

BIOGRAPHY

Shirouk Alabayachi

Shirouk Alabyachi is a woman and human rights activist. She has experience in working with the Iraqi Civil Society, as well as with international organizations, in addition to her profession as Water Resources specialist.

Shirouk was born and raised in Baghdad but left Iraq when Saddam took over power 1979. She spent 24 years in Europe, building her career and obtaining her Master of Sciences degree in Construction Engineering from Vienna University of Technology. In October 2003 she returned to Baghdad after gaining professional technical skills from working in different established well-known Austrian construction engineering firms. Since her return to Iraq, Shirouk has taken over the responsibility of managing nation-wide programs in Human Rights, Democracy building, Constitution and Political Process, Institutional Reform, and the Rights and Freedom Status Watch in Iraq. In addition to improving the water and environmental situation in Iraq.

She has served in different leadership and advisory positions in- and outside Iraq, such as the Director of programs in the Iraq Foundation, formal advisor for Global Fund for Women, advisor for the ROL sector in the Provincial Reconstruction's Team in Baghdad...etc

Shirouk is the head of Iraqiyat Centre for studies and Development. It is an NGO that was established 2005 by a well-known group of Iraqi intellectuals (women and men) working on various studies on the new trends in Iraqi society with regard to important issues (the new constitution, women's issues, civil society and democracy building in Iraq).

She also managed complex projects for international organizations interested in rebuilding Iraq in the fields of strengthening the Iraqi Civil Society, human & women's rights, capacity building of democracy institutions such as the Dutch IKV, the Swedish Gothenburg Initiative and the Global Fund for Women.

Shirouk contributed to many initiatives aimed at developing policies and strategic plans to institutionalize Iraqi Society by establishing working groups in various aspects. She was one of the founders and the head coordinator of the Iraqi Women Network, an umbrella organization for 88 women NGOs from all parts of Iraq. The Iraqi Women Network has been leading and coordinating campaigns for empowering women in elections, constitutional and political processes, to repeal revisions to the Personal Status Law and to ensure proper women representation in government.

She was also the Secretary of the Coordinating Committee of Iraqi Human Rights Group, which included members from Iraqi Council of Representatives, Presidential and Ministries representatives and civil society activists.

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Shirouk was the Coordinator of the Iraqi Democracy Watch Group, a group which included well-known Iraqi Academics and Researchers who were working on observing the status of rights and freedom in Iraq and the impact of violence and corruption on the living conditions of the Iraqi citizens, particularly women and other vulnerable groups.

She also launched the Iraqi Initiative for Water and Environment which included hundreds of Iraqi experts and NGOs to work together as a social alliance on improving the water and environment status in Iraq which have been degraded dramatically in the past decades.

She has written and published several papers and articles regarding the role of the Iraqi civil society in rebuilding the new democratic Iraq.