



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 on Follow-up on Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), I have the honor to refer to the examination of the combined fourth to seventh periodic report of Uganda, at the Committee's forty-seventh session, held in October 2010. At the end of that session, the Committee's concluding observations (CEDAW/C/UGA/CO/7) were transmitted to your Permanent Mission. You may recall that in paragraph 55 on follow-up on the concluding observations, the Committee requested Uganda to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 12 and 32 (b) of the concluding observations.

The Committee regrets the delay in the submission by the State party of the written information under the follow-up procedure of the Committee received with a 37-month delay in November 2015. At its seventieth session, held in July 2018 in Geneva, the Committee examined the follow-up report of the State party and adopted the following assessment.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 12** of the concluding observations, urging the State party to “**accelerate its law review process to harmonize its domestic legislation with its constitutional principles relating to non-discrimination and equality between women and men and with its obligations under the Convention without delay and within a clear time frame**” and to “**expeditiously enact the Marriage and Divorce Bill**”: The State party indicated that since its dialogue with the Committee in 2010, the Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee submitted its Report on the Marriage and Divorce Bill in January 2013 and, subsequently, the 9th Parliament considered 22 out of the 178 clauses that make up the Bill. Although its Parliament then decided to undertake further consultations, the State party added that it remains committed to complete the review process on this Bill.

The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State party that its Parliament has started considerations of the Marriage and Divorce Bill and decided to undertake further consultations. Although welcoming the State party's commitment to complete the review process on this Bill, the Committee regrets that since its dialogue with the State party in 2010 and the decision of Parliament to start further consultations on the Bill, no measures have been taken to expeditiously adopt and enact this Bill. The Committee considers that the State party took some steps to implement the recommendations. It considers that the recommendation **has been partially implemented**.

His Excellency
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The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is thorough and extensive, and responds to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **satisfactory**.

In relation to the recommendation urging the State party to “**expeditiously enact the Sexual Offences Bill**”: The State party indicated that through the enactment, in 2010, of a law on Domestic Violence and a law on the Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation, as well as of amendments to existing laws, most provisions of the Sexual Offences Bill were covered in its legislation. The State party added that in order to eliminate remaining gaps in the law relating to sexual offenses, it produced five Bills, submitted them to the 9th Parliament and that they were prioritized for enactment within its term.

The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party on the enactment of laws and amendments covering most provisions of the Sexual Offences Bill, and on the development of five Bills to eliminate remaining gaps in the law relating to sexual offenses. Regretting the lack of information on the gaps in its law on sexual offences those bills should address, the Committee takes note that those Bills were submitted to and prioritized for enactment within the term of office of the 9th Parliament. Further regretting that the State party did not inform the Committee whether these Bills were considered during the term of the 9th Parliament, which terminated before the submission of the State party’s follow-up report, it considers that the State party took some steps to implement the recommendations. It considers that the recommendation **has been partially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is incomplete and fails to respond fully to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **partially satisfactory**.

Regarding the recommendation urging the State party to “**expeditiously enact the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Bill**”: The State party indicated that on 13 May 2014, its 9th Parliament passed the HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Act. It however added that in order for this law to become binding and applicable, its President still needs to assent it. The State party further reported that its President assented to the regional East African Community HIV and AIDS Prevention and Management Act in March 2013.

The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State on approval by its President of the regional East African Community HIV and AIDS Prevention and Management Act in 2013, and that its Parliament passed the HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Act in 2014. Regretting that the latter has not yet been assented to by the President of the State party, the Committee considers that the State party took some steps to implement the recommendations. It considers that the recommendation **has been partially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is thorough and extensive, and responds to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **satisfactory**.

With regards to the recommendation urging the State party to “**raise the awareness of legislators about the need to give priority attention to legal reforms in order to achieve de jure equality for women and compliance with the State party’s international treaty obligations**”: The State party informed that during the first session of its 9th Parliament, the Parliamentary Commission, in partnership with various development partners and civil society organizations, organized induction and training sessions for all Members of Parliament and of Parliamentary Committees, and that during these sessions gender issues in legislation and parliamentary practice were addressed. It further indicated that its Women’s Parliamentary Association and other partners also sensitized legislators about the content of the Marriage and Divorce Bill, the Sexual Offences Bill and the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Bill, as well as on the need to prioritize their enactment.

