



SYRIA

Agenda: Empowering Women Through Entrepreneurship

Committee: United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

A UNICEF report, issued in March 2013, indicates that one out of every five schools in Syria has been destroyed, damaged, or turned into shelters for displaced families. The Syrian Network for Human Rights documented different damages to 3873 schools, including 450 schools that were fully destroyed. The use of explosive weapons in populated areas has limited girls' access to education due to the great security threats they inflict; in addition, the continuation of this form of targeting has fully deprived girls of education. The lack of access to education may also lead to other abuses including early marriage, whereby a center belonging to Women Now for Development has monitored many such cases in northern Syria. For example, a 15-year-old girl dropped out of school because of the shelling and later on, her father forced her to marry, only to be divorced six months later. As documented by the Syrian Network for Human Rights, 1000 schools were turned into detention and torture centers, and video documented the Syrian Government forces' violation in the Sabeel district school in the city of Hama

In Syria, women had access to higher levels of the political, military and economic arenas. Syrian women had obtained the right to

vote early in the last century. Today, women in Syria enjoyed equality with men, as guaranteed in the country's Constitution. Among other things, a strategy for reproductive health had been enacted, while a project to provide more economic autonomy for women was being implemented by the Social Ministry, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Efforts were also being made to reduce the poverty of rural families.

Stressing that Syria hoped to remove all impediments to women's advancement in all areas around the world, she said the Government had been working in the Syrian occupied territories in the Golan, where it was working to put an end to the suffering of civilian Syrian inhabitants, including Syrian women. She renewed the call for the Secretary-General to include in his reports references to that terrible situation, as well as the challenges faced by Syrian women in the occupied Syrian Golan. That request had been made on numerous occasions, yet those women continued to suffer, as victims of serious crimes who were forced to live far from their families. Syria urged a common overall approach to tackling the obstacles facing women living under the yoke of foreign occupation.

The United Nations logo, featuring a world map surrounded by olive branches, is centered in the background of the text.