

The Democracy  
and  
Workers' Rights  
Center in  
Palestine



For immediate release  
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**Festival on the occasion of International Women's Day organized by the Democracy and Workers' Rights Center in Khuza'a with EU support highlights women's experiences in realizing their right to work**

**Gaza, 15/03/2021** – On March 13, 2021, the Democracy and Workers' Rights Center organized a festival on the occasion of Women's International Day, with the participation of the Minister of Entrepreneurship and Empowerment, Engineer Usama Al Sa'dawi. The festival is part of an awareness campaign about women's right to work under the project "Gender Equality in the Economic Sphere: Our Right, Our Priority", implemented by the Democracy and Workers' Rights Center in Palestine (DWRC), in partnership with the Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development (PWWSD), COSPE, and EducAid, and funded by the European Union.

The festival aimed to strengthen awareness of women's right to work and highlight the challenges they face in seeking a decent job. The festival was implemented in partnership with the municipality of Khuza'a and a number of CSOs and cooperatives, including Al-Mutahdeen Cultural and Social Society, Nibras Association for Community Development, the Woman's Department at the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions in Gaza, Zeina Cooperative Association, Rafah Agricultural Cooperative Association, Olive Roots Association for Relief and Development, Bisan Association, and the Kindergarten and Day Care Workers' Union.

The festival included the opening of a "Women Entrepreneurs' Exhibition" by the Minister of Entrepreneurship and Empowerment and the President of Khuza'a Municipality, in which Zeina Cooperative Society, the Olive Roots Association, woman's department at the General Federation of Palestinian Workers in Gaza, and a number of women with disabilities presented their individual projects. During the festival, a number of entertainment activities took place as well, and the painter Ruba Dukhan presented a drawing on the occasion of International Women's Day.

In addition, several women had the opportunity to share their successful experiences at work especially women with disabilities. Sawsan Al-Khalili, the owner of a handicraft project said: "I was able to challenge my disability through active participation in community and sports activities, and I was keen to develop my own capabilities, which qualified me to receive many certificates of appreciation from official and popular institutions and many international and local awards in many fields." She added "I also took part in establishing the Knights Palestine Club for Women with Disabilities, the first sports club of its kind in Palestine, in addition to establishing my own project in handicrafts."

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*A representative of the Democracy and Workers' Rights Center, Mrs. Mona Rostom opened the festival, addressing women's rights in the context of high unemployment rates among male and female graduates. She added that the private and public sectors must fulfill their responsibilities in elaborating policies and programs to reduce unemployment. She also called for the necessity to provide job opportunities for women through self-employment, or through improving their access to decent job opportunities.*

*In his speech, the Minister of Entrepreneurship and Empowerment, Mr. Usama Al Sa'dawi, affirmed that the ministry is working to support entrepreneurial projects, and that women need support to enable them to participate in the labor market, especially considering that they have proven their success in the labor market with regard to managing small projects and women's cooperatives.*

*Mr. Shehta Abu Rock, the president of Khuza'a Municipality, spoke about the municipality's role in supporting women at work by allocating part of the municipality's support to entrepreneurial women. He noted that the municipality is ready to support and empower women in any entrepreneurial projects they may have. He also thanked the efforts undertaken in targeting marginalized areas such as Khuza'a, which suffered a lot of damage during the wars.*

*Adv. Ali Al Jirjawi, DWRC's lawyer, presented a short seminar on the right to work, in which he answered participants' questions. At the end of the festival, women raised slogans about the right to work, and a cultural and human rights competition was organized to improve women's knowledge about the right to work.*

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