

## UKRAINE

### CEDAW A/39/45 (1984)

152. The Committee considered the initial report of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (CEDAW/C/5/Add.11) at its 16<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> meetings, held on 5 and 10 August 1983 (CEDAW/C/SR.16 and 21).

153. The report was introduced by the representative of the State party who underlined that the Ukrainian SSR, a sovereign Soviet socialist State associate with other Soviet republics in the USSR, had its own Constitution, which took into account the specific features of the Republic. According to article 74 of the USSR Constitution and article 71 of the Ukrainian Constitution, the laws of the USSR applied in the territory of the Ukrainian SSR; however, the Republic enacted its own legislation based on the principles contained in the Constitution of the USSR.

154. As a result of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the principle of equality of the sexes had come to be applied for the first time in history and had become an integral part of the policy of the State.

155. The principle of equality of the sexes was expressly laid down in the Constitution of the Ukrainian SSR and was guaranteed by a broad spectrum of legislative, economic and social measures. The policies of both the Party and the Government for the advancement of women had been further developed since the 26<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, which had adopted a social development programme for 1981 to 1985 and for the period ending in 1990, with a view to establishing favourable conditions for women to combine their work more completely with social and political activity and with motherhood. The legislation of the Republic had been altered to reflect that problem. In particular, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, by its decree of 24 January 1983, had introduced amendments and additions to the Labour Code.

156. The law adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR concerning work co-operatives and their roles in the administration of enterprise institutions and bodies directly influenced the application of the principle of equality between the sexes by, *inter alia*, entrusting the co-operatives with the task of formulating and implementing measures designed to improve the working conditions of women workers and to increase protection for mothers and children.

157. The observance of legislation to protect women in matters relating to work, social life and motherhood was monitored by the Standing Commission of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR and similar committees at the regional level. The Standing Commission was empowered to sponsor legislative proposals concerning health, culture and social life. It also investigated the working conditions of women in various industrial sectors and formulated appropriate recommendations.

158. The representative of the State party was commended both on her presentation and on the organization of the report. Members were impressed with the measures taken to implement the Convention and with the details on legislative measures given in the report. Similarities between the Ukrainian SSR and the USSR reports were noted by some experts and they were attributed to the

similarities of the social, political and economic systems.

159. It was observed that there was a definite emphasis placed on motherhood, its protection and emulation as reflected in references to the honorary title of “Mother Heroine”, the order of “Glory of Motherhood” and the maternity medals, first and second class. Clarification was sought about the basis for the granting of such awards.

160. Regarding article 2 of the Convention, the experts asked in what ways constitutional guarantees were implemented and if the Convention could be referred to in the courts. They were also interested to know if women were informed about their rights, what were the remedies available for women who were victims of discrimination, whether such cases had been brought before the courts and whether legal aid was provided. In that connection, the experts noted that there had been a special committee on the problems of women and children since 1976 and asked if it had been inspired by the World Conference of the International Women’s Year, held at Mexico City in 1975, or had anything to do with the United Nations Decade for Women. They wished to know whether the special committee could make recommendations and, if so, to which body, and, if women could make a complaint to it and what, if any, were the remedies provided.

161. Noting the mention in the report of the task of eliminating all prejudices (article 5), the experts wished to know if all prejudices and stereotyped attitudes had disappeared from Ukrainian society and, if not, what measures were being taken to that end, particularly regarding customs based on the idea of superiority of one of the sexes. Regarding matters covered by article 16 of the Convention, the experts were interested in knowing what were the “customs of the past” referred to in the reports, and to what extent it was expected that the law could really achieve their eradication. They also asked for examples of such customs.

162. Regarding the participation of women in political life and in the decision-making process (article 7), the experts requested examples of legislative initiatives taken by women in such bodies. Since the report stated that Ukrainian women represented their country in international forums as well as in the United Nations system, statistics on numbers, proportions and levels of those women were also requested.

163. The experts noted the detailed information given in the report about the acquisition and loss of nationality (article 9) and asked whether a choice was given to the spouses in case one of them wanted to acquire the nationality of the other. Noting that the nationality of a child was to be determined by agreement between the parents, the experts wished to know what happened if no agreement could be reached.

164. Several members were also satisfied that the Government had tried to eradicate “harmful relics and customs” from the past, as well as prostitution, and it was asked what those customs were and how they, including prostitution, were being eliminated.

165. The experts said that they were impressed by the achievements of the Ukrainian SSR in the field of education and asked if education before school age was of a sexist nature. Commenting on the system of scholarships given to students, their access to specialized schools and institutes of higher

education, some experts asked for clarification as they felt that the provisions might be in contradiction to the stated principle of equal access to education.

166. Noting that public education was free, some experts requested clarification regarding the “total State support” mentioned in the report and asked what criterion of selection was applied. The experts also wished to know to what extent women had access to higher learning, if they used the system of evening classes and correspondence courses, and what was the number of women working in the education sector and their level.

167. Various experts wished to know what were the rules governing the validity of marriage (article 16, 1 (b)), as the report, while stipulating mutual consent, also referred to “other conditions”. Also they inquired about the reasons for the provision of different minimum ages of marriage for men and women and inquired regarding the choice of family name. The experts asked what were the rights and duties of parents after divorce and how the upbringing of children was organized in cases of dissolution of marriage.

168. Additional information was requested on the situation of children born out of wedlock or born in common law unions and whether adoption by a single person - man or woman - was possible.

169. The report contained several references to marriage or counselling centres, but it did not say, as one expert remarked, whether there were family-planning centres. It was asked whether spouses had access to contraception and free abortion and if they had a free choice in the spacing and number of their children. In order to have an idea of the general implications of laws pertaining to family and motherhood, the Committee requested population indicators to facilitate its consideration of the report.

170. Several experts said that additional clarification about the status of property and the question of inheritance was needed. They asked for information on how spouses could dispose of common property and whether inherited goods became part of the common property. Since divorce could take place by mutual consent and also by decision of the court, they wondered under what circumstances the court intervened. Several experts remarked that mothers were given many privileges and advantages even when adopting a child, but it was not mentioned what rights were extended to couples living together, but not legally married. It also seemed that both persons in a marriage had the right to choose residence but it was not specified what that meant exactly.

