



**Convention on the Elimination  
of All Forms of Discrimination  
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women  
Eighty-first session**

**Summary record of the 1864th meeting**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 16 February 2022, at 11 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Safarov (Vice-Chair)

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(*continued*)

*Sixth periodic report of Uzbekistan (continued)*

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*Mr. Safarov (Vice-Chair) took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.*

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention** *(continued)*

*Sixth periodic report of Uzbekistan (continued)* (CEDAW/C/UZB/6;  
CEDAW/C/UZB/Q/6; CEDAW/C/UZB/RQ/6)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Uzbekistan joined the meeting.*

*Articles 7–9*

2. **Ms. Stott Despoja**, noting that article 70 of the Electoral Code required that at least 30 per cent of candidates nominated for election were women, said she welcomed the fact that 41.3 per cent of candidates nominated to the Legislative Chamber in the 2019 elections had been women. She would be interested in hearing about the prospects of achieving a rate of 50 per cent in due course. The Committee was concerned, however, about the low representation of women in international leadership roles and in leadership positions in the private sector. She would appreciate an update on measures implemented under the Strategy for Achieving Gender Equality by 2030 to increase the number of women in public and political life. She also wished to know whether the establishment of the talent pool had improved women's representation in the parliament, political parties and the civil service.

3. It would be useful to know whether the Protection of Women from Harassment and Violence Act covered women in politics. Noting that 4.46 billion sum had been allocated to support the participation of political parties, she asked what proportion had been used to support women candidates.

4. She would be interested in hearing about the outcome of training sessions for local offices of the Women's Committee prior to the 2019 elections and training sessions carried out in conjunction with the Academy of State Administration to increase women's managerial and leadership skills.

5. According to the State party, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs selected personnel based on merit, with no distinction between men and women. She asked whether the Ministry actively supported women candidates in that context. Given that only 4 per cent of diplomatic and consular staff abroad were women and that only 22.6 per cent were employed at the Ministry's headquarters, she wished to know what measures were being taken to increase their representation at the international level.

6. Noting that a majority of participants in the 2019 gender equality survey believed that men made the best leaders, she asked whether the State party was introducing measures to combat negative attitudes and stereotypes with respect to women in leadership positions.

7. Given that in 2020 only 12 per cent of managers in Uzbekistan had been women, she wondered whether measures had been taken to increase their number and would welcome an update on the status of the Senate's action plan to train and support women for managerial positions. Lastly, she wished to know whether any measures were being taken to increase the number of women in the judiciary.

8. **Ms. Akizuki** said that she welcomed the adoption of amendments to the Citizenship Act in 2020, which had led to the granting of citizenship to nearly 5,000 stateless persons. However, article 25 of Act provided that citizenship would be lost if a person permanently residing abroad failed to register for seven years without good grounds. Women were more likely than men to change their nationality to that of their spouse upon marriage. As the Citizenship Act required foreigners to renounce their nationality without having acquired assurances that they would acquire Uzbek nationality, women were at greater risk of statelessness if they ultimately failed to obtain Uzbek nationality. She wished to know whether the State party would further amend the Citizenship Act to ensure that persons permanently resident abroad did not lose their citizenship and that stateless women could reacquire their citizenship.

9. The Committee noted that a bill on political asylum was being discussed and that the State party was the only country in the Commonwealth of Independent States that had not acceded to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and Protocol thereto. It would be useful to learn whether the State party had a time frame for taking action on them. As Afghan refugees and asylum seekers in the State party were not granted any legal status, they were denied access to many civil, social and economic rights. She would therefore be grateful for information on measures to establish a national asylum system that complied with international rules and to amend relevant legislation so that refugees and asylum seekers, including women, enjoyed all civil, social and economic rights. She also wished to know whether any measures had been taken to grant citizenship to Afghan refugees, since many of them had lived in the country for more than 20 years. She also wondered whether the State party had a timeline for taking action on the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

10. **Ms. Fayziyeva** (Uzbekistan), speaking via video link, said that the 48 women in the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, the lower house of parliament of Uzbekistan, accounted for 32 per cent of the total number of deputies. Under current electoral law, no less than 30 per cent of the candidates put forward by political parties had to be women.

11. **Mr. Saidov** (Uzbekistan), speaking via video link, said that women accounted for more than 30 per cent of the candidates nominated by each of the five political parties that had participated in the last parliamentary elections.

12. **Ms. Kadir khanova** (Uzbekistan), speaking via video link, said that 25 women has been elected to the Senate in December 2019, compared to only 16 in 2015.

