



PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE

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20 August 2025

Program

Social Democratic Alliance in the Arab World Conference

27-30 August 2025, Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan Region, Iraq

Background

The Arab region continues to navigate a complex landscape marked by persistent authoritarianism, unresolved conflicts, and democratic erosion. The ongoing war in Gaza has further deteriorated prospects for peace, worsening humanitarian conditions and pushing international mechanisms for accountability and response to the breaking point. More than a decade since the Arab Spring, the region has yet to realize the ethos of that moment. In many cases, the same repressive structures that the uprisings sought to dismantle have not only endured—but reasserted themselves, often in more sophisticated and entrenched forms.

At the same time, shifting geopolitical dynamics—including new regional alignments and the growing influence of external powers—are reshaping strategic priorities and governance models in a region long characterized by volatility and political upheaval. In this context, progressive forces must confront these challenges head-on: examining root causes, building democratic alternatives, and advancing coordinated, principled engagement to address the shared crises they face.

Organized by the Social Democratic Alliance in the Arab World (SDA-AW) and the Progressive Alliance (PA), and hosted by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), this conference brings together progressive party officials along with



women's and youth organizations from across the region. The meeting aims to deepen solidarity between Arab and Kurdish progressive movements, reinforce cooperation across party structures, exchange experiences in programmatic responses and democratic governance, and lay the groundwork for a renewed political vision and strategic programme for social democracy in the Arab world.

Tuesday, 26 August

Early Arrivals

Arrivals of Women Delegates for the Arab Conference of Women

Registrations upon check-in

Wednesday, 27 August

Arab Conference of Women

09:00 – 09:20 Transfer from the hotel to the conference venue
Conference Venue and Address:
PUK Political Bureau
Malik Mahmood King Road, Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan
Region of Iraq

09:30 – 10:30 **Opening Session**
Opening of the conference and welcoming of distinguished guests

SPEECHES

Shanaz Ibrahim Ahmed

First Lady of the Republic of Iraq

Feryal Abdullah

Head, Women's Committee of Social Democratic Alliance in the Arab World



Zita Gurmai (Video Message)

President, Party of European Socialists Women

Documentary Film

*The Struggle of Kurdish Women and the Women's Struggle
in the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan*

Group Photo

10:30 – 10:45 Coffee / Tea Break

10:45 – 12:00 **Women in Democratic Transition and Resistance:
Reforming Discriminatory Laws for Women's Justice**

Bahia Amra

International Secretary, Palestinian National Initiative
Co-Chair, Gender Equality Working Group of the
Progressive Alliance

Pakhshan Zangana

Former Secretary-General
Kurdistan's High Council for Women

Dr. Hind Benammar

Executive Secretary
Arab Trade Union Confederation

Dr. Salma Majdalani

International Secretariat Member
Palestinian Popular Struggle Front

Kasthuri Patto

International Secretary
Democratic Action Party, Malaysia



Moderator:

Salwa Demnaty

Member of Parliament, Morocco

Socialist Union of Popular Forces

12:00 – 13:00

Feminism in the Arab World and Building Political Alliances for Change

Dr. Nada Jaradat

Board Member of the Progressive Alliance

Fatah, Palestine

Mona Abdelrady

Secretary of Women Committee

Egyptian Social Democratic Party, Egypt

Iman Abdulrazzaq Mohammed

Member of Iraqi Parliament, Republic of Iraq

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Rasha Jabr

Member of the Board, Union of Progressive Women

Project Coordinator for Feminist Political Participation

Initiatives, Progressive Socialist Party, Lebanon

Hella Ben Youssef (online)

Member of the Political Bureau, Democratic Forum for

Labour and Liberties, Tunisia

Moderator:

Samah Bibars

Secretary of Women Committee

Jordanian Social Democratic Party, Jordan



13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 16:15	Reading and Ratifying the Statute and the Political Vision of Social Democratic Arab Women Union
16:15 – 17:15	Election of the President of the Women's Organization of the Alliance and Its Bodies (For Members only) Election Chair: Juliette Delacroix Political Advisor for EU and International Affairs, Migration and Women's Rights at the Emile Vandervelde Institute Socialist Party of Belgium
17:15 – 18:00	Closing Session Final Statements and Press Conference Elected President of the Arab Social Democratic Women Union Elected Secretary General of the Arab Social Democratic Women Union
19:30	Transfer from hotel to the dinner venue
20:00	Dinner Hosted by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan



Thursday, 28 August

Kurdish-Arab Political Dialogue

09:00 – 09:20 Transfer from hotel to the conference venue

Conference Venue:

PUK Political Bureau

Malik Mahmood King Road, Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan
Region of Iraq

09:30 – 11:00 **Opening Session**

WELCOME SPEECHES

Darbaz Kosrat Rasool

Head of the Relations Bureau, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
Board Member of the Progressive Alliance

