



## Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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### Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Forty-fifth session

18 January-5 February 2010

### Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

#### Egypt

1. The Committee considered the combined sixth and seventh report of Egypt (CEDAW/C/EGY/7) at its 918th and 919th meetings, on 28 January 2010 (see CEDAW/C/SR.918 and 919). The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/EGY/Q/7, and the responses of Egypt are contained in CEDAW/C/EGY/Q/7/Add.1.

#### Introduction

2. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for its combined sixth and seventh periodic report, which was well structured and in general followed the Committee's guidelines for the preparation of reports, with references to the previous concluding observations, although it lacked references to the Committee's general recommendations, as well as some specific disaggregated data, and was overdue. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for its oral presentation, the written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by the Committee's pre-session working group and the further clarifications to the questions posed orally by the Committee.

3. The Committee commends the State party for its high-level, large and multisectoral delegation, which was headed by the Secretary-General of the National Council for Women and which included a large number of women and men representing ministries and other governmental bodies with responsibilities for the implementation of measures in the areas covered by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Committee appreciates the constructive dialogue that took place between the delegation and the members of the Committee.

4. The Committee notes with appreciation that the report was prepared in a participatory process involving Government institutions, non-governmental organizations, trade unions and the National Council for Women.

#### **Positive aspects**

5. The Committee commends the State party for its withdrawal of its reservation to article 9, paragraph 2, of the Convention, and it notes the stated intention of the State party to withdraw its reservation to article 2 within a short time frame.

6. The Committee also commends the State party's development of a national planning methodology that has facilitated the mainstreaming of gender issues in the socio-economic national five-year plans for 2002-2007 and 2007-2012.

7. The Committee welcomes the continued coordination and other activities of the National Council for Women, the national mechanism for the advancement of women, and its development of a strategic framework aimed at achieving the third Millennium Development Goal, on gender equality, by 2015. The Committee also notes with appreciation that equal opportunity units have been established in most ministries and that the unit dealing with issues relating to the Convention within the organizational structure of the National Council for Women has now become permanent.

8. The Committee also welcomes the adoption of the new child law (Law No. 126 of 2008), which raises the age of marriage from 16 to 18 years for both males and females and criminalizes female genital mutilation.

9. The Committee further welcomes the State party's acceptance, on 2 August 2001, of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, concerning the meeting time of the Committee.

10. The Committee notes with satisfaction that, in the period since the consideration of the previous report, the State party has ratified or acceded to the following international instruments:

(a) The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, on 14 April 2008;

(b) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, on 6 February 2007;

(c) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, on 12 July 2002;

(d) The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, on 5 March 2004;

(e) International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, on 6 May 2002.

#### **Principal areas of concern and recommendations**

**11. The Committee recalls the obligation of the State party to systematically and continuously implement all the provisions of the Convention on the**

**Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and views the concerns and recommendations identified in the present concluding observations as requiring the priority attention of the State party between now and the submission of the next periodic report. Consequently, the Committee urges the State party to focus on those areas in its implementation activities and to report on action taken and results achieved in its next periodic report. The Committee calls upon the State party to submit the present concluding observations to all relevant ministries, to the National Assembly and to the judiciary, so as to ensure their full implementation.**

#### **National Assembly**

**12. While reaffirming that the Government has the primary responsibility and is particularly accountable for the full implementation of the obligations of the State party under the Convention, the Committee stresses that the Convention is binding on all branches of Government, and it invites the State party to encourage its National Assembly, in line with its procedures, where appropriate, to take the necessary steps with regard to the implementation of the present concluding observations and the Government's next reporting process under the Convention.**

#### **Reservations**

13. While welcoming the State party's progress in withdrawing reservations entered to the Convention upon ratification, the Committee reiterates its concern that the reservations in respect of articles 2 and 16 have been retained.

