

MENA Women News Brief

November 3, 2015 –November 17, 2015

Egypt

November 3: Will new Egyptian employment law help its women lean in?

“Nearly five years after the revolution, Egyptian women still face much the same obstacles in the workforce as the economy continues to limp along without their full participation. The Egyptian government is working on a new labor law to offer workers, especially women, more rights, and its provisions are being finalized.” ([Al Monitor](#))

November 4: Coalition calls for ‘popular uprising’ to release 66 women held in Egypt

“The Revolutionary Coalition for Egyptian Women called for a ‘strong popular uprising’ on Tuesday, November 3 to force the authorities to release 66 women who have been imprisoned on the basis of accusations which the government refer to as ‘criminal’ while the coalition considers them ‘political.’” ([Middle East Monitor](#))

November 5: Uber drivers in Egypt to get anti-sexual harassment training

“In an effort to counter one of Egypt’s biggest social issues, U.S.-based ride service Uber is rolling out a scheme that will train drivers in the capital Cairo to take steps against sexual harassment. The private car service announced it will be teaming up with Harassmap—an online social initiative which employs an SMS system for reporting incidences of sexual harassment in Egypt—to educate its drivers against the social issue.” ([Al Arabiya](#))

November 9: Egypt electoral law a step toward justice for women

“The Egyptian electoral law allocated 56 parliamentary seats to women in addition to 14 others appointed by the president, ensuring that 70 women would int I@PT@., (ï¼Ò€Iran's parliament has 290 seats, want to change that. A group of Iranian activists is seeking to dilute the dominance of men in the country's parliament, pushing for a greater female presence in the legislature following elections in February 2016.” ([Radio Free Europe](#))

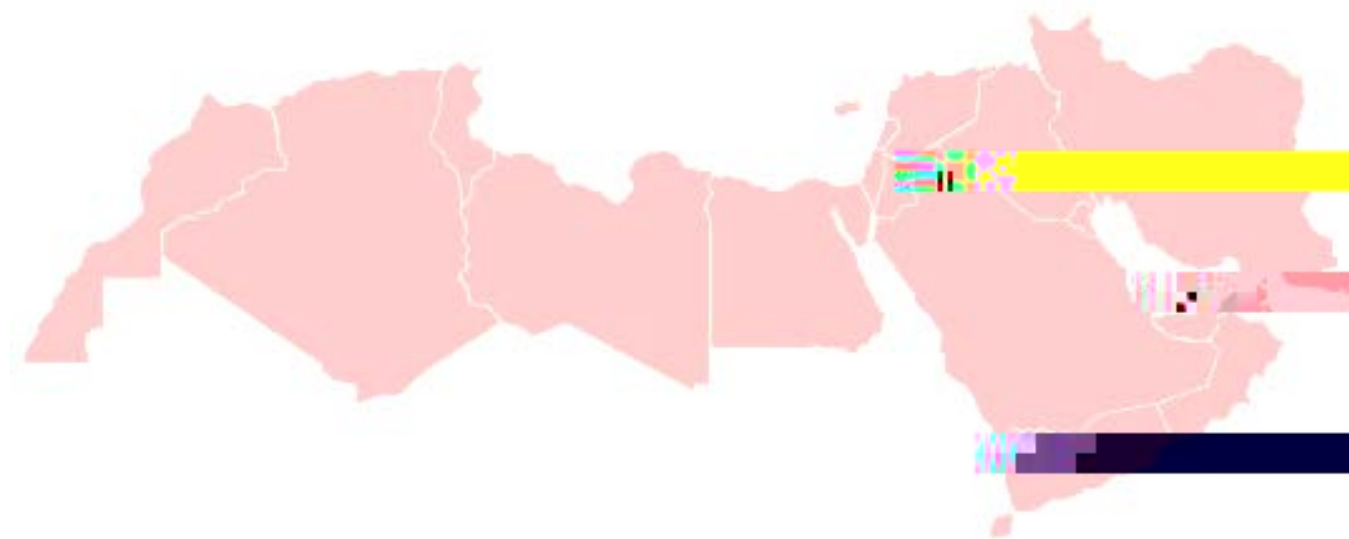
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November 8: Iran appoints first woman ambassador since revolution

