



# 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-fifth session

January-February 2010

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

#### United Arab Emirates

The pre-session working group considered the initial report of the United Arab Emirates (CEDAW/C/ARE/1).

#### General

1. Please provide information on the process of preparation of the initial report of the United Arab Emirates, including whether non-governmental organizations, in particular women's associations, were engaged in this process.
2. Please indicate whether there are any Government initiatives in place to ensure that the Convention becomes an integral part of the legal education and training of judicial officers, including judges, lawyers and prosecutors, particularly those working in the family court.
3. Please elaborate on the status of data collection in the country in general and to what extent such data collection takes place on a sex-disaggregated basis including rural, minorities and migrant populations. Please explain how such data is used in policy and programme development and in monitoring progress towards de facto equality of women and men.
4. Please clarify the scope of the State party's reservations to the Convention on the basis of the norms of Islamic law and describe the impact of these reservations on the practical realization of the principle of equality between women and men, as required under article 2 (a) of the Convention. Please indicate whether the State party is considering withdrawing its reservations to the Convention, and whether the State party envisages taking further steps to revise domestic legislation which is not in line with the provisions of the Convention to ensure its compatibility with the treaty.

5. Please describe any progress in respect of this establishment of a national independent human rights commission in the country, in line with the Paris Principles with a mandate to receive and investigate complaints of violations of human rights, including the human rights of women and children, as well as gender-based discrimination.

6. The report mentions the State party's encouragement for the establishment of women's associations and institutions as constituting part of its commitment to the empowerment of women. Please clarify the legal status of non-governmental organizations, in particular women human rights associations and any regulations relating to their activities. What substantive steps are being taken to ensure that women human rights activists benefit from the rights enshrined in the Convention?

**Legal status of the Convention, legislative and institutional framework, articles 1 and 2**

7. Please indicate whether the Convention is directly applicable in the State party's legal system and whether its provisions may be invoked by national courts. Please clarify whether under the UAE legal system, in situation of conflict between the Convention and domestic legislation, the Convention takes precedence over domestic laws.

**National machinery for the advancement of women, article 3**

8. Please provide information on the national machinery in place in the State party mandated to implement the Convention. Please provide information on the human and financial resources allocated to that body.

**Temporary special measures, article 4**

9. Please explain whether the Government has considered using temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and general recommendations No. 23 and 25, such as the establishment of quotas or incentives to accelerate the achievement of equality, particularly in the areas of employment, participation in political and public life, and the judiciary.

**Stereotypes and discriminatory cultural practices, article 5**

10. The report notes that the State party has made considerable efforts to modify patterns of conduct and eliminate discriminatory practices through education of its population. The report however lacks information on traditional practices affecting the enjoyment by women of their rights. Please provide information on social and cultural patterns affecting the enjoyment by women of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as on steps taken towards the elimination of prejudices, customary and all other practices which may perpetuate the notion of inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes and stereotyped roles for men and women.

**Violence against women**

11. Please provide information and statistics on the incidence of various forms of violence against women, in particular domestic violence and further provide the number of cases in the judicial system regarding domestic violence. Please indicate

what progress has been made to adopt any draft legislation as well as measures taken to adopt the national plan to create a national strategy on violence against women. Please elaborate on the types of social services which are offered by the State party to victims of domestic violence.

#### **Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution, article 6**

12. The report indicates that the UAE has taken measures to prevent and combat trafficking in women and girls at a national, bilateral and multilateral level. Please provide statistical information on the number of cases that have been prosecuted and the outcome of those cases. Please also provide information on domestic legislation, as well as mechanisms in place at the national level to prevent and punish trafficking in women and girls for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Please describe any measures taken to provide specialized training on trafficking for members of the police, border guards, lawyers and the judiciary; please give information on the effectiveness of these measures.

13. Please provide statistics, if available, on the number of women and girls engaged in prostitution and elaborate on any laws and measures adopted to prevent and punish the exploitation of prostitution, in line with article 6 of the Convention, as well as measures taken to provide rehabilitation and support for social integration of women who wish to leave prostitution.

