



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Lebanon*

1. The Committee considered the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Lebanon ([CEDAW/C/LBN/4-5](#)) at its 1345th and 1346th meetings, on 3 November 2015 (see [CEDAW/C/SR.1345](#) and 1346). The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in [CEDAW/C/LBN/Q/4-5](#) and the responses of Lebanon are contained in [CEDAW/C/LBN/Q/4-5/Add.1](#).

A. Introduction

2. The Committee appreciates the submission by the State party of its combined fourth and fifth periodic reports. It also appreciates the State party's written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by the pre-sessional working group and welcomes the oral presentation by the delegation and the further clarifications provided in response to the questions posed orally by the Committee during the dialogue.

3. The Committee commends the State party on its delegation, which was headed by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, Najla Riachi Assaker, and included representatives of the Internal Security Forces, the Directorate of Security, the Ministry of the Interior and Municipalities, the National Commission of Women's Affairs and the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the consideration in 2008 of the State party's third periodic report ([CEDAW/C/LBN/3](#)) in undertaking legislative reforms, in particular the adoption of the following legislation:

- (a) Law No. 164 of 2011, punishing the crime of trafficking in persons;

* Adopted by the Committee at its sixty-second session (26 October-20 November 2015).



(b) Law No. 162 of 2011, repealing article 562 of the Penal Code, which had allowed reduced sentences for crimes committed in the name of so-called honour;

(c) Law No. 129 of 2010, amending article 59 of the Labour Law and granting Palestine refugee workers compensation for dismissal from service;

(d) Law No. 128 of 2010, amending article 9 of the Social Security Law and allowing Palestine refugee workers to benefit from end-of-service compensation.

5. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to improve its institutional and policy framework aimed at accelerating the elimination of discrimination against women and promoting gender equality, such as the adoption of the following in 2012:

(a) National Action Plan for Human Rights (2014-2019);

(b) The National Strategy for Women in Lebanon (2011-2021), in 2012.

6. The Committee welcomes the fact that, in December 2008, in the period since the consideration of the previous report, the State party acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

C. Factors and difficulties preventing the effective implementation of the Convention

7. The Committee is deeply aware of the devastating impact of the combined economic, demographic and security challenges facing Lebanon as a consequence of the continuing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, which has resulted in:

(a) A mass influx of refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic into Lebanese territory, estimated at 1.6 million persons, in addition to an estimated 500,000 Palestine refugees;

(b) A social and economic cost to Lebanese society as a whole, which has translated into a sharp increase in poverty and unemployment and overstretched national health and education systems and infrastructure services; and

(c) A deteriorating security situation, exacerbated by sectarian conflict.

8. The Committee is also aware of the simultaneous political deadlock and institutional crisis that are preventing the enactment of laws and adoption of measures to promote and protect women's rights.

9. The Committee is seriously concerned about the insufficient support from the international community to alleviate the economic burden on the State party and better share the costs of the humanitarian response.

10. The Committee is concerned about the rise of religious conservatism and sectarian divisions in the country's pluralist society, which have had a negative impact on women's rights. The Committee is also concerned that the recurring political crises affecting the State party are also being used to justify the sidelining of women's issues as being "non-critical" instead of according them the priority that they deserve.

D. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

Refugee, asylum-seeking and stateless women

11. The Committee commends the State party for the open border and reception policy that it has had for years regarding Palestine refugees and those from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, hosting more than 2 million refugees, and its remarkable and sustained efforts to ensure the protection of refugees and asylum seekers. It takes note, however, of the policy paper on Syrian displacement in Lebanon, approved by the Council of Ministers on 23 October 2014, and the three main priorities for managing the displacement crisis. The Committee is concerned that the 1962 law regulating the entry into, stay in and exit from Lebanon does not distinguish between asylum seekers/refugees and migrants. The Committee is also concerned about the high number of reported cases of child and/or forced marriage among Syrian refugee women and girls and the lack of official data on that phenomenon and on the number of stateless persons in Lebanon.