171. Considering the achievements of the Ukrainian SSR in the matters covered by article 11, 2 (c) of the Convention, some experts commented that the tendency to stress the need to “create favourable conditions enabling women to combine motherhood and work” might prevent the eradication of stereotyped attitudes. They asked if the same emphasis was put on fatherhood and wondered if there was not a certain ambiguity in the main policy on that problem.

172. The experts were very interested in the facilities given to young workers to study and work at the same time and wished to know how many women continued their studies and to what level. The experts also asked whether the provisions concerning maternity leave also applied to men and under what conditions.

173. Considering the provisions of article 38 of the Ukrainian SSR Constitution about the right to guaranteed employment at a salary “commensurate with the quantity and quality of labour”, some experts asked if it referred to the principle of equal pay for equal work.

174. It was asked how the trial period mentioned in the report applied to working women, whether it also applied to men under the same conditions and what were the consequences of failing, especially since the report stated that there was no unemployment in the country. In that connection, provisions were needed regarding the conditions of workers - men and women- under fixed-term contracts.

175. The experts noted the legislation which provided a solid framework of protection for pregnant women and nursing mothers and observed that there was no indication in the report of what sanctions were imposed on delinquent enterprises. It was noted that there were different allocations of days of rest and vacations for different types of occupations and voluntary work, such as the militia, and information was requested on the types of occupation that warranted such differential treatment. It was asked if that could be interpreted as a privilege granted to certain activities. Clarification was also sought as to whether there were only women in the voluntary corps of the militia.

176. Concerning the system of pensions (article 11, 1 (e)), some experts asked what was the reason for the differences in ages for the allocation of pensions to blind workers in different sectors of the economy. They also asked if there was a pension for widows, and additional information was requested on the pensions given to mothers of many children.

177. The experts felt that more statistical information was needed about the types of occupation held by women and in what fields of industry they worked, as well as what was the number of women managers. Some experts asked what was the situation of women involved in creative work and whether they received the same advantages.

178. Noting that mothers of young children could not be requested to travel, some experts asked whether other working women were asked to do so and what happened if they refused.

179. Information was also requested regarding the prohibition of night work and work in hard or dangerous conditions and about professions which were closed to women. The experts also wished to know what were the exact functions of the State Labour Committee.

180. Several experts, although impressed by the various benefits provided by the laws of the Ukrainian SSR, wondered if there was not an over-protection of women which could possibly lead to discrimination.

181. The representative of the Ukrainian SSR reiterated that the reason her country had enacted its labour and social security legislation was that the function of motherhood should not interfere with the professional or occupational life of women. The upbringing of children was the joint responsibility of both parents even after the marriage had been dissolved. The Family Court, on the other hand, decided on matters on which parents could not reach an agreement, which could include domicile, custody and visiting rights. The same applied for couples not legally married, whose children had the same rights as those born in wedlock. The provisions of Soviet law and the coverage

of social guarantees in areas where they had a direct bearing on the performance of childbearing-related functions applied equally to women and men.

182. As regards the granting of awards for motherhood, the representative stated that statistics showed that most families averaged only one or two children. Nevertheless, as a result of the Government's family protection policy, a trend towards more families with three children was observed. The honour of "Mother Heroine" was awarded by decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR to mothers of 10 children, all of whom were still living when the last-born celebrated its first birthday. The motherhood medal was awarded to mothers of five children or more.

183. The age at which women could marry was set at 17 for biological, social and historical reasons: women generally matured earlier than men, secondary schooling ended at age 17 and Ukrainian women had traditionally been able to marry at 16 years of age. Marriage was subject to no conditions other than the minimum age and the consent of the spouses. However, article 17 of the Code laid down certain prohibitions: marriage was forbidden if one of the future spouses was already married, if the future spouses were related, whether directly, collaterally or through adoption, or if one of the spouses was recognized to be incapacitated for marriage owing to disease or mental deficiency.

184. Replying to a question regarding the effect of marriage on the names of the spouses and of the children, the representative referred to article 19 of the Code on marriage and the family according to which the spouses, at the time of marriage, could choose either to use the name of one spouse, or to retain their own names, or to add the name of the other spouse to their own name. As to children, article 62 of the same Code provided that children should have the name of their parents or the name of one of them if the parents had different names. In the latter case, if the parents could not agree on the name to be given to the child, it was for the guardianship body to decide. Dissolution of marriage did not give rise to any change in the names of the children. However, if after the dissolution of the marriage, the parent who had custody of the children wished to give them his name and they had the name of the other parent, the guardianship body could authorize the change of name with the agreement of the other parent.

185. The Constitution and the entire legislation of the Ukrainian SSR considered men and women as equal under the law.

186. The establishment of the Standing Commission of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR on Women's Life and Labour and the Protection of Mother and Child in 1976 is linked to the Republic's compliance with the decisions adopted on the occasion of the United Nations Decade for Women. The Commission had been invested with broad powers, including the right to veto the activities of the ministries and departments for compliance with the existing legislation on women's rights. In addition, it examined complaints and claims by individual women and took the necessary steps to satisfy their legitimate demands.

187. Women were informed of their rights by various organs of the national and local press. Conferences were organized and brochures were circulated and women with special problems could have free legal aid.

188. With regard to article 6 of the Convention, the representative stated that prostitution did not exist because the social cause of that problem had been eliminated. As a preventive measure, the Penal Code provided penalties for prostitution and pimping.

189. Property acquired during marriage was considered joint property, as was remuneration. However, goods brought into the marriage either by inheritance or by gift were kept by the owner. Royalties on copyright were considered as salary earned.

190. With regard to article 15 of the Convention, the representative said that under the Constitution, the Civil Code and the Marriage and Family Code, Soviet citizens were free to choose their place of residence, and the parents chose for children under the age of 15. Married couples chose their home by mutual agreement. Men and women of the Ukrainian SSR were free to leave the country and permission was granted in accordance with the legislation in force.

191. A single person could adopt a child. The laws pertaining to citizenship were the same for both sexes and dissolution of marriage did not affect that right. Abortion was free and the decision to abort depended exclusively on the spouses. It was performed in clinics, where women were also given birth control counselling and information.

192. Replying to a question concerning divorce, she said that under article 40 of the Code on Marriage and the Family, divorce could not be declared in the absence of the consent of the spouses, unless the continuation of life together and the maintenance of the family unit were impossible. In order to be sure, the court, before declaring a divorce, set a period of reconciliation which might last up to six months.

