



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 fourth periodic report of the Republic of Singapore at the Committee's forty-ninth session, held in July 2011. At the end of that session, the Committee's concluding observations were transmitted to your Permanent Mission (CEDAW/C/SGP/CO/4/Rev.1). You may recall that in the concluding observations, the Committee requested the Republic of Singapore to provide, within two years, written information on the steps undertaken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraph 14 and in paragraph 32 of the concluding observations.

The Committee welcomes the follow-up report received in December 2013 (CEDAW/C/SGP/CO/4/Rev.1/Add.1) under the CEDAW follow-up procedure, although it was received with a five-month delay. At its fifty-eighth session, held in July 2014 in Geneva, the Committee examined this follow-up report and adopted the following assessment.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 14** of the concluding observations, the Committee urged the State party to “consider withdrawing remaining reservations to articles 2 and 16, and article 11, paragraph 1, which are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention, within a concrete time frame”: The State party indicated that it remains necessary to maintain the reservations to article 2 paragraph (a) to (f), article 16 paragraph 1(a), (c), (h) to protect the rights of minorities in the practice of their personal and religious law. The State party also considered necessary to retain reservation to article 11, paragraph 1 to safeguard the welfare of women and their unborn children from certain hazardous occupations. The Committee considers that the recommendation **has not been implemented**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to paragraph 14 of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

- 1) Withdraw remaining reservations to articles 2 and 16, and article 11, paragraph 1, which are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention; and
- 2) Incorporate in its domestic legislation parts of articles 2 and 16 of the Convention that are now applicable in the State party.

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Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 32** of the concluding observations to “review and amend the existing labour legislation so that it applies to foreign domestic workers, or adopt new legislation ensuring that foreign domestic workers are entitled to adequate wages, decent working conditions, including a day off, benefits and access to complaint and redress mechanisms”: The State party indicated that, from 9 November 2012, the Employment of Foreign Manpower Act (EFMA) has been amended to impose harsher penalties for employers who are found in breach of work pass conditions. The State party also indicated that the Ministry of Manpower imposed more stringent safety requirements and requires employers to provide their foreign domestic workers with a weekly rest day or compensation in-lieu. The Committee notes with appreciation the amendments made to the Employment of Foreign Manpower Act. It considers that the State party failed to provide information on steps taken to adopt amendments ensuring that foreign domestic workers are entitled to adequate wages and have effective access to complaint and redress mechanisms. In addition, the Committee is concerned that the weekly day off is not mandatory and can be replaced with monetary compensation. The Committee considers that the recommendation **has been partially implemented**.

Regarding the recommendation to “review and repeal the law requiring a work-permit holder, including foreign domestic workers, to be deported on grounds of pregnancy or the diagnosis of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS”: The State party justified this law as a necessary measure to manage the population. The Committee considers that the recommendation **has not been implemented**.

Regarding the recommendation to “provide work permits to foreign wives with a social visit pass and review its system of granting citizenship to foreign wives within a clear and reasonable time frame after marriage”: The State party indicated that it introduced, in April 2012, a new Long Term Visit Pass Plus scheme (LTVP+) to provide greater support, including the right to work, to Singaporean families with foreign spouses who are not yet Permanent Residents nor citizens. It added that LTVP+ holders only require a Letter of Consent from the Ministry of Manpower that can be easily obtained. The Committee considers that the State party took some positive steps by introducing a new Long Term Visit Pass Plus which allows its holders to work. However, the Committee regrets that the LTVP+ holders still need to require a letter of consent from the Ministry of Manpower and that there are conditions for obtaining the LTVP+. The Committee also considers that the State party failed to review its system of granting citizenship to foreign wives within a clear and reasonable time frame after marriage. It considers that the recommendation **has been partially implemented**.

Regarding the recommendation to “ratify ILO Convention No. 111, concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, and sign and ratify ILO Convention No. 189, concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers”: The State party indicated that it will continue to review its approach to dealing with employment discrimination and the prospect of ratifying ILO Convention No.111. The State party also indicated that it supports the principles behind ILO Convention No.189 and it has been reviewing its legislation regularly to ensure the well-being of foreign domestic workers and to protect their employment rights. The Committee considers that the State party failed to provide information on concrete actions taken to ratify ILO Convention No.111 and to sign and ratify ILO Convention No. 189. It considers that the recommendation **has not been implemented**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to paragraph 32 of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

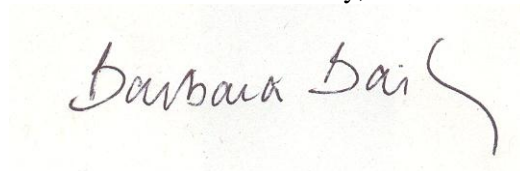
- 1) Review and amend the existing labour legislation so that it applies to foreign domestic workers, or adopt new legislation ensuring that foreign domestic workers are entitled to adequate wages, and that the weekly day off be mandatory and cannot be replaced with monetary compensation;

- 2) Ensure that foreign domestic workers have access to complaint and redress mechanisms;
- 3) Repeal the law requiring a work-permit holder, including foreign domestic workers, to be deported on grounds of pregnancy or the diagnosis of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS;
- 4) Review its system of granting citizenship to foreign wives within a clear and reasonable time frame after marriage; and
- 5) Ratify ILO Convention No. 111 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, and sign and ratify ILO Convention No. 189 concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers.

The Committee looks forward to pursuing its constructive dialogue with the authorities of the Republic of Singapore 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