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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women****Pre-session working group****Thirty-fourth session**

16 January-3 February 2006

**List of issues and questions with regard to the consideration
of periodic reports****Thailand****Introduction**

1. The pre-session working group examined the combined fourth and fifth periodic report of Thailand (CEDAW/C/THA/4-5).

**Constitution, legislation and national machinery for the
advancement of women**

2. In its previous concluding comments, the Committee recommended that specific anti-discrimination legislation should be introduced. However, the report indicates that the laws of Thailand have yet to include a clear definition of discrimination, but that an effort is under way to enact a law with respect to the elimination of discrimination against women. Kindly inform the Committee of the main content and progress of the law, and whether it incorporates the definition of discrimination of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

3. The report indicates that the Ombudsman is another mechanism for safeguarding human rights and provides a channel where people can submit complaints of unfair treatment by the Government. Please provide the Committee with detailed information on the number of cases received in the last five years and how many related to women's rights.

4. Please provide an update on recent changes to the structure and mandate of the National Machinery for Women and an assessment of the implications of those changes in terms of its expertise and capacity to coordinate the implementation of the Convention.



5. The report describes two processes by which a gender perspective is brought to draft legislation: the participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on an extraordinary committee to design laws, and the right of the citizens of Thailand to submit a request to the House of Representatives to consider laws (para. 42). Please cite specific examples of when those processes have been implemented.

6. In the light of the Committee's view that reservations to article 16 are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention, please provide information on any plans to withdraw the State's reservation and to bring the Family Law in line with article 16 of the Convention.

Violence against women

7. The report notes the persistence of various forms of violence against women, and that violence in the private sphere is rarely brought to court. Please indicate if there are plans to conduct a national population-based survey to assess the extent of violence against women. The report also makes note of extensive measures to increase social awareness and understanding of violence against women. Kindly comment on the effectiveness of those programmes and on what can be done to strengthen them so that women are aware of their rights and make use of existing procedures and remedies.

8. Kindly inform the Committee of the status and content of the draft domestic violence law (para. 62 (3)). Please indicate if it contains a provision on marital rape and on sexual harassment beyond the workplace, and a provision to guarantee that battered women and girls receive support services.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

9. The report notes that the Prostitution Prevention and Suppression Act of 1996 covers the exploitation of women in prostitution. Please provide information on the rate of arrests and convictions under that legislation.

10. Please specify if victims of trafficking have access to witness protection services when testifying in cases against procurers or owners of commercial establishments.

11. The report indicates some programmes organized by the Government of Thailand and NGOs to help victims of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Please provide updated information on the specific measures addressing trafficking in women and girls and their implementation and coordination at the national level.

Participation in public life and decision-making

12. The report briefly refers to several temporary special measures that have been implemented. Please describe those programmes in detail, including if there are any quota systems or benchmarks in place to increase women's participation at all levels of public and political life, and at various levels and branches of Government.

13. The report cites traditional stereotypes and attitudes as reasons for a lack of support among families and communities for women's political participation, and as reasons for women and girls' own lack of interest in the public sector (para. 23). Describe any programmes or activities that specifically encourage girls and young women to engage in civic participation and foster their development as community and political leaders, or any gender sensitization activities conducted in communities and the society as a whole.

Stereotypes and education

14. In its previous concluding comments, the Committee recommended that sensitization programmes for policymakers, administrators, legal personnel and other professionals in the health and education sectors should be developed and that school textbooks should be revised to eliminate stereotyped images of women and girls. Although the report refers to anticipated educational reform as a means of changing traditional attitudes, it gives few details with regard to the educational areas where the reform will be implemented, what specific programmes will be included, and if comparable measures are being planned for other sectors besides education. Kindly provide the preceding information to the Committee.