13. **Mr. Saidov** (Uzbekistan) added that, in total, there were currently 2.5 times the number of women representatives in both houses of parliament than in the previous legislature.

14. **Mr. Muslimov** (Uzbekistan), speaking via video link, said that the number of women in the judiciary had been steadily increasing. Women had accounted for 128 judges in 2018 and currently stood at 178 women judges. The First Deputy Chair of the Supreme Court and three of the presiding judges of the 14 regional courts in the country were women.

15. **Mr. Saidov** (Uzbekistan) said that about 1,600 women occupied decision-making positions in the executive, including six regional chief administrators (*khokims*). In addition, 37 women were heads of universities and 51 deans of university faculties and many women had acquired doctorates. According to the World Bank, Uzbekistan had been the one of top 27 countries in 2021 in terms of gender equality in entrepreneurship.

16. **Mr. Shigabuddinov** (Uzbekistan), speaking via video link, said that the country's ambassador to Israel and consuls in France and Italy were women. Women served as heads of department and 11 women diplomats were rostered for leading positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

17. **Ms. Marufova** (Uzbekistan), speaking via video link, said that the Ministry for Support of Mahalla and Family had more than 230 advisers to regional chief administrators in provinces, districts and cities. The Ministry had built a pool of more than 15,000 women, who were being trained to stand in the next parliamentary elections and assume decision-making positions. Women also held important positions in the National Bank, and the Bank had introduced a system for the support of women entrepreneurs. The high-level banking official who headed the system was a woman.

18. **Mr. Abdullayev** (Uzbekistan), speaking via video link, said that the Citizenship Act had been amended in 2020. It set out a streamlined procedure for acquiring citizenship. The President's message to the Oliy Majlis, with a proposal that the law should be amended to grant citizenship to stateless persons who had been resident in Uzbekistan for 15 years since 1 January 2005, had played an important role in the legislative reform. To date, a total of 67,554 persons, including 39,181 women, had been granted citizenship since 2016.

19. **Mr. Saidov** (Uzbekistan) said that the President had responded to a recommendation by the United Nations Secretary-General to eliminate statelessness in his message to the Oliy Majlis in 2020, in which he stated that persons who had been living in the country since 1995

would be granted citizenship. They were for the most part ethnic Uzbeks who had fled to Uzbekistan during the civil war in Tajikistan.

20. With regard to ratification of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and Protocol thereto, the authorities were cooperating with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and a series of information events had been organized on behalf of law enforcement personnel and civil society organizations. It was impossible to predict how long it would take for both houses of parliament to take a decision to accede to the Convention. However, efforts were under way towards that end.

21. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the country was hosting 13 persons with mandated refugee status from Afghanistan, including 6 women. The authorities had specified all the legal procedures for obtaining Uzbek citizenship. There had been more than 8,000 Afghan refugees in 2000 and coordinated action had been taken with neighbouring countries to address the problem.

22. Citizenship of only one country was permissible under the 2020 Citizenship Act. Uzbek citizens who were granted citizenship of another State would lose their Uzbek citizenship.

23. **Ms. Fayziyeva** (Uzbekistan) said that the Act on the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons in Uzbekistan adopted in 2021 contained an article on political asylum. The Act reflected all international standards applicable to stateless persons. The possibility of ratification of the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons would shortly be discussed in the Legislative Chamber.

24. **Mr. Saidov** (Uzbekistan) said that there was a Committee on Women and Gender Equality in the Senate and a national programme on gender equality was currently being developed.

25. The Committee's general recommendations and the experience of more than 48 different countries in combating domestic violence had been taken into account in drafting the Act on Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men and the Protection of Women from Harassment and Violence Act adopted in 2019. The Ministry of Internal Affairs had adopted measures in 2021 to address complaints of intimidation and violence, and arrest warrants had been issued in response to more than 18,000 reports of psychological and sexual violence and more than 7,000 reports of harassment. The Ministry had also conducted over 20,000 interviews in 2021 and organized about 12,000 events in higher education institutions. It also issued leaflets and booklets and posted videos on such issues.

#### *Articles 10 to 14*

26. **Ms. Haidar** said that she understood that girls encountered impediments in having access to inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities. Cultural, social, economic and structural constraints due to traditional stereotypes reportedly continued to play a negative role in that regard. Notwithstanding the establishment of a Ministry of Preschool Education and the activities of the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Higher and Special Secondary Education, girls continued to be underrepresented in preschool and higher education. Their underrepresentation in tertiary education was not due to unwillingness to become involved but to lack of funds owing to high tuition costs and the outdated expectation that young women should assume traditional household roles after secondary school. She therefore commended the project launched in 2017 with the United Nations Development Programme entitled "Empowering Women to Participate in Public Administration and Socioeconomic Life".