**14. The Committee urges the State party to review and withdraw the reservations to articles 2 and 16, which are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention.**

#### **Discriminatory laws**

15. While appreciating constitutional guarantees on gender equality and the efforts of the State party to review and revise discriminatory legislation, the Committee is concerned at the persistence of a significant number of discriminatory laws and provisions, including in the Penal Code and the personal status law, that deny women equal rights with men.

**16. The Committee calls upon the State party to give high priority to the completion of the necessary legislative reforms and to modify, or repeal, without delay and within a clear time frame, discriminatory legislation, including discriminatory provisions in the Penal Code and the personal status law. The Committee calls on the State party to increase its efforts to sensitize the parliament, as well as public opinion, regarding the importance of accelerating legal reform aimed at achieving formal equality for women and compliance with the Convention. It also encourages the State party to continue to increase support for law reform through partnerships and collaboration with religious and community leaders, lawyers, judges, unions, civil society organizations and women's non-governmental organizations.**

**Visibility of the Convention**

17. The Committee takes note of various campaigns to raise awareness of the Convention, including through the media, and the fact that international instruments, including the Convention, are part of Egyptian law and can be invoked before the courts. The Committee remains concerned, however, that there is inadequate knowledge in society in general, including among all branches of the Government, including the judiciary, of the rights of women under the Convention, the Convention's concept of substantive gender equality and the Committee's general recommendations. The Committee is also concerned that the State party did not provide information on cases in which the provisions of the Convention had been directly invoked in court. It is further concerned that women themselves, especially those in rural and remote areas, are not aware of their rights under the Convention and thus lack the capacity to claim them.

**18. The Committee urges the State party to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the Convention is sufficiently known and applied by all branches of Government, including the judiciary, as a framework for all laws, court decisions and policies on gender equality and the advancement of women. The Committee recommends that the Convention and related domestic legislation be made an integral part of the legal education and training of judges, magistrates, lawyers and prosecutors, particularly those working in the family courts, so that a legal culture supportive of the equality of women with men and non-discrimination on the basis of sex is firmly established in the country. It urges the State party to enhance the awareness of women of their rights through, inter alia, legal literacy programmes and legal assistance and to ensure that information on the Convention is provided to women in all parts of the country through the use of all appropriate measures, such as the media.**

**Legal complaints mechanisms**

19. The Committee takes note of the establishment by the parliament in 2003 of the National Council for Human Rights of Egypt, an advisory body with consultative functions, as well as the establishment in 2001 of the Ombudsman's Office, or office for women's complaints, within the National Council for Women. While noting that this office has received more than 50,000 complaints from women, the Committee is concerned that the office does not have the mandate to investigate such complaints. The Committee is further concerned that the State party does not have a comprehensive and effective legal complaints system for women, but it notes with satisfaction the information provided by the delegation that a general ombudsman's office is under consideration.

**20. The Committee urges the State party to strengthen its legal complaints system to ensure that women have effective access to justice. To this end, the State party is encouraged to accelerate the establishment of the general ombudsman's office with a mandate to consider complaints. The State party should ensure that this institution is provided with sufficient human, financial and technical resources for its effective functioning and that its composition and activities will be gender-sensitive and will fully address the issue of women's human rights. The Committee requests the State party to provide information about the mandate and functions of the general ombudsman's office in its next report.**

### **Stereotypes and cultural practices**

21. The Committee reiterates its concern at the persistence of practices, traditions, patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes regarding the roles, responsibilities and identities of women and men in all spheres of life. The Committee is concerned that such customs and practices perpetuate discrimination against women and girls; that this is reflected in their disadvantageous and unequal status in many areas, including in education, public life, decision-making, marriage and family relations, and the persistence of harmful traditional practices and violence against women; and that, thus far, the State party has not taken effective and systematic action to modify or eliminate stereotypes and negative traditional values and practices. While noting the formulation of a media strategy and the establishment of the media-watch unit within the National Council for Women, the Committee reiterates its concern at the continuing stereotypical portrayal of women in the media, which encourages discrimination and undermines equality between men and women.

