



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
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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 seventh periodic report of Bhutan at the Committee's forty-fourth session, held in July 2009. At the end of that session, the Committee's concluding observations were transmitted to your Permanent Mission (CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/7). You may recall that in the concluding observations, the Committee requested Bhutan to provide, within two years, further information regarding the specific areas of concern identified by the Committee in paragraphs 18 and 20 of the concluding observations.

The Committee welcomes the follow-up report received in April 2013, although it was received with a nineteen-month delay (CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/7/Add.1), under the CEDAW follow-up procedure. At its fifty-sixth session, held in October 2013 in Geneva, the Committee examined this follow-up report and adopted the following assessment.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 18** of the concluding observations “that the State party implement, as a matter of urgency, sustained policies aimed at the promotion of women's full, active and equal participation in decision-making in all areas of public and political life”: The State party indicated that no particular policy had been initiated. However, it mentioned the carrying out of studies on Women and Elections. Therefore, the Committee considers that the recommendation has been **partially implemented**.

Regarding the recommendation “to review criteria required for certain positions when such requirements turn into obstacles or barriers to women's access to decision-making”: The Committee **did not receive information** to assess whether this recommendation has been implemented.

Regarding the recommendation “to use temporary measures according to article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and in the Committee's general recommendation Nos. 25 and 23”: The State party indicated that no temporary special measures had been taken. The Committee considers that the recommendation has **not been implemented**.

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Regarding the recommendation “to implement awareness-raising activities about the importance of women’s participation in decision-making positions during the current transition of society as a whole, including in its remote and rural areas”: The State party indicated that a preparatory exercise was carried out for the potential women’s leader, to prepare them for the Functional Literacy Test, which is mandatory for all participating in elections, and women who passed the FLT were given training in leadership. While noting the absence of implementation of awareness-raising activities about the importance of women’s participation in decision-making positions, the Committee considers that the State party took some steps by training women for the Functional Literacy Test. The Committee considers that the recommendation has been **partially implemented**.

The Committee recommends that the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on steps taken to:

- 1) Implement sustained policies aimed at the promotion of women’s full, active and equal participation in decision-making in all areas of public and political life;
- 2) Review criteria required for certain positions when such requirements turn into obstacles or barriers to women’s access to decision-making;
- 3) Use temporary measures according to article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and in the Committee’s general recommendation Nos. 25 and 2; and
- 4) Continue the implementation of awareness-raising activities about the importance of women’s participation in decision-making positions during the current transition of society as a whole, including in its remote and rural areas.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 20** of the Concluding Observations “to give priority attention to eliminating all forms of violence against women”: The State party indicated that it carried out a study on the prevalence of violence against women, a study on Trafficking in Persons, and awareness-raising activities to combat violence against women. The Committee considers that the recommendation has been **partially implemented**.

Regarding the recommendation “to give priority attention to increasing access to justice for women victims of such violations, including in remote and rural areas”: The Committee **did not receive information** to assess whether the recommendation has been implemented.

Regarding the recommendation “to enact legislation, including on domestic violence, as a matter of priority. Such legislation should ensure that violence against women and girls constitutes a criminal offence and the basis of a civil claim; that perpetrators are prosecuted and punished in accordance with the seriousness of the offence; and that women and girls, including in remote and rural areas, who are victims of such violence have access to protection”: The State party indicated that it enacted the Domestic Violence Prevention Act in 2013, which criminalizes the act of domestic violence, holds perpetrators accountable based on the gravity of the offence, and provides protection to the victims. The Committee considers that the recommendation to enact legislation on domestic violence has **been implemented**. The Committee will study in details the content of this Act during the examination of the next periodic report.

Regarding the recommendation “to encourage further training and awareness-raising for law-enforcement officials and health-care providers to ensure that they are sensitized to all forms of violence against women”: The State party described a number of training workshops provided to law-enforcement officials and health-care providers. While noting that further training is needed, the Committee considers that, for the period under consideration, the recommendation has **been implemented**.

Regarding the recommendation “to adopt measures to increase the number of women working on these issues, including in the police force and other law-enforcement agencies”: The Committee **did not receive information** to assess whether the recommendation has been implemented.

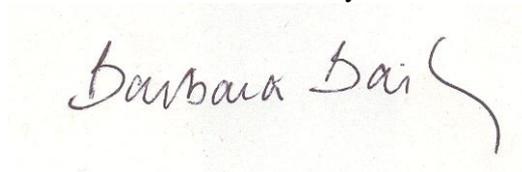
The Committee recommends that the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on actions taken to:

- 1) Continue its efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women;
- 2) Increase access to justice for women victims of such violations, including in remote and rural areas;
- 3) Continue training and awareness-raising activities for law-enforcement officials and health-care providers to ensure that they are sensitized to all forms of violence against women; and
- 4) Increase the number of women working on violence against women, including in the police force and other law-enforcement agencies.

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

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

Yours sincerely,



Barbara Bailey
Rapporteur on follow-up
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women