27. She would welcome information regarding temporary special measures to remedy the discrepancy between the representation of girls and boys in the education system. Such measures should ensure that girls, including rural girls, girls with disabilities and girls from minorities, had access to and remained in secondary and higher education, particularly in non-traditional fields of study. She would be grateful to hear about the impact of the measures taken and receive statistics on the enrolment rate of girls in technical and scientific studies in vocational institutions and universities. She would also be interested in learning about the

outcome of the review of school textbooks and curricula, and on the availability of gender equality and age-appropriate sex education.

28. **Mr. Saidov** (Uzbekistan) said that there were indeed three education ministries, one responsible for preschool education which had been established in 2016, one for national education and one for higher and specialized education. At the preschool and school level, the gender parity goal had been met. In fact, girls sometimes outnumbered boys.

29. **A representative of Uzbekistan**, speaking via video link, said that, in the 2020/21 academic year, an additional 240 state scholarships had been awarded in order to enable girls who required social assistance to attend school and 6,000 additional grants had been provided for female university students. Women accounted for 47 per cent of students in higher education.

30. **Mr. Saidov** (Uzbekistan) said that the number of women students had doubled over the past five years. His Government was striving to achieve gender parity in higher education colleges and universities. Women from rural areas and women with disabilities were given priority in the university admission process. Students with disabilities were provided with textbooks and other educational material and received equal treatment.

31. **Ms. Marufova** (Uzbekistan) said that, by way of temporary special measures, in 2021 some 3,000 girls from low-income families had received special government grants for university study. The city of Tashkent and the Republic of Qoraqalpog'iston also provided financial support for over 1,000 young women in higher education.

32. **Ms. Dettmeijer-Vermeulen**, noting the findings of the report of the International Labour Organization (ILO) entitled "Women and the World of Work in Uzbekistan. Towards Gender Equality and Decent Work for All", said the Committee wished to know to whether the law had been changed in response to the recommendations contained in that report and to what extent the recommendations had been implemented. It would appreciate an assessment of whether the reclassification of occupations and jobs with gender-neutral names and qualifications had contributed to eliminating the gender pay gap. As women still worked primarily in lower paid jobs and most were engaged in unpaid work looking after the home and family, she would be grateful for information about any amendments to laws and policies to effectively narrow the pay gap. The Labour Code prohibited the employment of women in several occupations and research had shown that, in male-dominated professions, men were much more likely to be called for an interview than women. She therefore asked whether any measures were envisaged to end such gender discrimination in law and practice.

33. She was curious to know how the percentage of women homeowners compared with that of men. The Committee would be grateful for details of the sustained measures to increase wages in certain occupations mentioned in paragraph 141 of the State party's report. It would like to know whether the support given to women's entrepreneurial activity under the poverty reduction programme mentioned in paragraph 173 of the replies to the list of issues had had any measurable effects and, in particular, what form of entrepreneurial activity, other than small-scale home-based activity, was supported. Was the decision to simplify the regulation of entrepreneurial activity and self-employment, to which reference was made in paragraph 175 of the replies to the list of issues, specifically targeted at women? The Committee wondered what sort of activities were listed as self-employment and what the purpose of simplification was. She wished to know how women in Uzbekistan had been affected by climate change and by the social and economic repercussions of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. What measures had been taken to counter those effects?

34. **Ms. Tisheva** said that she would like to have some information on the impact of the open concessional credit lines mentioned in paragraph 146 of the State party's report on women rural entrepreneurs and farmers. Had they generated higher income and economic security for women and promoted greater gender equality? She wished to know if those measures would be retained and if all women had access to them.

35. She would appreciate an explanation of how the issue of gender equality for rural women was mainstreamed into the national development strategy and the strategy for achieving gender equality. How would the participation of rural women in decision-making procedures be secured? Were gender dimensions included in policies and programmes to

combat and mitigate climate change? She would also like to know what specific measures were taken to eliminate stigma and discrimination against Lyuli women and girls, women living with HIV and AIDS and lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons to ensure their access to healthcare and employment and their protection against gender-based violence. Were there any plans to repeal discriminatory provisions of criminal law that violated their right to personal safety, private life and family relations?