12. The Committee recommends, in line with its general recommendation No. 32 (2014) on the gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness of women, that the State party:

(a) Ensure that the principle of non-refoulement is upheld, including for women and girls in need of international protection, in the implementation of its policy paper on Syrian displacement in Lebanon, approved by the Council of Ministers on 23 October 2014, by ensuring access to its territory, establishing gender-sensitive asylum procedures and including gender-based violence as a ground for asylum, in line with articles 2 and 3 of the Convention;

(b) Review the 1962 law regulating the entry into, stay in and exit from Lebanon, to distinguish between the protection needs of asylum-seeking and refugee women on the one hand and those of migrant women on the other;

(c) Seek technical support for the establishment of a system to collect data on incidents of gender-based violence against women, in particular sexual violence, and incidents of child and/or forced marriage of refugee women and girls, and provide victims with medical and psychosocial assistance and access to justice, in line with article 2 of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 33 (2015) on women's access to justice;

(d) Conduct a census to ascertain the number of stateless persons in its territory and take the measures necessary to provide them with civil registration documents, and consider ratifying the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness;

(e) Enlist and mobilize the support of the international community to share the economic burden and provide for the needs of the refugee population, including resettlement and humanitarian admission opportunities, and continue to cooperate with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

(f) Adopt a national action plan to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, the participation of

women at all stages of peace processes, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 30 (2013) on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations, and seek the support of the international community for the implementation of its obligations.

Implementation

13. The Committee is fully aware of the efforts undertaken by the State party to adopt a legal and institutional framework protecting and promoting women's rights. The Committee urges the State party to consider according the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations high priority for national mobilization and international support. The Committee urges the State party to promptly implement the present concluding observations by setting up a coordination mechanism with all relevant State institutions at all levels, including the parliament and the judiciary, with civil society and with its international partners.

Parliament

14. The Committee stresses the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention (see the statement by the Committee on its relationship with parliamentarians, adopted at the forty-fifth session, in 2010). It invites the parliament to take all measures necessary to unblock the current institutional crisis and, in line with its mandate, to take the steps necessary for the implementation of the present concluding observations.

Withdrawal of reservations

15. Notwithstanding the detailed explanations given by the delegation, the Committee remains concerned about the State party's reluctance to withdraw its reservation to the following articles of the Convention:

(a) Article 9 (2) on granting women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children. The Committee also notes with concern that the Council of Ministers has repeatedly endorsed the discriminatory provision in Decree No. 15 of 1925 on Lebanese Nationality, establishing that nationality is exclusively based on patrilineal descent;

(b) Article 16 (1) (c), (d), (f) and (g) regarding equality in marriage and family relations.

16. The Committee calls upon the State party:

(a) To withdraw its reservation made upon accession to the Convention regarding article 9 (2), repeal Decree No. 15 of 1925 on Lebanese Nationality and adopt legislation to ensure women equal rights with men to pass on their nationality to their foreign spouses and children;

(b) To withdraw its reservation made upon accession to the Convention regarding article 16 (1) (c), (d), (f) and (g);

(c) Initiate a dialogue with the leaders of religious communities and religious scholars, taking into consideration best practices in the region, with a view to overcoming the resistance to the withdrawal of its reservations to the Convention.

Constitutional framework

17. The Committee remains concerned that the Constitution is still not in full conformity with the Convention and does not explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex. It is also concerned about the limited scope and applicability of the procedure for challenging laws deemed to be incompatible with the Constitution and international legal obligations.

18. The Committee reiterates its previous recommendations to include in the Constitution a provision defining and prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex, in line with article 2 (a) of the Convention (see CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/3, paras. 10 and 11, and A/60/38 (Supp.), para. 96) and to amend articles 9 and 10 of the Constitution to ensure gender equality in the context of religious freedom and sectarian diversity.

Legislative framework

19. The Committee welcomes the initial review by the State party of legislation containing discriminatory provisions against women, but is concerned about the delays in adopting relevant amendments. The Committee welcomes the amendment of the Criminal Code and the repeal of its article 562. It is concerned, however, about the remaining discriminatory criminal law provisions and personal status laws that discriminate against women within sects and between women who are members of different sects. The Committee is also concerned about discriminatory provisions in labour, social security and municipal elections laws.

20. The Committee recommends that the State party expedite a comprehensive review to ensure the compatibility of legislation with the provisions of the Convention, and upon resolution of the institutional crisis and the restoration of government functions, urges it to amend or repeal all articles of the Criminal Code and personal status, labour, social security and municipal election laws that discriminate against women.