193. The rights of women in the matter of nationality were set forth in the Law of 1 December 1978 on USSR nationality. Under Soviet and Ukrainian legislation, women enjoyed the same rights as men with regard to nationality. An alien spouse wishing to acquire Soviet nationality must submit an application to that effect, pursuant to article 15 of the Law on Nationality. In the consideration of such an application, no account was taken of the race, belief, national origin or sex of the person concerned. When parents of whom one had Soviet nationality and who were both domiciled outside the territory of the Soviet Union could not agree on the nationality of a child, the question was settled in accordance with the agreements in force between the Soviet Union and the country concerned.

194. Fifty-two per cent of all workers were women. There had been a substantial increase in women's participation in the specialized technical fields where 58 per cent of women held managerial positions; 34 per cent of all engineers were women as were 35 per cent of agronomists; 71 per cent of economists were women; 62 per cent of doctors and 73 per cent of teachers, librarians and workers in related fields were women; 35.7 per cent of directors of eight-year schools were women and 34.4 per cent in secondary schools.

195. Education was free and scholarships with stipends were granted to students who received the highest marks. Financial assistance was also given to those who needed such assistance. The system of education included pre-school, mandatory general secondary, out-of-school, technical vocational, special secondary and higher education. The two sexes attended class together, and all persons had

the same access to education. Concerning the access of women to higher learning, the representative stated that 700 women held doctorates, 400 were members of the Academy and 15,500 were pursuing studies leading to a university degree. In 1959, out of every 1,000 women, 18 had completed advanced studies and 32 had secondary studies; in 1979, 20 years later, 58 of every 1,000 women had completed advanced studies and 524 had completed their secondary studies. In accordance with article 211 of the Labour Code, men and women working in the field of education were entitled to additional paid leave to sit for examinations. Under article 209 of the same Code, during the school year they were given lighter schedules or periods of leave during which they received up to 50 per cent of the average wage and in no case less than the minimum wage.

196. Concerning women's participation in the political life of the country, there were 234 elected women deputies, which represented 35.9 per cent of the total deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, a deputy chairman in the Presidium and another in the Council of Ministers. Two women headed the Social Security Ministry and the State Committee on Natural Preservation (Environment) and many women were vice-ministers in other ministries. Ukrainian women participated in large numbers in the work of international bodies, in which they were widely represented. Nevertheless, despite the requests of the Government, there were still too few of them in the United Nations Secretariat.

197. As to labour practice, the trial period mentioned in the report referred to both men and women. Labour disputes could be looked at by People's Courts but were mostly dealt with by trade unions. By law, it was forbidden not to hire either a pregnant woman or a nursing mother and recourse could be sought through the trade union or the courts.

198. The principles of work ethics in the country were: each according to his or her abilities and to each according to his or her work. Pay scales were set up in conjunction with trade unions. Harmful work from which women were barred included underground mining, steel welding and work in hardship places as in the north of the country. Additional leave was extended to men who worked in those sectors, as well as to men and women who worked irregular hours and had a long record of service or who engaged in voluntary work in social order committees. In addition, pregnant women or nursing mothers could not do night work or overtime. Women were not conscripted into the armed forces, and the number of female volunteers who were assigned to technical positions, to the commissariat or to work as mechanics, was insignificant.

199. Some experts recommended drawing the attention of States parties to the desirability of using the positive experiences referred to in the above-mentioned report in order to make further progress in eliminating discrimination against women, not only de jure, but also de facto.

## **CEDAW A/45/38 (1990)**

327. The Committee considered the second periodic report of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (CEDAW/C/13/Add.8 and Amend.1) at its 162<sup>nd</sup> meeting on 30 January 1990 (CEDAW/C/SR.162).

328. The representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic stated, in response to a question about why the second periodic report had begun with article 7, that the report was intended to update information based on developments subsequent to the initial report and that there had been no substantial change in the information under the earlier articles. The information contained in the second periodic report and, particularly, in the amendment to it, showed the effects of the vigorous renewal of society implied by perestroika and glasnost. The critical analysis that was part of that process had identified a number of problems for women requiring solution, including the situation of employment of women, women's work-load, the division of labour in the home between women and men and the related problem of underdevelopment in the necessary elements of the social infrastructure, and the participation of women in decision-making. Of particular importance was the probable effect of the process of economic reform on women.

329. The representative noted that as part of its reconsideration of the role of the International Court of Justice, the Government had in March 1989 withdrawn its reservation to article 29, paragraph 1, of the Convention.

330. In response to a question on the changes in the status of women that had taken place as a result of perestroika and glasnost, the representative stated that the major achievement was a change in the socio-political atmosphere of the country, both at the all-Union and republic levels, as a result of the election of peoples' deputies, the active role now being played by the Supreme Soviet in developing legislation that aimed at creating a state of law. There had been increasing democratization at the republic and local levels and elections in the republic would be held on 4 March 1990 on the basis of a new law. On the basis of that law, the new Parliament of the Republic would not have quotas for public organizations and although those organizations, including the Communist Party, could nominate candidates, voting was by district. In addition, a new all-Union law governing relations between the centre and the republics substantially expanded the rights of the Union Republics. The main issue was the radical economic reform to make the economy more responsive and, although it had not had the intended effect, as shown by the unbalanced market and shortages of goods, it was expected to increase the output of consumer goods and services.

331. Among the major developments for women at the Union level was the establishment of national machinery for the advancement of women, consisting of a committee of the Supreme Soviet and the new Department of Women's Affairs, Family Protection and Motherhood in the Council of Ministers. Similar changes were expected at the republic level after the forthcoming election. A second development was that, as a result of changes whereby enterprise managers were elected by work collectives, the proportion of women managers had increased and was 26 per cent of the total, ranging from 70 per cent in communications to 28 per cent in services and 23 per cent in industry. A number of enterprises, having shifted to cost-accounting, had more resources available for social benefits and improving maternity leave provisions. A solution to the food problem was being



promoted by the development of the co-operative movement, family brigades and later, perhaps, family-owned farms; corresponding changes in the law were also under consideration. Housing was being expanded with a view to assuring, that by the year 2000, each family owned a separate apartment or house. There were efforts under way to convert defence industries to civilian production and initial efforts had dealt with the production of medical equipment. A demographic decline had been noted, prompting action to deal with a sharp fall in the birth rate, which was now below a level necessary to replace the population. Decentralization in foreign economic relations, which had come about when Ukrainian enterprises were allowed direct access to their partners abroad, had led to the establishment of joint ventures producing goods in high demand. There was an increased understanding and improvement in international relations, including peoples' diplomacy of which women were a part, and an increase in the involvement of non-State organizations in charitable work. Finally, many hospitals and clinics previously reserved for government functionaries had been turned into facilities for children.

