



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
12 August 2008

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Pre-session working group

Forty-third session

19 January-6 February 2009

List of issues and questions in the absence of initial and periodic reports

Dominica

The pre-session working group decided, in accordance with the decision of the Committee at its thirty-seventh session (15 January-2 February 2007), and in the absence of the State party's initial report due in 1982, as well as its periodic reports, to proceed with the preparation of the present list of issues and questions.

General

1. Please explain why no initial and subsequent reports were submitted to the Committee, as required by article 18 of the Convention. Please describe any efforts undertaken to date in order to prepare the reports. Has the State party considered requesting the assistance of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Division of Advancement of Women and other bodies of the United Nations system in order to achieve the preparation and submission of the CEDAW report as soon as possible?
2. Please submit general and factual information about the country, in accordance with the harmonized reporting guidelines under the international human rights treaties, including the Convention (HRI/GEN/2/Rev.5).

Data collection

3. Please provide information on the status of data collection and analysis in the country in general and on the extent to which such data collection takes place on a sex-disaggregated basis. Please indicate how the Government intends to improve the collection of data disaggregated by sex, age and rural/urban areas pertaining to the areas of the Convention so as to support policymaking and programme development and to measure progress towards the implementation of the Convention.

Articles 1 and 2

Legal status of the Convention and incorporation of its provisions in domestic law and policies

4. Please indicate whether there are any laws or policy statements that define discrimination against women. If so, please explain whether the definition is sufficiently broad so as to include any act which causes, or results in, a difference in the treatment of women in comparison to men.

5. Please provide information on the status of the Convention vis-à-vis the Constitution and other national laws. Please indicate whether the Convention is directly applicable and whether there are instances of cases where the Convention has been cited in the courts. Has the Convention been disseminated and given visibility so as to make women aware of their rights?

6. Please explain whether there are any sanctions or penalties imposed for discrimination against women in all sectors of the society. Please provide information on their nature and actual application of these. Also provide information on remedies available to women whose rights have been violated.

7. Please provide information on legislation or other programmes that address the modification of traditional beliefs, customs and practices that result in discrimination against women or perpetuate such discrimination.

Article 3

National machinery for the advancement of women

8. Please explain the status and functions of the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs, its current level of funding and staffing. Please provide information on any special machinery or other institutions, such as a commission or ombudsperson, established to promote and protect human rights, including the rights of women and/or to oversee the Convention's implementation. Please explain the measures the Government is taking or intends to take to provide the national machinery for the advancement of women with adequate decision-making capacity and financial and human resources.

Article 4

Temporary special measures

9. Kindly explain which temporary special measures, in accordance with general recommendation No. 25 of the Committee, whether in the form of affirmative action, or otherwise, have been adopted to achieve equality between men and women at all levels and in all public sector institutions. Please include information on the inequalities that these measures sought to redress and whether they are enforced and monitored.

Article 5

Stereotypes and cultural practices

10. Please provide information on which cultural and traditional practices, or ways of life, if any, hamper women's advancement in society. Kindly provide information on measures, if any, which have been taken to change social and cultural patterns that lead to stereotyping or reinforcing the idea of the inferiority of women.

Violence against women

11. Please provide information on the Sexual Offences Act of 1982 and on its compliance with the provisions of the Convention.

12. Please provide information on the Act No. 22 of 2001 on Protection against Domestic Violence and on any other law or measure that has been taken to combat violence against women. Kindly provide information on whether there is a place for women to go when faced with violence within the family and whether there are special law enforcement units to deal with domestic violence. Is there a sex-disaggregated database on incidences of violence against women?

Article 6

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

13. Please provide information on whether the country has legislation to prevent trafficking in women and girls, and whether it is implemented effectively. Kindly specify if the existing legislation protects women and young girls from labour and sexual exploitation agencies which are essentially engaged in trafficking.

14. Please provide information on whether the law relating to violence against women applies to women in prostitution.

Articles 7 and 8

Political participation and participation in public life

15. Please provide information on the percentage of the members of political parties who are women and the percentage of public offices, including the academia and senior levels of the public administration held by women. Kindly provide information on which concrete measures which are envisaged to ensure achievement of women's full and equal participation and representation at all levels of Government, the legislative branch and the judiciary, as well as at the international level, taking into account the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, on article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, and general recommendation No. 23, on women in public life.

Article 9

Nationality

16. Please provide information on whether women, married or not, have equal rights with men to acquire, change, retain or transmit their nationality to their children. Please provide information on what social, cultural or economic factors affect a woman's exercise of these rights.

Article 10

Education

17. Please provide information on any measures taken by the Government to reduce the high drop-out rate of women and girls in the educational system. Please specify if any measures or laws have been taken by the Government to provide education opportunities for pregnant girls and teenage mothers in order for them to complete their education or to return to school after giving birth.

Article 11

Employment

18. Please provide updated statistical information disaggregated by sex on women's labour force participation, including any differentials in wages and benefits in comparison with men. Kindly explain whether there are any distinctions in recruitment and employment practices between women and men, and whether provisions exist to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and violence against women in the workplace.

Article 12

Health

19. Please state whether women have the same access as men to health-care services. If not, please specify what measures have been taken to eliminate discrimination in this context. Please provide information on what health facilities and personnel are available for women to deal with their specific health needs.

20. Please provide detailed and updated information on women's access to affordable reproductive and sexual health services and educational programmes, including their content and availability for particular groups, such as adolescent girls and rural women.

21. Please explain what measures have been undertaken in the country to reduce the high rate of teenage pregnancies. Please provide information on what measures have been taken to strengthen mental health and counselling services to ensure that they are accessible to all adolescents.

22. Please explain what measures and programmes have been introduced in the country to increase public awareness of the risk and effects of sexually transmitted

diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS. Please indicate whether any of these measures are aimed specifically at women and girls.

23. Considering the consequences which illegal abortion has on women's health, please provide detailed information on any measures the Government is undertaking to address this situation, from a health, educational and social perspective, as well as the possibility not to prosecute women who undergo an abortion, in line with its general recommendation No. 24. Kindly provide statistical information on how many women may be resorting to clandestine abortions and how many such women die as a result.

Article 13

Family benefits

24. Please provide information on the existence of family benefits and whether women have equal rights to those benefits.

Article 14

Rural women

25. Please provide information on any strategy or programme carried out by the Government to improve the situation of rural women, including their access to health, education, employment, access to land, credit and decision-making, paying particular attention to the situation of older women. Kindly explain whether rural women are aware of their rights under the Convention and whether there are public information campaigns to that effect. What forms of assistance are available to women who work in the agricultural sector?

Article 15

Equality before law

26. Please explain whether women are treated equally with men under the law with respect to their legal capacity to conclude contracts and administer property, as well as in court. Please specify if women have equal access to legal services and if they can get free legal help if they are unable to pay for it.

Article 16

Family relations

27. Please explain which law (civil law, customary law, or a combination of these) govern family relations. Please explain whether women are treated equally with men under these laws.

28. Please explain if upon dissolution of marriage women have the same rights as men with respect to property.

Optional Protocol and amendment to article 20, paragraph 1

29. Please indicate any progress made with respect to ratification of or accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention. Please also describe progress towards acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention.
