

CULTURE - MEDIA

III. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

CERD

- Spain, CERD, A/51/18 (1996) 32 at para. 203.

The Self-Regulating Agreement between the Ministry of Social Affairs and the mass media, concluded in order to promote a positive and non-discriminatory image of the Gypsy community, is viewed as an original and positive measure.

- India, CERD, A/51/18 (1996) 51 at para. 346.

The plurality of newspapers and the mass media, and their awareness of human rights problems, play an important role in the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

- Croatia, CERD, A/53/18 (1998) 59 at para. 325.

The State party should take concrete measures to guarantee freedom of association without distinction as to ethnic origin and should ensure that mass media, in all their forms, including electronic form, are open to all ethnic groups without distinction. Furthermore, the State party should take effective measures in order to stop racist and discriminatory speech in some graphic media.

- Colombia, CERD, A/54/18 (1999) 44 at para. 470.

Concern is expressed over the media's coverage of minority communities, including the continued popularity of television programmes that promote racial and ethnic stereotypes. Such stereotypes serve to reinforce the cycle of violence and marginalization that has already severely affected the rights of the State party's historically disadvantaged communities.

- France, CERD, A/55/18 (2000) 26 at para. 104.

Concern is expressed over reports that negative images of the Roma minority prevail in the mass media and in the public generally. It is recommended that the State party give full effect to the provisions of article 7 of the Convention by adopting effective measures, particularly in the fields of education, training and human rights information, to combat such prejudices.

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- Finland, CERD, A/55/18 (2000) 41 at para. 219.

It is noted that the media often present immigrants and minorities, in particular Roma, in a negative light. The State party is invited to strengthen measures to promote tolerance and combat prejudices, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information. The State party should find adequate modalities to make journalists and people working in the media sector more aware of racial discrimination.

- Slovenia, CERD, A/55/18 (2000) 45 at para. 244.

It is noted that different minority groups are provided by law with different protective measures in different areas of daily life, such as political representation, access to media, education and culture. Minority groups such as Croats, Serbs, Bosnians and Roma do not enjoy the same level of protection as the Italian and Hungarian minorities. In this connection, the State party should ensure that persons or groups of persons belonging to other minority groups are not discriminated against, in accordance with article 2 of the Convention.

- Argentina, CERD, A/56/18 (2001) 18 at para. 53.

The existence of xenophobic attitudes towards immigrants primarily from neighbouring countries, asylum-seekers and persons of African descent is of concern. These attitudes, which are manifested even in some of the media, seem to have increased as a result of the present economic crisis and have given rise, on occasion, to violent incidents. The State party should monitor such attitudes and incidents closely and take appropriate steps to deal with them.

ICCPR

- Burundi, ICCPR, A/49/40 vol. I (1994) 58 at para. 365.

The media should be used to promote national reconciliation and harmony among Burundi's various population groups. Strenuous efforts should be made to educate and inform the whole of Burundi society regarding human rights. This campaign should take account of Burundi's traditions and customs, including the role of mothers in educating their children.

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CEDAW

- Belgium, CEDAW, A/51/38 (1996) 22 at para. 192.

The Government should promote interest in women's participation in sports and in media coverage of such events.

- Slovenia, CEDAW, A/52/38/Rev.1 part I (1997) 15 at para. 111.

A formal complaint procedure and a formal evaluation board outside the Chamber of Commerce, which would include all sectors of society, should be established to address sexist advertisements. That procedure should incorporate sanctions against offending advertising agents.

- Turkey, CEDAW, A/52/38/Rev.1 part I (1997) 24 at para. 197.

The media should be mobilized in support of advancing the status and the rights of women, including through non-sexist and non-stereotypical portrayal of women in the media and through programmes to address violence against women. Efforts to increase the number of women in the media, particularly in decision-making positions, should be intensified.

- Venezuela, CEDAW, A/52/38/Rev.1 part I (1997) 30 at para. 245.