332. A question was posed about the problems women faced and the conditions that needed improving. In reply, it was noted that 92 per cent of women who could work or study did so. There were imbalances in employment in the sense that many women worked in hazardous occupations, on night shifts or other disadvantageous conditions. There were divergences in practice from the principle of equal pay for equal work since, although the principle was set in law, comparisons across individual economic sectors showed male to female wages to be in the ratio of 3:2. Women's high educational qualifications were not matched by their participation in decision-making, a fact that reflected the lack of professional training caused by the need to maintain the double burden. Measures being taken to correct that imbalance included special training programmes, evening and correspondence courses. The underlying problem was the lack of sharing of domestic responsibilities as women, on the average, were engaged in domestic work two to two and a half times more than men. Given the inadequate social infrastructure and lingering outmoded attitudes and stereotypes, women had to choose between a home and a career.

333. Regarding the Committee's question on violence against women and measures taken in that regard by the Government, it was noted that all forms of violence were punishable by law under the criminal code, including such crimes as illegal abortions, sexual assaults and rape, which was considered very serious and was punishable by 3 to 15 years in prison or worse. The Government was taking measures against all forms of crime, but the crime situation was alarming and 730 acts of violence against women had been recorded in 1989. There had been insufficient preventive work among persons with prior records.

334. Concerning a question about the problem of women abandoning their children to orphanages in order to enable them to pursue their careers and about the causes of that problem, the representative stated that some 70,000 children were orphaned or left without care, of which 34,000 remained in institutions. They included children born out of wedlock, children of alcoholics and some - very few - abandoned by their mothers. Besides family placement, new approaches were being sought.

335. On article 2, regarding a series of questions dealing with how women could use the courts to find remedies for discrimination, it was stated that full equality was set out in the Constitution and,

additionally, there were benefits set out in the labour code. In terms of cases of discrimination in labour relations, recourse could be had to the courts and legal assistance was provided, among others, through the public prosecutor's office and from trade unions and workers' councils. Although the basis for litigation was legislation adopted by the republic itself, the provisions of the Convention could also be used.

336. Regarding the jurisdiction and structure of the committees and commissions on the status of women established in the republic and the Union, the representative stated that the Standing Commission on Women, Motherhood and Children had been established in 1976 with functions deriving from the Constitution, including preparation of State policy affecting women's daily life and draft legislation, considering draft plans to ascertain their effect on women and to review regulations from individual ministries on their effect on women's daily life, as well as the consideration of complaints from individual women. Recommendations of the commission had to be considered by the appropriate organization. The commission had an elected chair and vice-chair and consisted of 33 deputies, both women and men.

337. On the Committee's question about the incidence of prostitution in the light of article 6, it was stated that it was not a widespread problem. In the 1920s, prostitution had been a reflection of poverty; in the present, it was undertaken for profit. The Government believed in dealing with it as a social problem, like alcoholism, with an emphasis on education and rehabilitation. Criminal penalties existed for cases of promoting prostitution of minors and maintaining a house of prostitution. In 1989, 152 people had been prosecuted for prostitution.

338. Concerning changes in the number and participation of women in the legislative bodies at various levels since the initial report, it was noted that measures to promote women's participation had to be linked with social protection. In practice, there had been no substantive changes in the level of participation, and the proportion was the same (36 per cent) at the level of the Supreme Soviet, but there had been qualitative improvement and a number of women occupied high posts, including the Chair of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. About one third of the members of the Communist Party were women and on the Central Committee, women made up about 10 per cent, at oblast level secretaries, 7 per cent, and one woman was a member of the Politburo. At the 27<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, 27.2 per cent of the delegates were women. Women participated in a wide range of activities, going beyond those that were traditionally women's preserve, and occupied many posts, although there were some spheres of competence where women were particularly involved. With regard to a question about whether women deputies could be nominated through the Ukrainian Republic Women's Council or whether they could present themselves as candidates in other ways, it was explained that the new law on people's deputies specified equal rights of both women and men and accordingly women could be nominated by the Women's Council, or from their place of work or their place of residence.

339. More information concerning the functioning of the Department of Affairs of Women at the Republic-wide level and the proposed national machinery was requested by the Committee and in response, it was noted that the policy was to improve the efficiency of the State machinery and for that reason, the Union-level Department on Women, Family Protection and Children had been created based on comments by people's deputies. It was expected to enhance women's participation.

Although there was currently no equivalent in the Ukrainian SSR, it was believed that one might be considered following the forthcoming republic elections.

340. Concerning questions about the characteristics of the system of women's councils, it was stated that they were public organizations of women in their place of work or residence. The 27<sup>th</sup> Party Congress in 1986 had adopted measures to strengthen their traditional role as advocates for women's advancement. There were 57,000 councils (of which 24,000 were in labour collectives) and the membership at all levels included 500,000 women. The councils conducted seminars, created consciousness, participated in drafting legislation, helped liaise with the government bodies. They dealt with population policy through special programmes, and participated with other institutions.

341. Referring to a question under article 8 on the specific number, proportions and levels of women representing the Republic in international forums, the representative stated that 40 per cent of the members of delegations to other socialist countries on questions of economic co-operation were women, as well as 21.4 per cent of such delegations to Western countries, 4.2 per cent of delegations to international organizations and 10 per cent of the persons sent to work in the secretariats of international organizations.

342. A question about the areas in which there had been an increase in the percentage of women in institutions of higher education, relevant to article 10, was answered by noting that there had been no change from the previous report, although there had been a slight increase in the percentage of male students in teacher training and that was considered a positive development as the teaching profession had been considerably feminized. Regarding several questions about sex stereotyping in textbooks and curricula and the existence of sex education, it was stated that a reform of the education system was under way, including an expansion of the rights of individual schools and their students to select textbooks. The curricula of both primary and secondary schools included material on the family and sharing of responsibilities and efforts were being made to re-orient teachers with a view to eradicating outmoded stereotypes. Responding to a question about why there had been an increase in college students with families, it was noted that the legal age for marriage was 18 for men and 17 for women and that there was a tendency towards earlier marriage, which was related to a more open view of sexual relations and improved social protection for married students, for whom housing was provided.

