



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**
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Summary record of the 497th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 23 January 2001, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Acar (Vice-Chairperson)

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In the absence of Ms. Abaka, Ms. Acar, Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

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

Initial report of Kazakhstan (continued)
(CEDAW/C/KAZ/1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms. Samakova (Kazakhstan) took a place at the Committee table.*

2. **Ms. Samakova** (Kazakhstan) said, in response to the question of whether the Convention had been applied in a specific case by the courts in Kazakhstan, that the Constitution specified that international agreements ratified by Kazakhstan had priority over national legislation and could be directly applied except in cases where such action would involve the introduction of new legislation. The Convention was thus an integral part of the country's current legislation but would, of course, be fully implemented only when the national legislation was fully coordinated with it. Work was therefore currently in progress to improve the country's legislative base. It was one of the main concerns of the National Commission for Women and the Family. So far, the Convention had been tested only once in the courts, when the Constitutional Council had heard an appeal from members of Parliament on whether the government decree allocating US\$ 4.5 million to the development of women's enterprises was in keeping with the Constitution. The Council had ruled, on the basis of article 4 of the Convention, that it was.

3. With regard to the bills on equal rights and opportunities and on domestic violence, she said that the former bill had been scheduled for 2000, but at the end of 1999 its sponsors had failed to be re-elected to Parliament. A new draft was being prepared by members of the *Sem'ya* (Family) parliamentary group and should be passed in 2001. In line with the Committee's comments, efforts would be made to define the terms "direct" and "indirect" discrimination. The bill on domestic violence, also scheduled for 2001, was currently being scrutinized by the Ministries of Justice and Internal Affairs. A working group, in which members of the National Commission participated, was also drafting a bill under which an ombudsperson

would be appointed to defend individual rights and promote gender equality.

4. With regard to the implementation of the Concept of State Policy for the advancement of women in the Republic of Kazakhstan, the National Plan of Action to improve the status of women and the Kazakhstan 2030 strategy, she said that the Plan had been elaborated on the basis of the Concept, Kazakhstan 2030 and the Beijing Platform for Action. It contained 12 priority points and 105 comprehensive measures with specific targets and deadlines. The Government had recently been given a report on the implementation of the Plan, which showed that all targets were being reached on schedule.

5. The National Commission, an advisory body chaired by herself, was composed of 28 members, including the first woman President of the National Academy of Sciences and the wife of the President of the Republic. Similar commissions had been established in the towns of Astana and Almaty, as described in paragraph 31 of the report. She also drew attention to paragraph 32, which outlined the activities of the Commission on Human Rights. The two bodies worked closely with each other, with other government institutions and with international and non-governmental organizations. Indeed, many of the latter had collaborated with the National Commission in the preparation of the country's initial report. No claims of work-related discrimination against women had been lodged before the Commission on Human Rights over the past year. Both bodies monitored the implementation of national legislation and international instruments. With regard to freedom of religion, she said that discrimination on the grounds of religion, among others, was forbidden under article 14 of the Constitution.

6. In answer to the question as to why the Concept made no mention of gender equality, she said that such equality was fundamental to Kazakh legislation and government programmes, as confirmed by research undertaken in 1999 by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. On the topic of domestic violence, she referred the Committee to the detailed information in the report and in her oral presentation. The law on rape had been tightened up in 2000: it was no longer lawful to call a halt to legal proceedings by agreement between the parties, and provision had been made for harsher penalties. Section

10 of the Criminal Code, entitled "Offences against public health and morals", listed immoral acts which were considered offences. They included recruiting people into prostitution; establishing or maintaining premises for prostitution or procuring; the illicit distribution of pornographic materials or objects or of publications glorifying cruelty and violence; the committing of outrages against corpses or their places of burial; and cruelty to animals.

7. With regard to crisis centres, she said that, over the past few days, a thirteenth such centre had been opened in the town of Karagande. In 2000 the centre in Almaty had received about 1,500 telephone calls from women victims of violence, who had been given psychological, legal and, where necessary, medical assistance. The National Plan of Action provided for the establishment of crisis centres in all regions by 2005 and in all districts by 2010. Crisis centres were non-governmental establishments, although central and local government helped by providing and maintaining premises and establishing links with medical and law enforcement bodies.