Farid Zahran

President, Social Democratic Alliance in the Arab World
President, Egyptian Social Democratic Party

KEYNOTE SPEECHES

His Excellency Dr. Abdul Latif Rashid

President
The Republic of Iraq

His Excellency Nechirvan Barzani

President
Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Bafel Jalal Talabani

President, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
Presidium Member, Progressive Alliance



SPEECHES

Dr. Mohammed Shtayyeh

Former Prime Minister, The State of Palestine
Board Member, Progressive Alliance

Bert Koenders

Former Foreign Minister of the Netherlands
Board Member, Progressive Alliance

Machris Cabreros

Global Coordinator
Progressive Alliance

Driss Lachguar

First Secretary, Socialist Union of Popular Forces, Morocco
Board Member, Progressive Alliance

Namık Tan

Deputy Chairman
Republican People's Party, Turkey

11:00 – 11:30 Group photo and tea break

11:30 – 13:00 **Challenges Facing the Integration of Kurds in different
Transition Societies**

Mohammed Haji Mahmoud

President
Kurdistan Socialist Democratic Party, Iraq

Adnan Mufti

Former Speaker
Kurdistan Region Parliament



Hoshyar Zebari

Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Republic of Iraq

Saleh Muslim

Presidential Council Member
Democratic Union Party, Syria

Tuncer Bakırhan

Member, Grand National Assembly of Turkey
Co-Leader, People's Equality and Democracy Party

Ruben Carranza

Senior Expert
International Center for Transitional Justice

Moderator:

Basem Kamel

Regional Coordinator of the Social Democratic Alliance in
the Arab World
Senator of Arab Republic of Egypt
Egyptian Social Democratic Party of Egypt

13:00 – 14:00

Lunch

14:30 – 16:00

**Building national, regional, and international alliances for
democratic rights, active citizenship, and rule of law**

Waddah Al-Yeman Al-Hariri

Head of International Relations
Yemeni Socialist Party, Yemen



Ilham Ahmed

Head of Foreign Relations for the Autonomous
Administration of North and East Syria

Farid Asasard

Former Leadership Council Member
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Paulo Bracarense

International Secretary
Brazilian Socialist Party

Robert Francis Garcia

Transitional Justice and Peace-building Expert
Akbayan Citizens' Action Party

Moderator:

Dr. Abdulbasit Kareem Mawlood

Former Minister of Trade
The Republic of Iraq

16:00 – 16:30

Coffee / Tea break

16:30 - 18:00

**Respecting Diversity as a Pillar for Building and Unifying
Democratic States**

Dhafer Nasser

Secretary General
Progressive Socialist Party, Lebanon

Dr. Amin Babasheikh

Former Politburo Member
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan



Yaaqoub Gorges Yaqo

Secretary-General of the Democratic Assyrian Movement
Former Member of the Kurdistan Parliament

Khaoula Lachguar

Member of Political Bureau and in-charge of External
Relations, Socialist Union of Popular Forces, Morocco

Kawsar Fatahi

Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan, Iran
Board Member, Progressive Alliance

Moderator:

Jamal Hussein

Political Researcher
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

18:00 Delegates and guests will return to hotels

18:00 - 19:00 **[Closed Session] Meeting of the Membership Committee with representatives of parties present that have applied for membership in the Social Democratic Alliance in the Arab World**

Abdulhady Al-Sanafi

Secretary-General of the Kuwaiti Democratic Forum

Ali Kazem Al-Rifa'i

Secretary-General of the Iraqi Social Democratic Current

Gharib Hesso

Co-Chair of the Democratic Union Party, Syria



Abdulhady Al-Huwaij

President of the Future Movement Party, Libya

Moderator:

Fady Owadat

Head of Membership Committee

Jordanian Social Democratic Party, Jordan

19:30 Transfer from hotel to the dinner venue

20:00 **Dinner**
Hosted by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Friday, 29 August 2025

Arab Regional Dialogue and Coordination Meeting

08:30 - 08:50 Transfer from hotel to the Conference venue

Conference Venue and Address:

PUK Political Bureau

Malik Mahmood King Road, Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan
Region of Iraq

09:00 – 10:30 **Developments in the Palestinian cause and their impact on the region**

Dr. Mohammed Shtayyeh

Former Prime Minister, The State of Palestine

Member of the Central Committee, FATAH

Dr. Falah Jabour

Secretary-General

Jordanian Social Democratic Party, Jordan



Dr. Mustafa Barghouti

Secretary-General

Palestinian National Initiative, Palestine

Dr. Ahmad Majdalani

Secretary-General

Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, Palestine

Moderator:

Dr. Freddy Elbaiady

Member of Parliament

Vice-President, Egyptian Social Democratic Party

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee / Tea break

11:00 – 12:00 **Prospects of Renewing Social Democracy in the Arab World**

In this 2-part session, we invite speakers from member parties of the Social Democratic Alliance in the Arab World together with global partners involved in causes for the Middle East to examine the current political and security situation in the Arab world and its possible trajectories; how domestic affairs affect the regional and geopolitical landscape and how these interplay affect growth and strategies of political actors

Key questions:

1) What are top 3 challenges in your country that has impact on the regional security and development landscape?