343. A series of questions on articles 10 and 11 dealt with the Government's approach to women's employment and the educational requisites for it in the context of perestroika. In quantitative terms, women were well represented in all fields of study as well as branches of the economy. A qualitative assessment based on studies suggested that workers' collectives in which there were both women and men were more effective than those having only one sex. The State could use both administrative measures and economic incentives to press for policies of equality. It was noted that a number of fields like the food or textile industries were feminized, but the re-equipping of the textile industry, for example, was leading to a slight increase in the number of men. Health and education were also feminized, but efforts were being made to recruit more male doctors and teachers and it had been noted that an increase in the pay to doctors attracted more men to medicine. Among school directors, women predominated at the primary level and made up 40 per cent at secondary levels. Participation of women in vocational training was high and more women were entering fields like

metallurgy and engineering. Restructuring of enterprises was expected to lead to more women in higher positions, but to achieve that, there was still a need to provide social support to women so as to eliminate the double burden. That has been helped by the high representation of women in the Supreme Soviet.

344. Concerning equal pay, in connection with article 11, the representative stated that there had been a general increase in wages over the past several years; some predominantly female fields especially had seen wages rise, and salary scales in all fields were being reviewed. On occupational safety, it was noted that it was government policy to improve working conditions. With regard to the repercussions of government policy to reduce drastically the number of women working in manual labour or in jobs involving harmful working conditions, it was stated that plans were being put into effect. Steps had been taken to ensure that women kept their pay while being retrained or relocated. The advice of trade unions and women's councils on those matters was sought and taken into account. On child-care, including the question of who takes care of children who cannot find places in child-care institutions, it was noted that there was a broad network of pre-schools, especially in urban areas, but that in rural areas only 45 per cent of the needs had been met. Extended paid leave would help. All mothers had the right to maternity and child-care leave. Moreover, as state and collective farms switched to self-financing, they would be able to provide child-care from their own resources. When there were not enough places, other means had to be found, including having the mother work at home, obtaining the help of a relative (like the grandmother) or with help from the women's council.

345. In response to a question about the relatively high infant mortality rate, in relation to article 12, it was stated that new facilities for child health were being developed and, with better facilities and services, infant mortality was decreasing. Outreach health service programmes were designed to help improve services for families and to help protect women. Special efforts had been undertaken in the wake of the Chernobyl disaster, including relocation of people away from contaminated areas, provision of preventive services for children, efforts to ensure uncontaminated food and water supplies and other measures. On the question of abortion, it was noted that they were legal when performed in a medical institution under a doctor's supervision, but that it was illegal to force a woman to have an abortion against her will. The figures on abortions were: 1985 - 1,345,475; 1986 - 1,166,039; 1987 - 1,068,000; 1988 - 733,000.

346. With regard to article 13, on women's economic rights, it was stated that women had equal rights with men. There was a slight difference in that the age for legal marriage was lower for girls than for boys, although local authorities could lower either by one year.

347. A general decline in the size of the rural population was noted in response to a question under article 14 about whether rural women had the same access to health care as urban women. The population plan sought to raise the birth rate and there were efforts to increase the medical services available in rural areas. Construction of new clinics, however, was behind schedule and collective and State farms were investing in health services and infrastructure.

348. A question was posed under article 16 about the legal position of couples living in consensual unions and in reply it was stated that the code on marriage defined that on the basis of formal

registration, but that, for children born outside of formal marriage, when family relations could be shown to exist and there was a voluntary recognition of paternity, consensual unions did receive some recognition. Concerning the high divorce rate, it was stated that there had been a sharp drop in family stability and some 36 per cent of marriages ended in divorce, although that seemed to be declining recently. There were some 1.5 million children in those families. The survey undertaken by the Soviet Women's Committee had identified male alcoholism, infidelity, lack of sharing in domestic responsibilities, problems in daily life and lack of mutual understanding as reasons for divorce. Efforts were made to reconcile, but some 96 per cent of the separation cases ended in divorce. A higher proportion of divorced men than divorced women remarried.

349. Members noted the comprehensiveness and frankness of the introduction to the report, hoping that with the advent of glasnost and perestroika, many changes would take place, including those leading to a greater participation by women in political and decision-making. Concern was expressed that economic restructuring could lead to a reduction in essential services, like child-care facilities, and might mean that women would pay the larger cost for the restructuring.

## **CEDAW A/51/38 (1996)**

265. The Committee considered the third periodic report of Ukraine (CEDAW/C/UKR/3 and Add.1) at its 302<sup>nd</sup> meeting, on 29 January 1996 (see CEDAW/C/SR.302).

266. In introducing the report, the representative of Ukraine highlighted the changes that the country had undergone since the report's submission in 1991, in particular, the transition from a totalitarian to a democratic regime. The Government was in the process of establishing a national machinery for the advancement of women, and several bodies had been set up to study the social situation of women and to protect women. There had also been an increase in women's non-governmental organizations. Currently, women accounted for 54 per cent of the population.

267. The representative stated that the legislation of Ukraine was consistent with the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and reported on parliamentary hearings held in July 1995 at which the implementation of the Convention had been discussed in detail. She mentioned the high level of education of women but noted that preference was given to men over women in leadership posts and that women were also not well represented in executive positions. There were no women ministers and no women in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, and women held only 4 per cent of the seats in Parliament. Women were equal to men in professional training. They had equal access to social, political and cultural activities. They received equal wages and benefited from conditions that made it possible for them to combine work with motherhood, including part-time work and other special benefits.

268. The representative mentioned several laws and measures that had been adopted to improve the situation of families with children and that a law on children would soon be enacted.

269. The representative also spoke about the severe economic crisis, which had had a major impact on the situation of working women and had increased the threat of poverty. Seventy-four per cent of the unemployed were women.

270. The representative pointed out that Ukraine was undergoing the deepest demographic crisis of the decade. In the age group between 20 and 50 years the mortality of men was more than three times higher than that of women. The life expectancy of women is, as a result, 10 years greater than that of men. The representative outlined the serious health problems of adolescent girls and said that the number of abortions exceeded the number of births. She said that a national programme of family planning had been launched in September 1995, including making contraceptives available.

271. The representative mentioned the setting up of a network of services and the allocation of funds for dealing with negative genetic effects of radiation associated with the Chernobyl incident.

