



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

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## Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Pre-session working group

Forty-second session

20 October-7 November 2008

### List of issues and questions with regard to the consideration of the initial and second periodic reports

#### Bahrain

The pre-session working group considered the combined initial and second periodic report of Bahrain (CEDAW/C/BHR/2).

#### Legislation, machinery for the advancement of women and national plans

1. The report indicates in paragraphs 55-56 that the Convention became part of domestic law once it was passed. Please provide information on court or other judicial or administrative cases, if any, in which the provisions of the Convention have been invoked and please provide information on the outcome of such cases.
2. Please provide information on the number of women who have been appointed to the Constitutional Court and indicate whether there are any training programmes on the Convention for the members of the Court.
3. The report states in paragraph 80 that article 1 of the Convention still faces obstacles to full implementation. Please elaborate on measures undertaken to increase women's awareness of their constitutional and legal rights. Please provide detailed information on efforts made to overcome the social, cultural and traditional beliefs that prevent women from enjoying their rights and the impact of these efforts on the advancement of women.
4. According to paragraph 167 of the report, the Ministry of the Interior is preparing a draft law to eliminate cases of discrimination against women in relation to nationality. Please describe the current status of the draft law, provide a detailed description of its contents and indicate whether it will grant nationality to children born to a Bahraini woman who is married to a foreigner.
5. According to paragraph 92 of the report, further training and educational programmes are required for attorneys, judges and legal and judicial officials to

raise awareness of women's rights and issues. Please provide information on any programmes that have been carried out and the impact of such training.

6. The report mentions that women are still being prevented from participating in political and public life, despite measures introduced to promote their participation. Please provide information on new concrete measures, policies and nationwide training courses in women's leadership which are being envisaged to increase the number of women participating in politics and public life.

#### **Violence against women**

7. According to paragraph 122 of the report, all groups in Bahraini society are concerned with the serious problem of domestic violence. Please indicate whether any draft legislation on domestic violence is being considered and describe the legal remedies and social services available to the victims.

8. According to paragraph 125 of the report, a judicial institute was set up to train and qualify judges to handle domestic violence cases and female police officers have been trained to specialize in such cases. Please provide information on the impact of such training, statistical information on the number of domestic violence cases considered and information on the outcome of the decisions. Please also indicate whether male police officers have received such training.

9. The report states in paragraph 129 that a reform of the sharia judiciary is required to combat and handle cases of violence against women and that judges and law enforcement officers must be trained in human rights to handle such cases. Please indicate whether there has been any judiciary reform and the impact that will have on the guarantee to combat violence against women. Please also provide information on training programmes for judges and law enforcement officers aimed specifically at dealing with violence against women.

10. According to paragraph 325 of the report, the Government has referred the draft family law to the legislative branch for adoption. Paragraph 130 of the report states that the adoption of that law will reduce domestic violence and violence against women. Please provide information on the current status of that law and on the time frame for its adoption.

11. Please provide information on whether there are any national plans to create a national strategy that would involve collecting data on violence against women.

#### **Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution**

12. The report states in paragraph 136 that a division in the Ministry of the Interior has been established to prosecute persons involved in human trafficking crimes and that a draft law on the combating of trafficking in persons is under way. Please provide statistical information on the number of prosecution cases that have been carried out, the outcome of those cases and any efforts made to cooperate with foreign countries to combat trafficking. Please also provide information on the nature of the draft law on trafficking and the time frame for its adoption.

13. According to paragraph 137 of the report, women's associations and human rights associations have started to examine cases of trafficking and exploitation of women in prostitution and ways of suppressing such occurrences. Please provide information on the outcome of those studies and indicate whether awareness-raising campaigns have been introduced, including campaigns aimed at foreign workers.

Please also provide statistics on women who are being trafficked in and out of the country.

### **Stereotypes and education**

14. The report states in paragraphs 113-119 that a national strategy has been prepared to promote Bahraini women and eliminate stereotypes about the role of women. The Ministry of Information also signed a cooperation protocol with the Supreme Council for Women to take action on all types of media that show or encourage gender-based violence. Please provide information on the nature and the current status of the implementation of the strategy and the protocol.

