

Role of Women (MRW); child development programmes; temporary measures to accelerate equality, training and literacy programmes, special measures related to maternity; sex roles and stereotypes and the importance of family education; difficulties in implementing the principle of equality; religious customs and traditional norms; traffic in, and exploitation of, women; participation in political and public life; education and access to education; the government policy on women and employment and mechanisms for its implementation, the Labour Act, social security, retirement, pensions, child care and family support, unpaid work in the home; health and general health care services, family planning, abortion; family benefits, access to loans and credit, the situation of rural women, the Family Welfare Movement (PKK), the Programme to Increase the Role of Women in Small Industries; equality before the law; and marriage and family, the right to a name, divorce, property and alimony.

The Committee's concluding observations and comments (A/53/38, paras. 262–311) noted that as a follow-up to the Beijing Conference, the government had launched a national movement — the Outlook of Harmonious Gender Partnership between Men and Women in the Family, Society and Development — with a view to inculcating values of equality in the citizenry. Reference was also made to the government's core focus in four areas: poverty eradication, education, health, and empowerment. The Committee welcomed, *inter alia*: the fact that the Convention forms part of domestic law and has been cited before courts in discrimination cases; the introduction of an Indonesian National Action Plan to implement the Beijing Platform for Action; and the creation of women's studies at institutions of higher learning.

Factors hindering the implementation of the Convention were noted as including: the current economic crisis; the existence of cultural attitudes that confine women to the roles of mothers and housewives; policies and programmes developed on the basis of those stereotypes, thereby limiting women's participation and entitlements; and the failure to collect data on certain issues that are crucial to the well-being of women, such as the prevalence of violence against women.

The principal areas of concern identified by the Committee included: the existence of laws which are not in accordance with the provisions of the Convention regarding family and marriage — including polygamy, and age for marriage; divorce and the requirement that a wife obtain her husband's consent for a passport; economic rights — including ownership and inheritance of land, access to loans and credits, entitlement to social, health and other benefits in the labour sector, and the requirement that a wife obtain her husband's consent for night employment; and health — including the requirement that the wife obtain her husband's consent with regard to sterilization or abortion, even when her life is in danger.

The Committee expressed concern that, *inter alia*: there is no clear definition of discrimination modelled on article 1 of the Convention in the constitution or other national laws; Muslims may choose whether Islamic or civil law is to be applied to them, raising questions as to who decides this issue, and to what extent Muslim women are able to choose to have civil law applied to their affairs rather than Islamic law; marriages between partners of different religions are prohibited *de facto* in certain regions of the country; existing social, religious and cultural norms recognize men as the head of the family and breadwinner and confine women to the roles of mother and wife, noting that it is unclear what steps the government is proposing to take to modify such attitudes; traditional gender stereotypes are also perpetuated in formal education and textbooks have not been revised to eliminate such stereotypes; and that the full implementation of the national plan of action might be impeded by prevailing religious and cultural norms that constitute the backdrop to Indonesia's legal and policy efforts towards women's equality.

Concern was raised in relation to: women's low rates of participation in education, as well as the high level of illiteracy among women, especially in the rural areas; access to education of all children, including those from minority groups; the fact that women are still employed in lower-paid and lower-skilled work; the predominant view which appears to be that married women might provide supplemental income for a family, parallel to very little emphasis on the right of women to develop a career of their own; and the lack of adequate laws to address violence against women, as well as the lack of systematic sex disaggregated data collection and documentation on the extent, forms and prevalence of violence against women.

The Committee noted its concern with regard to: reports on violations of women's human rights in East Timor and the information provided by the government on the situation of women in areas of armed conflict, which reflects a limited understanding of the problem; the fact that the government's remarks are confined to the participation of women in the armed forces and do not address the vulnerability of women to sexual exploitation in conflict situations, as well as a range of other human rights abuses affecting women in such contexts; information on the situation of migrant women and the failure to include discussion of reports of death as a result of mistreatment and abuses of Indonesian migrant women abroad, as well as cases of trafficking for the purposes of prostitution; and the lack of mechanisms to respond to abuses of Indonesian women abroad.

Additional concerns were expressed related to: reported cases of coercion in the course of the implementation of the family planning programme; the fact that limited information was provided on the problem of HIV/AIDS; attribution of the problem of HIV/AIDS to women in prostitution; programmes designed to "clean the city streets" of prostitutes whenever there is a major international event in Jakarta and reports indicating that