15. The report notes that female students remain concentrated in the traditional fields of domestic science, commerce and tourism, and are generally not encouraged to enter non-traditional sectors because it is deemed inappropriate and they are expected ultimately to face employment problems (para. 154). Please describe the trends, since the last report, of female students in non-traditional fields, and indicate if time-bound targets or goals are in place for increasing the number of female students in non-traditional fields of study.

16. Please provide information on the proportion of enrolment and drop-out rates of girls and boys in primary school, in both urban and rural areas. What happens if parents or guardians do not send their school-age children to school? Is there any punishment?

17. The report provides little information about measures to support women and men in reconciling their family and work responsibilities. Please provide information on what specific measures are in place to overcome stereotypes that create obstacles for women's participation in the labour market and to facilitate the sharing of family and work responsibilities.

Employment and economic empowerment

18. Although the report notes that equal remuneration is mandated by law, it provides no information on existing trends of pay parity between men and women. Kindly inform the Committee if there are existing wage gaps between men and women at the same levels of seniority with similar levels of responsibility, per sector.

19. What measures have been taken or implemented to combat sexual harassment at work? Are there any programmes to ensure stronger enforcement of the Labour Protection Act of 1998 or strengthen its sexual harassment provisions?

20. In its previous concluding comments, the Committee expressed its concern that young girls were leaving school to enter the labour market. Kindly provide detailed information on the rates of participation among young girls in the labour market and on what protection is in place to address exploitation of child labour.

21. The report states that nearly 80 per cent of homeworkers are women (para. 187). What programmes and policies have been implemented by the Department of Welfare and Labour Protection, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare's office on homeworkers, and are there plans to bring homeworkers and other workers in the informal sector under the Social Insurance Act?

Health

22. The report indicates that there is a significant disparity in the availability of health-care services and personnel between urban and rural areas (para. 240). What measures have been taken to close that gap? Furthermore, provide information on whether the 30 baht programme has been evaluated to assess access to basic services for the rural and urban poor, hill tribes and other ethnic groups.

23. The report states that abortions performed for reasons other than the health of the mother or in instances of rape are illegal (para. 217). Please provide detailed information on measures in place to ensure access for women and men to information and services relating to contraceptives and family planning, and what kind of reproductive health services are provided to them.

24. In her 2005 report on HIV/AIDS, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences stated that in Thailand "75 per cent of women living with HIV were likely to have been infected by their husbands" (E/CN.4/2005/72, para. 33). Please provide detailed information on any programmes to raise awareness of the transmission of HIV/AIDS between spouses and between mothers and children, and on their substantive content and impact.

25. In its previous concluding comments, the Committee expressed its concern at the high rates of suicide and mental illness among women in Thailand. The report states, however, that the suicide rate and prevalence of mental illness continue to rise. Kindly describe what measures are in place to achieve better mental health for women, and any efforts to undertake an assessment of the effectiveness of those measures in informing women about mental illness and directing them to the medical attention and counselling they need.

Rural and vulnerable women

26. Please provide information on rural women living in poverty, and on the impact of poverty-alleviation projects carried out by the Government, especially of projects targeted at women.

27. Kindly comment on rural women's access to credit and land and savings cooperatives. In particular, please inform the Committee what proportion of the non-collateral loans made by the People's Bank are granted to rural women, and how the State party intends to increase rural women's roles in cooperatives.

28. In its previous concluding comments, the Committee expressed concern that hill tribe women and girls may not be protected by national laws and recommended the introduction of legislation and other measures to protect them. Please provide information on the steps taken to implement those recommendations.

Family and nationality law

29. The report notes that women are rarely designated as head of household, except in instances where they are widowed or abandoned. The report also describes how that trend hampers women's ability to own property allocated by the Government. Kindly inform the Committee if the State party intends to amend the provision that allows only designated heads of household to obtain Government land, or if there are any other programmes in place to ensure land rights for women.

30. Has the State party made any progress on changing the Nationality Law to allow its women citizens to extend citizenship to their foreign husbands, as recommended by the Committee in its previous concluding comments?