### Concluding comments of the Committee

#### Introduction

272. The Committee expressed appreciation for the frank presentation of the third periodic report of Ukraine and welcomed the effort to provide updated information during extensive replies, which supplemented in large measure the statistical data that should have been included in the report. It regretted that the report did not follow the Committee's general guidelines and did not take into account its general recommendations.

#### Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention

273. The Committee acknowledged the dramatic economic crisis resulting from the transition of the country to a democratic market-oriented society and from structural adjustments. It also noted the serious ecological crisis deriving from various factors, in particular the Chernobyl incident. Both crises endangered the implementation of the Convention and the de facto enjoyment of the human rights of women.

274. In addition, the pervasive and systematic persistence of general cultural patterns and social gender stereotypes were found to be a major issue affecting the implementation of the Convention.

#### Positive aspects

275. The Committee considered that the holding of a parliamentary hearing in 1995 specifically to discuss issues related to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women showed the importance attached by the Government to the Convention and the Committee's work. It also appreciated the public impact of such a step.

276. The Committee noted with satisfaction that Ukraine had ratified all major human rights treaties and had adopted a new Act on the Effect of International Agreements on Ukrainian Territory in December 1991, by which all international treaties ratified automatically became part of domestic legislation. The Committee commended the fact that the country attached great importance to human rights in general.

277. It was also noteworthy that the Government had made commitments at the Beijing Conference on important issues relating to family life problems faced by women as a consequence of economic transition and had already established regional bodies to oversee the implementation of such special projects.

278. The Committee expressed its satisfaction at the fundamental economic and structural changes that had recently taken place in Ukraine as described in the oral presentation. It welcomed in particular the adoption of several legal measures to implement the provisions of the Convention.

279. The Committee commended the adoption of the new constitution guaranteeing the equality of men and women in all spheres of life in accordance with the Convention.

280. The Committee welcomed the fact that women with disabled or young children enjoyed early pension benefits under Ukrainian law.

### Principal subjects of concern

281. The Committee was concerned that the Government had not made any effort to combat cultural and social stereotypes of women and men.

282. The Committee noted with concern that, despite the existence of several entities to oversee issues relating to women and children, the Government had no clearly formulated policy on women, and that the national machinery on gender issues had no effective authority. It was also unclear whether and to what extent parliamentary bodies were committed to eliminating discrimination against women.

283. While acknowledging the good intentions behind legal measures adopted to protect maternity, the Committee was of the view that such measures could be overprotective and detrimental to the status of women in a market-oriented economy.

284. The Committee noted the absence of measures or plans that would enable men to share parental responsibilities on an equal footing with women.

285. The Committee was concerned about the prevailing low proportion of women in decision-making positions.

286. The Committee was very concerned about sexual stereotyping and overprotective labour legislation. It noted that protective labour laws had the sole effect of restricting women's economic opportunities, and were neither legitimate nor effective as a measure for promoting women's reproductive health. Women should have a right to free choice as to their employment, and the high rates of infant mortality and fetal abnormality resulting from the ecological disaster should be addressed as a matter of public health.

287. The Committee noted the limited access of rural women to effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning. This situation often led large numbers of women to resort to unsafe abortions.

288. Further concern was expressed at the fact that the rate of women's economic activity had declined significantly in recent years. Women constituted 80 to 90 per cent of the unemployed. This was due to the reduction of the public sector as the main employer of women and the non-recruitment of women by the emerging private sector.

289. The Committee also noted with concern that women clustered in certain occupations in which they received substantially lower wages than those paid to men employed in other occupational sectors.

290. The Committee had serious concerns regarding the health of the Ukrainian people in general and of women in particular. The problems of sustaining normal pregnancy, of birth defects and of infertility due to nuclear radiation poisoning and stress-related difficulties weighed heavily on women.



291. The Committee had serious concerns about the deep demographic crisis in the country, in particular, and the fact that the number of abortions exceeded the number of births.

292. The Committee was concerned about the growing rate of suicide and deaths related to alcohol poisoning.

293. The Committee noted with concern that the minimum age for marriage was not the same for girls as for boys.

#### Suggestions and recommendations

294. The Committee requested that Ukraine provide an explanation, in subsequent reports, of "partial non-compliance" with articles 2, paragraphs (d) and (f), 3, 5, paragraphs (a) and (b), 7, paragraph (b), 8 and 14, paragraphs (a) (b) and (h), as stated in the third periodic report and changes in their implementation status in the next report.

295. The Committee recommended that in subsequent reports further information on the status of implementation of commitments made at the Beijing Conference be provided.

296. The Committee recommended that, in view of the successful incorporation into domestic legislation of all international treaties ratified by the country, equal rights as well as human rights education should be made mandatory for judges and law enforcement agencies in Ukraine.

297. The Committee recommended that the Government provide more detailed information in the next report on violence against women, including rape, wife battering, child abuse, incest and other forms of physical and psychological violence against women, as well as on governmental measures to combat such violence.

298. The Committee further recommended that Ukraine provide detailed statistical information on women of all minorities living in the country, in particular on Crimean Tartars.

299. The Committee urged the Government to review and amend the legislation that allowed the activities of numerous sex services and the practice of hiring women as dancers, waiters or other staff to work abroad, often leading to prostitution, and to take measures to prosecute criminal offenders and to rehabilitate the victims through education, training and support services.

300. The Committee recommended that, in agreement with article 5 of the Convention, measures be adopted so that women and men shared domestic work and the care of children equally.

## **CEDAW A/57/38 part II (2002)**

262. The Committee considered the combined fourth and fifth periodic report of Ukraine (CEDAW/C/UKR/4-5 and Corr.1) at its 555th and 556th meetings, on 6 June 2002 (see CEDAW/C/SR.555 and 556).

### Introduction by the State party

263. In introducing the report, the representative of Ukraine informed the Committee that although Ukraine was a young State, formed only in 1991 when it seceded from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, during its first decade an important democratic structure had been developed, which constituted the basis for the promotion of gender equality. In 1996, Ukraine adopted a constitution that embodied the principle of the equal rights of men and women, based on the view that all people were equal in their dignity.