The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party that gender issues in legislation and parliamentary practice were tackled during induction and training sessions of Members of Parliament and of Parliamentary Committees, and that the Members of Parliament's awareness on the content of the Marriage and Divorce Bill, the Sexual Offences Bill and on the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Bill was raised by the Women's Parliamentary Association and other partners. The Committee regrets that besides the Women's Parliamentary Association, no State actor took on the task of sensitizing legislators on the need to prioritize legal reforms aiming to achieve de jure equality for women on the legislative agenda. It further regrets that the State party did not provide information on measures taken to implement the recommendation in the framework of the State party's 10th Parliament. It considers that the State party took some steps to implement the recommendations. It considers that the recommendation **has been partially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is incomplete and fails to respond fully to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **partially satisfactory**.

With regards to the recommendation urging the State party to “**continue to increase support for law reform through partnerships and collaboration with religious and community leaders, lawyers, judges, unions, civil society organizations and women's non-governmental organizations**”: The State party indicated that in the three years leading up to the time its follow-up report was submitted, its Law Reform Commission, its Human Rights Commission, its Equal Opportunities Commission, several faith based organizations, cultural leaders, judges, lawyers, academics and civil society organizations, including women's advocacy groups and mainstream human rights organizations, have been involved in consultations on the Marriage and Divorce Bill, the Sexual Offences Bill and on the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Bill.

The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party on consultations of religious and cultural leaders, judges, lawyers, civil society organizations, women's advocacy groups and other stakeholders on the Marriage and Divorce Bill, the Sexual Offences Bill and on the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Bill. The Committee considers that the State party took some steps to implement the recommendations. It considers that the recommendation **has been partially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is thorough and extensive, and responds to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **satisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 12** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

1. **Expediently enact the Marriage and Divorce Bill.**
2. **Expediently enact Bills addressing gaps in its law on sexual offences to harmonize its domestic legislation with its constitutional principles relating to non-discrimination and equality between women and men.**
3. **Expediently accent the HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Act.**
4. **Raise the awareness of legislators about the need to give priority attention to legal reforms in order to achieve de jure equality for women.**

With regards to the recommendation made in **paragraph 32** of the concluding observations, urging the State party to “**enhance its compliance with article 10 of the Convention and to raise awareness of the importance of education as a human right and as**

the basis for the empowerment of women and to strengthen awareness-raising and training of school officials and students, as well as sensitization of children through the media”: The State party indicated that its Gender in Education Policy (2009) provides for the implementation of gender mainstreaming programs and that its Revised Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2007–2015 includes gender as one of the cross-cutting issues. The State party moreover informed that it established a Gender Unit within the Ministry of Education and Sports in 2007 and that this unit initiated programmes, inter alia to train and re-train teachers (particularly senior women/men teachers and career teachers) in gender-responsive methodology and practices. The State party further reported that in the framework of its Equity in the Classroom Programme, teachers have been sensitized to change negative attitudes towards girls’ education and to adopt methods to promote equity in the classroom. It also indicated that its Gender in Education Policy (2009) provides a guiding framework to monitor the responsiveness of the education system to the needs of girls, boys and children with special needs. Finally, the State party informed that civil society organizations use the media, such as television, radios and the print media to sensitize the general public on the right to a violence-free childhood.

The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State party on its Gender in Education Policy and on its Revised Education Sector Strategic Plan, which promote gender mainstreaming. It moreover welcomes the initiation of programmes that include the training and re-training of teachers in gender-responsive methodology and practices, the sensitization of teachers to change negative attitudes and promote equity in the classroom, as well as the monitoring of the responsiveness of the education system to the needs of girls and boys. Further taking note of information provided on awareness raising on the right to a childhood free of violence, the Committee regrets that the State party did not specify which actions have been taken after its dialogue with the Committee in 2010, as well as the absence of information on measures that State institutions have taken to sensitize children on the importance of education as the basis for the empowerment of women through the media. The Committee thus considers that the State party took some steps to implement the recommendations. It considers that the recommendation **has been partially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party fails to respond fully to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **unsatisfactory**.

In relation to the recommendation urging the State party to **“take the necessary measures to ensure safe transportation to and from schools”**: The State party indicated that it distributed guidelines on policy, planning, roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the implementation of Universal Primary Education, and that these guidelines mandate parents to ensure protection of their children against harm and abuse on their way to and from school. It further reported that its education sector guidelines provide that no child should walk for more than four kilometres to reach school. The State party informed that within this framework, it encouraged private investors to establish educational centers in all parts of the country to reduce distances for school children and that it continues to support the construction, renovation and expansion of school facilities through its School Facilitation Grants. It also indicated that it has worked with non-state actors to provide bursaries allowing needy children, especially girls, to stay in boarding facilities instead of travelling long distances to and from school.