8. Regarding changes to the Criminal Code, she said that penalties had been increased for a wide range of offences, including performing illegal abortions, rape, violent acts of a sexual nature, sexual relations with a minor, forced sexual intercourse, sodomy, lesbianism or other acts of a sexual nature, and the corruption of minors. Another change had been that rape would no longer form the object of a private prosecution. It was hoped that if such cases were pursued independently by the police and the courts, women would be better protected. She noted that sodomy and lesbianism were crimes only if violence or threats were used or if the victim was helpless.

9. As for whether women could appeal to the Constitutional Council, she said that those entitled to appeal to the Council were the President, the Chairman of the Senate, the Chairman of the Majilis, the Prime Minister and a group of deputies numbering not less than one fifth of the total membership. The Council also considered cases in which a judge had ruled that a law or regulation infringed a person's constitutional rights and freedoms. Individual citizens could not apply to the Council.

10. Discrimination at the workplace was illegal, and those who felt they had been victims of such discrimination could apply to the courts. As for the role

of the employer in paying social benefits, current legislation provided that the employer should pay benefits in respect of sickness, occupational accidents and occupational disease; pregnancy and childbirth; and maternity or paternity benefits. The employer also paid a 22 per cent social tax which was used for education, health and social protection purposes. A compulsory pension contribution of 10 per cent was also levied on all workers. Work was in progress to elaborate a social protection plan allowing for private insurance and the consequent boost to jobs and wages. The aim was to spread the burden between the State, the employer and the employee. A whole raft of new legislation would be required.

11. As for the question of why women's pay was lower than men's, she said that the country's legislation strictly upheld the principle of equal pay for equal work; in 2000 it had ratified the International Labour Organization Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), 1951. Any actual differences in remuneration were due to differences in the jobs held and the level of responsibilities and qualifications. As for the assertion that women were the first to be dismissed and that employers attempted to avoid paying them benefits, she said that women could apply to the courts in such situations and there had been many examples of rulings in their favour.

12. Women were considerably better represented in the justice system than in other fields; indeed, among lawyers and legal managers women constituted an absolute majority. On the bench, women represented 38 per cent of the staff of the Supreme Court of the Republic and 25 per cent of judicial board chairpersons. Women constituted 56 per cent of Supreme Court administrative staff.

13. The National Commission did not have its own budget. Funds were provided only for the salaries and technical backup of the secretariat of the minister chairing the Commission, which formed part of the Prime Minister's Office. Measures provided for under the National Plan of Action to improve the status of women were funded by the ministries and agencies responsible for implementing them. An additional \$2 million had, however, been allocated to the Commission from extrabudgetary funds to implement specific parts of the Plan. In that context, she confirmed that the mandate of the Commission was to improve the status of women and specifically to achieve real equality with men.

14. As for the need for temporary special measures to achieve such equality, she said that women retired five years earlier than men, at 57.5 years as against 62.5 years. From 1 July 2001, those figures would rise to 58 and 63 years. Women in rural areas with families of five or more children whom they had brought up until the age of eight could receive a pension at the age of 50, rising to 53 from 1 July 2004. Both measures could be considered examples of positive discrimination. As the country's social and economic conditions improved and greater equality between the sexes was achieved, amendments could be made to those provisions.

15. The Government was taking temporary measures to reduce unemployment among women, including a programme for the rehabilitation and development of light industry in the period 1999-2003 through the creation of favourable economic conditions. Affirmative-action measures included support for women entrepreneurs through the granting of credit on easy terms. Temporary special measures for women were not needed in education, where positive discrimination in favour of women could already be observed. All 105 measures under the National Plan of Action to improve the status of women in the Republic of Kazakhstan were aimed at achieving de facto equality between men and women. The National Commission monitored the Plan's implementation and mobilized extrabudgetary resources for individual programmes.

16. With respect to the exploitation of women, article 128 of the Criminal Code criminalized the use of fraud to recruit persons for purposes of sexual or other types of exploitation. The commission of that crime by a group of people, by prior agreement or in respect of a minor carried a punishment of up to five years' imprisonment. The commission of that crime by an organized group with the aim of transporting the persons so recruited across State boundaries carried a punishment of three to eight years' imprisonment, with or without the confiscation of property. Article 133 of the Criminal Code dealt with trafficking in minors, which was defined as the transfer of a minor from his or her parents or guardians to another person in exchange for monetary compensation. Such crimes were punishable by three to 10 years' imprisonment, with or without the confiscation of property. Cases involving serious health or other consequences carried a punishment of seven to 15 years' imprisonment.

