



REFERENCE: YH/follow-up/Austria/62

14 December 2015

Excellency,

In my capacity as Rapporteur for Follow-up on Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), I have the honour to refer to the examination of the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of Austria at the Committee's fifty-fourth session, held in February 2013. At the end of that session, the Committee's concluding observations were transmitted to your Permanent Mission (CEDAW/C/AUT/CO/7-8). You may recall that in the concluding observations, the Committee requested Austria to provide, within two years, written information on the steps undertaken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraph 25 and in paragraph 31 of the concluding observations.

The Committee welcomes the follow-up report received with a two-month delay in April 2015 (CEDAW/C/AUT/CO/7-8/Add.1) under the CEDAW follow-up procedure. At its sixty-second session, held in October-November 2015 in Geneva, the Committee examined this follow-up report and adopted the following assessment.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 25** of the concluding observations that the State party “adopt a comprehensive national action plan on violence against women as soon as possible”: The state party indicated that the 2014-2016 National Action Plan (NAP) on the Protection of Women against Violence was adopted on 26 August 2014. It includes measures on coordination, data collection, research, prevention, protection and support, substantive and procedural legislation, investigation and criminal prosecution, and European and international cooperation. The State party also mentioned a number of activities that are already being implemented in the context of the NAP. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the National Action Plan on the Protection of Women against Violence. It considers that the recommendation **has been implemented**.

Regarding the recommendation that the State party “ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and introduce criminal sanctions for non-compliance with restraining orders”: The State party stated that it has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Prevention and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence on 14 November 2013. The State party also mentioned that the Security Police Act has been amended to define violations of certain restraining orders imposed to protect women against domestic violence and invasions of privacy as administrative offences. The potential penalty could be a fine of up to 500 euro or imprisonment of up to two weeks in case

His Excellency
Mr. Thomas Hajnoczi
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Austria
to the United Nations Office at Geneva
Avenue Giuseppe Motta 35-37
1202 Geneva

Email: genf-ov@bmeia.gv.at

the fine cannot be paid. In cases of persistent non-compliance, the offender may be arrested. The Committee welcomes the ratification by the State party of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. It further welcomes the introduction of criminal sanctions for non-compliance with certain restraining orders. The Committee considers that the recommendation **has been implemented**.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 31** of the concluding observations that the State party “take measures, such as quotas, and support the provinces taking these measures with benchmarks and concrete timetables, to guarantee the rapid increase of the representation of women in elected and appointed positions in provincial governments and in the parliaments, including in the European Parliament, as well as in political parties, the diplomatic service and sports associations”: The State party mentioned that women accounted for 33 per cent in provincial governments, 32 per cent in provincial parliaments and 5.6 per cent in mayoral positions. It also stated that training courses and mentoring programmes for female politicians and women interested in politics were being held in all provinces in order to increase the proportion of women in provincial and municipal politics. Regarding the representation of women in political parties, the State party indicated that the Austrian legislature did not lay down a provision that ties funding to measures for the elimination of discrimination against women in its revision of the Federal Act on the Financing of Political Parties. However, several political parties have voluntarily adopted measures to increase the share of women in their respective bodies and committees. Besides, the current ratio in the diplomatic service is about 34.3 per cent women to 65.7 per cent men. The selection process for hiring staff for the diplomatic service is partly anonymous, although women are given preference up to a women’s share of 50 per cent if they are equally qualified as their male counterparts, and the 2014 Plan for the Advancement of Women is currently being implemented. Furthermore, women accounted for a total of 16 per cent in the federal managing boards of sports associations. A strategy group was set up and various training courses and awareness-raising activities have taken place to increase the representation of women in official bodies in Austrian sports. According to alternative source of information, women account for 44 per cent of Austrian members of the European Parliament. The Committee welcomes the measures taken by the State party to foster the participation of women in provincial governments and parliaments, in the European Parliament, as well as in the diplomatic service. It also notes that several political parties have voluntarily adopted measures to increase the share of women in their respective bodies and committees. It notes, however, that the representation of women in sports associations remains low, in spite of the measures taken to address this issue. The Committee considers that the State party took significant steps towards the implementation of the recommendation. It considers that, for the period under consideration, the recommendation **has been implemented**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to paragraph 31 of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

- 1) Guarantee the rapid increase of the representation of women in mayoral positions, in political parties, as well as in sports associations.



The Committee looks forward to pursuing its constructive dialogue with the authorities of Austria on the implementation of the Convention.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Xiaoqiao Zou'.

Xiaoqiao Zou
Rapporteur on follow-up
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women