Ring the bell for gender equality

On Tuesday, 9 March 2021, the Amman Stock Exchange (**ASE**) hosted the annual celebration of the international initiative 'Ring the Bell for Gender Equality', in cooperation with the International Finance Organization (**IFC)**, UN Women Jordan and the UN Global Compact Jordan, by ringing the bell to start the trading session It was in the presence of Dr. Laith Al-Ajlouni, Chairman of the Securities Commission, Mr. Mazen Wataifi, Chief Executive Officer of the ASE, Ms. Aisha Mukhtar, UN Women Jordan Officer in Charge, Ms. Yasmin Mohammad, Gender and Private Sector Officer at the IFC, and Mr. Jamal Fariz the Vice Chairman in UN Global Compact.

Mr. Mazen Wahaifi, the CEO of the ASE, said that the Stock Exchange is taking part in this celebration along with other 107 stock exchanges and CCPs around the world that will 'ring the bell' to mark International Women's Day under this year's theme "Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world".

Mr. Wathaifi explained that the theme recognizes the distinguished efforts of Jordanian women in leadership positions and women-led organizations during the challenging period of the COVID-19 pandemic, including their important contribution to more inclusive decisions-making, policies and legislative reforms.

Mr. Wahaifi emphasized the need for accelerated efforts to enhance the role of women as equal partners with men in all fields. He also called upon business leaders from around the world to take concrete steps to empower women in the workplace as well as in the society as a whole. Recalling women's unique capacity to develop and innovate, he added that the ASE fully recognizes the importance of empowering women and is committed to sustain their increased participation in the Jordanian capital market system, and enhancing economic activities their economic empowerment and active participation in the labor market. In this regard he recalled the World Federation of Exchanges (**WFE**) selection of the Director of the Planning and Institutional Development Department at the ASE to be in WFE list of women leaders in global stock exchanges.

Mr. Abdullah Jafri, Country Manager for the Mashreq Region at IFC, said that gender equality is one of the prerequisites for the success of companies and institutions. In addition to promote equal access to opportunities for all, the IFC remains committed to supporting companies to provide flexible work policies, building digital infrastructure to diversify their talent pool, and to include professional women at all levels who will lead the growth and success of corporations.

On behalf of UN Women, Ms. Aisha Mukhtar said "Private sector engagement is crucial for women's empowerment, and capital market institutions are particularly well-placed to promote the full and effective participation of women and equal opportunities for leadership. Through the adoption of the Women Empowerment Principles, UN Women is supporting private sector partners for corporate delivery on gender dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including pay equity, gender-responsive supply chain and workplace policies."

Mr. Jamal Fariz, Vice Chairman in UN Global Compact Jordan also said "Advancing women's participation and leadership in business is not only the right thing to do and a matter of fundamental human rights. It is essential to drive business performance, advance corporate sustainability and achieve the SDGs".

'Ring the Bell for Gender Equality' is a global initiative that has been launched by a group of influential leaders from global financial markets and it is taking place in various countries to celebrate International Women's Day.