2) What is the state of the democratic movement in your country coming out post-Arab spring? What are top 2-3 challenges confronted by social democratic movements in the Arab World?



3) What are entry points for regional and transnational cooperation among progressive parties during this critical period? What are prospects for political renewal?

Qasim al-Araji

National Security Advisor
The Republic of Iraq

Farid Zahran

President, Social Democratic Alliance in the Arab World
President, Egyptian Social Democratic Party

Rebwar Taha

Governor of Kirkuk
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Dr. Khelil Ezzaouia

Secretary-General, Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberties, Tunisia

Moderator:

Tanya Gilly Khailany

Former Member of the Iraqi Parliament
Board Member of the Progressive Alliance

12:00 – 12:30

Tea / Coffee Break

12:30 – 13:30

Prospects of Renewing Social Democracy in the Arab World

Chadi Sabra

Secretary of International Relations
Syrian Democratic People's Party, Syria

Dr. Jwan Ihsan

Member of the Political Bureau of PUK
Former Member of the Iraqi Parliament



Evin Incir

Member of European Parliament

Swedish Social Democratic Party, Sweden

Faraj Zayoud

Secretary for Multilateral International Relations

FATAH, Palestine

Hend Mgaith

President

International Union of Socialist Youth

Moderator:

Rasha Abdulkafi

First Secretary, Student Sector

Yemeni Socialist Party Abroad, Yemen

13:30 – 14:30

Lunch

14:30 – 16:00

Coordination Committee meeting of Social Democratic Alliance in the Arab World

Bilateral Meetings among Progressive Alliance parties' representatives and dialogue partners

16:00

Transfer of delegates and guests back to the hotel

16:30 – 18:00

[Closed Session] Organizational meeting of the High Committee of the Social Democratic Alliance in the Arab World

19:30

Transfer from hotel to the dinner venue



20:00

Dinner

Hosted by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Saturday, 30 August 2025

08:30 – 08:50

Transfer from hotel to the conference venue

Conference Venue and Address:

PUK Political Bureau

Malik Mahmood King Road, Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan
Region of Iraq

09:00 – 09:45

**Report from the Coordination Body of the Social
Democratic Alliance in the Arab World and from the
Global Coordinator of the Progressive Alliance**

09:45 – 11:15

**Parallel workshops on building a joint action plan 2025 -
2027**

*All participants of the conference are welcome to
participate in collectively discussing the regional action
plan.*

Workshop 1: What political priorities, issues, and themes
can we work together on over the next three years?

Moderators:

Enas Alatoom

NADA Leader, Jordanian Social Democratic Party, Jordan

Shireen Abu Hilal

Leadership Member

Palestinian National Initiative, Palestine



Workshop 2: How can we strengthen the organizational structure of the regional alliance and enhance cooperation with sister parties outside the Arab world?

Moderators:

Lhoussaine El Housni

Member of the National Council and in-charge of Arab relations, Socialist Union of Popular Forces, Morocco

Amany Khaled

Secretary of Training and Political Education
Arab Union of Socialist Democratic Youth

Workshop 3: What unifying elements comprise our framework and shared vision of Arab Peace and Security?

Moderators:

Dara Khailany

Leadership Council Member
Head of Foreign Relations Department
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Israa Marwan Zalloum

Vice-President
Socialist Youth Union in the Arab World

11:15 – 11:30 Coffee / Tea break

11:30 – 12:00 **Presentation of the Workshop Outcomes**

12:00 – 13:00 **Declaration of the Conference and Closing Session**



Declaration of the Conference

Darbaz Kosrat Rasool

Head of the Relations Bureau, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Board Member of the Progressive Alliance

Closing Speeches

Bafel Jalal Talabani

President, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Presidium Member, Progressive Alliance

Farid Zahran

President, Social Democratic Alliance in the Arab World

President, Egyptian Social Democratic Party

13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00	Transfer from the conference venue to the hotel
14:00 – 15:00	[Closed Session] Meeting with the International Coordination of the Progressive Alliance and various international partners to explore common ground for cooperation and coordination
15:00	Transfer from hotel to the field visit site/s
15:30 – 19:00	Group field visit in the city of Sulaymaniyah
19:30	Farewell Dinner Hosted by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Departures