“Iran has appointed its first woman ambassador since the 1979 Islamic revolution, naming foreign ministry spokeswoman Marzieh Afkham to head its embassy in Malaysia. Iranian media first said back in April that Afkham was lined up for promotion to the rank of ambassador, but the reports were unconfirmed. Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif paid tribute to Afkham saying she had carried out her duties for two years as foreign ministry spokeswoman with ‘dignity, bravery and particular insight.’” ([Al Arabiya](#))

November 17: Hassan Rouhani's Women's Rights Conundrum (Op-ed by Haleh Esfandiari)

“When it comes to civil rights, including women’s rights, President Hassan Rouhani’s hands are tied. His reformist inclinations have been frustrated by conservative clerics, the security agencies, and right-wing members of parliament.



and my family.’ The participants held banners that read ‘nationality is not identification papers’ an.p(((r)3(2T)1(he)2

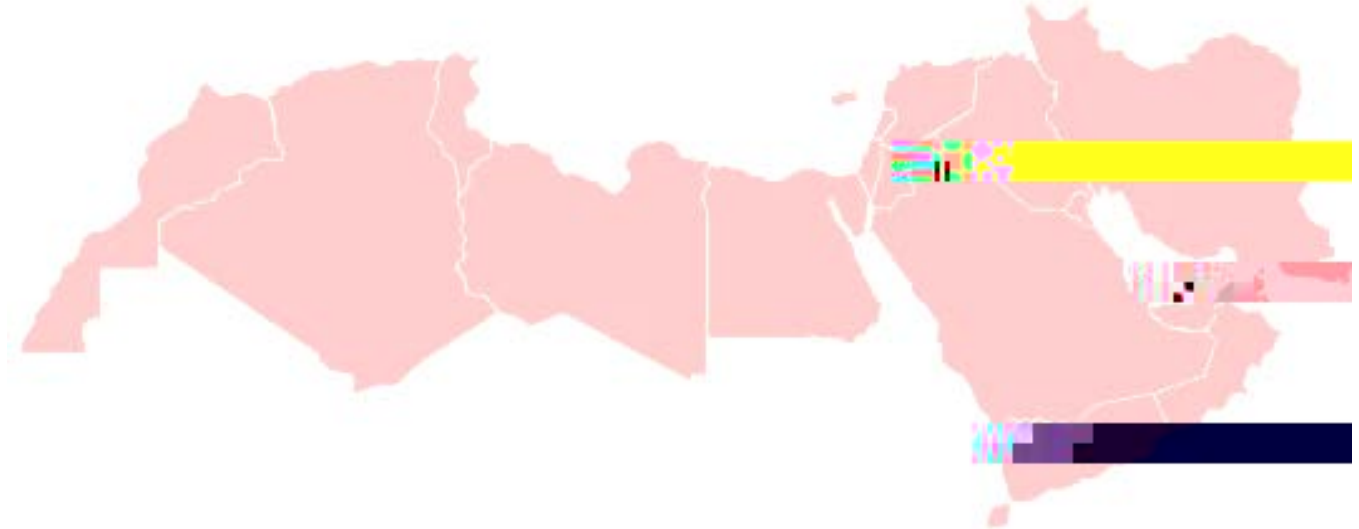


November 11: Even a little power is a welcome first step for Saudi suffragettes (Op-ed by Roula Khalaf)

“The municipal poll on Saturday, December 12 is the first time that women will vote and stand in a nationwide election, which is only the third voting experiment ever to be held in the conservative kingdom. It is, moreover, a partial election, with only half the seats for grabs, the rest appointed. And yet, instead of frustration, there was excitement in the faces of women running in the elections. For Saudi suffragettes, change comes at such a slow pace that every little step helps.” ([Financial Times](#))

November 15: Saudi Arabia to have four industrial cities for women

“The Saudi Organization for Industrial Estates and Technology Zones (MODON) is set to establish four new industrial cities in Jeddah, Yanbu, Qassim and Al-Jouf. MODON is in the process of coordinating with other parties to allocate industrial land to tndm 0.-2(e)-t(e)4(s)-



Yemen

November 14: Travel Ban on Women’s Rights Advocate

“Houthi officials in Yemen have barred a prominent women’s rights advocate, Dr. Shafiq al-Wahsh, from traveling to preparatory peace talk meetings in the region, Human Rights Watch said. The Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah, should lift all travel restrictions on Dr. Wahsh, director of the semi-government