**22. The Committee urges the State party to put in place without delay a comprehensive strategy, including the review and formulation of legislation and the establishment of goals and timetables, to modify or eliminate traditional practices and stereotypes that discriminate against women, in conformity with articles 2 (f) and 5 (a) of the Convention. Such measures should include efforts to raise awareness of this subject, targeting women and men at all levels of society, in collaboration with civil society. The Committee calls upon the State party to use innovative and effective measures to strengthen understanding of the equality of women and men and to work with the media to promote a positive, non-stereotypical and non-discriminatory portrayal of women.**

### **Violence against women**

23. The Committee is seriously concerned that violence against women in all its forms has increased, both in the private and public spheres. In this respect, the Committee remains concerned at the absence of a holistic approach to the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women, that such violence would appear to be socially legitimized and accompanied by a culture of silence and impunity and that cases of violence are thus underreported. The Committee is also concerned that some provisions in the Penal Code, including articles 17 and 60, condone acts of violence against women by exempting perpetrators from punishment or reducing the sentences imposed. The Committee regrets the lack of data and information on the incidence of various forms of violence against women and girls, as well as the lack of studies and surveys on the extent of violence and its root causes. The Committee is further concerned that social support services suffer from inadequacy, insufficiency and lack of coordination and that shelters for victims of domestic violence are limited to women under 50 years of age.

**24. The Committee urges the State party to give priority attention to combating violence against women and girls and to adopting comprehensive measures to address such violence, in accordance with its general recommendation No. 19. Such measures should include the expeditious adoption of a comprehensive law criminalizing all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, marital rape, sexual violence, sexual harassment, institutional violence and crimes committed in the name of honour.**

They should also include the development of a coherent and multisectoral action plan to combat violence against women. The Committee also urges the State party to amend articles 17 and 60, as well as other applicable provisions, of the Penal Code to ensure that perpetrators of violence against women do not benefit from any reduction in penalty. The Committee calls upon the State party to increase the number of shelters and ensure an adequate geographical distribution thereof, and it also calls upon the State party to lift age limitations on access to shelters for victims of domestic violence. The Committee requests the State party to provide data on and information on trends in the prevalence of various forms of violence against women, disaggregated by age and by urban and rural areas.

#### **Trafficking and prostitution**

25. While noting the establishment of a national coordinating committee for preventing and combating human trafficking and the fact that a comprehensive draft law on human trafficking is on the parliamentary agenda, the Committee is concerned at the prevalence of trafficking in the State party, and it regrets the lack of information on the content of the draft law and the lack of disaggregated data on the prevalence of trafficking and prostitution. It is also concerned at the failure of the State party to address the root causes of trafficking, which impedes the effects of the State party to address the trafficking problem in a serious way. The Committee regrets the lack of information provided on the existence and implementation of regional and bilateral memorandums of understanding and/or agreements with other countries on trafficking and the inadequate information provided on the prosecution and punishment of traffickers. It is further concerned that, while women working in prostitution are punished, their clients are not.

26. **The Committee urges the State party to fully implement article 6 of the Convention, including by speedily enacting specific and comprehensive national legislation on the phenomenon of trafficking and ensuring that perpetrators are punished and victims adequately protected and assisted. The Committee calls upon the State party to increase its efforts at international, regional and bilateral cooperation with countries of origin, transit and destination through information exchange in order to prevent trafficking, and to harmonize legal procedures aimed at the prosecution of traffickers. It also recommends that information and training on the anti-trafficking legislation be provided to the judiciary, law enforcement officials, border guards and social workers in all parts of the country. In addition, the Committee recommends that the State party conduct comparative studies on trafficking and prostitution and address their root causes in order to eliminate the vulnerability of girls and women to sexual exploitation and traffickers and to undertake efforts for the recovery and social integration of the victims. The Committee further urges the State party to pursue a comprehensive approach in addressing the question of prostitution, including exit programmes for women who wish to leave prostitution and legislation to sanction the demand side. The Committee calls upon the State party to ensure systematic monitoring and periodic evaluation, including through the collection and analysis of data on the trafficking and exploitation of women in prostitution, and to include such data in its next periodic report.**

**Tourist or temporary marriages**

27. The Committee is concerned about the so-called “tourist marriages” or “temporary marriages” of young Egyptian girls, usually from poor families in rural areas, to non-Egyptians, usually wealthy men from neighbouring countries. The Committee is concerned that this, according to the State report, constitutes a new type of trafficking in girls under the cover of marriage.

