

## The General Federation of Iraqi Women



Manal Younis, President of the General Federation of Iraqi Women

The General Federation of Iraqi Women GFIW was convened in Baghdad from March 29 — April 5 1986. Around 250 delegates from all over the world attended the conference which was opened by Vice President Mr. *Taha Muheiddin Ma'rouf*, who gave a speech on the important role of women and the need to integrate women in the process of social and economic development. The Vice President's speech was followed by a number of other speeches given by participants in the conference.

The agenda of the conference, which was attended by the participants, included meetings that were held every day to discuss the Federation's three-year plan which aims at enhancing the integration of women in the country's economic development. The female labour force participation rate in 1984 was 24.3 per cent as compared to 17 per cent in 1975. Eleven committees of the 12th conference of GFIW were formed to discuss the federation's plans in the following sectors: finance, administrative, information, and public relations, social development, culture, economic development, research and studies, and women in North Iraq.

The GFIW headed by Chairwoman, Mrs. *Manal Younis*, has played a vital role in women's emancipation during the last few years. Many training courses, symposiums and conferences were held by the GFIW, focusing on eradication of illiteracy, providing women with formal and non-formal education and ensuring equal pay for equal work.

The Federation's objectives aims at preparing and mobilizing Iraqi women to undertake their effective role, raising her status and ensuring her equal rights. The Federation also aims at promoting sisterhood among Arab women, to speed up the process of utilizing the human reserves of women in the Arab world and to design measures at all levels to enhance female labour force participation. It is very important to be aware of the economic contribution of women and their potential in promoting the development and growth of their respective societies.

President *Saddam Hussein's* view on Iraqi women's role can be summarized in his saying that «we do not believe in a correct role for man in society if detached from that of women».

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