The Government should undertake broad-based programmes directed at the entire population, through the mass media and other possible channels, to combat gender stereotypes.

- Armenia, CEDAW, A/52/38/Rev.1 part II (1997) 78 at para. 65.

The Government should use the education system and the electronic media to combat the traditional stereotype of women "in the noble role of mother" and to raise awareness of the role of men in caring and their responsibility for parenting.

- Antigua and Barbuda, CEDAW, A/52/38/Rev.1 part II (1997) 97 at para. 270.

Culture is a positive vehicle for influencing the advancement of women. Cultural art forms should be used as a vehicle to promote respect for women. The media should be used to promote positive attitudes towards women.

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- Australia, CEDAW, A/52/38/Rev.1 part II (1997) 111 at para. 402.

A comprehensive strategy to eliminate violence against women should be adopted following the National Domestic Violence Summit, with an emphasis on prevention, and with sufficient funding. Ways should be found to involve women's groups in the development of strategies to reduce violence in the media, including electronic media, and they should participate in the development of regulatory codes of practice of the media. The Government should further assess its monitoring and enforcement responsibilities in that regard.

- Zimbabwe, CEDAW, A/53/38/Rev.1 part I (1998) 13 at para. 152.

A campaign to promote positive images of women should be organized, involving the mass media.

- Czech Republic, CEDAW, A/53/38/Rev.1 part I (1998) 16 at paras. 191, 202 and 206.

Paragraph 191

The lack of measures and programmes to promote a positive image of women as actors in all areas at all levels of public life and to encourage equal sharing of family responsibilities by men in the media are matters of concern.

Paragraph 202

The enactment of a special law and introduction of policies to combat all forms of violence against women, together with promotion of education and media programmes sensitizing the public on this issue, is urged.

Paragraph 206

The image of women as individuals and independent actors in the public sphere needs to be promoted and it is recommended that the Government launch comprehensive, systematic, goal-oriented efforts to balance the existing positive emphasis placed on women's role in the private sphere in laws, policy measures and governmental attitudes, with an equal emphasis on their public sphere functions. In this regard, men should be encouraged, through public media campaigns, school curricula and special temporary measures, such as effective use of paternity leave, to share family responsibilities equally with women.

- Bulgaria, CEDAW, A/53/38/Rev.1 part I (1998) 19 at para. 256.

The Government should implement its intention to cooperate at the regional and international levels with regard to the problem of trafficking in women and their exploitation through prostitution. In order to tackle the problem of trafficking in women, it is essential to address women's economic

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vulnerability, which is the root cause of the problem. In addition, national legislation should be reviewed and amended in accordance with the Convention, effective administrative and police structures need to be created, media sensitization and training campaigns conducted and the work of women's non-governmental organizations in this area promoted.

- Algeria, CEDAW, A/54/38/Rev.1 part I (1999) 12 at para. 74.

The Government, non-governmental organizations, intellectuals and the mass media are urged to encourage enlightened attitudes and accelerate women's emancipation through publicity and public awareness campaigns.

- Kyrgyzstan, CEDAW, A/54/38/Rev.1 part I (1999) 15 at paras. 114 and 121.

Paragraph 114

The principle of equality guaranteed by law should also refer to non-discrimination on the grounds of sex. Policies, including educational, mass media and awareness-raising campaigns should also be introduced and efforts should be directed at countering both intentional and unintentional discrimination.

Paragraph 121

A range of measures, including comprehensive public education and mass media campaigns, should be introduced to eliminate traditional stereotypes of the roles of men and women.

- Thailand, CEDAW, A/54/38/Rev.1 part I (1999) 24 at paras. 244 and 245.

Paragraph 244

The traditional stereotypes of women and men that are reflected in some laws and portrayed in school text books and through the media, which undermine positive policies relating to gender equality, are of concern.

Paragraph 245

A review should be made of laws and policies and school text books in order to remove gender stereotypes. The media should also be encouraged to portray girls and women in non-stereotyped ways.