**28. The Committee urges the State party to adopt all necessary measures to prevent and combat this negative phenomenon, including through the prosecution of perpetrators. The Committee recommends that the State party develop, with the support of religious authorities, community leaders and civil society organizations, awareness-raising campaigns on the negative implications of these “temporary marriages” for the girls involved and their families.**

**Participation in political and public life**

29. The Committee notes various measures taken by the State party, including the recent amendment of its election law establishing a quota of 64 additional seats reserved for women in the People’s Assembly (lower house) and the establishment of the Egyptian women’s parliamentary forum. The Committee is concerned, however, that this quota does not include the Shura Assembly and only covers two consecutive parliamentary terms. The Committee is also concerned at reports of violence, including gender-based violence, against female candidates during the electoral process, which poses a serious challenge to their political participation. Furthermore, the Committee remains concerned about the continuing underrepresentation of women in public, political and professional life and in decision-making positions, including in municipal, town and village councils, and in senior management in general.

**30. The Committee recommends that the State party pursue sustained policies aimed at the promotion of the full and equal participation of women in decision-making in all areas of public, political and professional life. It recommends that the State party fully utilize general recommendation No. 23 concerning women in public life and calls upon the State party to adopt temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and general recommendation No. 25, in order to accelerate the full and equal participation of women in public and political life. The Committee calls on the State party to take the necessary measures to secure the participation of women in the various phases of the electoral process, including effective measures to combat gender-based violence against them. The Committee recommends the implementation of awareness-raising activities on the importance of the participation of women in decision-making for society as a whole and the development of targeted training and mentoring programmes for women candidates and women elected to public office, as well as programmes on leadership and negotiation skills for current and future women leaders. The Committee also recommends that the State party carefully monitor the effectiveness of measures taken and results achieved and that it inform the Committee thereof in its next report.**

**Education**

31. While noting measures undertaken by the State party, the Committee is concerned that the average number of females and males enrolling in primary education has generally declined in a number of rural and remote villages with small populations and that a gender gap favouring males continues to exist in certain areas. The Committee is also concerned about the sharp decline in the enrolment of girls between the primary and secondary levels, and it remains concerned at the rate at which girls and young women drop out of secondary school and university. It is further concerned at the gender segregation in students' choice of field of education and regrets the general lack of information about access to education for girls from minority and refugee communities and girls living in the street.

**32. The Committee urges the State party to enhance its compliance with article 10 of the Convention and to raise awareness of the importance of education as a human right and as the basis for the empowerment of women. It urges the State party to ensure the equal access of girls and women to all levels and fields of education, take steps to overcome traditional attitudes that in some rural areas may constitute obstacles to the education of women and girls and to keep girls in school. The Committee also calls on the State party to overcome expeditiously the de facto segregation in the educational system, to actively encourage the diversification of educational and professional choices for women and men and to offer incentives for young women to enter traditionally male-dominated fields of study. The Committee urges the State party to ensure the necessary budgetary allocation for the implementation of various projects and programmes, and it requests the State party to provide, in its next report, information on the measures taken and their gender impact, as well as information about access to education for girls from minority and refugee communities and for girls living in the street.**

**Employment**

33. The Committee is concerned about the persistence of discrimination against women in the labour market, in particular the high rate of unemployment affecting women, a wide gender gap, and occupational segregation and discriminatory recruitment practices. It also notes with concern that the Labour Code does not fully reflect the principle of equal remuneration for women and men for work of equal value. It remains concerned about the concentration of women in the informal sector, with no social security or other benefits. The Committee is further concerned about the absence of specific legal provisions and concrete measures to address sexual harassment in the workplace. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned about the insufficient legislative framework for adequate protection against discrimination in all aspects of employment and the poor implementation of the Labour Code, coupled with its weak enforcement by the Labour Inspectorate.

