme Council.

5. Presenting the research and reports he is mandated to prepare to the Executive Council.

Part Six

Budget and Resources of the Organisation

Article (13)

The Organization shall have an independent budget approved by the Executive Council and accredited by the Supreme Council, and subject to review by the Supreme Authority for Public Control of the League Council.

Article (14)

The resources of the Organization shall be composed of:

1. Shares of the Member States in accordance with the scale of contributions in force in the budget of the League.

2. Subsidies, donations and voluntary contributions recommended by the Executive Council and approved by the Supreme Council, whether from individuals or bodies.

Part Seven

The Organization's Relationship with the League of Arab State and Other International Organizations

Article (15)

The Organization shall present its annual programme to the Economic and Social Council of the League and shall provide advice in respects falling within its competence.

Article (16)

The Organization shall abide by the rules for coordination between the institutions of joint Arab action and for cooperation in the implementation of its programmes and activities with the Economic and Social Council, the Council of the League of Arab States and the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs.

Article (17)

The Organization shall cooperate with Arab, regional and international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with women's issues, consistent with the objectives of the Organization and with the Charter of the League and, in particular, with the relevant bodies of the League and the United Nations.

Part Eight

General Provisions

Article (18)

The State of the headquarters shall provide the necessary facilities for the headquarters of the Organization, and the Member States that host the branch offices and specialized centres shall also provide the necessary facilities for them.

Article (19)

The Organization shall have the privileges and immunities established under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the League, in accordance with a convention between the Organization and the State of the headquarters in this regard.

Article (20)

It shall be permissible to amend the Convention establishing the Organization on the basis of a request signed by at least five Member States, and after the recommendation of the Executive Council and its approval by the Supreme Council by a two-thirds majority of the members in each of them. The amendment shall not be decided on except in the next session of the Executive Council. The amendment shall only be after being ratified by at least two-thirds of the members in accordance with the constitutional procedures of each State.

Article (21)

The Convention shall enter into force after the lapse of 30 days from the date of deposit of the ratification documents by seven of the signatory States. The ratification documents or accession shall be deposited with the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, which shall inform all other States of each deposit and its date.

The State holding the presidency of the Arab Women's Summit shall call for the convening of the first meeting of the Executive Council within one month of the entry into force of the Convention.

Article (22)

If a Member State deems it necessary to withdraw from the Organization, it shall address an official letter to the Executive Council of the Organization, which shall take measures to inform it. The withdrawal shall not be effective until one year from the date of its notification to the Supreme Council.

In witness whereof, the authorised representatives whose names appear after this Convention have duly affixed their signatures on behalf of their governments.

The Convention was drafted in the Arabic language in Cairo on the first of Dhu al-Hijjah 1422 A.H. corresponding to 14/2/2002 by virtue of the Decision of the Economic and Social Council No. 1435 د.ع (69), of one original kept with the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and a true copy of which shall be delivered to each of the contracting parties.

**General Directorate of Legal Affairs**

**Conventions Management**

**Arab States Signatory to the Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organisation**

**and Names and Signatures of its Representatives**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **State** | **name of the State representative** | **Signature** |
| Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  |  |  |
| United Arab Emirates  |  |  |
| Kingdom of Bahrain  |  |  |
| Republic of Tunisia  |  |  |
| People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  |  |  |
| Republic of Djibouti  |  |  |
| Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  |  |  |
| Republic of the Sudan  |  |  |
| Syrian Arab Republic  |  |  |
| Democratic Republic of Somalia  |  |  |
| Republic of Iraq  |  |  |
| Sultanate of Oman  |  |  |
| State of Palestine  |  |  |
| State of Qatar  |  |  |
| United Islamic Republic of Comoros  |  |  |
| State of Kuwait  |  |  |
| Republic of Lebanon  |  |  |
| Libyan Arab Republic  |  |  |
| Arab Republic of Egypt  |  |  |
| Kingdom of Morocco  |  |  |
| Republic of Mauritania  |  |  |
| Republic of Yemen  |  |  |

**The Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organisation**

The Council of the League at the ministerial level,

Having reviewed:

The Memorandum of the General Secretariat;

The recommendation of the Standing Committee of Legal Affairs at its meeting on (10-11/2/2002);

The Economic and Social Council Decision No. 1435 - د.ع 69 - on 13/2/2002;

And the recommendation of the Committee of Legal Affairs;

**Decides**

Taking note of the "Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organization" . (ق: No. 6193 د.ع (117 - ج3 - 10/3/2002)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia does not approve the decision of the Economic and Social Council as it violates the rules and procedures of the work of the Council. The Kingdom believes that the proposal to establish the Arab Women Organization shall be presented to the competent authorities and councils and then the matter shall be submitted to the Economic and Social Council for consideration.

Second:

1) Approving the draft Convention Establishing the Arab Women Organization presented by the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States. (Attachment No. 7)

2) Requesting the Organization to address duplication and reporting back to a subsequent session of the Council. (ق 1435 ـ د . ع 96 ـ 13/2/2002)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia does not approve the decision as it violates the rules and procedures of the work of the Council. The Kingdom believes that the proposal to establish the Arab Women Organization shall be presented to the competent authorities and councils and then the issue shall be submitted to the Economic and Social Council for consideration.

- The State of Qatar considers that the two draft conventions of the Arab Women Organization and the Information Technology Organization should have been presented to the subsequent September session for discussion, to let the State of Qatar to take its legislative measures and study the two draft conventions mentioned in all financial, administrative and social aspects and the League Council.

- The State of Kuwait has reservations on the two decisions, namely (1) the establishment of the Arab Women Organization, and (2) the establishment of the Arab Information and Communication Technology Organization at this session, as it did not pass through the legal procedures followed in the General Secretariat, and the rules for the establishment of organizations with the Economic and Social Council as approved in the Council. It has not been studied by States and has not yet been submitted to them, despite the belief of the State of Kuwait in the importance of the role played by women in all fields, and the support provided by the State of Kuwait to activate Arab women's work, and also notes the importance of information and communication technology in our time, and considers that the legal and statutory procedures shall be followed, provided that the drafts shall be sent to the Member States for consideration in the session of September 2002 after the States have made their observations on the two drafts.