Sisters and Brothers,

On behalf of the UNDP represented by the director of the regional center Mr. Khaled Abdel Shafi, I would like to thank the kind invitation of the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies on the occasion of the graduation of the fifth and sixth groups of women's leadership program.

On this occasion, I salute all Arab women for their steadfastness and struggle, as part of the consolidation and preservation of national identity and gaining freedom and independence, along with their relentless struggle to entrench their rights to equality, justice, and fairness, and enhance their role and status, in the face of a culture of exclusion and marginalization, and the elimination of all forms of violence that she has been and still is exposed to in a lot of areas.

We meet today on the occasion of a number of important UN activities, in the forefront of which is the anniversary of the launch of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Global Campaign for Violence Against Women, as an emphasis on the need to end all forms of discrimination against them, and work hard to ensure the realization of all the rights, and at the same time with the opening, recently here in Oman, of the regional center for the Arab region, which carries great significance in light of the large and mounting challenges facing the Arab region and its peoples and the wave of violence, conflict, and extremism, which urges us to go out into peace-building spaces, building countries, and achieve the development of peoples who were affected by these wars, so
the United Nations Development Program works tirelessly to renew templates and premises and develop a vision and a strategy for priorities that are consistent with the nature of this complex context, which places at the heart of many of his priorities, work on the empowerment of women and support for her ambition and her fair demands of equality and involvement in the peace-making processes, conflict prevention, and establishing community security through various programs.

The United Nations has always put within its priorities to strengthen the role of women and their participation, whether in public life or in decision-making, and supported her rights, consolidated her position, and activated her political, economic, and social participation, and considered that any violation of any of the rights of women must have a deterrent at the level of crime, to get to a new phase where the culture of life and respect for human rights, and the values of justice and equality prevail.

Unfortunately, there are a lot of Arab women, who face today, too, as all our society, misery and frustration factors, in communities with high unemployment and poverty rates, that generate a lot of psychological and social phenomena, and its resulting manifestations of community and family violence, of which women often bear the brunt. We based our interventions in the legal empowerment of women, support their easy access to justice, strengthen the protection of women from violence, and give women their natural and inalienable rights to act on the activation of protections internationally, and localize and adapt relevant international resolutions, particularly the UN Resolution 1325.

We are fully aware that any efforts to institutionalize and build or develop the Arab countries, will not be completed unless they included in the heart of them victory for the rights of women and the incorporation of
their demands in various development, empowerment, prevention, and protection paths, for there lies activation and mobilizing of half the energies of society, and involve her in the making of future and change.

The ongoing events around us put on the shoulders of women's and human rights activities, governmental and private, as the most relevant to the needs and aspirations of women, the burden of participation and addressing all forms of violence, stereotyping, marginalization, and dedicating the required transformation at all levels, in preparation for the construction of civilized pluralistic Arab society, in which true justice and equality and full partnership of women and men prevail, where women, as men, assume leadership in all fields, because they deserve it under the leadership qualities that distinguish women: such as participation, consultation, authorization, and granting powers after consideration, dialogue, communication and the expression of feelings, speed, depth of relations, empathy, creativity and ability to understand the needs.

There are many daunting challenges and requirements of our Arab societies after values of tolerance and brotherhood diminished, and were replaced by the phenomena of violence, for the society is confused between action and reaction, and the result is an escalating violence in the name of values, beliefs and morals.

Many crises reflect directly on the Arab women and youth, most notably the identity crisis and the absence of role models, shaken values and standards, undermined confidence in everything around us, and the growing sense of intellectual and cultural emptiness, these crises, unfortunately, have become a driving force for the involvement of young people in extremist groups, which provide them with an alternative to the
sense of security and identity and to raise the banner of rejection and protest.

In spite of the many challenges, you must hold on to your dream and motivation to change and not to surrender to frustration, and here I would like to express my hope to see this constellation of leaders take a future role, by engaging in the treatment of public affairs and work to generate creative ideas that are out of the box, to serve development, governance, human rights, and women in particular in the region.

And last but not least, I reiterate my thanks for this generous invitation and congratulate the graduates, and I record my admiration for this pilot program, which creates valuable opportunities and works to disseminate knowledge and stimulate action to make the desired change that we truly need.

I thank you for your kind attention.