



Good evening everyone, “Masaa eljiir”

Thank you for being here.

We have gathered here today to recognize the achievements and the trajectory of an incredible woman. And through this woman, to put the spotlight on human rights – the rights of men and women alike. I am very happy and honored to be able to hand her this decoration (Order of Civil Merit) myself, on behalf of his Majesty the King, during my first official visit to Egypt.

Nehad Abul Komsan is a lawyer and an advocate for women’s rights; she is also a TV star; a youtube influencer. As a young newly graduated lawyer she decided to devote herself to the fight for women’s rights. Maybe the younger generations do not realize that not so long ago nobody was talking about gender equality, here in Egypt, but also in many other countries. It took courage and vision to put oneself in the frontline of this struggle. As a founder of the Egyptian Center for Women’s Rights she made an important contribution to supporting and defending women’s political rights, and delivering legal aid to women. She then started a long career as advisor of several organizations and governments.

But she did not want merely to change laws and policies; she wanted to change people mindsets.

Dr. Aboul Komsan’s TV program is watched daily by more than 10 million people.

Through her show she fights slowly but steadily for equality of women and a bigger and more active role for them in the Egyptian society.

Some of the issues raised by Dr. Aboul Komsan include subjects such as a gender balance education for both boys and girls, the eradication of violence against women, the need to act against sexual harassment, or the fight against genital mutilation and early marriage to name a few. I would like to highlight her efforts to change the Penal Code to protect victims of rape and to equate the rights of men and women as regards to inheritance.

She has dared to denounce cases that have shaken the country and counselled promoters of new digital platforms to help women such as #AssaultPolice. Besides, she has promoted the drafting of new laws to implement real changes for women.

Such an example of feminism deserves this decoration.

Dr. Nehad,

On behalf of the of the Spanish Cooperation, I want to thank you for having supported our work. You are well aware of Spain's deep commitment regarding women's and girls' rights. The government of Spain has put gender equality at the core of its agenda. We are certain that the future cannot be built leaving half of the population behind.

Gender equality is one of the fundamental pillars of our cooperation with Egypt. We support your government's efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women, as it is reflected on its National Strategy for the Empowerment of the Egyptian Women 2030. Women's empowerment and rights is clearly a shared interest of both countries, and because of that, we partner with several Egyptian institutions, particularly with the National Council for Women, to take this ambitious agenda forward.

However, as governments, we cannot work without civil society. We would not be here today without those brave women who have fought for women's rights and equality and against all odds, succeeded in building a better world. They have opened new paths and opportunities for women; they have shown us the way forward to achieve a fairer, equal world for women and girls.

Thank you very much.