15. The report states in paragraph 115 that the Supreme Council for Women and the Ministry of Education signed a cooperation protocol in 2006 regarding a review of the curriculum and educational aids in order to eliminate stereotypes about the role of women. Please provide information on that review and on whether it has been introduced in the educational curriculum. If not, please indicate what the obstacles are to its implementation. Please provide information on any awareness-raising measures carried out through the media and public education programmes undertaken or envisaged to make it clear that violence against women is socially and morally unacceptable.

16. The report states in paragraph 191 that the curricula plan for 2004/05 will introduce textbooks which include discussion of the social, political and economic roles of women in an effort to eliminate stereotypes regarding the roles of men and women. Please specify whether the new plan has been incorporated into the curricula and whether its implementation has been monitored to see whether goals on the elimination of stereotypes are being achieved.

### **Employment**

17. According to paragraph 136 of the report, a hotline has been established to receive complaints and offer advice, and inspectors have been appointed to monitor the conditions of foreign workers. Please provide sex-disaggregated statistical data on the number of complaints received, and indicate whether there have been any prosecution cases and, if so, the outcome of those cases. Please provide information on the work of inspectors in monitoring the working conditions of foreign women workers.

18. According to paragraph 241 of the report, efforts are being made to amend the Labour Law to benefit women migrant domestic workers. Please provide an update on the progress of the implementation of that reform and indicate whether the law allows foreign women domestic workers to enjoy the same rights enjoyed by Bahraini women. Please also indicate whether the amendments to the Labour Law will lead to the abolition of the Kafala system.

19. The report states in paragraph 248 that due to the small number of women in decision-making positions, women still face gender discrimination in employment. Please provide information on the steps taken to increase the number of women in decision-making positions and indicate whether new measures have been taken to address the issue of unemployment among women in both the public and private sectors.

20. According to paragraph 230 of the report, the private sector has not provided any nursery schools or kindergarten services. Please indicate whether there have

been any measures undertaken to establish such services and please provide statistical information on the number of such schools that have been set up.

21. The report states in paragraph 228 that women have filed complaints in relation to promotions in the workplace. Please provide information on the outcome or decisions stemming from those complaints. Please also provide information, including statistical data, on the number of complaints received in regard to sexual harassment and violence against women in the workplace.

22. According to paragraph 246 of the report, women working in unskilled occupations experience poor working conditions and receive low wages. Please indicate any measures that have been introduced to eliminate such problems and indicate whether any plans have been undertaken to protect against or prevent discrimination against women at work.

23. The report states in paragraph 249 that unemployment insurance should be established to help unemployed women. Please indicate whether unemployment insurance has been introduced and describe any other programmes that have been set up to help unemployed women gain access to employment.

### **Health**

24. According to paragraph 291 of the report, a civil association and the Ministry of Education are jointly preparing a programme to introduce reproductive health into the curriculum. Please provide information on the implementation of such programmes and indicate whether they will be introduced in all public and private schools. Please also state whether there are any measures that have been implemented aimed at women and girls specifically to increase public awareness nationwide of the risks and effects of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

25. The report states in paragraph 292 that the Government and the private sector are preparing intensive educational programmes to eliminate obstacles to family planning, including certain cultural and traditional beliefs that prevent women from practising family planning. Please provide information on the status of these programmes.

### **Marriage and family relations**

26. According to paragraph 330 of the report, married women may lose their own property to their husbands upon separation. Please indicate measures that have been taken to help such women obtain their property and explain whether the draft family law covers this issue.

27. The report indicates in paragraph 325 that a marriage contract is recognized only if it has been completed under Islamic sharia law. The report also states that there is no minimum legal age for marriage for women and men but that the age of the onset of puberty is considered to be the minimum age for marriage. Please indicate whether the draft family law will set the minimum legal age of marriage for women and men, and whether it will be consistent with the legal age of majority established in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

28. Please indicate any progress made with respect to the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Please also indicate any progress made towards acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention.