

MALDIVES

CEDAW

RESERVATIONS AND DECLARATIONS

(Unless otherwise indicated, the reservations and declarations were made upon ratification, accession or succession)

23 June 1999

Reservations:

...

2. The Government of the Republic of Maldives reserves its right to apply article 16 of the Convention concerning the equality of men and women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations without prejudice to the provisions of the Islamic Sharia, which govern all marital and family relations of the 100 percent Muslim population of the Maldives."

Note

On 29 January 1999, the Government of Maldives notified the Secretary-General of a modification of its reservation made upon accession. In keeping with the depositary practice followed in similar cases, the Secretary-General proposed to receive the modification in question for deposit in the absence of any objection on the part of any of the contracting States, either to the deposit itself or to the procedure envisaged, within a period of 90 days from the date of its notification (i.e. 25 March 1999). No objection having been received, the modification was accepted for deposit upon the expiration of the 90 day period, that is to say on 23 June 1999. The text of the reservations made upon accession read as follows:

Reservations:

"The Government of the Republic of Maldives will comply with the provisions of the Convention, except those which the Government may consider contradictory to the principles of the Islamic Sharia upon which the laws and traditions of the Maldives is founded.

Furthermore, the Republic of Maldives does not see itself bound by any provisions of the Convention which obliges to change its Constitution and laws in any manner."

In this regard, the Secretary-General received communications from various States on the dates indicated hereinafter:

Finland (17 August 1999):

"The Government of Finland objected in 1994 to the reservations made by the Government of Maldives upon accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Government of Finland has now examined the contents of the modified reservation made by the Government of the Republic of Maldives to the said Convention.

The Government of Finland welcomes with satisfaction that the Government of the Republic of Maldives has specified the reservations made at the time of its accession to the Convention. However, the reservations to Article 7 (a) and Article 16 still include elements which are objectionable. The Government of Finland therefore wishes to declare that it assumes that the Government of the Republic of Maldives will ensure the implementation of the rights recognised in the Convention and will do its utmost to bring its national legislation into compliance with obligations under the Convention with a view to withdrawing the reservation. This declaration does not preclude the entry into force of the Convention between the Maldives and Finland".

Germany (16 August 1999):

The modification does not constitute a withdrawal or a partial withdrawal of the original reservations to the Convention by the Republic of the Maldives. Instead the modification constitutes a new reservation to articles 7 a (right of women to vote in all elections and public referenda and be eligible for elections to all publicly elected bodies) and 16 (elimination of discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations) of the Convention extending and reinforcing the original reservations.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany notes that reservations to treaties can only be made by a State when signing, ratifying, accepting, approving or acceding to a treaty (article 19 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties). After a State has bound itself to a treaty under international law it can no longer submit new reservations or extend or add to old reservations. It is only possible to totally or partially withdraw original reservations, something unfortunately not done by the Government of the Republic of the Maldives with its modification.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany objects to the modification of the reservations".

(Note 37, Chapter IV.8, Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General)

Note

On 31 March 2010, the Government of the Republic of Maldives notified the Secretary-General of its decision to withdraw its reservation regarding article 7(a). The reservation read as follows:

"...The Government of the Republic of Maldives expresses its reservation to article 7(a) of the Convention, to the extent that the provision contained in the said paragraph conflicts with the

provision of article 34 of the Constitution of the Republic of Maldives... ." *(Note 38, Chapter IV.8, Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General)*

OBJECTIONS MADE TO STATE PARTY'S RESERVATIONS AND DECLARATIONS

(Unless otherwise indicated, the objections were made upon ratification, accession or succession)

Austria, 26 October 1994

With regard to the reservations made by Maldives upon accession:

"The reservation made by the Maldives is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention and is therefore inadmissible under article 19 (c) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties and shall not be permitted, in accordance with article 28 (2) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Austria therefore states that this reservation cannot alter or modify in any respect the obligations arising from the Convention for any State Party thereto."

Canada, 25 October 1994

With regard to the reservations made by Maldives upon accession:

"In the view of the Government of Canada, this reservation is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (article 28, paragraph 2). The Government of Canada therefore enters its formal objection to this reservation. This objection shall not preclude the entry into force of the Convention as between Canada and the Republic of Maldives."

Finland, 5 May 1994

With regard to the reservations made by Maldives upon accession:

In the view of the Government of Finland, the unlimited and undefined character of the said reservations create serious doubts about the commitment of the reserving State to fulfil its obligations under the Convention. In their extensive formulation, they are clearly contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention. Therefore, the Government of Finland objects to such reservations.

The Government of Finland also recalls that the said reservations are subject to the general principle of treaty interpretation according to which a party may not invoke the provisions of its

domestic law as a justification for failure to perform its treaty obligations.

The Government of Finland does not, however, consider that this objection constitutes an obstacle to the entry into force of the Convention between Finland and Maldives."

