



**Convention on the Elimination  
of all Forms of Discrimination  
Against Women**

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 91st MEETING

Held at the Vienna International Centre, Vienna,  
on Thursday, 2 April 1987, at 2.30 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. BERNARD

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The meeting was called to order at 2.40 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION (continued)

Initial report of Greece (continued) (CEDAW/C/5/Add.28)

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms. Antonopoulou (Greece) took a place at the Committee table.
2. Ms. ANTONOPOULOU thanked the members of the Committee for their questions and comments, which would enable Greece to work more effectively towards the elimination of all discrimination against women.
3. Referring to article 1 of the Convention, she said that legislative, social and political changes in Greece had not given rise to any particular opposition among the Greek people. However, measures related to such questions as divorce, marriage and abortion had elicited some strong reactions, especially in conservative circles and from the Church. Once equality was regarded as an essential aspect of everyday life, conservative political forces would no longer be able to incite fear.
4. Referring to article 2, she said that 54 decentralized equality bureaux, designed to improve women's position in society, had been set up in 1983. The Council for Equality had been upgraded to the level of a General Secretariat, with its own budget and staff. Many publications describing women's legal rights had been distributed throughout the country. The Greek Constitution legitimized discrimination in favour of women in certain matters connected with the care of children. Lastly, she pointed out that Greek women had never campaigned for the right to serve in the armed forces.
5. Referring to article 3, she said that the General Secretariat for Equality encouraged the activities of the women's movement. Its consultative committee was composed of members of the major Greek women's organizations. The three largest women's organizations also had representatives in the Prefectural Equality Bureaux. The General Secretariat could not finance women's organizations, although it had requested Parliament to make that possible. Women's organizations could, however, apply for subsidies to the Ministry of Culture.
6. Answering questions on article 4, she said that with the support of the Work-force Employment Agency and the General Secretariat for Equality, a number of women had been trained in traditionally male occupations. By 1985, women comprised 25 per cent of the trainees. All training was subsidized. In 1987, the General Secretariat for Equality was running four similar training programmes and assisting with training schemes for female co-operative members.
7. Referring to article 5, she said that young couples could receive family planning advice in family planning centres and municipal health care offices throughout Greece. The question of the treatment of women's rights in the mass media was considered a major issue by the Socialist Government of Greece. The General Secretariat was involved in the selection of programmes and in the choice of suitable material for children, as well as in the preparation of a new mass media bill designed to prevent the reproduction of sex stereotypes. It was not possible to specify the number of women working in the mass media, although they occupied a variety of senior positions. Few, however, held technical jobs. Many

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worked as reporters or editors on daily newspapers and magazines. Since the preparation of the report, 264 women and 116 men had availed themselves of parental leave.

8. Replying to questions on article 6, she said that the General Secretariat had drafted specific proposals with respect to pornography, exploitation of the female body in advertising and prostitution. Women's organizations had been asked to assist in drafting a bill on the subject. The number of women in trade unions was not known. Over recent years their presence had slowly increased. The low figures could be explained by social prejudices. Greece had signed international conventions which prohibited women from working on night shifts or in underground mines; those prohibitions were related to the protection of physical and mental health. Greece could not derogate from those conventions before their expiry.

9. On the subject of article 7, she said that recent changes in Greece's electoral law had been counter-productive for women in political parties, whose candidate lists were drawn up by men. There were more women in political parties in the towns than in the villages. The political system was now decentralized, and local authorities had become essential government tools which was helping women to obtain more positions of responsibility. Political parties and the administration had a poor record for promoting women in political life; with one minister, one deputy minister and 11 members of the PASOK Central Committee, women constituted a distinct minority among politicians. The same applied in the diplomatic sphere. Neither men nor women had the benefit of any such services in Greece. The General Secretariat and the Prefectural Equality Bureaux were, however, able to offer a certain amount of legal guidance.

10. Turning to article 8, she said that there were Equality Bureaux in the Ministry of Labour and the Labour Inspectorates throughout the country. The Work-force Employment Agency was responsible for implementing equality measures. In 1986, the courts had heard 104 complaints of discrimination against women in employment and in many cases had decided in their favour.

