



Arab countries' perspective

Conference paper by Ahmad Awad

In the framework of the Deauville Partnership that was launched in 2011, many of the IFIs extended its operations to the Arab region, including especially those countries involved in the Arab Spring, such as Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Yemen and Jordan.

In order not to repeat the approach of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, including the implementation of economic and political policies that had a negative impact on the level of socio-economic rights of the people in the region, it is important to take into consideration several aspects, and observe the issue from the Arab countries' perspective.

Therefore, in order for the Deauville Partnership to be truly effective and to impact positively on the Arab economic and political scenario, three main points should be taken into consideration.

- Through a deep observation of the initiatives and actions the region experienced in the past, it is possible to say that economic and political reform, in terms of democratization, should be carried out in parallel, in order to meet all the objectives and targets set out. What is of crucial importance, is to develop an approach that includes the assessment of democratic indicators, such as rule of law, freedom of association and peaceful assembly and level of public participation in the decision-making process and dialogue on the public policies. This process of public participation in the implementation of economic reform policies should include different stakeholders, such as small and medium enterprises, trade unions and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).
- There is a growing need to develop and implement strategies that promote inclusive economic growth for the Arab countries involved in the Deauville Partnership. This implies the enhancement of business sectors that have an added value and that can provide a huge number of job opportunities with decent working conditions all the while respecting workers' rights. Due to the high rate of unemployment, especially of young people and women, there is a need for urgent action and an effective approach, in order to enable their economic participation in the labour market. Additionally, one of the top priorities should be the development of specific sectors of the labour market, such as renewable energy, in order to promote a safe and environmentally friendly scenario for the development of the labour market.
- Finally, CSOs' efforts should be enhanced, as well as their powerful role in the region, as a mean of promotion of the democratization process and citizenship in addition to its importance as an instrument to fight terrorism and instability in the region.

In conclusion, what is important to remark is that the Deauville Partnership can effectively answer the call for improvement of working conditions, labour market and economic reform. That kind of approach can work, but only if the cultural, economic, civic, social and political rights are respected. In other words, a human rights-based vision and perspective should be adopted, in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN for post-2015 in the region, such as poverty eradication, sustainable development, environment protection, the right to an adequate standard of living, decent working conditions, the rule of law, gender equality, women's empowerment and the overall commitment to justice and democracy for development.

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