The Committee takes note of information provided by the State party on its support for the construction, renovation and expansion of school facilities, and on its collaboration with private investors to establish educational centers in all parts of the country to limit children’s walk to school to four kilometres. The Committee also takes note of information provided on collaboration between the State party and non-state actors to promote the access to bursaries for children in need, allowing them to stay in boarding facilities. The Committee however regrets that the State party considers the responsibility for the protection of children on their way to and from school to reside with the parents. It thus considers that not only did the State party take no

measures to ensure safe transportation to and from schools in order to implement the recommendation, but that it took some **measures contrary to its recommendation**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is thorough and extensive, and responds to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **satisfactory**.

In relation to the recommendation urging the State party to “**take the necessary measures to ensure safe educational environments free from discrimination and violence**”: The State party indicated that its Gender Unit facilitates the implementation of programs aimed at addressing gender imbalances in the Education Sector and that it has reformed the primary school curriculum to remove gender stereotypes and introduce more gender-sensitive instruction materials. The State party also reported that it launched a national chapter to contribute to the Girls’ Education Movement in 2011, through which girls and boys have been empowered to speak out against abuse and discrimination. It further indicated that schools in the Karamoja region have improved counselling and peer support for girls and boys through the Complementary Opportunity for Primary education programmes. The State party moreover informed on plans to increase the ratio of female teachers, head teachers and school deputies to males in order to ensure that pupils have role models and counsellors, and that it will consider the integration of a course on “Gender and child protection against discrimination and violence” in the curriculum for teacher training for all levels.

The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party on the reform of the the primary school curriculum to remove gender stereotypes and the introduction of more gender-sensitive instruction materials. It also welcomes the empowerment of girls and boys to speak out against abuse and discrimination and the promotion of counselling and support structures in educational settings. The Committee takes note of the State party’s plans to introduce a course on gender and child protection against discrimination and violence. It considers that the State party took some steps to implement the recommendation. The Committee thus considers that the recommendation **has been partially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is thorough and extensive, and responds to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **satisfactory**.

Regarding the recommendation urging the State party to “**establish reporting and accountability mechanisms to ensure that perpetrators of all sexual offences against school girls are prosecuted**”: The State party indicated that the Teachers’ Code of Conduct instructs Head teachers to disseminate and enforce this code in cases of sexual violence against girls or boys, and that this code of conduct has been widely disseminated. It also reported on plans to ensure that teachers, parents and children are exposed to age appropriate sexuality education, which shall include the responsibilities with regards to the protection of children against sexual abuse and information on corresponding legislation. The State party further informed on plans to disseminate Guidelines for Reporting, Response and Referral on cases of violence against children to all teachers, students and parents. The State party also indicated its plans to address the human, material and financial resource needs of the Child and Family Protection Unit of its Police force, and to strengthen community participation in apprehending perpetrators of defilement against girls in and out of school.

The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party on the dissemination of the Teachers’ Code of Conduct, which define responsibilities in cases of sexual violence in educational settings. It takes note of plans to strengthen the competencies of students, teachers and parents with regards to sexuality education and corresponding legislation, to address the needs of the Police force in charge of child protection and to strengthen community participation in apprehending perpetrators of sexual offenses. However regretting that the State party did not take action since its dialogue with the State party in 2010 to establish reporting and

accountability mechanisms, and to ensure that perpetrators of sexual offences against school girls are prosecuted, the Committee considers that the State party took some steps to implement the recommendations. It considers that the recommendation **has been partially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is extensive, but fails to respond fully to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **partially satisfactory**.

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. Strengthen training of school officials and students on the importance of education as the basis for the empowerment of women.**
- 2. Ensure safe transportation to and from schools, in line with the Committee's General recommendation No. 36 (2017) on the right of girls and women to education.**
- 3. Introduce the planned course on gender and child protection against discrimination and violence.**
- 4. Establish reporting and accountability mechanisms to ensure that perpetrators of all sexual offences against school girls are prosecuted.**

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Hilary Gbedemah
Rapporteur on follow-up
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women