- Georgia, CEDAW, A/54/38/Rev.1 part II (1999) 53 at para. 95.

The principle of the equality of women and men should be incorporated in the Constitution.

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Education and awareness-raising campaigns should be initiated utilizing the large number of women in mass media and education. Efforts should be made to obtain a clear understanding of indirect discrimination so as to accelerate its elimination and to put in place new legislation addressing the issue of indirect discrimination. Training of lawmakers and the judiciary, health professionals and the mass media in this respect is also recommended.

- Democratic Republic of the Congo, CEDAW, A/55/38 part I (2000) 21 at paras. 215 and 216.

Paragraph 215

Concern is expressed at the persistence of traditional customs and practices, which are in violation of women's fundamental rights, such as dowry, the levirate, polygamy, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Paragraph 216

Legislation should be enacted to prohibit such traditional practices. The Government should work with NGOs and the media to change attitudes through information and awareness-raising campaigns, the teaching of the Convention in schools and the translation of the Convention into local languages so as to accelerate women's enjoyment of their human rights.

- Burkina Faso, CEDAW, A/55/38 part I (2000) 25 at para. 266.

The Ministry for the Advancement of Women is called upon, with the cooperation of NGOs, intellectuals, religious leaders and the media, to encourage a change in people's way of thinking and accelerate the process of the emancipation of women through law reform, information, education and communications activities, particularly in rural areas, so that a change takes place in women's view of themselves and society as a whole recognizes that the participation of women is necessary for the development of Burkina Faso.

- Germany, CEDAW, A/55/38 part I (2000) 29 at paras. 323 and 324.

Paragraph 323

The continuing stereotypical portrayal of women, especially of foreign women, in the media is of concern.

Paragraph 324

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The Government is urged to support the important role of the media in changing stereotypical attitudes to women. Opportunities should be created for the portrayal of positive, non-traditional images of women and to encourage and facilitate the use of self-regulatory mechanisms in the media to reduce discriminatory and stereotypical portrayals of women.

- Lithuania, CEDAW, A/55/38 part II (2000) 61 at paras. 138, 139 and 157.

Paragraph 138

The persistence of traditional stereotypes regarding the role of men and women in the family, in employment and in society, is of concern. Further concern is expressed about the lack of targeted educational programmes, mass media campaigns and temporary special measures in education, employment and politics to eliminate these stereotypes. The fact that provisions in the current draft Code of Advertising Ethics may not be sufficient to address advertisements that utilize and support traditional sex-role stereotypes, is also of concern.

Paragraph 139

The Government should design and implement comprehensive programmes in education and the mass media in order to promote roles and tasks of women and men in all sectors of society. The draft Code of Advertising Ethics should be amended in order to cover not only the prohibition of the promotion of discrimination against women and men, or of the alleged superiority of one sex over the other, but also of the more subtle utilization of and support for traditional role stereotypes in the family, in employment and in society.

Paragraph 157

The Government should also involve the mass media in promoting positive images of women leaders.

- Romania, CEDAW, A/55/38 part II (2000) 77 at para. 303.

Concern is expressed over the continuing stereotypical and sexist portrayal of women in the media, especially in advertising. The State Party should encourage the media to contribute to the societal effort to overcome such attitudes, should create opportunities for a positive, non-traditional portrayal of women and should encourage and facilitate the use of self-regulatory mechanisms in the media to reduce discriminatory and stereotypical portrayals of women.

- Finland, CEDAW, A/56/38 part I (2001) 29 at para. 304.

A positive change of atmosphere in the media regarding sex phone lines should be encouraged, as they run counter to the efforts being made to portray women positively, and not as “sex objects.”

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- Egypt, CEDAW, A/56/38 part I (2001) 33 at paras. 334 and 335.

Paragraph 334

Concern is expressed at the continuing stereotypical portrayal of women in the media, which encourages discrimination and undermines equality between men and women.

