



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

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## Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Forty-sixth session

### Summary record of the 927th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 13 July 2010, at 3 p.m.

*Chairperson:* Ms. Gabr

## Contents

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the  
Convention (*continued*)

*Sixth periodic report of Argentina (continued)*

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*The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.*

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (continued)**

*Sixth periodic report of Argentina  
(CEDAW/C/ARG/6, CEDAW/C/ARG/Q/6 and  
Add.1) (continued)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the delegation of Argentina took places at the Committee table.*

*Articles 7 to 9*

2. **Ms. Belmihoub-Zerdani** said that, despite the quota law, the rate of women's representation in politics was still not high enough to implement effective gender policies and programmes. She encouraged the Government to make even greater efforts to bring about significant representation for women. Programmes to encourage women to run for political office at the provincial level were needed since the experience made it more likely that they would hold elected office at the national level. Political parties should be encouraged to include women candidates through subsidy programmes and other initiatives. The number of women in the judiciary at the national and provincial levels was also low. There was no information on the number of women diplomats.

3. **Ms. Prigoshin** (Argentina) said that the Government was promoting programmes to encourage greater participation of women in the Parliament, and would consider increasing funding to those parties that supported women candidates. While women did participate in the judiciary, they were not in decision-making positions. It was a challenging issue because in most cases judges were appointed for life. Lastly, while there were ten women ambassadors, she did not know how many women diplomats there were overall.

*Articles 10 to 14*

4. **Ms. Zou Xiaojiao** said that she hoped that the next report would provide educational data that had been disaggregated by region and by sex. She would like to know whether there had been measures to eliminate gender disparity in education and to encourage women to study in non-traditional areas. Training programmes should be provided on elimination of stereotypes in textbooks. More

information on measures to ensure mainstreaming in higher education was needed. Lastly, she wondered whether the Government would indeed spend 6 per cent of its gross domestic product on education.

5. **Ms. Pimentel** said that while it was noteworthy that Argentina had achieved the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on education, she would like detailed information on measures and mechanisms to incorporate the gender perspective in education policies, in particular for marginalized girls and women. She wondered how the policies respected the cultural and linguistic diversity of indigenous populations and whether bilingual education programmes existed. It would be helpful to have information on mechanisms to ensure comprehensive sex education programmes that included modules on sexual orientation and gender identity. It was also important to establish teacher training programmes on sex education, in particular in the provinces. Lastly, she would like to know whether the reproduction and distribution of media that discriminated against women was prohibited.

6. **Mr. Bruun** said that there was a lack of gender-specific statistics and information on monitoring and follow-up measures for women workers, in particular unskilled women. Information on measures to protect the fundamental rights of domestic workers in the areas of training, leave and insurance programmes was needed. Information on legal representation of women in the workplace, in cases of sexual harassment in particular, would also be helpful. Lastly, he would appreciate more information on the impact of female quotas in unions and gender clauses in collective agreements.

7. **Ms. Patten** said that, given the entrenched systemic discrimination, she would like to know whether positive public and private sector employment equity programmes had been implemented and monitored, in particular for vulnerable women. She would also like information on hiring, retention, promotion and training for marginalized groups of women. It would be helpful to know the mechanisms in place to eliminate wage discrimination, and to review, analyse and reformulate wage structures in female-dominated professions. Lastly, she asked how social security for domestic workers, was handled.

8. **Ms. Murillo de la Vega** said that she would like to know whether there were programmes to stimulate

employment opportunities for women in the formal labour market.

9. **Ms. Rasekh** asked whether the national employment law addressed sexual harassment in both the public and the private sectors. She would also like information on how confidentiality was maintained in reporting cases of sexual harassment.

10. **Ms. Jaising** asked whether there were programmes to reduce the rate of abortions leading to maternal death and to ensure safe non-criminal abortions. She wondered how unintended pregnancies were tracked and whether measures were being taken to close the gap between policy and practice in respect of abortions. Lastly, she would like to know whether there were plans to ratify the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

11. **Ms. Rasekh** said that she would like to know the incidence of HIV/AIDS and mental health issues among women. Information on psychosocial services available for women, in particular in the public sector, would be helpful.

