

MEMORENDIUM

submitted by the National committee for the Follow upon Women's issues \
LEBANON

From 1995 till 2008

**18 000 Lebanese women are married to non Lebanese and
80 thousands¹ children, men and women were affected by the current
nationality law².**

Although, the Lebanese Constitution does not include any discriminatory articles against women. In fact, it consolidates the equality of all Lebanese citizens before the law without discrimination. In addition Lebanon has ratified the CEDAW convention in 1996 but it has made reservations on: Article 9, 16 and 29 and has not yet ratified the optional protocol.

Despite this, we are still facing several challenges and major gaps in legislations. The **Lebanese Nationality law (decree n 15 dated on 1925) still prohibits Lebanese women who are married to foreign nationals from granting their Lebanese nationality to their husbands and children.** This prohibition is held firmly in place by the State reservation on Article (2) of paragraph 9 of the CEDAW Convention. The gender discrimination here is blatant: a foreign woman married to a Lebanese man gains Lebanese nationality one year after the marriage is registered. Thus, **Lebanese women are deprived of their basic rights as citizens.** The nationality law **is negatively affecting not only Lebanese women but their families as well.** Some of the problems of the current nationality laws in families are : health and social services, psychological problems, inheritance and the right to work . Such discriminatory laws send the message that women do not enjoy a full citizenship.

The Discrimination against women in the current Lebanese Nationality Law can be observed in the following points:

- A Lebanese mother may not grant her nationality to her children and the

¹18 000 women + 18000 Men= 36 000 \ 18 000* 2.4(fertility rate) = 44.400- \ 36 000 + 44.400= 76.400 almost 80 000 Child, women and men. It s important to note that the study mentioned below covered only the period 1995-2008 or 14 years and the final number is approximate and does not reflect the real size of the problem.

² Charafeddine, F. (2010). Predicament of the Lebanese women married to non Lebanese, National Committee for the Follow-up on Women's Issues and UNDP, Lebanon.

foreign husband

- Discrimination between a mother of a Lebanese nationality and a foreign mother who acquired the Lebanese nationality because she can grant her acquired Lebanese nationality to her foreigner children

It is time to reform the current Lebanese nationality law

It is time to reiterate women's right to equality

Lebanese women should have equal to men the right to grant their nationality to their spouses and children.

This is their right and it must be acquired.

Therefore,

We the Lebanese civil society, call on the Lebanese government to :

- **Reform the legislative decree No. 15 of January 19, 1925 (Nationality Law) towards equality between men and women to be in harmony with spirit of the CEDAW convention, without any discrimination or injustice.**
- **Lift the reservations made on CEDAW convention, mainly (Article 9 (2) – Nationality**
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