11. Referring to article 9, she said that children born out of wedlock in Greece were recognized either voluntarily or through court procedures. Such children enjoyed the same legal rights as other children. The granting of supplementary benefits was not dependent on the length of time a couple had lived together. Single parents were entitled to social security benefits.

12. With reference to article 10, she pointed out that the system of compulsory education, changing social attitudes and the prohibition of employment of children below the age of 15 had tended to restrict illiteracy to adults, especially the elderly. The rate of illiteracy among women was probably lower than indicated in the statistics. It was well to note that 27.4 per cent of university teachers were women. Courses of women's studies had been started in the University of Salonica, and there was a two-week summer programme for women. Girls were encouraged to take technical career options thanks to the abolishment of stereotypes in textbooks and to vocational guidance in the schools. Home economics courses enrolled the same number of boys as girls. No women were admitted to religious schools (of which the graduates were ordained as priests), but it was possible for women to study theology at university.

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13. Turning to article 11 of the Convention, she said that a great many measures had been taken to improve social security in the private sector. Mothers in employment benefited from a childbirth allowance and a post-natal allowance, as well as their wage or salary. If they were not employed, but covered by their husband's health insurance, they received a childbirth and a post-natal allowance. If they were unemployed they were entitled to a Ministry of Health grant before and after the birth.

14. Transfer of social security entitlements was possible only under certain conditions in the public sector, while in the private sector there were no impediments. The General Secretariat for Equality had taken steps to change the law concerning the non-transfer of pensions from the wife to the husband. Unmarried mothers were entitled to a lump-sum allowance, followed by a monthly grant until the child reached the age of 16. There was no discrimination regarding women's access to bank loans of any kind. Between 1980 and 1985, many expatriates had returned to Greece. Of the women, nearly 70 per cent became housewives. Seminars were organized to make their return easier. Regarding taxation, spouses were taxed individually and the personal income was the basis for taxation. Mothers were allowed deductions according to the age of their children; alimony was taxable.

15. With reference to article 12, she said that abortion had never been condoned as a method of contraception, although it had been used as such. The Ministry of Health wished to change that state of affairs and had set up family planning services in urban and rural areas. Prior to the existence of those services, there had been 300,000 abortions per year in Greece. There were no statistics available on the impact of the new campaign. AIDS was not yet a problem in Greece; the Ministry of Health had distributed relevant information and had established a committee, on which the General Secretariat was represented, to discuss the question. Lastly, seminars were organized for women prison inmates.

16. On the subject of article 13, she said that many judges in Greece were influenced by traditional beliefs. They consequently discriminated against women, and the General Secretariat, in conjunction with the Ministry of Justice, had organized seminars for judges to acquaint them with international conventions, family law and other new areas of law concerning equality between the sexes.

17. On article 14, she said that there were some 114 women's co-operatives in Greece; loans and subsidies were provided by the Government for regional development and collective production initiatives. Support was also given by banks and regional authorities. In supporting the co-operatives, the General Secretariat for Equality aimed to enhance women's ability to control output and understand marketing procedures, to acquire their own incomes and to familiarize themselves with collective democratic procedures. It was hoped that women would ultimately play a part equal to men in decisions pertaining to national production. Until that goal was achieved, the General Secretariat of Equality would continue to support women's co-operatives.

18. The law on equal pay for work of equal value applied to the lower wage scales, but there were disparities between the pay received by men and that earned by women in the same branches of the economy. Figures for 1986 for the clothing industry, which had the highest percentage of female workers, showed that on average women

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were paid 268 drachmas per hour, while men received 326 drachmas per hour. In the metallurgical industry, where almost all employees were men, women received on average 348 drachmas and men 542 drachmas per hour. In 1986 some 13,498 complaints had been lodged in relation to employment.

19. Referring to article 16, she said that an amendment to the Penal Code had introduced automatic prosecution for rape and the terms of imprisonment for rapists had been considerably increased. Sheltered housing had been provided in the Athens area on the initiative of the General Secretariat for Equality, which was facing the social problem of battered women for the first time. A refuge centre and information and counselling office for battered women was to be opened in May 1987; it was a pilot project, and it might prove necessary to open more such centres.