36. **Ms. Gbedemah** said that the Committee would be grateful if the delegation could explain how the main causes of maternal mortality and stillbirth were being addressed. What measures were in place to ensure wider coverage with medical services in rural areas? Had mobile clinics been considered? She wondered if any special temporary measures were in place to encourage women to become doctors and to specialize in gynaecology, obstetrics and paediatrics. She wished to know what counselling on HIV and AIDS was given to girl pupils as part of sex education in schools. She was concerned that, given the higher rate of women's infection with HIV/AIDS, women would be particularly affected by article 113 of the Criminal Code and article 58 of the Code of Administrative Offences. She therefore wondered if the State party would consider using more general criminal law provisions instead of those to which she had just referred in order to ensure that women were not deterred from seeking treatment for HIV.

37. In view of the number of young girls who became pregnant, the Committee wished to know whether barriers to the use of contraceptives had been identified and how they were being addressed. What plans were there to scale up financial resources to expand the list of contraceptive methods and increase their use among women aged 15–49? The Committee would like to know how many women's clinics there were and to have some data on their utilization, as well as on youth-friendly reproductive health services. It would appreciate clarification on whether abortion was contingent upon pregnancy endangering a woman's life or health, or if it could be carried out on other grounds.

38. She wished to know if any research had been conducted into the reasons for the higher suicide rate among girls. To what extent did stereotypes and expectations account for it? She would be grateful for some clarification of article 103 of the Criminal Code. She wished to know whether the State party intended to use school lunches or breakfasts to combat anaemia among girls.

39. What was the patient profile and prevalence of sterilization? Had the recommendations contained in the Committee's previous concluding observations regarding sterilization (CEDAW/C/UZB/CO/5) been followed? She would like to know what health measures were available to girls with disability. With reference to the heavy impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women health workers she would appreciate information on the protocols that were in place to protect them, on the psychological support available for burnout and professional trauma and on measures for reorganizing work schedules.

40. **Mr. Yakubov** (Uzbekistan), speaking via video link, said that the Government had adopted several pieces of legislation to guarantee equal pay and opportunities. As a result, collective agreements had to include provisions that did so. By 2030, the Government intended to establish full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value in line with the fifth target of Sustainable Development Goal 8. A draft amendment to the Labour Code would prohibit discrimination in wages, establish a minimum wage and oblige employers to pay in full the wages and salaries which had been agreed.

41. In 2021 over 5,000 complaints had been received from women under a complaint procedure that had been introduced to ensure gender equality. More than 3,000 of those complaints had been resolved. The authorities had identified 4,500 breaches of legislation, including failures to pay wages in a timely manner or provide maternity leave. The violations had occurred in the education and health sectors, in agriculture and in the banking sector. The perpetrators had been charged and brought to justice. The recommendation that women should not be employed in certain occupations was not discriminatory but designed to protect their health. In 2019 a new list of occupations that had an adverse impact on women's health had been drawn up. The list provided a number of jobs for which the employment of women

was not recommended. However, women were not prohibited from working in the jobs in question.

42. In order to improve the income of women in rural areas, grants were given to women who wished to set up their own businesses to enable them to buy equipment and tools. They could also obtain soft loans. In 2021, 10,000 women had received support to enable them to set up a business on their own land. A register had been compiled of women on low incomes and 24,000 of them had received a total of 69 trillion sum in loans from the Fund for the Support of Women and the Family and commercial banks. In a move to reduce poverty, a scheme to develop a sewing industry and other crafts had been introduced in rural areas. Unemployed members of a cooperative likewise received a grant that could be contributed to the cooperative's overall resources. Some 4,000 women had received such grants.

43. **Mr. Saidov** (Uzbekistan) said that, to date, Uzbekistan had ratified 19 ILO conventions, including the Fundamental Conventions, all of which it was implementing. The Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis had adopted the Labour Code, which was currently being considered by the Senate. The Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support, in cooperation with the World Bank Group, was implementing a project aimed at enhancing economic opportunities for rural women. In connection with the project, 300 grants had been provided to women on low incomes to enable them to launch businesses. Over 130,000 women entrepreneurs were currently active in Uzbekistan, including 8,000 farmers. Under the "Well-appointed Village" and "Well-appointed Mahalla" government programmes, targeted assistance was provided to women entrepreneurs.

44. **Ms. Marufova** (Uzbekistan) said that the number of women entrepreneurs in Uzbekistan was increasing very quickly. The Association of Women Entrepreneurs, which was a non-governmental organization (NGO), was responsible for promoting entrepreneurship among women.

45. **Ms. Basitkhanova** (Uzbekistan), speaking via video link, said that the Government had adopted the Reproductive Health Act in 2019. The maternal and infant mortality rates had fallen significantly in recent years. Notwithstanding the progress made, the Government would continue to work towards further reductions. In 2021, under the "Women's Notebook" programme to assist vulnerable women, free medical care had been provided to over 160,000 women, including low-income women and women with disabilities. All of the women had been given free medical examinations, and some 1,500 women had received free specialist and surgical treatment at a cost of more than 42 billion sum. A presidential decree on the allocation of monthly benefits to mothers of children with disabilities had recently been signed.