Access to justice

21. The Committee is concerned about the obstacles that women face when seeking accessing to the justice system, in particular the lack of adequate legal aid services and the lack of knowledge and sensitivity on the part of justice officials regarding women's rights.

22. The Committee, in line with its general recommendation No. 33 (2015) on women's access to justice, recommends that the State party:

(a) **Institutionalize systems of legal aid and public defence that are accessible, sustainable and responsive to the needs of women and ensure that such services are provided in a timely, continuous and effective manner at all stages of judicial or quasi-judicial proceedings, including alternative dispute resolution mechanisms;**

(b) **Take immediate steps, including capacity-building and training programmes for justice system personnel on the Convention and women's rights, to ensure that religious courts harmonize their norms, procedures and practices with the human rights standards enshrined in the Convention and other international human rights instruments.**

National machinery for the advancement of women

23. The Committee regrets the institutional weakness, limited status, insufficient decision-making authority and inadequate human, technical and financial resources of the national machinery for the advancement of women and the obstacles facing coordination and gender mainstreaming throughout all government bodies. The Committee is concerned about the low level of coordination between the gender focal points within the line ministries and the Department of Women's Affairs in the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Committee is also concerned about the limited and inadequate information provided regarding the implementation of the National Strategy for Women in Lebanon (2011-2021).

24. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/3, para. 21) that the State party:**

(a) **Give urgent priority to strengthening the institutional capacity of the national machinery for the advancement of women and provide it with the mandate, decision-making power and human, technical and financial resources necessary to work effectively for the promotion of equality between women and men and the enjoyment of their human rights;**

(b) **Institutionalize and strengthen the system of gender focal points in line ministries and other public institutions in order to achieve effective gender mainstreaming strategy throughout policies and programmes;**

(c) **Ensure that the national machinery coordinates and cooperates with civil society and women's non-governmental organizations to promote participatory planning for the advancement of women;**

(d) **Accelerate the implementation of the National Strategy for Women in Lebanon (2011-2021) by adopting a plan of action that clearly defines the competencies of national and local authorities regarding the National Strategy and is supported by a comprehensive data collection system to monitor its implementation.**

Stereotypes

25. The Committee is concerned about discriminatory patriarchal stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in society and in the family and the role of the media in overemphasizing the traditional role of women as mothers and wives, thus undermining women's social status and their educational and professional careers. The Committee notes with concern that the advertising sector persistently conveys stereotyped and sometimes degrading images of women.

26. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all measures necessary to raise awareness on the part of the media and the advertising sector of the need to eliminate discriminatory gender stereotypes, to ensure that women are not portrayed only as wives and mothers and to promote positive images of women as active participants in political, economic and social life.**

Violence against women

27. The Committee welcomes the adoption of Law No. 293 of 2014 on the protection of women and other family members from domestic violence. The Committee notes with concern, however, the absence in the law of explicit reference

to gender-based violence against women and of provisions specifically criminalizing marital rape, crimes committed in the name of so-called honour and other harmful practices. It is also concerned about the continued existence of discriminatory provisions in the law with regard to the criminalization of adultery and that the law does not take precedence over customary and personal status laws. The Committee further regrets the lack of disaggregated data on the number of reports, investigations, prosecutions and convictions in cases of violence against women, including sexual harassment, domestic violence, assault and rape, including by security forces.

28. The Committee urges the State party:

(a) **To amend Law No. 293 on the protection of women and other family members from domestic violence, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 19 (1992) on violence against women, to specifically criminalize gender-based violence against women, marital rape, crimes committed in the name of so-called honour and other harmful practices;**

(b) **To remove provisions that discriminate between women and men regarding adultery and ensure that Law No. 293 takes precedence over customary and personal status laws;**

(c) **To collect data, disaggregated by sex, age, nationality and relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, on the number of reported cases of violence against women and the number of prosecutions, convictions and sentences imposed on perpetrators;**

(d) **To strengthen legal, medical and psychological support for women who are victims of violence;**

(e) **To ensure that all allegations of sexual harassment are recorded, that all allegations of assault and rape are duly investigated, prosecuted and sanctioned, that victims have access to appropriate redress, including compensation, and that all allegations of assault and rape by members of the security forces are investigated by an independent judicial authority.**

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

29. The Committee welcomes the adoption of Law No. 164 of 2011 to combat trafficking, but notes with concern that the artist visa scheme of 1962 facilitates the sexual exploitation of women migrant workers in the entertainment sector, that Law No. 164 is not being enforced effectively, that it criminalizes victims and that it is without prejudice to the artist visa scheme. It is also concerned about the absence of an early identification and referral system for victims of trafficking, who are frequently arrested, detained and deported without adequate protection and assistance for victims, and weak coordination between government security, justice and social services entities, as well as their lack of cooperation with civil society.

30. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) **Review and revise the artist visa scheme to ensure that it is not misused for the sexual exploitation of women and take appropriate steps to decrease the demand side of prostitution;**

(b) **Amend article 523 of the Criminal Code as necessary to ensure that victims of trafficking are not prosecuted;**

(c) **Provide mandatory gender-sensitive capacity-building for judges, prosecutors, the border police, the immigration authorities and other law enforcement officials to ensure the strict enforcement of the Law No. 164 to combat trafficking by promptly prosecuting all cases of trafficking in women and girls and adequately punishing traffickers;**

(d) **Ensure the early identification of victims of trafficking and their referral to protective services; strengthen assistance to victims of trafficking, including by granting them temporary residence permits, irrespective of their ability or willingness to cooperate with prosecutorial authorities, and by providing them with access to alternative income opportunities;**

(e) **Provide victims of trafficking with adequate access to health care and counselling and strengthen those services by providing targeted training to social workers;**

(f) **Ensure inter-agency coordination between government security, justice and social services entities to combat trafficking and strengthen their cooperation with civil society.**

Participation in political and public life

31. The Committee is concerned about the gross underrepresentation of women in public and political life and the lack of capacity-building for political party and labour union representatives with regard to women's rights, and regrets that the bill that would have provided for a 30 per cent minimum quota for women's representation on the candidate lists of political parties for parliamentary elections was not adopted. It is concerned about the strong political resistance to the adoption of temporary special measures to effectively promote the equal participation of women in public and political life.

32. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take all appropriate measures to increase the number of women in elected and appointed office at all levels, so as to comply with article 7 of the Convention;**

(b) **Take specific measures, including temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 23 (1997) on women in political and public life and No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures, and establish concrete goals and timetables in order to accelerate the increase in the representation of women in all spheres of public and political life;**

(c) **Implement awareness-raising campaigns to highlight the importance to society as a whole the full and equal participation of women in leadership positions in all sectors and at all levels and explain the purpose of introducing temporary special measures such as quotas as a strategy necessary for accelerating the realization of women's de facto equality.**

Education

33. The Committee notes the recommendation in the study by the National Committee for the Follow-up of Women's Issues and the Centre for Educational Research and Development to eliminate discriminatory gender stereotypes in schoolbooks. The Committee is concerned, however, that the State party has not taken effective steps to remove such stereotypes from school curricula and textbooks. It is also concerned about the lack of training for teachers on women's rights and gender equality and the limited career guidance encouraging women and girls to choose non-traditional career paths, in particular in the fields of science and technology.

34. The Committee recommends that the State party intensify its efforts to review school curricula and textbooks to eliminate any stereotyped and patriarchal depictions of the roles of women. It reiterates its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/3, para. 25) that the State party enhance training for teachers on gender, women's rights and equality. The Committee further recommends that the State party give priority to eliminating traditional stereotypes and structural barriers that may deter girls from enrolling in traditionally male-dominated fields of study, such as science and technology, and step up efforts to provide girls with career counselling on non-traditional career paths and non-stereotypical vocational training.

Employment

35. The Committee welcomes the adoption of Laws Nos. 266 and 267 of 2014 extending maternity leave in the public and private sectors to 10 weeks with full pay. The Committee is concerned, however, about the lack of measures to promote the concept of shared family responsibilities and to combat the difficulties that women face in combining work and family responsibilities. The Committee is also concerned about women's limited access to the formal labour market and about the absence of legislation criminalizing sexual harassment in the work place. The Committee is further concerned about gender pay gaps, occupational segregation and the high percentage of women in low-paid jobs, such as service sector workers and salespersons, administrative staff and mid-level professionals.

