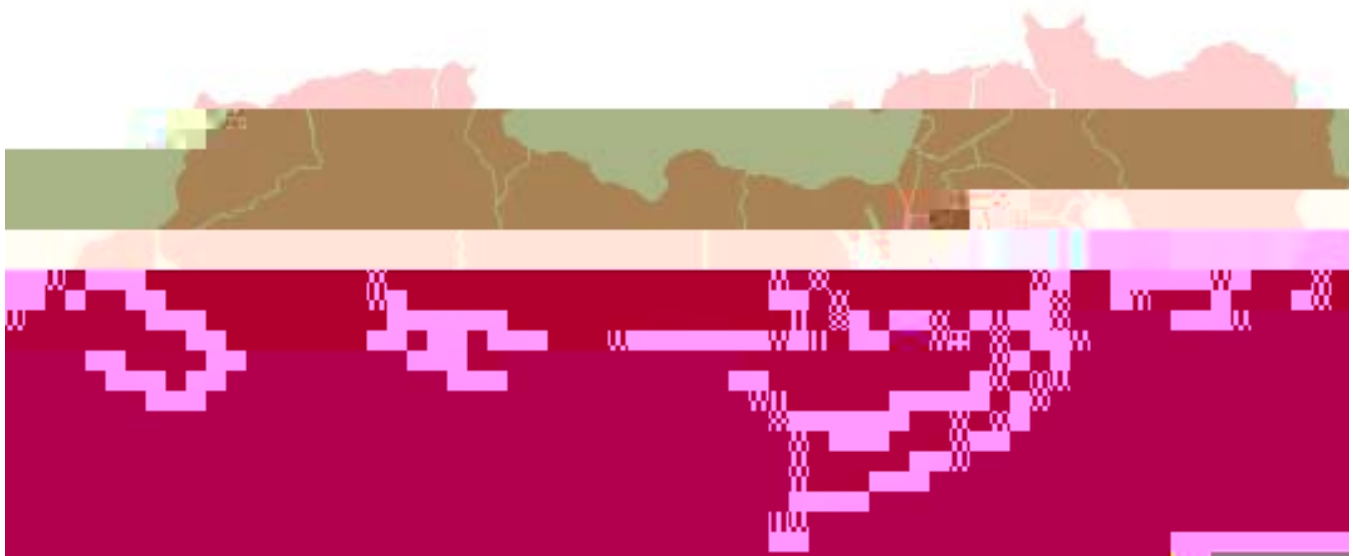


# **MENA Women's News Brief**

**January 12, 2014 – January 26, 2015**

**January 21: (Op-Ed) When Women Become Terrorists by Jayne Huckerby**

“While much will be made in the coming months of France’s intelligence failures, the West’s inability to appreciate the role that women play in terror should come under the highest scrutiny. Take the role of women in the Islamic State group, also known as ISIS or ISIL. While the group oppresses many women,



### **January 26: Egypt court convicts doctor of female genital mutilation**

“An Egyptian appeals court on Monday, January 26 convicted a doctor of manslaughter and performing female genital mutilation that led to the death of a 13-year-old girl, sentencing him to two years and three months in prison in the country’s first case that came to trial over the widespread practice, defense lawyers said. The doctor, Raslan Fadl, was initially acquitted of the 2013 death of Sohair el-Batea in a village in the Nile Delta province of Dakahliya. He was not present in court Monday, January 26 and his whereabouts were unknown. The verdict was ‘a triumph for women,’ said lawyer Reda el-Danbouki, who represented the deceased. Egypt has one of the highest rates of female genital mutilation in the world and criminalized the practice in 2008, but it remains widespread.” ([Washington Post](#))

## **Iran**

### **January 22: Women, children are main victims of sanctions: Iranian VP**

“The Iranian vice president for women and family affairs says women and children are the main victims of extremism, violence, and unfair sanctions. Shahindokht Molaverdi made the remarks during a meeting with Finnish Ambassador to Tehran Harri Kamarainen, according to ISNA. Molaverdi noted that despite the fact that Iran has made considerable progresses in achieving women’s rights, like other countries women in Iran are still facing various challenges. She also stated that all countries should join hands in a bid to constrain extremism and violence, which have become global phenomena.” ([Tehran Times](#))

