



the creation of a data-collection system on domestic violence cases. Courts were also dealing more severely with cases of domestic violence and had adopted a “no-drop” policy for such cases. Increased attention was also being paid to trafficking in women.

6. Women’s representation in Parliament remained low, where women held 3 of 49 seats — although 2 of them occupied senior positions. This was due to the fact that only chiefly title holders were eligible to run for Parliament and, despite some improvements, a preference for men to hold this position remained. At the same





State party to ensure that public officials, especially law enforcement personnel, the judiciary, health-care providers and social workers, are fully sensitized to all forms of violence against women and are adequately trained to respond to them.

26. The Committee is concerned about the continuing low representation of women in public life and decision-making, including women's limited access to family chiefly titles (matai), and their resulting low representation in the Parliament. It is concerned that sociocultural stereotypes and traditions continue to prevent women from seeking public, and especially elective, office.

27. The Committee encourages the State party to take sustained and proactive measures to increase the representation of women in elected and appointed bodies in all areas of political and public life. It recommends that the State party introduce temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation 25, to increase the number of women in the Parliament and in local government bodies. It calls upon the State party to carry out awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of women's participation in public and political life and in decision-making positions, with a view to eliminating customs and practices that discriminate against women, in accordance with articles 2 (f) and 5 (a) of the Convention. The Committee requests the State party to regularly evaluate the impact of such measures, including temporary special measures, so as to ensure that they lead to the desired goals and to provide in its next report comprehensive information on the results achieved.

28. The Committee is concerned about the situation of women in the employment sector and their lower level of participation in the labour force. The Committee is concerned that existing legislation is discriminatory or has significant gaps with respect to articles 11 and 13, such as lack of provisions on equal pay for work of equal value, protection against discrimination on the basis of pregnancy and against sexual harassment in the workplace. The Committee is also concerned about the extremely limited provision of paid maternity leave in the private sector and the lack of adequate childcare services.

29. The Committee calls upon the State party to bring its legislation into compliance with article 11 of the Convention without delay and to ensure compliance with such legislation. The Committee also requests the State party to step up its efforts to address the impediments women face in entering the labour force and to implement measures to promote the reconciliation of family and work responsibilities between women and men. The Committee also urges the State party to use temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and general recommendation 25 so as to enhance implementation of article 11 of the Convention. It requests the State party to provide information about the impact of such measures in its next report.

30. The Committee expresses concern that complications from pregnancy and childbirth remain one of the leading causes of morbidity for women. It is also concerned about the rising incidence of teenage pregnancy, the limited family-planning efforts, the low contraceptive prevalence rate and the lack of sex education in schools, despite comprehensive access for women to health services,



39. The Committee recommends that the State party make the promotion of gender equality an explicit component of its next national development plan and policies, in particular those aimed at sustainable development.

40. The Committee encourages the State party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention and to accept, as soon as possible, the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the Committee's meeting time.

41. The Committee requests the State party to provide an assessment of the impact of measures taken to enhance the de facto equality of women and to respond to the concerns expressed in the present concluding comments in its next periodic report submitted under article 18 of the Convention. The Committee invites the State party to submit its fourth periodic report, which is due in October 2005, and its fifth periodic report, which is due in October 2009, as a combined report in 2009.

42. Taking account of the gender dimensions of the declarations, programmes and platforms for action adopted by relevant United Nations conferences,

women's and human rights organizations, the Convention and its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

---