36. The Committee calls upon the State party:

(a) To promote the equal sharing of family and domestic responsibilities between women and men, including by introducing compulsory paternity or shared parental leave following childbirth;

(b) To take measures, including temporary special measures, in line with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 5 (1988), such as creating incentives for employers to recruit women, introducing flexible working arrangements and strengthening professional training for women, in order to enhance women's access to the formal labour market;

(c) To adopt legislation criminalizing sexual harassment in the workplace;

(d) To take specific measures to address horizontal and vertical segregation, including by promoting the equal participation of women in highly skilled jobs and senior management positions, providing counselling and

placements that stimulate on-the-job career development and upward mobility in the labour market, stimulating the diversification of occupational choices by both women and men, encouraging women to take up non-traditional jobs, especially in the fields of science and technology, and men to seek employment in the social sector, and providing women with access to effective job training, retraining, counselling and placement services that are not limited to traditional employment areas;

(e) To take specific measures to close the pay gap and implement the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, including by establishing a body responsible for conducting job evaluation schemes using gender-neutral criteria.

Women migrant domestic workers

37. The Committee welcomes the various measures adopted by the State party to protect the rights of women migrant domestic workers, including issuing unified contracts, requiring employers to sign up to an insurance policy, regulating employment agencies, adopting a law criminalizing trafficking in persons and integrating such workers into the social charter and the national strategy for social development. The Committee notes with concern, however, that the measures have proved insufficient to ensure respect for the human rights of those workers. The Committee is equally concerned about the rejection by the Ministry of Labour of the application by the National Federation of Labour Unions to establish a domestic workers' union, the absence of an enforcement mechanism for the work contracts of women migrant domestic workers, limited access for those workers to health care and social protection and the non-ratification of the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) of the International Labour Organization (ILO). The Committee is concerned about the high incidence of abuse against women migrant domestic workers and the persistence of practices, such as the confiscation of passports by employers and the maintenance of the *kafala* system, which put workers at risk of exploitation and make it difficult for them to leave abusive employers and obstacles affecting domestic workers' access to justice, including fear of expulsion and insecurity of residence while procedures are under way. The Committee is deeply concerned about the disturbing documented reports of migrant domestic workers dying from unnatural causes, including suicides and falls from tall buildings, and about the failure of the State party to conduct investigations into those deaths.

38. The Committee, in line with its general recommendation No. 26 (2008) on women migrant workers, recommends that the State party:

(a) Raise awareness among women migrant domestic workers of their human rights under the Convention and monitor the work of employment agencies, including by establishing an enforcement mechanism to ensure that the same contracts are used in the State party and in workers' countries of origin;

(b) Expedite the adoption of the bill regulating domestic employment, with adequate sanctions for employers engaging in abusive practices, and ratify the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) of the ILO on decent work for domestic workers;

(c) Abolish the *kafala* system and ensure the effective access to justice of women migrant domestic workers, including by guaranteeing their safety and residence while procedures are under way;

(d) **Promptly investigate all reports of deaths of women migrant domestic workers from unnatural causes and prosecute and sanction any perpetrators;**

(e) **Take the measures necessary to protect the rights of women migrant domestic workers, including by approving the establishment of a domestic workers' union.**

Palestine refugee women

39. The Committee is concerned about restrictions on the right to work of Palestine refugee women.

40. **The Committee recommends that the State party review and amend its labour laws to ensure that Palestine refugee women have the right to work by providing them with access to the labour market in the State party.**

Health

41. The Committee welcomes the adoption of a plan by the Ministry of Public Health in 2013 for the delivery of a comprehensive package of primary health-care services, the establishment of primary health-care centres throughout the State party and the progress achieved in reducing maternal mortality. The Committee is concerned, however, about the limited access of women and adolescent girls to sexual and reproductive health services in rural and remote areas in the State party. It is also concerned about the insufficient monitoring of private health-care providers, which are the majority providers of specialized health services for women. The Committee further notes with concern the high number of unsafe abortions owing to the strict criminalization of abortion and the delay in introducing age-appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights at the primary, intermediate and secondary levels of education.