### **January 23: Iranian women stand united in protest and hope at Asian Cup**

“Kian (not her real name) and several other activists have been working quietly on protest banners for the past few months, which they smuggled in and unveiled at the quarter-final in Canberra. On the 65th minute mark, a banner carrying the face of Ghoncheh Ghavami was briefly unveiled in the Gregan-Larkham Stand. Ghavami is a young British-Iranian woman who was placed in prison for trying to attend a volleyball match in 2014. A second banner was also planned to be unfurled inside the stadium, but in the excitement Kian simply couldn’t find the time. In English, it read ‘Thanks for censoring us!’ and in Farsi below ‘Don’t be tired!’” ([The Guardian](#))

## **Iraq**

### **January 14: Female Yazidi captives forced to give blood to wounded Islamist fighters: survivor**

“Female Yazidi captives are being forced to donate blood to wounded Islamic State (IS) fighters, according to a pregnant teenager who escaped after being seized and held captive by IS militants. The 19-year-old, identified as Hamshe, said she and her baby were held for 28 days by IS militants, who she believes killed her husband, brother-in-law and father-in-law.” ([Reuters](#))

### **January 20: UN: ISIS Executing “Educated Women” in Iraq**

“The United Nations on Tuesday, January 20 decried numerous executions of civilians in Iraq by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group, warning that educated women appeared to be especially at risk. The jihadist group is showing a ‘monstrous disregard for human life’ in the areas it controls in Iraq, the UN human rights office said. The group, which controls large swathes of territory in Iraq and in neighboring war-ravaged Syria, last week published pictures of the ‘crucifixions’ of two men accused of being bandits, and of a woman being stoned to death, allegedly for adultery. Numerous other women have also reportedly been executed recently in ISIS-controlled areas, including Mosul, UN spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani told reporters. She said ‘educated, professional women, particularly

women who have run as candidates in elections for publ





### **January 14: Syria militants execute woman for 'adultery': monitor**

“Al-Qaeda-linked militants have publicly executed a woman accused of adultery in northwestern Syria, a monitoring group said Wednesday, January 14. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said that in total 14 people had been executed for alleged adultery or homosexuality in the war-torn country since July, half of them women. It released a video showing fighters from Al-Nusra Front, Al-Qaeda's Syrian affiliate, tying up a woman and shooting her in a square in the town of Maaret Masirin in the province of Idlib. A crowd of civilians and fighters are seen watching, as a jihadist accuses the woman of ‘corrupting the earth, and adultery.’” ([AFP via France24](#))

### **January 16: Syrian women and children struggle in Lebanon**

“According to the International Rescue Committee (IRC), a global humanitarian aid organisation, the voices of female refugees have been stifled due to an increasing burden of meeting basic needs. In a recent report drawing on more than 70,000 interviews with female refugees, the IRC found a trend of ‘sexual exploitation and harassment, domestic violence, and early and forced marriage.’ Last year, the UN refugee agency found that more than 145,000 Syrian refugee women were ‘fighting for survival’ and caught in a spiral of poverty, isolation and fear; by the start of this year, local organisations projected that number to surpass 200,000 in Lebanon alone.” ([Al Jazeera](#))

## **Tunisia**

### **January 12: Interview with Tunisia's first female presidential candidate**

“As the fourth anniversary of the Tunisian revolution on 14 January nears, the name of Tunisia’s first female presidential candidate, Kalthoum Kannou, is circulating after she became only the second woman to run for the post in the Maghreb. Kalthoum Kannou, a judge, came 11th out of a total of 27 candidates in the first round of the presidential elections in late November. Veteran politician Beji Caid Essebsi went on to win, but Kannou secured around 18,000 votes in Tunisia, a country that prides itself on being a leader on women’s rights issues in the Arab world. Kanou, who has always said that without the revolution she would not have been able to run, talked to Ahram Online about her experience.” ([Ahram Online](#))

### **January 16: (Op-Ed) Women’s rights in Tunisia: promising future or religio-political game?**

“Women in Tunisia have long enjoyed rights that are very clear on paper. In practice, however, the government’s willingness to enforce these rights seems to depend on the religio-political game of the day.” ([Open Democracy](#))


### **January 23: Essid’s New Government: Nine Women**

“Tunisian Prime Minister Habib Essid announced his appointments for the new Tunisian government’s cabinet positions in a press conference earlier today, January 23. In a press conference held at the presidential palace, Essid explained that ‘women and youth are well represented in this government.’ Although six women were appointed as chief administrators, only three women were given minister positions—Khadija Cherif, Minister of Women, Family and Childhood; Salma Rkik, Minister of Professional Training and Employment; and Latifa Lakhdir, Minister of Culture and Heritage Preservation.” ([Tunisia Live](#))

By Julia Craig Romano



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