**34. The Committee requests the State party to ensure equal opportunities for women in the labour market, in accordance with article 11 of the Convention. To this end, the Committee urges the State party to adopt effective measures in the formal labour market to eliminate both horizontal and vertical occupational segregation, narrow and close the wage gap between women and men and apply the principle of equal remuneration and equal opportunities at work. It encourages the State party to regulate the informal sector to ensure**



**that women in this sector are not exploited and are provided social security and other benefits. The State party is further encouraged to enact specific legal provisions to prohibit, and adopt concrete measures to address, sexual harassment in the workplace. The Committee urges the State party to consider amending its Labour Code 2003 so as to introduce a general prohibition of discrimination that would explicitly prohibit discrimination in all aspects of employment, including discriminatory recruitment practices.**

#### **Female domestic workers**

35. The Committee notes with concern that article 4 (b) of the Labour Code stipulates that the provisions of that law shall not apply to workers in domestic service, including foreign workers. It also notes with concern the rising number of migrant domestic workers, including females, the absence of legal protection afforded to them and the fact that they are often not aware of their rights and, in practice, cannot easily file complaints and gain redress in cases of abuse.

**36. The Committee recommends that the Labour Code be amended in order to apply to domestic workers, including migrant domestic workers, or that new legislation be adopted to provide for their protection. It also recommends that the State party take appropriate measures to protect migrant domestic workers, particularly women domestic workers, that migrant workers in domestic service should have access to mechanisms for bringing complaints against employers and that all abuses, including ill-treatment, should be promptly investigated and punished.**

#### **Nationality**

37. The Committee notes that the nationality law has been amended under Law No. 154 of 2004, which grants gender equality regarding the transfer of Egyptian nationality to the children of a man or a woman who marries a foreigner. The Committee is concerned, however, that Egyptian women cannot pass their nationality on to their foreign husbands, unlike Egyptian men who have such right after two years of marriage, and it is also concerned that the children of Egyptian women married to foreigners from certain countries are still encountering obstacles in passing their nationality to their children.

**38. The Committee requests the State party to amend the nationality law so as to bring it into conformity with article 9 of the Convention. The Committee also calls upon the State party to remove any obstacles to the practical implementation of the law.**

#### **Health**

39. While commending the efforts made by the State party to improve the health-care infrastructure and the decrease in maternal mortality rates (from 84 per 100,000 live births in 2000 to 55 per 100,000 live births in 2008), the Committee is concerned at the absence of any statistics or data on maternal morbidity. The Committee is also concerned at the limited access to reproductive and sexual health services, especially in rural areas, and that emergency contraception is generally not provided. The Committee is further concerned at the lack of information on women's mental health status.

40. **The Committee calls upon the State party to take all necessary measures to improve women’s access to health care and health-related services, within the framework of the Committee’s general recommendation No. 24. It urges the State party to conduct comprehensive national surveys on maternal mortality and morbidity, publish all findings and include, in its next report, gender-disaggregated data on morbidity rates, both at the national level and in urban and rural areas. The Committee requests the strengthening and expansion of efforts to increase knowledge of and access to affordable contraceptive methods throughout the country and to ensure that women in rural areas do not face barriers in accessing family-planning information and services. It also recommends that sex education be widely promoted and targeted at adolescent girls and boys, with special attention to the prevention of early pregnancy and the control of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS. The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Health promote and raise awareness regarding emergency contraceptives among women of all ages, highlighting their benefits in protection against unwanted pregnancies in cases of rape. The Committee also calls upon the State party to provide information about women’s mental health status, as well as their access to mental health services, in its next periodic report.**

#### **Female genital mutilation**

41. While welcoming the recent criminalization of female genital mutilation (FGM) and measures taken in the context of the national campaign to counter this practice, including the “FGM-free village” projects, the Committee remains seriously concerned about the persistence and high prevalence of this harmful practice, which is a grave violation of girls’ and women’s human rights and of the State party’s obligations under the Convention. The Committee also notes with concern the serious health complications for girls and women arising out of this practice, which in some cases may lead to death, and the impunity of perpetrators. In this respect, the Committee is concerned at the loophole in the current law which allows doctors to perform female genital mutilation if there is a “medical necessity”.