17. As to gender education, considerable efforts were under way in educational institutions to provide children with social and cultural models based on gender equality. Subjects such as fundamental rights and the ethics and psychology of family life were studied in all secondary schools, and all students had equal access to information on health, family planning and legal issues. Nearly all schools and over half of all higher and secondary specialized educational institutions included a programme on personal hygiene; the effects of tobacco, narcotics and other toxins on the body; and prevention of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and sexually transmitted diseases. Beginning in 2001, the entire system of higher and secondary education would introduce gender studies.

18. The media were making great efforts to combat gender stereotypes and promote gender equality. In 2000, through the State-run media alone, women's issues had been the focus of over 400 articles and interviews and over 300 television programmes. Gender stereotypes were also being combated through a conceptual framework for the elaboration of draft laws and State programmes. All the media in Kazakhstan were subject to a 1999 law on the media, which, inter alia, regulated the retail sale of erotic magazines and prohibited the broadcasting of productions of a pornographic or erotic nature. A draft law on advertisements had been prepared, which would propose a ban on advertisements that condoned gender discrimination.

19. In relation to article 7 of the Convention, the first women's political party, the Political Alliance of Women's Organizations, had been registered in 1999 to consolidate the efforts of women campaigning for public office. Subsequently, it had been reorganized into the Democratic Women's Party. In Kazakhstan, which was barely 10 years old, political parties and movements were still in the process of forming. The issue of quotas was widely debated; many felt that Kazakh women's high level of education and "advancement" made quotas unnecessary. Women accounted for 54 per cent of civil servants and over 40 per cent of those employed at all levels of State administration and the judiciary. That had created a strong foundation for women's advancement to decision-making positions.

20. Out of 7,275 candidates for local representative organs (*maslikhats*) at the regional, area and town levels, 1,355, or 19 per cent, had been women. Out of

the 3,322 candidates elected at all levels, 639, or 19 per cent, had been women. Thus, the proportion of women elected corresponded to the proportion of women candidates. Currently, women made up about 50 per cent of workers in regional administrative bodies.

21. The Government felt that constitutional guarantees and the legislation in force, particularly the law on equality of rights and opportunities, were sufficient to ensure the expansion of women's participation in political life. In his annual message to the people of Kazakhstan, the head of Government had highlighted the need for government support for non-governmental organizations, in part through the system of grants for the implementation of socially beneficial projects. In addition, the procedures for the formation and registration of non-governmental organizations had recently been simplified.

22. Under the Constitution, the legislation in force and international instruments, women and men had equal rights with respect to their children's nationality, as called for in article 9 of the Convention.

23. In the area of education, for the 1999-2000 academic year, professors and teachers in institutions of higher education had included 3,500 women holding candidate of science degrees, representing 42 per cent of the total, and 2,400 women senior lecturers, representing 40 per cent of the total. There had also been 246 women holding doctor of science degrees (16 per cent) and 334 women professors (17 per cent). Out of the overall number of teachers in institutions of higher education, the majority were women.

24. The National Plan of Action to improve the status of women included a whole set of measures for women's political and economic advancement, including measures to enhance women's legal literacy, the introduction of gender studies throughout the system of higher and secondary education and the improvement of national legislation concerning women and children. Measures taken for women's economic advancement included land apportionment and microcredit programmes. Some \$4.5 million had been allocated to support women entrepreneurs. To promote women's advancement to decision-making levels in all government bodies, a pool of women executives had been created. In February 2001, the head of the State Service Agency and deputies members of the group on the family would go to Sweden to study the Swedish

experience with women's advancement to decision-making levels.

25. Statistics showed that girls and women outnumbered boys and men in secondary and higher education. The State's education policy was based on mandatory secondary education and equal access to educational institutions; there had never been gender-based preferential treatment. Women's high levels of education gave them access to high-paying jobs. For example, women accounted for two thirds of the employees of financial and credit institutions, in which pay levels were quite high.

26. Kazakh legislation neither prohibited nor encouraged single-sex education. However, there were some single-sex secondary schools, such as the military school and certain secondary schools funded by foreign countries; such schools represented less than 3 per cent of all secondary schools. The Government set uniform standards for all secondary schools.

