

# OVERCOMING RESTRICTIONS ON WHRDS IN THE MENA REGION



## 18. 06. 2015

10:00 TO 11:30 AM, PALAIS DES NATIONS, ROOM XXII

The integral work of human rights defenders (HRDs) has been firmly recognized within the discourse of the international human rights community. However, despite the growing movement to ensure greater codification and integration of the active participation of HRDs in **facilitating and safeguarding international and national human rights law**, HRDs continue to face grave and unwarranted persecution for pursuing their vital work. Women human rights defenders (WHRDs), operating within entrenched patriarchal ideologies and systems, are not only subjected to the routine persecution endured by their male colleagues, but also face targeted violence, discrimination and restrictions as a result of their gender.

The event will provide a unique opportunity to reflect on the key role that WHRDs play in the implementation of human rights in the Middle East and North Africa and effective strategies to create intra-state and international solidarity to address targeted restrictions on WHRDs. The panel will also provide a venue to discuss concrete measures that states need to take at the national level to ensure effective protection for WHRDs and ensure their right to freedom of expression, association, and assembly.

### SPEAKERS

- Enma Aouij, *Chair of the Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and Practice*
- Maryam Al- Khawaja, *Co-Director, Gulf Center for Human Rights*
- Sara Brandt, *International Advocacy Advisor, Center for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance (CEWLA)*
- Elsa Saade, *Gulf Center for Human Rights, Saudi Arabia*

### MODERATOR

- Phil Lynch, *Executive Director, ISHR*

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