

After the cabinet approval of the draft law regulating the practice of civil work:-

The new law came in implementation of the mandate of the President of the Republic, and to achieve the ambitions of civil society organizations.

- The draft law ensures control and follow-up and promotes transparency and does not include custodial penalties

- Allows the establishment of associations of resident foreign communities, and the right of associations to establish and contribute to charitable companies and funds.

-The law-making journey included the use of laws from countries and community dialogue tours involving more than 1,000 civil associations representing all governorates of Egypt.

Ghada Wali, Minister of Social Solidarity said that the cabinet approval on the draft law of regulating the practice of civil work in its session yesterday, which was submitted by the ministry in implementation of the mandates of the President of the Republic President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi; the draft law will be pushed forward to parliament in preparation for its discussion and promulgation.

Wali added that the way to amend the law began when the President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi called for amending the law of regulating civil work in response to the desire of youth participating in the World Youth Forum in Sharm El-Sheikh, which is compatible with the civil society organizations, the Prime Minister passed a resolution to form a committee including the composition of representation of ministries concerned with civil work to prepare a comprehensive vision to amend the law.

Wali said that the committee held more than 20 meetings to the conclusion of the necessity of drafting a new law, and not just amendments to Law 20 of 2017, based on that the current stage needs a new philosophy that opens the doors to wide participation in nation-building, and to provide opportunities to participate in the establishment of civil associations and create the space for existing institutions for further work as well as encouraging volunteer values and protecting volunteers.

The Committee has taken a number of steps to bring the draft law to light. The committee decided to establish a comprehensive community dialogue. Seven tours of community dialogue were held, four of which were held in different governorates of Egypt such as Cairo, Alexandria, and Ismailia. The Upper Egypt associations participated in a dialogue in Menia governorate; four major associations implemented these dialogues in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Solidarity and the General Federation of Societies. In which 1164 associations took part, in addition to central dialogues held at the Ministry of Social Solidarity, attended by opinion leaders, experts and civil society leaders, and more than 20 international organizations licensed to work in Egypt participated in another dialogue.

The end of the rounds of community dialogue organized by the National Training Academy and included a number of diverse youth streams. In addition to informing the law preparation committee of similar international experiences, where the use of laws from countries in implementation of the mandate of Mr. President, which included access to international experiences in the organization of civil work. Wali said that the law opens the floodgates to participate in nation building, organizes volunteerism, protects volunteers, allows new activities and fields, regulates the activities of foreign communities, and regulates professional certification, noting that all custodial articles have been abolished, except for financial and administrative penalties.

Wali also pointed out that the presidential support was not limited to calling for the amendment of the legislation in a way that provides a supportive atmosphere, but at the level of actual empowerment, it directed the government to fund projects implemented by the associations to participate in human development and nation development. She added that the new draft law increased the participation of foreigners in the boards of associations to 20%, and allowed the establishment of associations of resident foreign communities in Egypt. As well as the possibility of opening branches of associations abroad after licensing them, and opening branches and offices within the notification, and allows the establishment of companies or investment funds and contribute to charity.

The law grants associations the right to receive cash from inside Egypt from natural or legal persons of Egypt or foreign non-governmental organizations authorized to operate inside Egypt. The associations are allowed to receive donations from natural or legal persons inside or outside the country after notification to the administrative authority, and the absence of a reply will be taken as consent. Wali also pointed out that the draft law supports the principle of transparency and emphasizes the need to publish budgets and the final account in detail with the commitment to governance, and obliged them to open a bank account in one of the banks subject to the supervision of the Central Bank. The new law consolidates the authorities responsible for overseeing the civil society institutions in one area, and the foreign non-governmental permission to practice one or more of the activities of associations and NGOs subject to the provisions of the law. Wali pointed out that the new law exempts the built-up properties of the association from all real estate taxes, exemption from customs tariffs, and other fees imposed on imported devices, machines, equipment, and supplies of production and cars. The new law enacts voluntary work by opening a door for volunteering.