46. In recent years, clinics for women had been re-established to improve the quality of care provided to women. More than 200 cancer treatment centres throughout the country had been set up to carry out screening for cervical and breast cancers for women between the ages of 30 and 60. Mobile teams of health specialists had been established to provide women and girls in the country's remote and mountainous areas with care. Since 2022, all health districts must have a professional midwife and districts with populations of 2,000 or more a paediatric specialist. There were 46 interdistrict perinatal centres, which met international standards, to which more than \$5 million in equipment had been allocated.

47. In accordance with a presidential decision adopted in 2018, State-funded health care was provided to all pregnant women diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. In 2021, over \$6 million of State funds had been spent on treating persons living with HIV/AIDS. All children born to mothers living with HIV/AIDS received free powdered milk during the first six months of their lives. Previously, women living with HIV/AIDS had been assigned to special clinics, which had carried a certain stigma, but now they were treated in regular hospitals and given State-funded care. The partners of women with HIV/AIDS were regularly tested for the condition.

48. Starting in 2022, all children in the Republic of Qoraqalpog'iston and Xorazm between the first and fourth grades of primary school would receive free breakfasts and lunches. In 2021, the Government had allocated more than 4 trillion sum to contain the COVID-19 pandemic and specialized beds had been set up for pregnant women with

COVID-19. Protocols on treating women and children with COVID-19 had been published and were being fine-tuned in line with ongoing developments.

49. **Ms. Artikova** (Uzbekistan), speaking via video link, said that the Prosecutor General had drafted a new version of article 113 of the Criminal Code, which concerned the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDs. The draft was currently being discussed by a group of experts.

*Articles 15 and 16*

50. **The Chair** said that the Committee would welcome information on any convictions secured in connection with violations of the prohibitions on child marriage and polygamy. It would also be grateful to receive gender-disaggregated statistical data that would allow the Committee to determine whether articles 15 and 16 of the Convention were being effectively implemented. The Government might indicate whether it would amend the law to allow persons living with HIV/AIDs to foster or adopt children. In view of the fact that disputes over child custody sometimes resulted in a child being abducted, the Government might consider ratifying the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption.

51. He asked whether the Government would consider ratifying the ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156). The Committee welcomed the law amending the minimum age for marriage but wished to know what was being done to prevent unlawful religious marriages and forced marriages, which had become more frequent since the change in the law. Lastly, he asked whether the law on marriage currently provided for any exemptions to the minimum age for marriage and, if so, on what grounds.

52. **Mr. Saidov** (Uzbekistan) said that, in conjunction with ILO, the Government was implementing a country programme on decent work. The Government was considering whether to adopt the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption. The law did not currently provide for any exemptions to the minimum age for marriage, which was 17 years for women and men. According to information held by the local authorities, the number of marriages involving a person younger than the minimum legal age for marriage had fallen significantly between 2019 and 2020. The Government, the mahallas and civil society organizations were conducting a campaign to raise awareness of the harmful effects of early marriage.

53. **Mr. Muslimov** (Uzbekistan) said that, in 2020, the courts had examined around 40 cases involving a violation of the minimum age for marriage established in the Administrative Liability Code. Fines had been handed down to all the perpetrators. In 2020 and 2021, no prosecutions for violating the minimum age for marriage had been brought under the Criminal Code. In 2020, 9 persons had been prosecuted for violating the provisions of the Criminal Code concerning forced marriage while 11 persons had been prosecuted for violating those provisions in 2021.

54. **Mr. Saidov** (Uzbekistan) said that the National Human Rights Centre and the United Nations Children's Fund had analysed the question of whether persons living with HIV/AIDS should be allowed to adopt or foster children. The results of that analysis would be submitted to the Ministry of Health, which was currently in the process of compiling the various laws on health into a single health code.

55. **The Chair** said that the Committee would welcome information on any training being provided to judges, prosecutors or other legal officials in connection with the laws prohibiting early marriage and polygamy. The delegation could provide its answers in writing.



56. **Mr. Saidov** (Uzbekistan) said that he wished to thank the Chair and the Committee members for the open and constructive dialogue. The Government looked forward to receiving the Committee's concluding observations, which it would disseminate among government agencies, NGOs and the general public. In common with its usual practice, the Government would submit a report on the outcome of the constructive dialogue to the Oliy Majlis. It would then work with NGOs to draw up a national action plan on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Committee's concluding observations.

*The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.*