12. **Ms. Pimentel** requested information on implementation of laws and programmes for sexual and reproductive health services, in particular provision of contraceptives. She would like to know how women's right of access to legal abortion was protected from health or justice officials opposed to abortion. Further detail on amendments to article 86 of the Penal Code, in particular in respect of victims of rape and their access to abortion, would be appreciated. She would like to hear how equal and dignified treatment by health-care providers was guaranteed for all women, in particular marginalized women. Finally, she would like to know about programmes for girls and women to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS.

13. **Ms. Arocha Dominguez** said that policy implementation in respect of health services should be evaluated. She would like updated information on the strategic plan to reduce maternal and infant mortality.

14. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that there was a general lack of gender- and age- disaggregated data on issues including poverty rates and housing, making it difficult to evaluate programmes described in the report. Impact assessment information for all programmes was needed. For example, the report noted changes in the Heads of Household Plan, but it remained unclear whether the Plan was linked to the

universal children's allowance programme and who was eligible for it. It was also unclear whether it was linked to the National Microcredit Programme. Moreover, the report gave no detail on constraints on access to credit.

15. **Ms. Coker-Appiah** said that the Government must ensure the full implementation of the Convention despite the challenges of the federal system. She requested specific information on indigenous women's access to education, justice and health services, and on mechanisms used to ensure that they benefited from all gender policies.

16. **Ms. Zou Xiaoqiao** said that she would like more information on rural and indigenous women, in particular on employment, property ownership, access to education and health services and participation in public affairs. More information on national and provincial rural development programmes would also be helpful. Information on access to credit by women, in particular data on difficulties they faced, would be useful. Lastly, she would appreciate information on older rural women.

17. **Ms. Manzotti** (Argentina) said that women made up 37 per cent of all students in technical schools and more women were graduating from programmes in non-traditional areas. Women received 47 per cent of technical, engineering, mechanical and agrotechnology scholarships. The gender perspective had been included in educational materials through initiatives including the comprehensive sex education programme. The Federal Council of Education Departments had approved the curriculum guidelines for comprehensive sex education, which outlined the minimum content to be included in all curricula at all educational levels, in 2008. The Ministry of Education had made it a priority to train teachers and develop appropriate materials. Guidelines had been distributed to all schools, regional training meetings had been held, and technical programmes had been conducted in provinces. A virtual teacher training course had been offered for comprehensive sex education and educational materials had been developed in conjunction with special education modalities. Audio-visual programmes for sex education had been developed. The first comprehensive sex education congress had been held in 2010.

18. **Ms. Hammar** (Argentina) said that the Tripartite Commission on Equal Treatment and Opportunities for Men and Women was a forum for the Government,

workers' confederations and employers' organizations to develop policies to strengthen and continue the economic recovery. The Commission had also launched an initiative to create an office to address violence in the workplace. While women remained the majority in the informal sector, there were initiatives to provide them with social benefits. The law on trade union quotas for women established that a certain percentage of women must participate in collective bargaining. There was no limit to the subjects a collective bargaining unit could address. A national law governed public employees and programmes, and initiatives under way to close the gender gap in wages included childcare centres and related support. Ten domestic service unions had been established throughout the country; a draft law before Parliament addressed domestic employees. Eight tripartite entities worked in conjunction with MERCOSUR to establish concrete initiatives for working women. Ten provincial tripartite bodies and municipal bodies offered direct action among employers, unions and the State. The largest employment sector in the country was small and medium enterprises, in which women held leadership positions.

19. **Ms. Ferro** (Argentina) said that in 2007 an awareness-raising campaign had been launched to provide information about unsafe abortions. A procedure guide for non-criminal abortions had also been developed in 2007, and updated and approved in July 2010. The guide would be distributed in all provinces to increase awareness of non-criminal abortion. While access to sexual and reproductive health services had increased, disparities remained, and work was under way to draft a protocol to guarantee all women direct access to services. A hotline was available to give all women direct access to information. Initiatives were also under way to develop national and provincial indicators, and six agreements had been signed to establish programmes to reduce maternal mortality and set concrete targets.

