



International Advocacy Reports and Statements

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Netherlands

The Dutch official report was presented by a numerous representation from six ministries of the Dutch government. Representatives from Aruba and Netherlands Antilles were present as well.

The basic principles of women equality are anchored in international treaties and European and Dutch legislation. Increasing numbers of women in the Netherlands participate in all domains of social life: politics, administration, science, culture, the media, employment, sports etc. However, discrimination of immigrant and older women remains to be a problem.

Education and Woman Emancipation

The proportion of women in top position has increased but still is not proportional and representative. The Minister for Emancipation, who coordinates all emancipation policies of the government, is consulted when naming personnel at high positions in the Dutch administration occurs and can intervene if the minister thinks a woman candidate would be better. A number of projects in support of the emancipation policy have been promoted but with small results when look at gender ratios of managers, researchers and university personnel. In addition, the Dutch representation admitted that more progress in combating general stereotypes about women in top positions has to be achieved.

The Netherlands has currently more women entering university than men. However, there is a great difference between subject selection. Women are less likely than men to choose technical studies which results in lower salary in the future. Educational measures have been taken to improve career and professional orientation of girls. Resources in the amount of 16 millions Euros are allocated to the field of training to promote technical education for girls starting on a primary level.

Egypt

The Egyptian official report was prepared by the National Council for Women. It was an analytical report dealing separately with each article of the Convention. The Egyptian Constitution and the laws supplementing the Constitution provide for equality between men and women. However, these provisions concerning gender equality are in some cases violated in practice. The Egyptian Penal Code is discriminatory in crimes of adultery. Also, it is not possible for a woman to take up a post of a governor.

International Federation of University Women

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There is no discrimination of women in regards to wages in public sector; however a wage of a woman in a private sector is about 80% of the wage of a man. Women participation in politics is supported by the Center for Political Empowerment of Women and National Council of Women - Forum for Women. According to a new draft law a minimum quota will be set for a participation of both genders in the parliament.

There have been Woman's Skill Development Centres and E-training Centers created in Egypt to help women to enter the job market. Several other agencies, units and projects were established to promote women empowerment and education. In 2001 an Ombudsman Office started to monitor complaints of women who report discriminatory practices, which they are subject to. Media image of woman has improved as but stereotypes in theater and advertisements remain.

The legal age for marriage has recently be set to 18 years. However, this does not mean that early marriage does not occur mainly in rural areas. Female genital mutilation (FGM) and circumcision have not been combated yet, but the general understanding of FGM is moving from a social norm to a crime.

The Committee urged the Egyptian Government to sign the Optional Protocol. The government response was hesitant. The Optional Protocol would affect domestic competencies and therefore needs to be considered into detail by the government.

Education

National Council for Women has initiated several projects to lower the gender gap in education. In secondary education and some areas of higher education, there are more females enrollees and the number is still increasing. Also, the percentage of women at some university and college faculties is steadily growing. The Girl-Friendly Schools Initiative, which started in 2003 to reduce the gender gap in primary education, has had an impact already. This initiative managed to decrease female dropouts effectively according to Egyptian Ministry of Education. There is an effort to increase exclusively girls schools mainly in the rural areas as some families are hesitant to send their daughters to coeducational schools. Also, school curricula needs to be freed from negative female and men stereotypes. Egypt's National Council for Human Rights will participate in this project.

The illiteracy rate among women is still higher than that among men. A new illiteracy eradication strategy, awareness-raising programs and national campaigns should be intensified to increase women participation in educational programs.