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Canada to support women's political leadership in Middle East, North Africa

According to a statement from the Canadian government, the [Honorable Lynne Yelich](#), minister of state (foreign affairs and consular), has announced [Canada's contribution to two projects](#) that will encourage the participation of women in the political process in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Women's participation in decision-making processes is essential to ensure that democracies are truly representative of their populations ... Canada will continue to support the development of women's leadership skills and increase their active participation in elections so that more qualified women will be elected. These activities will strengthen the voice of women in emerging democracies at all levels of government.



Canada's Ambassador to Afghanistan Attends Training Session on Leadership for Women's Rights, Oct. 17, 2012. Flickr/Canada in Afghanistan

"As the Middle East moves to a new era of political development, women have a great responsibility to shape the debate on how their societies will be run," added [Tami Longaberger](#), chair of the [Arab Women's Leadership Institute](#). "The Arab Women's Leadership Institute is proud to partner with the Canadian government to increase the number of female elected officials who will contribute to this debate in Lebanon, Libya and Tunisia."

The projects in Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen will support the development of women candidates' electoral campaigning skills and help to expand recognition of women's rights as these countries continue to undergo political transitions. They will contribute to Canada's efforts and interests in promoting democratic transition and increasing the political participation of women in the MENA region.

