

inheritance rights under the agrarian reform law; and the continuing absence of the principle of equality in the constitution. Concern was expressed about: the economic consequences of women's poverty; women's migration to urban areas and to foreign countries making them susceptible to sexual exploitation, including trafficking and sex tourism, and prostitution; the lack of creation of jobs for women in growth sectors, including in the tourism industry, and the lack of affirmative action measures to support women's efforts to break the cycle of poverty.

The Committee expressed concern about: the rigid social codes in the country and the persistence of machismo, which is reflected in areas such as women's low participation in public life and decision-making, in the stereotypical portrayal of women's role in the family, social life and a segregated labour market; the failure to undertake comprehensive and systematic public awareness and information campaigns to change stereotypical attitudes that are detrimental to women's equality; the fact that insufficient cooperation and networking has been established between the DGPM and women in decision-making in all areas of political, economic and social life; the situation of women workers with regard to discrimination in income and benefits; the absence of efforts by the government to ensure and enforce compliance with wage, benefits and workers' safety laws, including compliance with ILO Conventions; women's overall high unemployment rate and the particularly insecure situation of domestic workers and of single mothers; and the fact that women often have higher levels of education than men but are paid less than men for work of equal value. Concerns also addressed such areas as the high maternal mortality rate caused by toxæmia, haemorrhages during childbirth and clandestine abortions, and provisions making abortions absolutely and under all circumstances illegal.

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

- ♦ ensure that the implementation of all provisions of the Convention proceeds without obstacles; include in its next report detailed information on the practical implementation of the Convention emphasizing the impact of policies and programmes aimed at achieving women's equality;
- ♦ provide the DGPM with the necessary authority, and adequate human and financial resources, to implement special programmes for women, to influence all governmental decision-making and to ensure that a gender perspective is consistently applied in all government policies and programmes;
- ♦ promote intensified cooperation between the DGPM and other sectors and entities of civil, political and economic life, so as to ensure more systematic attention to gender issues in these areas;
- ♦ make women a priority in its poverty eradication strategy, place particular emphasis on the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all poverty eradication

efforts, and take measures to ensure to women the enjoyment of their rights in such efforts;

- ♦ identify priority areas for targeted actions for women, for example with regard to the reduction and elimination of illiteracy, the creation of jobs and the implementation of labour legislation and reforms;
- ♦ continue to give attention to women heads of households and conduct further research into their situation with a view to developing sound and effective policies on strengthening their socio-economic situation and the prevention of poverty, and ensure that needed services and support are provided to such households;
- ♦ improve the collection and use of data disaggregated by sex; place particular emphasis on areas related to women's health, work, employment, wages and benefits, the types and incidence of violence against women, and the impact of measures against violence against women;
- ♦ continue its integrated approach to the elimination and prevention of violence against women and give attention to so-called crimes of passion, their frequency and the response of law enforcement;
- ♦ pursue bilateral agreements and cooperate in multilateral efforts to reduce and eradicate traffic in women, to protect women migrant workers from exploitation, including sexual exploitation; conduct public information campaigns aimed at particularly vulnerable groups of women to alert them to potential dangers when seeking work overseas;
- ♦ conduct regular assessments of the impact of the 25 per cent quota regulation contained in the electoral law to ensure the full implementation of the law and the achievement of higher percentages of women in decision-making;
- ♦ strengthen vocational and technical training and career counselling for young women and increase information activities regarding non-traditional jobs for women in order to reduce job segregation patterns and the wage gap between women and men;
- ♦ strengthen educational programmes for girls and boys on sexual and reproductive health, on combatting the spread of HIV/AIDS and on family planning;
- ♦ review legislation in the area of women's reproductive and sexual health, in particular with regard to abortion;
- ♦ give full attention to the needs of rural women, including in such areas as access to health and social services, income-generation projects and housing; consider the establishment of special banks and of improved access to credit for rural women;
- ♦ take steps to ensure the *de facto* separation of the secular and religious spheres, with a view to ensuring the full implementation of the Convention; and