14. Please describe concrete steps taken to ratify the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

#### **Participation in decision-making and representation at the international level, articles 7 and 8**

15. The report provides information on the initial election of representatives to the Federal National Council in 2006, as well as on participation of UAE's women in leadership positions and at the international level. Please provide statistical information on the number of women in decision-making positions as compared to men at national, regional and local levels. Please provide information on sustained measures which have been taken to increase the participation of women in political and public life at all levels, as well as their representation at the international level.

16. Please indicate steps taken to establish a supreme council on women and children concerning health issues and if established, please indicate the proportion of women compared to men in the council, as well as the proportion of non-UAE women.

#### **Nationality, article 9**

17. Please indicate progress made in regard to review of the State party's legislation in order to permit a UAE woman to transfer her nationality to her child. Please also indicate whether current legislation allows UAE women to transfer their nationality to their foreign husbands on the same basis as UAE men in respect of their foreign wives.

**Education, article 10**

18. The report notes the positive trend in the UAE in respect of the increasing rate of women's participation in education at all levels. Please elaborate on measures taken by the Ministry of Education with respect to the elimination of stereotypical attitudes about the roles and responsibilities of women and men in textbooks, curricula and teacher training and the outcome of these measures.

19. Please provide updated information on the percentage of primary, secondary and university graduates who are female. Please indicate what are the dropout rates for women at all levels of education, as well as on the major causes leading girls and women to discontinue their education. Please also provide data and information on the education levels and access to education of women and girls from rural areas, minorities and non-Emirates nationalities.

**Employment, article 11**

20. Please provide information on whether the State party has put in place a policy aimed at accelerating de facto equality of women in the area of employment. If so, please indicate what steps have been taken to implement this policy. Please also elaborate on the State party's initiatives aimed at strengthening the role of women in the business sector, and the outcome of these efforts.

21. Please provide information and statistics on women's labour force participation in the informal sector, including non-Emirates citizens. Please describe the types of legal, social or other services and protection available to women in the informal sector and any measures taken to increase their accessibility.

22. Please describe the conditions for workers, in particular women migrant workers, who are contractually employed in the UAE. Please indicate whether the amendment to Federal Labour Law No. 8 (1980) will lead to the enforcement of mandatory employment contracts with the objective to protect and safeguard the rights of the contractually employed workers.

23. Please elaborate on the legal framework, policies and programmes in place as well as any measures to protect the rights of women migrant domestic workers, as recommended by the Committee in its general recommendation No. 26 on women migrant workers (2008). Also, indicate the steps taken by the State party towards ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

**Health, article 12**

24. The report notes that the State party has made considerable efforts to improve maternal and child health-care services. Please provide information and data on the access to general and mental health services for women and girls, including those from rural areas, minorities and non-UAE nationalities.

25. Please provide further information on the services provided by the State party to elderly women, as well as efforts to strengthen adolescent health education in schools, including reproductive health.

26. Please provide information on whether existing programmes to prevent and combat HIV/AIDS integrate a gender perspective, including the availability of antiretroviral medication to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

**Economic and social benefits, article 13**

27. Please provide information on women's access to loans and financial credit on equal terms with men. Please specify any measures taken to ensure women's and girls' equal access to participation in sports, as well as any efforts by the Government to eliminate any de facto inequality between women and men on these issues.

**Rural women, article 14**

28. Please provide detailed information on any special programmes, which have been developed to meet the needs of rural women, in particular in the area of education, vocational training, access to health services and employment. Please indicate the percentage of rural girls and women in comparison to boys and men who are enrolled in primary, secondary and university levels, and how these percentages compare with urban enrolment.

**Marriage and family life, articles 15 and 16**

29. Please provide information on steps taken to ensure equality between women and men in respect to personal status with respect to marriage, divorce, child guardianship, custody, as well as inheritance.

30. Please clarify the role of the courts with regard to marriage and family practices and customs, and describe the measures, including training, to ensure awareness of the Convention and compliance by the judiciary and the legal profession with UAE's obligations under the Convention.

**Optional Protocol and amendment to article 20, paragraph 1**

31. Please provide information on progress made towards accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention. Please also indicate what progress has been made towards acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention relating to the Committee's meeting time.

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