20. **Mr. Luongo** (Argentina) said that the incidence of poverty had decreased substantially among women and girls since 2003, though less so among girls under 17. While the decrease was significant, there was still concern for those who lived below the poverty threshold. Therefore, the Ministry of Social Development had increased investment in programmes to combat poverty, including the universal children's allowance programme, which covered more than 90 per

cent of all children. Initiatives to cover the remaining 10 per cent had also begun. Eighty-six per cent of the programme's beneficiaries were women from the most vulnerable groups. The National Institute for Indigenous Affairs of the Ministry of Social Development had been created to address concerns of indigenous women. The National Statistics and Census Institute had published a comprehensive study of indigenous populations on its website. A presidential decree had been signed in 2010 to establish a body to evaluate and administer indigenous community property and land.

21. **Mr. Martini** (Argentina) said that the Secretariat for Rural Development and Family Farming had been established in 2009 and its budget had increased significantly. There were national and provincial programmes designed to support rural women through initiatives including credit access and subsidies. International programmes also supported rural women in conjunction with such entities as the World Bank. The Secretariat had branches in 21 provinces, and eight provinces had established indigenous units to focus on rural development. While rural development programmes were national, they worked with regional councils and civil society. Support had been provided to grass-roots women's organizations working to ensure that women participated fully in their communities and in decision-making processes. In every province, organizations worked with teams from ministries on a number of projects, including nutrition programmes for rural and indigenous communities with the Secretariat for Rural Development and Family Farming, rural employment programmes with the Ministry of Labour and rural housing with the Ministry of Planning. Compliance with the Convention and budget monitoring were handled through provisional boards for rural development that worked with the provinces and civil society. While the national credit system was complex, a national banking law allowed increased microcredit opportunities for rural projects. Important work had been done in the health sector to fight endemic diseases and to disseminate information on subjects including reproductive health. A programme was also being developed to provide dental and eye care to indigenous populations.

22. **Ms. Prigoshin** (Argentina) said that the delegation understood that statistical data was vital to understanding all dimensions of gender equality and would work hard to provide such statistics. It would

also continue to establish monitoring centres like the observatories. In respect of gender stereotypes, gender provisions in the media law and the Violence against Women Act addressed media contributions to gender violence.

the next periodic report, the Committee hoped to hear of continued progress in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, protection for domestic workers and violence against women.

*The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.*

#### *Articles 15 and 16*

23. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** requested further explanation of the new law on equality in marriage. She would like to know how marital property was handled, whether it was equally distributed in case of divorce, and how unregistered marital property and property owned by partners in a de facto union was treated. It was important for the law to recognize non-financial contributions to households and to provide for post-separation financial allowances in cases where women had not achieved economic independence. Was legal aid available for women facing divorce?

24. **Ms. Balart** (Argentina) said that the new law on equality in marriage referred specifically to same-sex unions.

25. **Ms. Prigoshin** (Argentina) said that all property acquired during a marriage was divided equally between the man and the woman in cases of divorce. The Civil Code did not grant property rights to non-registered owners in de facto unions, but it did provide financial allowances for non-financial contributions to partnerships upon separation.

26. **Ms. Pimentel** said that she would like to know whether the Government was working to improve the rights of partners in de facto unions.

27. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** asked whether women could exercise rights to unregistered housing in cases of separation.

28. **Ms. Prigoshin** (Argentina) said that the National Women's Council (CNM) was working with the Legislature to amend the Civil Code to improve and protect the rights of women in de facto unions. If the man held title to property, in case of separation the woman could remain on the property if minor children lived with her.

29. **The Chairperson** said that she hoped that the Committee's concluding observations would be brought before Parliament. The fact that Argentina had a female Head of State was a positive factor in the continued growth of women's political participation. In