264. The representative informed the Committee that a Ministry of Family and Youth had been established in 1996 to implement the State policy on the family, women, young people and children. The Ministry had prepared legislation to comply with general human rights standards. In 1997, a National Plan of Action for the years 1997-2000 was launched by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, aimed at improving the situation of women and expanding their role in society. In 1999, the Verhova Rada (Parliament) adopted a declaration on general principles of State policy concerning the family and women, which provided for the enhancement of women's role in the economic, political, social, cultural and spiritual life of the country. In 2001, a family code on the equal rights and duties of women and men vis-à-vis family matters was endorsed, and a new National Plan of Action for the years 2001-2005 was adopted.

265. The representative informed the Committee of the increase in the number and impact of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and women's groups in Ukraine over the last five years. During this period, the number of national and international NGOs had increased threefold and, to strengthen the links between the Government and NGOs, the National Council of Women of Ukraine had been created. The women's movement had become very active, particularly regarding activities related to education on gender issues to combat social and cultural stereotypes. The representative pointed out, however, that difficulties had been encountered in eliminating stereotypes and ensuring gender equality at a time when Ukraine was experiencing serious economic problems resulting from the transition from a State-controlled to a free market economy.

266. The representative informed the Committee of the situation of women in the fields of education, employment and health. She noted that women and men had equal access to education, as guaranteed by the Constitution. During 2000-2001, girls constituted 49 per cent of pupils in schools and over half of the students in higher education; in addition, 48 per cent of students seeking doctorates were women. However, despite women's high qualifications, the job market continued to be segregated. Women were mainly employed in the education, health, culture and service sectors, where salaries were lower. Overall, women's salaries were 73 per cent of those of men's. The Government was

trying to remedy the horizontal segregation of the labour market through its National Plan of Action, with mandatory social insurance for the unemployed. Measures had been taken to provide allowances to facilitate job creation, while jobs had been set aside to assist sectors of the population that needed special protection, including women with children below six years of age or single mothers with children below 14 years of age. The representative informed the Committee that the Constitution provided for free health assistance as well as for measures to assist pregnant women. She noted the remarkable improvement achieved in the rate of maternal mortality, which had dropped from 34 deaths per 100,000 women in 1996 to 25 deaths per 100,000 women in 2000. During the same period, the number of abortions had also declined by one third.

267. In the 2002 elections, the number of women in local government had risen by up to 50 per cent. However, the number of women in Parliament remained low, at 5.1 per cent, while in the central organ of the executive branch, women occupied only 6 per cent of high-level posts. Political life remained largely male-dominated. Women were excluded from the centres of power and did not participate in the decision-making processes of resource allocation and management. In order to guarantee equal opportunities for women and men in political life, in 1999, a bill on State guarantees of equal rights and opportunities was proposed, which was to be considered for adoption by the new Parliament.

268. The representative informed the Committee that the Government was paying serious attention to the issue of violence against women, including domestic violence, sexual exploitation and sexual harassment. In 2001, the Act on the Prevention of Domestic Violence had been adopted. In addition, crisis centres and shelters had been set up for the social rehabilitation of women and children victims of violence. In order to combat trafficking in women and children, the Government had acceded to various international conventions to prevent trafficking and, in May 2002, had adopted a comprehensive programme against trafficking for the years 2002-2005, focused on three areas: prevention of trade in persons; prosecution; and rehabilitation.

269. Measures had been taken by Ukraine to maintain peace among the 130 nationalities coexisting in the State. Ethnic groups were protected by legal and normative instruments, including the Convention on the Protection of National Minorities, ratified in 1997.

270. In concluding, the representative noted that Ukraine had made steady progress towards achieving gender equality and advancing the status of women, particularly since 1996 when the Committee considered Ukraine's third periodic report and made valuable recommendations that had helped to create the conditions for women's empowerment. In order to accelerate progress on promoting gender equality, however, Ukraine would need to mobilize national resources. The representative also acknowledged the importance of the support provided by international organizations, including the United Nations system, for the promotion of equality between women and men in Ukraine.

## Concluding comments of the Committee

### Introduction

271. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for submitting its combined fourth and fifth periodic report, which generally follows the Committee's guidelines for the preparation of periodic reports. It commends the State party for the written replies to the issues raised by the pre-session working group and the State party's oral presentation, which provided additional information on the current situation of the implementation of the Convention in Ukraine. The Committee commends the State party on its delegation, headed by the Head of the State Committee for Family and Youth Affairs.

272. The Committee notes that governmental action, in particular the National Plan of Action to improve the situation of women, is placed within the context of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

### Positive aspects

273. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the Convention is incorporated into Ukrainian law and has precedence over conflicting national legislation.

274. The Committee welcomes the range of laws and programmes that have been introduced, including the law on the prevention of domestic violence, the criminal law that makes trafficking in persons a criminal offence and the new family code, as well as other efforts undertaken to improve the situation of women and promote gender equality, such as the elaboration of a draft law on equal opportunities.

275. The Committee expresses its satisfaction with the presence of an increasingly active civil society on women's issues in Ukraine, including many women's political parties. The Committee also commends the State party's recognition of the important role of the large number of NGOs working on women's issues.

276. The Committee notes with satisfaction the high level of women's educational achievement and the increase in the number of women in local government in some regions.

### Principal areas of concern and recommendations

277. The Committee is concerned that there is still a lack of familiarity with the Convention and the opportunities for its application, including among the judiciary, law enforcement personnel and women themselves.

278. The Committee recommends the introduction of education and training programmes on the Convention, in particular for judges, lawyers and law enforcement personnel. It recommends that awareness-raising campaigns targeted at women be undertaken so that women can avail themselves of legal remedies for violations of their rights under the Convention. The Committee invites the State

party to provide, in its next report, information about complaints filed in courts based on the Convention, as well as any court decisions that refer to the Convention.

279. The Committee is concerned at the apparent lack of understanding of discrimination against women as a multifaceted phenomenon that entails indirect and unintentional as well as direct and intentional discrimination. This understanding is a prerequisite for the effective elimination of both de jure and de facto discrimination against women.

280. The Committee recommends that policies and efforts be directed at countering both direct and indirect discrimination against women.

281. The Committee expresses concern that, although the Convention is incorporated in domestic law and the Constitution provides for the equality of all citizens, Ukrainian law does not contain a specific definition of discrimination against women and does not provide effective enforcement procedures or remedies. The Committee is concerned that it did not receive sufficient information regarding the content of the draft law on equal opportunities.

282. The Committee recommends that the State party include in its legislation a definition of discrimination, enforcement procedures and remedies for violations of women's rights under the Convention. It also recommends the inclusion of a provision allowing the adoption of temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention.

