

## **I Commit to the Women on Boards' Panel**

**It is both an honor and a privilege to stand before you today as we close the Women on Board law project, that has been pivotal in advocating for gender equality and strengthening women's leadership roles in Lebanon's public and private sectors. I would like to thank everyone involved in making this initiative a reality, and I commend the dedication and tireless efforts of the Lebanese League for Women in Business for their invaluable work in advancing the cause of women's empowerment.**

**The importance of gender equality cannot be overstated. It is not just a matter of justice or fairness; it is a matter of progress, economic growth and resilience and a driver of accountability and transparency, hence, the prosperity of our society as a whole. In Lebanon, as across the globe, we face a situation where women remain underrepresented in leadership roles, whether on corporate boards, in government institutions, or in the highest decision-making spheres.**

**Despite the significant advancements we have made in areas such as education and workforce participation, women continue to face barriers when it comes to assuming leadership positions. They are often overlooked, underfunded, and held back by structural inequalities that**

**have persisted for far too long. The fact remains that women are still largely absent from strategic decision-making processes that shape the economic and political landscape of our country.**

**Today, women represent an untapped resource that could significantly contribute to the future of our economy, the development of our institutions, and the strengthening of our democracy. The lack of gender diversity in leadership roles limits the perspectives and ideas that are crucial for innovative solutions to the challenges we face. Our economy, our society, and our institutions cannot thrive without fully benefiting from the talents, knowledge, and expertise of half of our population. This is why it is essential that we create spaces where women are not just participants, but leaders and decision-makers in both the private and public sectors.**

**As a society, we must address the barriers that prevent women from accessing leadership roles. These include cultural biases, stereotypes about women's capabilities, lack of access to mentorship and networks, and insufficient policies that support the work-life balance that women need to thrive in the workplace. We must ensure that women have access to the resources, opportunities, and platforms that allow them to succeed and rise to leadership positions.**

**Through initiatives like the Women on Board Law Project, we are taking important steps to break down these barriers**

**advocating for structural reforms. This initiative has shown us the undeniable benefits of gender diversity in decision-making processes, ranging from better business performance to more inclusive and effective governance. But while we have made progress, the journey is far from complete.**

**The challenges we face are not easy to overcome, but they are not insurmountable. With continued effort and collaboration from all sectors, the government, businesses, civil society, and the private sector, we can create an environment where gender equality is not a goal for the future but a reality of the present.**

**I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm the Ministry of Social Affairs' commitment to advancing gender equality in all aspects of Lebanese society. We will continue to work alongside our partners to ensure that women's voices are heard, their leadership is nurtured, and their contributions are valued.**

**Together, we will build a Lebanon where women have the same opportunities to lead, innovate, and to shape the future of our country.**

**Thank you.**