42. **Further to its general recommendations Nos. 14 and 19, the Committee calls on the State party to ensure the effective implementation of the prohibition of female genital mutilation, including through Law No. 126 of 2008, as well as the prosecution and adequate punishment of perpetrators of this practice. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and increase its awareness-raising and educational efforts targeted at both men and women, with the support of civil society organizations and religious authorities, in order to completely eliminate female genital mutilation and its underlying cultural justifications. Such efforts should include the design and implementation of effective educational campaigns to combat traditional and family pressures in favour of this practice, particularly among those who are illiterate, especially parents. The Committee requests the State party to include information about the impact of such measures in its next report.**

#### **Rural women**

43. While noting that rural women constitute the majority of women in the State party and the workforce in the agricultural sector, the Committee reiterates its concern at the very limited information and statistical data provided on the situation

of women in rural and remote areas, particularly on the issues of health, education, labour and employment, and participation in socio-political life. The Committee notes the recent Government campaign, but it is concerned at the high number of rural women who still lack personal identity cards, which prevents them from fully enjoying their rights as citizens, including registering as voters and obtaining work and State services.

**44. The Committee requests the State party to include in its next report comprehensive data on the situation of rural women in all areas covered by the Convention. The Committee also requests the State party to accelerate the process of issuance of identity cards to all women, including women in rural and remote areas.**

#### **Vulnerable groups of women**

45. The Committee is concerned at the very limited information and statistics provided about vulnerable groups of women and girls, including older women, women with disabilities, refugee women and girls living in the street. The Committee is also concerned that those women and girls often suffer from multiple forms of discrimination, especially with regard to access to education, employment and health care, protection from violence and access to justice.

**46. The Committee requests the State party to provide, in its next report, a comprehensive picture of the de facto situation of vulnerable groups of women and girls in all areas covered by the Convention and information on specific programmes and achievements.**

#### **Marriage and family relations**

47. While commending the State party for recent amendments to the taxation law and for having raised the age of marriage from 16 to 18 years for both males and females, the Committee is concerned about the high number of early marriages of girls, especially in rural areas, and at the continued legal authorization of polygamy. The Committee also notes with concern that legal provisions relating to personal status, in particular concerning marriage, divorce, the custody of children and inheritance, do not provide equal rights for women and men. In this respect, the Committee expresses its concern at “urfi” marriages and at the precarious situation of Christian women married to Muslim men with regard to divorce, custody and inheritance. The Committee is further concerned that judges presiding over family courts, which are the only courts dealing with family-related disputes, do not have the required knowledge and expertise and that there are no female judges in the family courts. The Committee is also concerned that family court judgements may not be implemented, owing to a lack of adequate enforcement mechanisms.

**48. The Committee calls upon the State party to undertake a comprehensive review of its personal status laws, ensuring that women and men have equal rights to marriage, divorce, the custody of children and inheritance, and it recommends that the State party consider issuing a unified family law on personal status covering both Muslims and Christians. The Committee also calls upon the State party to implement measures aimed at eliminating polygamy in all cases, as called for in the Committee’s general recommendation No. 21, and to take all necessary measures to combat the practice of early marriage. The Committee further recommends that training sessions be**

**organized to ensure that family judges are appropriately equipped and specialized in family law issues and that female judges be appointed to the family courts. The Committee calls upon the State party to establish effective mechanisms for the timely enforcement of family court judgements.**

49. The Committee reiterates its concern that women who seek divorce by unilateral termination of their marriage contract (khula) under Law No. 1 of 2000 can only obtain such a divorce if they forgo alimony and return their dowry. The Committee is further concerned that the lack of provision for the equal distribution of marital property upon divorce leads to the economic vulnerability of the wife.

