15th Meeting of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM)

1 June 2011
Beirut, Lebanon

	Opening	Speaker
08.30	Registration	
08.45	Welcome by ESCWA's Executive Secretary	**Rima Khalaf**
09.55	Introduction by LAS Assistant Secretary General for Social Affairs	**Sima Bahous**

Session 1 The Arab Region at a Cross Roads: Towards a New Development Paradigm.

09.05–09.20 **Presentation by:** **Mr Taher Kanaan (Jordan)**

Session Facilitated by: Sima Bahous, LAS

Synopsis: *Independent of whether popular uprisings succeed in their respective agendas, the context of the region has been altered dramatically, by a regional reaction to exclusion (political, economic and social). What will be the main challenges for member countries post the popular uprisings witnessed across the region? Public sector reform, reconciliation, security sector reform, are just examples of areas where member countries will need to redefine policies to adapt to this new climate. How can economic and social actors engage, and what opportunities have been created for the UN and others to leverage these changes to address underlying poverty, inequality, and the full enjoyment of economic, political and social rights? What is the role of youth in addressing these challenges given their primary role as the instrument of change in the region?*

Purpose:

1. *To identify key features of the region post the uprising in various countries.*
2. *Identify new openings where the UN and regional actors can respond and react, to pave the way for discussions in Session 3.*

09.20-11.00 **Discussion**

11.00-11.15 **Coffee Break**

Session 2 Harnessing the Power of Popular Movements into Effective Political, Economic & Social Transformation

11.15-11.25 **Introduction:** **Draft UNDG Response Strategy to Chief Executives Board (CEB)**

Introduction & Session Facilitated by: Amat Alsoswa, UNDP

11.25-12.30 **Panel Discussion:**

1. **Abdelrahman Jad Hassan (Egypt)**
2. **Abid Briki (Trade Union Federation - Tunisia)**
3. **Mr Ezzedin Al Asbahi (Human Rights Information & Training Centre – Yemen)**

Synopsis: *Review the common threads across the region by way of interaction between panel members with Egyptian, Tunisian and other experiences.*

12.30-1.15

Purpose: *To identify challenges of maintaining the momentum of reform and provide insight into rebuilding the infrastructure of governance*

Discussion

1.15-2.15 **Lunch**

Expert Guest Participants

Samir Aita	Rédacteur en Chef et Directeur Général, Le Monde Diplomatique Editions Arabes, Président du Cercle des Economistes Arabes
George Corm	Former Lebanese Minister of Finance; Professor, L'Université Saint-Joseph
Yezid Sayigh	Professor of Middle East Studies, King's College
Omar Razzaz	Advisor, Middle East and North Africa Region, The World Bank
Mehmet Serkan Tosun	Associate Professor, Director of Graduate Programs, Department of Economics, College of Business, University of Nevada, Reno
Arkan El-Seblani	Regional Legal Specialist, Regional Bureau for Arab States, UNDP
James Eberlein	Communications and Research Advisor, Partnership for Democratic Governance, OECD
Raghid El Solh	Consultant, Issam Fares Center for Lebanese Studies
Khalil Gebara	Head of Good Governance, Office of the Caretaker President of the Council of Ministers Saad Hariri
Jad Chaaban	Associate Professor of Economics, American University of Beirut
Nadim Shehadi	Associate Fellow of Chatham House and Academic Visitor at St. Anthony's College, Oxford University
Elizabeth Sellwood	Center on International Cooperation, NYU, currently on temporary assignment with the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon
Havard Hegre	Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Oslo and Center for the Study of Civil War, PRIO
Havard Nygard	PhD Fellow at the Department of Political Science at the University of Oslo And an Associate Researcher at the Peace Research Institute Oslo's Centre For the Study of Civil War

Session 3 Moving Forward: Grasping New Opportunities to Engage

2.15 – 5.00 **Facilitated Discussion**

Session Facilitated by:
Rima Khalaf, ESCWA

Note: Session Closed to RCM Members

Purpose: *To discuss:*

1. *Opportunities for UN policy and technical expertise to member countries based on mandates – what are the new opportunities for the UN and others to engage?*
2. *Opportunities for engagement between UN and regional stakeholders - including LAS, IMF, World Bank and regional banks – on engagement with member countries*
3. *And develop a position by the RCM on engaging member countries to facilitate the transition to democracy in the region.*
4. *Determine clear mechanisms to engage relevant social transformation dialogue.*

5.00-5.20 Wrap Up and Closing

Rima Khalaf &
Sima Bahous