283. The Committee expresses its concern that the national machinery for the advancement of women does not have sufficient power and visibility or financial and human resources to effectively promote the advancement of women and gender equality.

284. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen the existing national machinery in order to make it more effective by providing it with adequate human and financial resources at all levels and enhancing coordination among the existing mechanisms for the advancement of women and the promotion of gender equality.

285. While recognizing that the number of women elected to office in local government has increased in some regions, the Committee is concerned about the low representation of women in high-level elected and appointed bodies, including as members of Parliament, of which only 5 per cent are women, as high-ranking officials within the executive branch, where women occupy only 6 per cent of posts, and within the state administrations and civil and diplomatic service.

286. The Committee urges the State party to take measures to increase the representation of women in elected and appointed bodies through, inter alia, the implementation of temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, in order to realize women's right to participation in all areas of public life and, particularly, at high levels of decision-making. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts in offering or supporting training programmes for current and future women leaders and carry out awareness-raising campaigns regarding the importance of women's participation in political decision-making.

287. Recognizing the efforts made by the State party to address the issue of trafficking in women and girls, including the criminal law provision against trafficking in persons, the Committee notes with concern that the extent of this problem is not reflected in the information provided in the report. It notes with concern that there is still not enough information on the subject or a comprehensive policy to address the problem.

288. The Committee urges the State party to make the issue of trafficking in women and girls a high priority and to include in its next report comprehensive information and data on the issue and on progress made in this area. It recommends the formulation of a comprehensive strategy to combat trafficking in women and girls, including within the territory of the State party, which should include the prosecution and punishment of offenders and increased international, regional and bilateral cooperation with other countries of origin, transit and destination of trafficked women and girls. It recommends the introduction of measures aimed at improving the economic situation of women so as to eliminate their vulnerability to traffickers, education initiatives for vulnerable groups, including teenage girls, as well as social support, rehabilitation and reintegration measures for women and girls who have been victims of trafficking. It calls on the State party to ensure that trafficked women and girls have the support they need so that they can provide testimony against their traffickers. It urges that training of border police and law enforcement officials provide them with the requisite skills to recognize and provide support to victims of trafficking.

289. The Committee expresses its concern about the status of women's health, especially their reproductive health. The Committee is concerned about the high number of abortions and the fact that the maternal and child mortality rates remain high. It is also concerned about the undernutrition of women, as well as iodine deficiency and other diseases among women. The Committee is concerned about the insufficiency of attention to tobacco addiction and alcoholism among women.

290. The Committee draws attention to its general recommendation No. 24 on women and health and recommends comprehensive research into the specific health needs of women, including their reproductive health, the full implementation of a life-cycle approach to women's health, the financial and organizational strengthening of family planning programmes and the provision of wide access to contraceptives for all women and men. The Committee urges the State party to reinforce programmes of sexual and reproductive education for both girls and boys in order to foster responsible sexual behaviour and further discourage abortion as a means of birth control. The Committee requests more information on the prevalence of, and measures taken against, alcoholism and tobacco consumption among women.

291. While welcoming the measures taken to combat violence against women, including the adoption of the law on the prevention of domestic violence, the inclusion of the issue under the National Plan of Action, and the fact that marital rape can be prosecuted under the Criminal Code of Ukraine, the Committee is concerned about the prevalence of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence.

292. The Committee urges the State party to place high priority on comprehensive measures to address violence against women in the family and in society. The Committee calls upon the State party to ensure that such violence is prosecuted and punished with the required seriousness and

speed, and that women victims of violence have immediate means of redress and protection. It recommends that measures be taken to provide shelters for women victims of violence and to ensure that public officials, especially law enforcement officials, the judiciary, health-care providers and social workers, are fully sensitized to all forms of violence against women. The Committee invites the State party to undertake awareness-raising measures, including a campaign of zero tolerance, to make such violence socially and morally unacceptable.

293. While noting with appreciation the high level of education among women, the Committee expresses its concern about the situation of women in the labour market, including the high rate of unemployment among women and the strong occupational segregation with a concomitant wage differential. The Committee is concerned that women are not able to receive adequate retraining to compete in the market. It is further concerned that the State party's protective labour laws restricting women's participation in night work and other areas, may create obstacles to women's participation in the labour market.

294. The Committee urges the State party to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in the labour market, including through the use of temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention. The Committee recommends that the State party design and implement special training and retraining programmes for different groups of unemployed women. It also recommends that efforts be made to eliminate occupational segregation, including through education, training and retraining. There should be additional wage increases in female-dominated sectors of public employment to close the wage gap between these and male-dominated sectors. The Committee recommends that the State party conduct regular reviews of legislation in accordance with article 11, paragraph 3, of the Convention, with a view to reducing the number of barriers that women face in the labour market. It also recommends that effective measures allowing for the reconciliation between family and professional responsibilities be strengthened and that the sharing of domestic and family tasks between women and men be promoted.

295. The Committee is concerned about the persistence of traditional stereotypes regarding the role of men and women in the family and in society at large.

296. The Committee urges the State party to design and implement comprehensive programmes in the educational system and to encourage the mass media to promote cultural changes with regard to the roles and tasks attributed to women and men, as required by article 5 of the Convention. It recommends that policies be developed and programmes implemented to ensure the eradication of traditional sex role stereotypes in the family, in employment, in politics and in society.

297. The Committee urges the State party to accept the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, concerning the meeting time of the Committee.

298. The Committee also urges the State party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

299. Taking account of the gender dimensions of declarations, programmes and platforms for action adopted by relevant United Nations conferences, summits and special sessions (such as the special session of the General Assembly to review and appraise the implementation of the Programme of

Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (the twenty-first special session), the special session of the General Assembly on children (the twenty-seventh special session), the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the Second World Assembly on Ageing), the Committee requests the State party to include information on the implementation of aspects of these documents relating to relevant articles of the Convention in its next periodic report.

300. The Committee requests the State party to respond to the concerns expressed in the present concluding comments in its next periodic report to be submitted under article 18 of the Convention. It also requests that the report address the general recommendations of the Committee and provide information on the impact of legislation, policies and programmes to implement the Convention.

301. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Ukraine of the present concluding comments in order to make the people of Ukraine, in particular government administrators and politicians, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure the de jure and de facto equality of women and the further steps required in this regard. It also requests the State party to continue to disseminate widely, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention, its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as the results of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".