Germany

The Federal Republic of Germany considers that the reservations made by Egypt regarding article 2, article 9, paragraph 2, and article 16, by Bangladesh regarding article 2, article 13 (a) and article 16, paragraph 1 (c), and (f), by Brazil regarding article 15, paragraph 4, and article 16, paragraph 1 (a), (c), (g) and (h), by Jamaica regarding article 9, paragraph 2, by the Republic of Korea regarding article 9 and article 16, paragraph 1 (c), (d), (f) and (g), and by Mauritius regarding article 11, paragraph 1 (b) and (d), and article 16, paragraph 1 (g), are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (article 28, paragraph 2) and therefore objects to them. In relation to the Federal Republic of Germany, they may not be invoked in support of a legal practice which does not pay due regard to the legal status afforded to women and children in the Federal Republic of Germany in conformity with the above-mentioned articles of the Convention. This objection shall not preclude the entry into force of the Convention as between Egypt, Bangladesh, Brazil, Jamaica, the Republic of Korea, Mauritius and the Federal Republic of Germany.

Objections of the same nature were also formulated by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany in regard to reservations made by various states, as follows:

...

vi) 24 October 1994: In respect of the reservations made by Maldives.

Netherlands, 14 July 1994

The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands considers that the declarations made by India regarding article 5 (a) and article 16, paragraph 1, of the Convention are reservations incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (article 28, paragraph 2).

The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands considers that the declaration made by India regarding article 16, paragraph 2, of the Convention is a reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (article 28, para. 2).

The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands considers that the declaration made by Morocco expressing the readiness of Morocco to apply the provisions of article 2 provided that they do not conflict with the provisions of the Islamic Shariah, is a reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (article 28, paragraph 2).

The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands considers that the declaration made by Morocco regarding article 15, paragraph 4, of the Convention is a reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (article 28, paragraph 2).

The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands considers that the reservations made by Morocco regarding article 9, paragraph 2, and article 16 of the Convention are reservations incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (article 28, paragraph 2).

The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has examined the reservations made by the Maldives [...]. The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands considers the said reservations incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention.

The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands objects to the above-mentioned declarations and reservations.

These objections shall not preclude the entry into force of the Convention as between India, Morocco, the Maldives and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Norway, 25 October 1994

With regard to the reservations made by Maldives upon accession:

"In the view of the Government of Norway, a reservation by which a State party limits its responsibilities under the Convention by invoking general principles of internal law may create doubts about the commitments of the reserving State to the object and purpose of the Convention and, moreover, contribute to undermine the basis of international treaty law. It is in the common interest of States that treaties to which they have chosen to become parties also are respected, as to their object and purpose, by all parties. Furthermore, under well established international treaty law, a State is not permitted to invoke internal law as justification for its failure to perform its treaty obligations. For these reasons, the Government of Norway objects to Maldives reservations.

The Government of Norway does not consider this objection to constitute an obstacle to the entry into force of the above-stated Convention between the Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Maldives."

Portugal, 26 October 1994

With regard to the reservations made by Maldives upon accession:

"The Government of Portugal considers that the reservations formulated by the Maldives are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention and they are inadmissible under article 19 (c) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

Furthermore, the Government of Portugal considers that these reservations cannot alter or modify in any respect the obligations arising from the Convention for any State party thereto."

Sweden

17 March 1986

"The Government of Sweden considers that [the following reservations] are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (article 28, paragraph 2) and therefore objects to them:

...

"Indeed the reservations in question, if put into practice, would inevitably result in discrimination against women on the basis of sex, which is contrary to everything the Convention stands for. It should also be borne in mind that the principles of the equal rights of men and women and of non-discrimination on the basis of sex are set forth in the Charter of the United Nations as one of its purposes, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and in various multilateral instruments, to which Thailand, Tunisia and Bangladesh are parties.

...

"In this context the Government of Sweden wishes to take this opportunity to make the observation that the reason why reservations incompatible with the object and purpose of a treaty are not acceptable is precisely that otherwise they would render a basic international obligation of a contractual nature meaningless. Incompatible reservations, made in respect of the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, do not only cast doubts on the commitments of the reserving states to the objects and purpose of this Convention, but moreover, contribute to undermine the basis of international contractual law. It is in the common interest of states that treaties to which they have chosen to become parties also are respected, as to object and purpose, by other parties."

Subsequently, the Secretary-General received, from the Government of Sweden, objections of the same nature as the one above with regard to reservations made by the following States on the dates indicated hereinafter:

...

- 26 October 1994 with regard to the reservations made by Maldives upon accession. The Government of Sweden also stated that: "The Government of Sweden therefore objects to these reservations and considers that they constitute an obstacle to the entry into force of the Convention between Sweden and the Republic of Maldives.";

...

Note

...

...[O]n 12 February 1997, the Secretary-General received from the Government of Denmark the following communication with regard to reservations made by Kuwait upon ratification:

"The Government of Denmark finds that the said reservations are covering central provisions of the Convention. Furthermore it is a general principle of international law that internal law may not be invoked as justification for failure to perform treaty obligations. The Government of Denmark finds that the reservations are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention and accordingly inadmissible and without effect under international law. Consequently, the Government of Denmark objects to these reservations.

It is the opinion of the Government of Denmark that no time limit applies to objections against reservations, which are inadmissible under international law.

The Convention remains in force in its entirety between Kuwait and Denmark.

The Government of Denmark recommends the Government of Kuwait to reconsider its reservations to the [said] Convention."

On that same date, the Secretary-General also received from the Government of Denmark, communications, identical in essence, *mutatis mutandis*, as the one made for Kuwait, with regard to reservations made by Lesotho upon ratification... and Malaysia..., Maldives (see also Note 45) and Singapore upon accession...

...

(Note 31, Chapter IV.8, Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General)

(Ed. note: for other objections, see Note under Reservations and Declarations, above)