27. With respect to employment, the change in the respective proportions of women working in the public and private sectors reflected the effects of privatization and the creation of economic conditions for the development of small and medium-sized businesses and of private enterprise. In 1995, 88 per cent of the workforce had been wage-earners; by 1999, that figure had dropped to 52 per cent.

28. The law on employment provided State guarantees of equality in employment opportunities, wages, unemployment insurance and social assistance. Special measures targeted groups such as the poor, persons living alone, parents of large families, parents of young children and persons of pre-retirement age. The law provided for the involvement of employers in guaranteeing the population's employment; to that end, the Government and local authorities, with the participation of employers, devised appropriate programmes each year. Women could work part-time or at home in all economic sectors, including industry. Labour conditions and standards were agreed upon in individual labour contracts with employers. In 1999, two thirds of all workers on a shortened work schedule had been women.

29. The law on labour protection restricted women's access to jobs with hazardous or dangerous working conditions and jobs involving the lifting of heavy loads by hand. Workers required medical clearance in order to be hired for such jobs. The Ministry of Labour and

Social Security drew up a list of workplaces, jobs and tasks involving hazardous, dangerous or heavy work, in respect of which a shortened work week (36 hours) was permitted.

30. In 1999, 52 per cent of applicants to employment agencies had been women; nearly half of them had obtained work. Unemployment among women was gradually declining. In 1996, 178,000 women had been officially registered as unemployed; by 2000, the number had fallen to 140,000. The basic principles and rules for the system of social partnership among the authorities, employers and trade unions were established by law. The parties concluded general, sectoral or regional agreements. In 2000, a general agreement had been signed between the Government, the employers' association and the Federation of Trade Unions of Kazakhstan. A draft general agreement for 2001-2002 was ready for signature.

31. Some 6 per cent of children under age 3 and some 28 per cent of children between the ages of 3 and 6 were in the preschool education system. That system would expand as the country's socio-economic situation improved.

32. In relation to health care, the worsening of the country's socio-economic situation as a result of economic restructuring had reduced the amount of funds available for health care, and a large number of medical establishments, particularly primary care facilities, had closed. Subsequently, emergency measures had been taken to improve medical services, such as the Government's decision to allocate adequate financial resources for the development of primary medical care services in rural areas. In 1999-2000, over 800 community health stations had reopened, offering paramedical, midwifery and family outpatient services.

33. In 1999-2000, the programme to prevent and control sexually transmitted diseases had had positive results. For example, between 1996 and 1999, the number of syphilis patients, half of whom had been women, had been reduced by 28.5 per cent, while the number of gonorrhoea patients, 40 per cent of whom had been women, had been reduced by a third. The number of abortions had fallen by 29 per cent over the past three years as a result of family planning initiatives implemented with the support of international organizations. The number of breast cancer cases had remained stable but high, at 31.4 cases per 100,000 women. That was primarily a result of the country's

poor ecological situation and of inadequate funding for the purchase of diagnostic equipment. Smoking was significantly less common among women than men, but the percentage of women smokers had increased in recent years. The increase in the number of women who died of cardiovascular diseases was primarily due to age and other factors. Preventive efforts were under way; for example, in December 2000, the Parliament had adopted a new Administrative Code that penalized the sale of tobacco products to minors.

34. She announced that a special State programme had been introduced to combat tuberculosis and as from 1998 national budgetary funds had been used to buy anti-tuberculosis medicine. Efforts were also being made to diagnose tuberculosis at an early stage and to provide special treatment for sufferers among the prison population. The detection of the disease had improved and, as a consequence, the death rate from that cause had dropped by 25 per cent in the previous two years. Moreover, measures taken to facilitate access to primary health care had halted the decline in health among the population and, as a result, life expectancy had risen by 1.6 years for women and 2.3 years for men.

35. Rehabilitating the environment was one of the most important tasks facing Kazakhstan and, to that end, a special State programme entitled "Health and the environment" had been launched, along with a number of other schemes. More than 2 billion tenge had been spent on their implementation over the previous two years. Seven regional programmes sponsored by international organizations were under way, but the help of the international community at large would be needed to solve all the country's ecological problems.

