

The principal areas of concern identified by the Committee included, *inter alia*: the discrimination faced by indigenous women, where health, education and employment indicators are below the national average; the situation of rural women living in poverty and in extreme poverty; the situation of indigenous women and children, particularly in the state of Chiapas; *de facto* discrimination in terms of the situation of women workers in factories; the situation in certain areas where the principle of equal pay for work of equal value is not applied and where women of child-bearing age are subject to mandatory pregnancy tests as a condition of employment; that, in spite of the legislative measures taken, violence against women, particularly domestic violence, continues to be a serious problem; the high, and unsatisfied, demand for contraceptive methods, particularly among poor urban women, rural women and adolescents; cases in some localities in which contraceptive methods have been used without women's express consent, in violation of the law; and the possible existence of illicit traffic in women.

Concern was also raised with regard to: the possibility that in the present circumstances, the gender-equality policy in the regular educational system may be affected by the decentralization of education in Mexico; the lack of access to health-care services for children and the elderly; inadequacies in the policies to promote equality within the family, noting that stereotyped roles are perpetuated in the family by deeply rooted traditions of men's superiority; the possibility that certain legal provisions might continue to promote inequality and traditional roles within the family; the high rate of teenage pregnancy and the lack of access for women in all states to rapid and easy abortion; and the absence of information about Mexican women who migrated abroad.

The Committee recommended that the government, *inter alia*:

- ♦ continue efforts to reduce poverty among rural women, particularly indigenous women, and make special efforts to promote education, employment and health programmes conducive to the integration of women into the development process, both as beneficiaries and as protagonists;
- ♦ evaluate areas, such as the private sector, that are not covered by affirmative action and, in the next report, submit a consolidated evaluation of all affirmative-action initiatives;
- ♦ include, in the next report, more information about existing mechanisms to enable women to seek redress from the courts on the basis of the Convention;
- ♦ continue to monitor compliance with labour laws in the factories and pursue the work of raising awareness among factory employers;
- ♦ continue, through the Ministry of Agrarian Reform, institutional intervention to persuade public land (ejido) assemblies to allocate to women the parcels of land to which they are entitled;

- ♦ consider the advisability of revising the legislation criminalizing abortion and weigh the possibility of authorizing the use of the RU486 contraceptive as soon as it becomes available; introduce training for health personnel with regard to women's human rights, and particularly their right, freely and without coercion, to choose means of contraception; assist all states to review their legislation so that, where necessary, women are granted access to rapid and easy abortion;
- ♦ provide information in the next report on the impact of programmes to reduce and prevent teenage pregnancy;
- ♦ continue to work for the adoption of nationwide legislation on all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, adjusting state laws to national laws; consider the possibility of implementing an integrated, long-term plan for combatting violence that could include taking legal action, training judicial, law enforcement and health personnel, informing women about their rights and about the Convention and strengthening victims' services; take strong action against persons who commit violence against women and make it made easier for women to bring court action against offenders;
- ♦ address in the next report the matter of whether the government intends to legalize prostitution and whether this issue has been subject to public debate; ensure that new legislation does not discriminate against prostitutes and does punish pimps and procurers;
- ♦ amend the legal penalties for rape and ensure their implementation; conduct rape awareness campaigns for NGOs and legislators;
- ♦ take action against employers who discriminate against women on grounds of pregnancy;
- ♦ include, in the next report, information on, *inter alia*: the avenues of appeal open to women who, upon a division of property in divorce, suffer economically despite their contribution to the family's assets; women who migrate abroad, where they go, and whether any authorized agency regulates such migration; men's and women's comparative access to pensions and the minimum amount of such pensions; whether homosexuality is penalized in the criminal code; and women heads of rural enterprises and on programmes for the economic advancement of rural women;
- ♦ introduce education programmes on the provisions of the Convention and the rights of women for judicial personnel, law enforcement officers, lawyers and others who are responsible for applying the law; take further steps to increase the numbers of women at all levels of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies; conduct a campaign to educate women about the content of the Convention, alerting them to their economic, political, civil and cultural rights; and