Committee : UN Women.

Country :Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Agenda Item(s) : Empowerment of Women

Saudi Arabia, officially the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), is a country in West Asia and Middle East. Capital of Saudi Arabia is Riyadh, and the official language is Arabic. It says on the flag that God is one and Muhammad is the servant and messenger of God. The currency is Saudi Arabian Rial. Over the 2014 ethnic groups are 90% Arab, 10% Afro-Arab. Official religion is Islam. Others are Christianity, Hinduism,Buddhism. Population is 32,175,224. Girls education in Saudi Arabia was not formally addressed by the government until 1959. Public education - from primary education through college - is open to every Saudi citizen. Education is the second largest sector of government spending in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia spends 8.8% of its gross domestic product on education, which is nearly double the global average of 4.6%. Islamic studies are part of the education system alongside scientific and social studies that vary from educational institutions to another.

In the public sector, the Saudi government has opened up jobs targeted at women, such as legal researchers at the Ministry of Justice and positions at the airports and land-border crossings. Saudi Arabia has also appointed its first ever female ambassador, who will serve as the kingdom’s ambassador to the US. Last year, the country ended the world’s only ban on women drivers, taxis or male relatives to travel around, including to work. The economic impact behind these changes are profound, as they undoubtedly remove major obstacles for Saudi women to join the labour market and provide a substantial increase in their spending power, offering the potential to create growth in the Saudi consumer and private sector. Besides the changing economic role of women, Saudi Arabia is also moving forward with its social modernisation and changing its decades-long social norms. In an interview with CBS television last March, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman commented that head scarf and abaya- a loose fitting, full length robe, are not mandatory for Saudi women, as long as their attire is decent and respectful. Women in Saudi Arabia had for decades been required to wear abaya (usually in black) and cover their hair and faces in public, a dress code strictly enforced by religious police. The kingdom is also stepping up to ease rules on gender segregation. For the first time, Saudi women are now allowed to enter certain stadiums unaccompanied and attend sports events. Although they are required to be seated in the family section, which is separated from the male-only crowd, this marks another incremental step towards greater women’s rights. At the same time, the country is hosting more and more gender-mixing cultural and entertainment events, such as the music concert at the FIA Formula E Championship and the first mixed-gender play- Take Away.

The Kingdom has made quantum leaps in terms of empowering women and increasing their economic participation in the labor market. The reform efforts and legislation that have taken place in recent years in accordance with the Kingdom’s Vision 2030 have been reflected in the goals of women’s empowerment, as the economic participation rate for Saudi females from 15 years and over reached 33.5% by the end of 2020, while The percentage of women's participation in the labor market doubled from 17% to 31.8%, exceeding the 2030 vision target to reach 30%, and the percentage of women in middle and senior management positions reached 30% in the public and private sectors during the past year 2020. The indicators also showed an increase in the percentage of Saudi women in the civil service to 41.02% by the end of 2020. When we look at the world in general, women in many states have more rights than in our country… But we will liberate women by recognizing their rights in our country. We will work for a more beautiful world with strong and happy women all over the world, where women have equal rights with men.

Sources:

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