42. **The Committee recommends that the State party provide comprehensive health services, in particular sexual and reproductive health services, in each region according to its size and population, take measures to adequately monitor the performance of private health-care providers, and introduce age-appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health in the curricula at the primary, intermediate and secondary levels of education. The Committee also recommends that the State party legalize abortion, at least in cases in which the life or health of the mother is threatened, and in cases of rape, incest and severe foetal impairment, and that it increase women's access to safe abortion and post-abortion care services.**

Rural women

43. The Committee welcomes the creation, in 2008, of the National Observatory for Women in Agriculture and Rural Areas by the Ministry of Agriculture. The Committee notes with concern, however, the lack of updated and disaggregated data on the participation of women in the agricultural sector. It remains concerned about the exclusion of women agricultural seasonal workers from the protection of the Labour Code and the limited initiatives to increase women's access to rural entrepreneurship through technical assistance, microcredit facilities and bank accounts.

44. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation that the State party collect updated and disaggregated data on women working in the agricultural sector, adopt legislation to protect women agricultural seasonal workers and strengthen support for the entrepreneurial initiatives of women in rural areas.**

Marriage and family relations

45. The Committee is concerned that the multiplicity of personal status laws in the State party, on account of its religious diversity, is resulting in discrimination against women within their own sects, and inequality between women belonging to different sects in key aspects of their lives, including marriage, divorce and custody of children. The Committee is concerned that the process to regulate civil marriage in the State party has stalled and regrets the absence of an optional civil personal status law despite increasing demands from sectors of civil society. The Committee is also concerned that the Court of Cassation has little oversight over religious courts, which tend to rule in favour of the husband in divorce, alimony and child custody proceedings. The Committee is further concerned about a bill intended to regulate marriage of minors instead of prohibiting child marriage and about the high incidence of child marriage among rural girls, which is disproportionately high compared with the national average.

46. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt an optional civil personal status law, based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination and the right to choose one's religious affiliation, in order to protect women and alleviate their legal, economic and social marginalization;**

(b) **Require religious sects to codify their laws and submit them to the parliament for a review of their conformity with the Constitution and the provisions of the Convention and establish an appeals mechanism to oversee religious court proceedings and ensure that religious courts do not discriminate against women in their judgements;**

(c) **Set the legal minimum age for marriage at 18 years for girls and boys, in line with international standards, and take the measures necessary to effectively prevent child marriage among rural girls.**

Optional Protocol and amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention

47. **The Committee encourages the State party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention and to accept, as soon as possible, the amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention concerning the meeting time of the Committee.**

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

48. **The Committee calls upon the State party to use the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in its efforts to implement the provisions of the Convention.**

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

49. **The Committee calls for the realization of substantive gender equality, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, throughout the process of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

Dissemination

50. **The Committee recalls the obligation of the State party to systematically and continuously implement the provisions of the Convention. It urges the State party to give priority attention to the implementation of the present concluding observations and recommendations between now and the submission of the next periodic report. The Committee therefore requests that the present concluding observations be disseminated in a timely manner, in the official language of the State party, to the relevant State institutions at all levels (national, regional and local), in particular to the Government, the ministries, the parliament and the judiciary, to enable their full implementation. It encourages the State party to collaborate with all stakeholders concerned, such as employers' associations, trade unions, human rights and women's organizations, universities, research institutions and the media. It recommends that the present concluding observations be disseminated in an appropriate form at the local community level to enable their implementation. In addition, the Committee requests the State party to continue to disseminate the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and relevant jurisprudence, in addition to the Committee's general recommendations, to all stakeholders.**

Technical assistance

51. **The Committee acknowledges the considerable efforts undertaken by the State party in seeking support from the international community to address its demographic and economic challenges resulting from the refugee crisis. The Committee also takes note of the insufficient support received to date and accordingly encourages the State party to continue to enlist the support of the international community to this end. The Committee also calls upon the State party to strengthen further its cooperation with specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations system and other international entities in the development of a comprehensive programme aimed at the implementation of the above recommendations and the Convention as a whole.**

Ratification of other treaties

52. **The Committee notes that the adherence of the State party to the nine major international human rights instruments¹ would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of**

¹ The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

life. The Committee therefore encourages the State party to consider ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, to which it is not yet a party.

Follow-up to the concluding observations

53. The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 12 (f) and 22 (b) above.

Preparation of the next report

54. The Committee invites the State party to submit its sixth periodic report in November 2019.

55. The Committee requests the State party to follow the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents ([HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6](#), chap. I).
