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For a long period of time, and compared to other countries in the region, Lebanon has been considered a pioneer regarding women's rights in which many women were granted several rights due to signing many treaties consecrating the principle of equality. However, Lebanon has not yet succeeded in granting full equal citizenship to women. Despite the equal constitutional guarantees given to both men and women and despite the fact that Lebanon has signed most of the UN treaties pertaining to human rights, women still do not enjoy the same equal rights as men. The most unashamed lapse of women's rights is their inability to grant their Lebanese nationality to their foreign husbands and their children. The law, unfortunately, was placed on 19 January 1925, and it also violates articles 2,3,24 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, article 7 on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and treaties that Lebanon has authorized. This doesn't only invade the gender equality; but also wrecks many families' lives.

The subject of nationality constitutes a perfect matter of discrimination. This discrimination goes back to the French colonialism period, when Lebanon was governed by the French Napoleonic Code. However, the transplantation of this Code in Lebanon was actually a step backwards for Lebanese women since its preceding Ottoman law was far more progressive in terms of women's right, under which women enjoyed a mainly beneficial position in the area of citizenship rights. In fact, an Ottoman law dating from the early 1800's had consecrated a rule allowing the citizenship to be inherited from both the mother and the father. Besides the origin of this discrimination, this prejudice stems from the reliance of the country on religious laws. The Republic of Lebanon has an unjustified fear of allowing the naturalization of a large refugee population and of a sudden shift in the sensitive religious demographic balance of the country. In fact, the government justifies its worries as part of a political plan to prevent the settlement of Palestinians in Lebanon, in accordance with the provisions of the Lebanese Constitution and other conventions against settlement.

This law has caused severe issues in many families' lives. It prohibits the right to education to many non-Lebanese children born from a Lebanese mother, and this prohibition stands against article 49 of Decree No. 134/59 which provides that public education is a right for every Lebanese in the primary education age. This regulation also violates the right to participate in political life and universities. Moreover, many families cannot afford work permits due to their expenses, and this bans the member from work. Let's not forget the exclusion from public health care and financial inheritance due to the status as foreigners. Many governmental and nongovernmental acts have been made. Minister of Interior (Ziad Baroud) played a huge role. He organized meetings with women activists forming a draft in which he stressed his support for the cause calling the decree "discriminative". However, the draft failed to help. In addition to that, many campaigns like "My Nationality is a Right for Me and My Family" also fought for their privilege. This campaign gathered Lebanese women married to foreigners and their children in a sit-in at Riad-Solh Square trying to address the message. Yet, no one listened.

As for my opinion, I consider the fear the politicians are running around is just a group of many excuses. I understand the significance of the religious balance in Lebanon, but I suggest transplanting a law that combines the holy standards and humanity. To not misdirect the country's future, I propose giving the woman her full right of passing on her nationality to her children and foreign husband in order to provide them with all their rights as humans, but within certain standards. Also, according to article 5, and as amended by the law dated 11/01/1960,"the foreign woman married to Lebanese shall, upon her request, become Lebanese after one year from the date of registration of the marriage in the Civil Status Office." This law should be applied on foreign men and their children too. If men have the right to pass on their nationality to their foreign wives, then women should too. Thus, a woman should be able to provide the Lebanese nationality to her foreign husband a year after marriage, then to her children. Moreover, any child born in a Lebanese hospital should get the Lebanese nationality in a condition that one of the parents is Lebanese. I believe that the parliamentarians are the ones who should be putting a great effort in not just amending the law, but placing a new one that is in consistent with the articles and treaties. Such laws should be taken care off immediately specially by important politicians claiming to be icons as any right delayed is a right denied. If God honored women with the ability to give birth and dedicate life to one or more, then people should be ashamed of themselves for depriving a mother from her right to pass on a simple nationality.

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