

The Rights of Muslim Women in Tanzania

WORKSHOP WITH JUWAKITA IN DAR ES SALAAM

On Wednesday 24th October 2018 and Thursday 25th October 2018, female members of the Association of Muslim Women (JUWAKITA) and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) jointly convened a workshop on “The Rights of Muslim Women in Tanzania” in Dar es Salaam. The leadership training viewed the challenges and opportunities of Muslim women in the Tanzanian society according to Qur’an and Sunnah.

The workshop was opened with an introduction of Shamim Khan, chairwomen of JUWAKITA, introducing the participants of 26 Tanzanian regions to the organizers. Afterwards, Mr. Daniel El-Noshokaty, country representative of KAS Tanzania, held his opening speech emphasizing the enormous importance of women Rights. He compared men and women to wings of a bird that are both needed in order for a bird to fly. Jane Mbeba, Program Officer of KAS presented the objectives of the workshop which are to discuss challenges, but also to recognize success stories and opportunities. The women were also asked to point out their expectations in order to acknowledge their personal questions concerning the topic.

With the first presentation on “Women’s Rights according to the constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania and the UN Charter”, Mwatumu Malale, JUWAKITA Secretary General led into the thematic part of the workshop. She firmly encouraged the

women to be aware of their rights and not to accept suppression because of cultural and historical reasons. She emphasized the importance of recognizing Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights “All humans are free and equal.”, but to be conscious of the responsibilities which come with.



JUWAKITA General Secretary Mwatumu Malale during her presentation

The following discussion revealed fears the women have concerning their rights. Many women complained about a lack of information. Insufficient education in this area causes non-awareness and confusion. In this regard, Mwatumu Malale encouraged the women to recognize their potential in order to use their motivation to search for further education and to support other women in their regions.

After a short coffee break, Dr. Moh’d Makame, Dean of Faculty of Law and Shari’ah at Zanzibar University led into his presentation on “Women’s Right according to the Qur’ an and Sunnah”. He stressed the advantages of the religious Islamic laws,

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TANZANIA

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because in contrast to the national law the validation of Islamic laws exceeds borders and brings people together all over the world. He provided the participants with knowledge about the right of women in education, marriage, heritage and ownership.

In the upcoming discussion, the women interestedly revealed their questions concerning the connection of the national Tanzanian law and the law according to Qur'an and Sunnah.

The second day was characterized by an in-depth group work offering the women the possibility to obtain deeper insight into specific issues. Within seven groups the women discussed several topics such as "Education in the Muslim society", "Heritage law", "Divorces and the consequences for children" or "Religious education". In the following presentation of the results, the women emphasized the importance of education measures to gain new knowledge about rights and responsibilities. Girls should receive specific counselling to be provided with skills for their future. In addition to that, Self-Confidence was mentioned as key-feature to be a role model for children. Women should be confident about their rights in order to inherit this mind-set to their descendants.

creating a society with equal rights for men and women. The workshop successfully offered the possibility for the women to obtain new perspectives and widen the horizon in order take part in further development actions in their environment.



Group photo of several participants and organizers



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Women during their group work

At the end of the workshop, the participants were encouraged to take existent measures in order to initiate changes in the different regions. With their own plans and creativity they can contribute to the higher targets of