Paragraph 335

The Government, including the National Council for Women, is urged to support the important role of the media in changing stereotypical attitudes towards women and in promoting equality between men and women as prescribed by the Constitution and international standards. Opportunities should be created for the portrayal of positive, non-traditional images of women and the number of women in decision-making positions in the media should be increased. A monitoring body on the representation of women in the media should be established.

- Viet Nam, CEDAW, A/56/38 part II (2001) 68 at para. 251.

Urgent and wide-ranging measures, including targeted educational programmes, the revision of curricula and textbooks, and mass media campaigns should be taken to overcome traditional stereotypes regarding the role of women and men in society.

- Nicaragua, CEDAW, A/56/38 part II (2001) 72 at para. 295.

Measures to change stereotypical attitudes about the roles and responsibilities of women and men, including awareness-raising and educational campaigns directed at both women and men, as well as the media, should be strengthened in order to achieve *de facto* equality between women and men. An assessment of the impact of the measures should be undertaken in order to identify shortcomings, and to adjust and improve these measures accordingly.

CRC

- Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), CRC, CRC/C/50 (1996) 17 at paras. 91 and 107.

Paragraph 91

The absence of pluralism in the activities of the major organs of the mass media, limiting the freedom of the child to receive information and the freedom of thought and conscience, is of concern.

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Paragraph 107

A solution should be found to the situation of Albanian-speaking children in Kosovo, especially in the light of the principles and provisions of the Convention, including those of its article 3 relating to the best interests of the child. The State-controlled mass media, in the interests of healing and building trust within the country, have a role and a responsibility to contribute to the efforts to foster tolerance and understanding between different groups and the broadcasting of programmes that run counter to this objective should end. The securing and dissemination of broader and more diverse sources of information designed for children, including by broadcasting them on the mass media, would assist in ensuring further implementation of the principles and provisions of the Convention, including those of its article 17. Measures should also be taken to improve the activities of the mass media in imparting information for children in their own language, including Albanian.

- Croatia, CRC, CRC/C/50 (1996) 31 at paras. 200 and 201.

Paragraph 200

The Government should devote its full efforts to actively encouraging a culture of tolerance through all possible channels, including the schools, the media and the law.

Paragraph 201

The State-controlled mass media should play an active role in the efforts to secure tolerance and understanding between different ethnic groups. The broadcasting of programmes which would run counter to this objective should come to an end.

- Lebanon, CRC, CRC/C/54 (1996) 7 at para. 60.

Opportunities for the cultural development of children are critical. Measures should be taken to give children access to child literature and media.

- Panama, CRC, CRC/C/62 (1997) 19 at para. 123.

Measures should be taken that are aimed at developing a culture of human rights and at changing attitudes towards children in general, and in particular children belonging to indigenous groups. Information and education about children's rights should be disseminated to children and adults alike. Such information should be translated into the different languages spoken by indigenous people. Moreover, the existence of a high level of illiteracy in the country requires the use of the media in a manner adapted to the various levels of the audiences in the country.

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- Slovakia, CRC, CRC/C/100 (2000) 100 at para. 591.

In accordance with article 29 (c) of the Convention, the State party should ensure that the education system and the media in particular foster positive attitudes towards minorities and intercultural dialogue between the minorities and the majority, including children.

- Lithuania, CRC, CRC/C/103 (2001) 47 at paras. 278 and 279.

Paragraph 278

Concern is expressed that children are not adequately protected from the violence and pornography increasingly being shown on television, in video films and in other media. Also, while noting that there is State support, including through tax reduction, for the publication and sale of books, it is noted with concern that not enough programmes and books for children are being produced and disseminated in the country.

Paragraph 279

In light of article 17 of the Convention, the State party is encouraged to further enforce appropriate guidelines and legislation for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her development, in particular violence and pornography, such as the Law on the Provision of Information to the Public of 1996. Measures to encourage the production of programmes and books for children and disseminate them throughout the country, in particular in rural areas, should be reinforced.