**50. The Committee calls on the State party to consider a revision of Law No. 1 of 2000, in order to eliminate the above-mentioned financial discrimination against women.** The Committee further calls upon the State party to provide for the equal distribution of property accumulated during marriage upon divorce, taking into consideration non-financial contributions to the accumulation of marital property.

#### **Data collection and analysis**

51. The Committee is concerned that the report did not provide sufficient statistical data on the situation of women in all areas covered by the Convention. The Committee is also concerned at the lack of information on the impact of measures taken, obstacles encountered and results achieved in various areas of the Convention.

**52. The Committee calls upon the State party to strengthen its system of data collection, including through the use of measurable indicators to assess trends in the situation of women and in progress made towards the de facto equality of women, and to allocate sufficient budgetary resources for that purpose. The Committee also requests the State party to include in its next report statistical data and analysis, disaggregated by sex, rural and urban areas and State and governorate levels, indicating the impact of policy and programmatic measures, the obstacles encountered and the results achieved.**

#### **Optional Protocol**

**53. While noting that this issue is under consideration in the State party, the Committee calls upon the State party to accede to the Optional Protocol to the Convention.**

#### **Preparation of next report**

**54. The Committee requests the State party to ensure the wide participation of all ministries and public bodies in the preparation of its next report, as well as to consult a variety of women's and human rights organizations during that phase.**

#### **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

**55. The Committee urges the State party, in the implementation of its obligations under the Convention, to fully utilize the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which reinforce the provisions of the Convention, and**

requests the State party to include information thereon in its next periodic report.

#### **Millennium Development Goals**

56. The Committee emphasizes that full and effective implementation of the Convention is indispensable for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It calls for the integration of a gender perspective and an explicit reflection of the provisions of the Convention in all efforts aimed at the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and requests the State party to include information thereon in its next periodic report.

#### **Dissemination**

57. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Egypt of the present concluding observations in order to make the people, including Government officials, politicians, parliamentarians and women's and human rights organizations, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure the de jure and de facto equality of women, as well as the further steps that are required in that regard. The Committee recommends that the dissemination should include the local community level. The State party is encouraged to organize a series of meetings to discuss progress achieved in the implementation of the present observations. The Committee requests the State party to continue to disseminate widely, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly on the theme "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

#### **Ratification of other treaties**

58. The Committee notes that the adherence of the State party to the nine major international human rights instruments<sup>1</sup> would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the Government of Egypt to consider ratifying the treaty to which it is not yet a party, that is, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

#### **Follow-up to concluding observations**

59. The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps undertaken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 16 and 24 above.

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<sup>1</sup> The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**Technical assistance**

60. **The Committee recommends that the State party avail itself of technical assistance in the development and implementation of a comprehensive programme aimed at the implementation of the above recommendations and the Convention as a whole. The Committee also calls upon the State party to strengthen further its cooperation with specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Statistics Division and the Division for the Advancement of Women in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat.**

**Date of next report and reporting guidelines**

61. The Committee requests the State party to respond to the concerns expressed in the present concluding observations in its next periodic report under article 18 of the Convention. The Committee invites the State party to submit its next periodic report on 5 February 2014.

62. The Committee invites the State party to follow the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents, approved at the fifth inter-committee meeting of the human rights treaty bodies, in June 2006 (HRI/MC/2006/3 and Corr.1). The treaty-specific reporting guidelines adopted by the Committee at its fortieth session, in January 2008, must be applied in conjunction with the harmonized reporting guidelines on a common core document. Together, they constitute the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The treaty-specific document should be limited to 40 pages, while the updated common core document should not exceed 60-80 pages.

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