



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Fifty-sixth session

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

List of issues prepared in the absence of the combined fourth to eighth periodic reports of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Note by the Committee

General

1. The Committee did not receive the combined fourth to eighth periodic reports of the State party. Please provide information on the reason for this situation. Please also provide information and statistics disaggregated by sex on the current situation of women in the State party, in all areas of the Convention.

Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework

2. Given that the dualist system of the State party requires incorporation of the Convention to render it fully applicable in the domestic legal system, please indicate whether the State party has taken measures to domesticate the Convention, and to identify, repeal and amend provisions that discriminate against women. Please indicate whether the State party has taken measures to integrate in the Constitution a definition of discrimination against women in line with article 1 of the Convention, covering acts of discrimination by public and private actors, in accordance with article 2 of the Convention, or whether such definition has been incorporated in other legislation. Please also indicate whether there are some cases where the Convention has been cited by domestic courts and if so, please provide details on them.

National machinery for the advancement of women

3. Please indicate what percentage of the national budget is allocated to the Department of Women's Affairs and provide information on the capacity of the national machinery for the advancement of women. Please also indicate whether the State party envisages developing a national gender equality policy.

Temporary special measures

4. Please provide information on temporary special measures taken or envisaged, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25(2004) on temporary special measures, to expedite accelerating realization of de facto equality of women with men.

Stereotypes and harmful practices

5. Please provide information on measures taken or envisaged, including the development of a comprehensive policy, to change social and cultural patterns that lead to stereotyping, reproducing or reinforcing the traditional roles of women and men within the family and society in general, particularly targeting gender socialisation practices in the family and the school and negative media messages and portrayals of women.

Violence against women

6. Information before the Committee refers to the very high rate of violence against women, including rape and domestic violence. Please provide information on the measures taken and envisaged to address this issue and provide detailed information on the current situation and trends with respect to all forms of violence against women and girls occurring in the domestic and public spheres. Please also provide data, disaggregated by age, type of offence and, in the case of sexual violence, the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim, on cases of violence against women reported to the police, the number of cases brought to court and the number of prosecutions and convictions resulting from these cases. Please also provide data on women murdered by their husbands, partners or ex-partners.

7. Please indicate whether the State party envisages developing a national policy or comprehensive long-term strategy to combat violence against women, which would include measures to: (a) encourage women to report acts of violence; (b) ensure prosecution of perpetrators; (c) provide victims with effective protection, remedies and rehabilitation; and (d) carry out capacity-building and awareness-raising programmes for the police and other law enforcement officers, lawyers, health and social workers, the judiciary and the public at large.

8. In paragraph 125 of its previous concluding observations, the Committee referred to the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act in 1995. Please indicate the measures taken to: (a) effectively enforce this Act and monitor its implementation, (b) establish shelters, and (c) provide women victims of violence with medical and psychological support.

9. Please indicate the steps taken or envisaged to adopt a comprehensive law on all forms of violence against women as well as legal provisions: (a) prohibiting sexual harassment at school, in the workplace and in the public sphere; (b) defining marital rape on the basis of lack of consent; and (c) criminalizing marital rape.

Trafficking

10. Information before the Committee mentions the prevalence of prostitution, including juvenile prostitution. Please indicate whether the State party has carried out a study to investigate the scope, extent and root causes of trafficking in human beings and forced prostitution, particularly of women and girls, including through the collection and analysis of data on trafficking and exploitation of women and girls in prostitution. Please provide information on the laws and measures adopted or envisaged to prevent and punish trafficking and exploitation of prostitution, in line with article 6 of the Convention. Please also indicate whether the State party envisages developing policies and programmes addressing prevention, protection, assistance and legal support for victims of trafficking, including those who are exploited in forced prostitution.

Participation in political and public life

11. Information before the Committee indicates the presence of only one woman out of the 15 members of the House of Assembly and two women in the cabinet. Please provide information on the steps taken to increase the number of women in elected and appointed decision-making bodies and to achieve equal representation of women in political and public life, including through the adoption of temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 (2004). Please provide, in particular, information on measures taken or envisaged, in accordance with general recommendation No. 23 (1997), to introduce a system of quotas that would aim at reaching a minimum of 30 per cent of women in Parliament, and to support women candidates standing for elections by developing targeted training and mentoring programmes on leadership and negotiation skills for potential women candidates and potential female leaders in the public sector.

Education

12. Information before the Committee indicates: (a) the high dropout rate of girls owing to pregnancy; (b) economic obstacles to women and girls' access to education, particularly in female-headed households; and (c) persistent gender segregation of fields of study in professional areas with females concentrated in traditional areas of teaching and nursing. Please provide information on the measures taken to address these issues.

Employment

13. Please provide information on the measures taken to: (a) reduce the high rate of unemployment of women; (b) amend the 1994 Equal Pay Act to ensure the provision of the principle of equal pay for women and men for work of equal value; (c) address occupational segregation in the workplace; and (d) close the wage gap between women and men. Please also indicate whether the State party has adopted legal provisions prohibiting sexual harassment and violence against women in the workplace.

Health

14. Please provide information on the status of women's health, including sexual and reproductive health. Please also provide information on: (a) the percentage of the national budget allocated to health; (b) the maternal mortality rate; (c) women's access to basic health-care services, including essential obstetric care; as well as (d) the prevalence of cervical and breast cancer and the measures taken to prevent these and other chronic non-communicable diseases that predominantly affect women.

15. Information before the Committee indicates the existence of a programme of the Ministry of Health to combat teenage pregnancy. Please provide information on the content of this programme and on the measures taken to enforce and monitor its implementation. Please also provide information on the availability and accessibility of comprehensive education on sexual and reproductive health and rights and of family planning services, and indicate whether there are measures in place in this regard. Please also provide information on the use and availability of contraceptives.

16. Please indicate the HIV/AIDS infection rate among women, including pregnant women, and whether treatment is available to women living with HIV/AIDS. Please also indicate whether the existing programmes to combat HIV/AIDS integrate a gender perspective, including the availability of antiretroviral medication to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Please further refer to the initiatives undertaken in order to eliminate discrimination and stigma against women and girls infected with HIV/AIDS.

17. In paragraph 140 of its previous concluding observations, the Committee expressed its concern about the need for spousal's consent for tubal ligation and on the existence of a law which precludes safe abortion. Please indicate the measures taken or envisaged to eliminate the need for spousal's consent for tubal ligation, provide information on the incidence of unsafe abortion and its impact on women's health, including maternal death, and indicate whether the State party envisages removing the harsh punitive legislative provisions imposed on women who undergo abortion, in line with the Committee's general recommendation 24 (1999) on women and health.

Disadvantaged groups of women

18. Please provide information on measures aimed at the improvement of women's access to land ownership and credit facilities, particularly among disadvantaged groups of women. Please also provide information on the situation of women with disabilities, older women, and women living in situation of poverty, in relation to access to health services, education and social protection measures. Please provide information on the situation of women in detention and indicate whether female detainees are held separately from male detainees, whether their gender-specific medical needs are met and whether female guards are in charge of their supervision.

Natural disasters

19. Given that the State party has an active volcano and is in the hurricane belt, please provide information on whether a gender perspective has been incorporated into national disaster management and relief and recovery strategies.

Optional Protocol and amendment to article 20, paragraph 1

20. Please indicate any progress made with respect to the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention and acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention.