36. Working women received social benefits paid by the employer during pregnancy and when they gave birth. Non-working mothers with four or more children under the age of seven received social benefits irrespective of the family's income. Mothers who had raised eight or more children were awarded a medal and were likewise entitled to a State benefit regardless of family income. The State was thereby trying to help large families and, at the same time, improve the demographic situation. Similarly a bill entitled "State targeted social assistance" to provide help for poor families was under consideration. Food scarcity should be alleviated by an overall rise in agricultural production. In rural areas almost all families had a

small plot of land where they could grow food, and the local authorities helped them by providing fuel and lubricants.

37. Rural women (and indeed all women) enjoyed equality with men in all spheres of life and activity. A State microcredit programme was being run for the poorest members of the rural population, with preference going to women and large families. Eighty per cent of women who had been granted microcredits had formed groups and set up small businesses. In some areas regional programmes were under way to promote the socio-economic and cultural development of villages.

38. While rural women did have more children than urban women, they took an active part in the life of society. Almost two thirds of rural teachers and doctors were women. Market reforms had fundamentally changed the mentality of people in the countryside, particularly women. Rural women were very keen to establish small businesses and non-governmental organizations and they participated in competitions and exhibitions. Furthermore, in order to solve their problems they had set up the Confederation of Businesswomen of Kazakhstan, which had branches in all areas and brought together more than 5,000 rural women.

39. Turning to the question regarding cases of marriage between couples who were under age, she explained that good reasons had to be given and that marriage before 18 was permissible only with the consent of the prospective bride and groom.

40. Although the rural health sector had suffered more than any other from the reform process, the primary health care network was being restored and the Government had adopted a strategy for the development of public health, including the restoration of health services in the countryside. The number of rural outpatient services would be increased, together with funds to provide drugs and equipment for preventive medicine.

41. In keeping with article 29 of the Law on marriage and the family, questions of child-rearing were resolved by the parents jointly. Spouses were obliged to do all they could to promote the well-being of the family and the health and development of their children. There were no statistics on polygamy as it was banned in Kazakhstan.

42. Referring to the members' recommendations, she said that those regarding gender-related matters were already being implemented under the National Plan of Action. She urged members to peruse the documentation describing her country's efforts to enhance the status of women, which her delegation had supplied on 18 January. As for cooperation with the United Nations, Kazakhstan was working with all its agencies and had vigorously supported the continuation of work on gender in development. The abolition of the death penalty was under consideration. Higher living standards and further economic recovery based on the country's rich oil reserves would discourage internal migration.

43. She thanked the Committee for the constructive dialogue and eagerly awaited its concluding comments, which would be of assistance in implementing all the provisions of the Convention. The concluding comments would be published and, as soon as she returned home not only would a press conference be held to report on the meeting in New York, but information about it would also be circulated in national and local newspapers. The Committee's comments would also be passed on to the women's congress which was to be held in June.

44. **The Chairperson** invited members to submit additional questions or comments.

45. **Ms. Schöpp-Schilling**, after thanking the Government of Kazakhstan for its full replies, nevertheless expressed some doubts about early retirement for women. While it might be regarded as a protective measure under article 4, paragraph 2, for women who had long borne the dual burden of employment and caring for their family, it would seem to conflict with article 4, paragraph 1. She therefore hoped that, in future, the latter paragraph would be seen as an instrument for overcoming some forms of hidden discrimination, such as the low wages paid in sectors dominated by women. Because of patriarchal norms, activities in those sectors were regarded as a prolongation of work done in the home and less valuable than men's heavy labour; in the twenty-first century, however, that attitude was inappropriate.

46. **Ms. Livingstone Raday** said she believed that the economic difficulties experienced by Kazakhstan were the reason for the deteriorating situation in which women found themselves. Although the Minister had voiced the opinion that since Kazakh women were

highly qualified, there might be no need for positive discrimination in their favour, the references in the report to their stereotyped exclusion from managerial posts might be indicative of unintentional, hidden discrimination which should be overcome by the adoption of special measures until a critical mass of women in high-level positions had been achieved. Furthermore, the Government should rectify the decline in women's social security rights and should address the concern of women's organizations about the denial of transfer payments to women whose families were below the poverty line. Temporary measures were required to put women back on the map and ensure that they were the leaders of the future.