20. As for the dowry system, it had not been abolished totally in the minds of people, although it was very important that fathers were no longer obliged to provide their daughters with dowries. The law had played a very important part in changing social attitudes, and it was expected that the dowry system would soon disappear in practice because one of the main reasons for its survival had been the taxation benefits that formerly accrued to the father. Assets which had been given to husbands as dowries had now been returned to the wife under the law.

21. In answer to further questions from Ms. Oeser, Ms. Guan Minqian, Ms. Akamatsu and Ms. Pilataxi de Arenas, she said that the ILO conventions which expired in 1987 and 1991 would be considered, but she was not able to say what action would be taken on them. International conventions, when ratified by the Greek Parliament, entered domestic legislation and thereby superseded previous legislation on the same subject; where national legislation did not meet the standards of international conventions, citizens had the right of appeal and could take their case to court. Overall figures were not available for requests for paternity leave made by men, but in one municipality 106 men had made such requests, compared with 240 women; men were beginning to take responsibility for bringing up their children. The rate of unemployment among single women was higher than among married women because more of them were applying to enter employment.

22. The CHAIRPERSON thanked Ms. Antonopoulou (Greece) for her replies to members' questions.

23. Ms. Antonopoulou (Greece) withdrew.

24. Ms. LAIOU-ANTONIOU said that the General Secretariat for Equality would give serious consideration to a suggestion by Ms. El-Tallawy that a seminar be held in Greece to discuss the methodology of formulating reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention, for which it had been suggested that the report of Greece would serve as a model. Such a seminar might be envisaged for 1988.

Initial report of the Republic of Korea (continued) (CEDAW/C/5/Add.35)

25. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms. Yung-Chung Kim took a place at the Committee table.



26. Ms. YUNG-CHUNG KIM (Republic of Korea), replying to the questions and comments of members of the Committee, said that the main functions of the new National Committee on Women's Policies mentioned in paragraph 15 of her country's report included policy-making on women's affairs, co-ordination of the activities of governmental and non-governmental women's organizations and the promotion of employment opportunities for women and their social participation. The committee had 20 members, more than half of whom were women and 9 of whom were public officials in ministries; other members included the President of the Korean Women's Development Institute and a number of experts on women's affairs. The committee was headed by the Prime Minister and had a permanent secretariat. There were also two government offices concerned with women's affairs: the Family Welfare Bureau in the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, which was concerned with the promotion of the status of women in general, and the Women's Affairs Guidance Office in the Ministry of Labour, which dealt mainly with the working conditions of women. The functions of the government-supported Korean Women's Development Institute included research on women's issues, the development of educational training programmes and teaching materials for working women, support for non-governmental women's organizations and the operation of a resource centre for the exchange and sharing of information.

27. The main achievements of the various offices and organizations, whose activities were co-ordinated, had been the raising of general awareness of the status of women and of women's issues, the provision of extensive vocational training and career development programmes, the improvement of job opportunities and working conditions for women, and the establishment of the Long-Range Plan for Women's Development and the Guidelines for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

28. The question asked most frequently by members of the Committee had concerned the reservations of the Government of the Republic of Korea with respect to certain articles of the Convention. The Government had found that article 9 and article 16, paragraphs (c), (d), (f) and (g), of the Convention were not in harmony with the Nationality Act, the Civil Code and the Conflict of Laws Act, and considerable social resistance would have to be overcome before the relevant articles of those domestic laws could be changed.

29. With respect to family law, which placed great emphasis on male lineage, there was an element of discrimination against women in the relationship between the legitimate mother and the illegitimate child, and the Government was considering changing the relevant clause in the process of revising the country's family law in the near future.

30. The main objectives of the Long-Range Plan for Women's Development were development of the potential of women in line with their rising level of education, promotion of the welfare of working women and upgrading their training in line with high-technology industrialization, and increasing women's employment opportunities. The educational system was to be reviewed in order to establish de facto equality; training courses hitherto considered suitable only for men were to be opened to women; and efforts were to be intensified to enable women to take middle-level and high-level posts in the public sector. In order to promote women's welfare, the Maternal and Child Health Act had been amended; government support to the 34 maternal and child welfare facilities had been increased; and legal aid, which had previously been dealt with for the most part on a voluntary basis by non-governmental organizations, had been enshrined in a Legal Aid Act.

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31. The Long-Range Plan for Women's Development had been divided into three periods: a preparatory year, 1986; the period 1987-1991, during which it was to be incorporated in the country's sixth Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan; and a period of consolidation from 1992 to the year 2000.