47. **Ms. Goonesekere** welcomed the fact that Kazakhstan was considering ratification of the Optional Protocol and pointed out that any constitutional remedy should provide a method of enforcing constitutional rights. It would be useful to have information on what access women had to the Constitutional Court and Supreme Court in order to assert those rights.

48. **Ms. Shin** was concerned about the early retirement age of women with large families because, although it might be regarded as a special positive measure in favour of women, it might also preserve the notion that a woman's chief role was that of a mother and housewife, in other words the very opposite of what women were trying to achieve in other parts of the world. Mandating the same retirement age for men and women might help to end discrimination against women in employment. Since she feared that the Government's efforts to take the burden of housework and child-rearing into account and its policy to promote population growth might lead to the inadvertent reinforcement of outdated ideas about women, she urged that other aspects of the issue be given due consideration.

49. **Ms. Taya** said that the Government should consider taking temporary special measures, as provided for in article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, to close the gap between the large number of highly qualified women and the limited employment opportunities.

50. **Ms. Corti** urged the Government to fulfil its commitment to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention and the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, thereof as quickly as possible. As the delegation had

acknowledged, implementation of the Convention in Kazakhstan left much to be desired. However, the fact that the initial report had been submitted so soon after ratification of the Convention was proof of political will, and the Convention would help Kazakhstan to move towards gender equality and resolve many of the problems faced by countries in transition.

51. She urged the Government to act on the Committee's recommendations and to take all necessary legislative and other measures, including cooperation with civil society and non-governmental organizations, to guarantee the nation's highly educated women full enjoyment of their human rights. Kazakhstan's mineral wealth would soon place it among the ranks of developed countries, and women's skills would be needed as the nation emerged from poverty.

52. Lastly, she welcomed the Government's plan to disseminate information on the Committee's consideration of the initial report and its cooperation with various United Nations agencies.

53. **Ms. Samakova** (Kazakhstan) thanked the Committee for helping her Government prepare the initial report and for the many constructive comments made by its members.

54. It was true that salaries were low in the health and education sectors, in which women predominated. Wages in those areas had been increased by 30 per cent in January 2001 however, and further progress was anticipated in the future. She acknowledged the need to improve employment opportunities for women; for example, although women currently held over 40 per cent of mid-level civil service posts, they were under-represented at the higher levels.

55. Parliament had discussed the possibility of establishing a single retirement age for men and women, but there was considerable opposition to that proposal since many women, particularly those with large families, welcomed the opportunity for early retirement. Such attitudes were likely to change as the national standard of living increased.

56. The Government was committed to improving the status of women through, inter alia, the Kazakhstan 2030 Strategy and the National Plan of Action. The appropriate legislation was in place; the main challenge was to mainstream its implementation at the level of daily life. Moreover, further legislation was envisaged: Kazakhstan had acceded to over 30 international

conventions and was committed to implementing the provisions thereof.

57. **The Chairperson** said that the Committee welcomed the Government's commitment to ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention and article 20, paragraph 1, thereof. It was clear that political will to implement the Convention existed and that a firm foundation for future progress was being laid.

58. Although the national legislation was essentially egalitarian, a definition of discrimination should be incorporated therein. She welcomed the Government's intention to take measures in that regard, to strengthen the national machinery for women's rights and to establish an ombudsperson. It was encouraging that the Government was endeavouring to combat gender stereotypes, particularly in the school curriculum, and was considering incorporating a prohibition of gender-based discrimination in the new legislation on the media. She also welcomed the decision to let public prosecutors take the initiative in bringing rapists to trial.

59. The Government should endeavour to increase public acceptance of quotas for women in decision-making posts; many societies believed that such measures would promote mediocrity in public office, but the high percentage of educated women in Kazakhstan made such fears unnecessary. Furthermore, incorporation into legal norms of the concept of indirect discrimination would help to close the gap between men's and women's wages.

60. She looked forward to receiving information on the enactment and implementation of the draft legislation on domestic violence; that problem was too important to be addressed through the general provisions of a penal code, however well designed.

61. Lastly, the Government's plan to disseminate the Committee's concluding comments on the initial report augured well for the continued success of a young country committed to the promotion and protection of human rights for women.

62. **Ms. Samakova** (Kazakhstan) again thanked the Committee, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Office in Kazakhstan, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the representatives of international organizations with whom her delegation had met in New York.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.