32. She explained that the phrase "utilization of the female work-force", as used in the report, meant development of the full potential of women so as to enhance their job opportunities; it did not imply exploitation of women's resources. The principles of co-operation, harmony, humanization and comprehensiveness mentioned in the Long-Range Plan meant narrowing the gap between the sexes, classes, regions (urban and rural), employers and workers. The Guidelines for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women laid down the rules for implementing the Long-Range Plan. A draft Equal Employment Act had been prepared and was almost ready for submission to the National Assembly.

33. With regard to prostitution, although it was prohibited by law some 10,000 women were officially known to have been engaged in it in 1986. They were usually women who lacked skills and therefore needed vocational training and guidance. The Government had established schemes to train them for work in such sectors as the electronic and garment industries, which needed staff. In addition, counselling and job guidance centres for women were helping to reduce the number of prostitutes, although some returned to their former occupation.

34. The structure and system of government departments had been established by men, who traditionally regarded the affairs of women and children as inseparable. It had now been decided that they should be dealt with separately in the administration, but implementation of that decision was dependent on an improvement in the budgetary situation.

35. Turning to the statistics on the number of women in employment, she said that, as of 1985, 317,000 women were engaged in the professional, technical and administrative fields, representing 5.4 per cent of the total female work-force; there were 569,000 women in clerical jobs, or 9.8 per cent of the total; 2,059,000 in the sales and service sector, or 35.3 per cent of the total; 1,608,000 in the primary sector, or 27.6 of the total; and 1,249,000 in the manufacturing and transport sector, representing 21.4 per cent of the total.

36. As of 1984, there were 124,000 unemployed women, excluding full-time housewives. Unemployed women within the age group 20-24 made up 45.2 per cent of the total unemployed female work-force, and 37 per cent of the total were in the 15-19 age group. No figures were available at present on the unemployment rate of women by industrial sectors, but information would be provided in the next report. The retirement age in professional occupations was the same for men as for women, but women in blue-collar jobs retired about 5-10 years earlier. There had been cases in which female workers were compelled by their employers to retire against their will: some women had taken their claims to the courts, where they had obtained favourable rulings. The new legislation on equal employment would, of course, redress all such malpractices.

37. While it was true that the pay of female workers was lower than that of their male counterparts, in white-collar jobs they generally received the same amount. On the other hand, female workers in the manufacturing and primary sectors were paid as little as half as much as men.

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38. The average working shift of Korean women was eight hours. However, in order to maximize output in times of peak business, they were asked to do overtime work on a voluntary basis, and they were then paid at overtime rates. Female workers were protected in the same way as men by insurance coverage against industrial illnesses or accidents. Furthermore, dormitory facilities and intermediate level or high school courses were provided free of charge for female workers by employers in manufacturing sectors. In most Korean export industries female workers were in great demand, particularly in labour-intensive industries where skilled hand movements were required.

39. The existing Labour Standards Act excluded women from certain occupations, such as mining, excavating, timber-cutting, and handling high-voltage electric lines, but the Government was currently eliminating some of those prohibitions in order not to restrict women's job opportunities.

40. Korea's Family Law contained discriminatory articles reflecting traditional male-centred Confucian thought which had been opposed by women's organizations since 1956. The Law had been partly revised in 1977, and pressure for change would continue.

41. Over 30 universities in Korea offered women's studies courses, which included graduate courses and research activities.

42. Since the establishment of the National Assembly in 1948, women had held an average of 2.5 per cent of the seats, and in the same period there had been five women ministers. The number of female civil servants occupying posts higher than deputy director was 177, representing 1.1 per cent of the total of 16,629 senior civil servants. In the judiciary, there were 13 women lawyers, or 0.5 per cent of the total of 2,391 lawyers. In the diplomatic service, there were currently three women in middle-ranking posts; it would be some years before women were found at more senior levels.

43. Military service, although compulsory for men, was on a voluntary basis for women. Some posts in the army, such as nurses in military hospitals, were open to women, but no woman had ever been promoted beyond the rank of colonel. Women were also serving as intelligence officers, paratroopers and military policewomen.

44. Registered women's organizations enjoyed the advantage of government subsidies and administrative support, whereas their unregistered counterparts benefited only from the latter form of assistance.

45. The purpose of the Equal Employment Bill, which was currently in preparation, was to provide and enforce equality in employment, training, placement, promotion and retirement. The Bill would establish a new body to be called the Equal Opportunity Promotion Committee, which would monitor enforcement of the law and deal with complaints and labour disputes. The new legislation would also provide for optional maternity leave of up to one year without pay, in addition to the existing two-months maternity leave stipulated by the Labour Standards Act. It was also proposed that day-care centres and nursing facilities should be provided at the work place.



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46. Apart from social security systems applicable to both men and women, additional measures for women were being provided. The Livelihood Support Act for Wives and Families of Fallen Soldiers served as a basis for the financial support of needy war widows and their children. Enactment of mother and child welfare legislation was being considered by the Government in order to provide economic assistance to widows and single mothers and their children who were not covered by earlier provisions.

47. The "family education" mentioned in the report was aimed at inculcating certain values in family relations, such as respect for the elderly, which were threatened by social mobility and rapid industrialization.

48. More than 50 per cent of the country's intermediate level schools were co-educational, whereas for the high schools the figure was approximately 30 per cent. Most universities and colleges were co-educational, except the military academies and police schools. However, there were also a few universities which admitted only women students at the undergraduate level. The Korean Government took a positive view of co-education at all levels, believing that it would contribute to the expansion of equal opportunities for women and men and to the elimination of prejudice against women.

49. In view of the gravity of Korea's population problem, the Government had pursued a family planning policy for two decades. Families with less than two children had benefited from tax incentives, child education allowances and other benefits. The costs of sterilization were often paid by the Government, but abortion was legally banned except if the life of the pregnant mother was endangered. The birth rate was 23.2 per 1,000, and the death rate was 6.3 per 1,000.

50. Regarding freedom of marriage, a man who had attained 18 years of age, and a woman who had reached 16 years of age, could enter into a matrimonial commitment upon the consent of his or her parents or guardian.

51. The following were admitted as grounds for divorce: adultery; malicious desertion by the other spouse; extreme maltreatment by the spouse or in-laws; and death of the other spouse or his or her disappearance for three years. The current divorce rate was 2 per cent.

52. The Maternal and Child Health Act provided for the following: care services for registered pregnant mothers before and after delivery, including regular medical check-ups, counselling, early discovery of abnormal symptoms, and checks on the normality of the foetus; delivery by qualified medical personnel; regular medical check-ups and vaccinations for infants and children; the supply of nutrient medicines for needy pregnant mothers; the training of health personnel; and educational and information activities. The Maternal and Child Health Centres established under the Act in both rural and urban areas were playing an important role in providing such services. Statistics on the numbers of pregnant women and their children receiving health care would be submitted later.

53. With regard to the support system for female workers, she said that some 22,000 child-care centres had been established since 1980. Most of them were located conveniently close to work places.

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54. Clarifying the concept of "health of household", she said that it meant the well-being of the entire family, with special emphasis on the mother and child. The concept of "work detrimental to morality" embraced such occupations as prostitution which were incompatible with the common meaning of morality.

55. In conclusion, she said that, while new legislation could not always solve social problems overnight, the efforts made by the Government of the Republic of Korea and by the country's non-governmental organizations since ratification of the Convention had brought about considerable change, and it was hoped that by the early 1990s substantial progress would have been made towards achieving genuine equality.

56. The CHAIRPERSON noted the information that of 2,391 lawyers in the Republic of Korea only 13 were women. She hoped that efforts would be made to correct such a severe imbalance.

57. Ms. PILATAXI de ARENAS thanked the representative of the Government of the Republic of Korea for the comprehensive scope of her replies to the questions of members of the Committee. She hoped that the existing discriminatory laws would be modified by new legislation before that country's next report was submitted.

58. Ms. MONTENEGRO de FLETCHER said that it was still not clear to her whether the working week of women in Korea was of 48 hours or less.

59. Ms. CARON said that she would have liked to know whether the inherent bias shown towards men in Korean inheritance law extended to the situation in which a family had no son, and whether in general it was proposed to introduce a more equitable law of succession.

60. Ms. Yung-Chung Kim (Republic of Korea) withdrew.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.