

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

**Date of admission to UN:** 24 October 1945.

### TREATIES: RATIFICATIONS AND RESERVATIONS

**Land and People:** The Dominican Republic has not submitted a core document for use by the treaty bodies.

#### Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Acceded: 4 January 1978.

The Dominican Republic's third periodic report is due 30 June 1999.

#### Civil and Political Rights

Acceded: 4 January 1978.

The Dominican Republic's fourth periodic report was due 3 April 1994.

**Optional Protocol:** Acceded: 4 January 1978.

#### Racial Discrimination

Acceded: 25 May 1983.

The Dominican Republic's fourth through eighth periodic reports were due 24 June 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996 and 1998 respectively.

#### Discrimination against Women

Signed: 17 July 1980; ratified: 2 September 1982.

The Dominican Republic's fourth periodic report (CEDAW/C/DOM/4) was considered at the Committee's May 1998 session; the fifth periodic report is due 2 October 1999.

#### Torture

Signed: 4 February 1985.

#### Rights of the Child

Signed: 8 August 1990; ratified: 11 June 1991.

The Dominican Republic's initial and second periodic reports were due 10 July 1993 and 1998 respectively.

### REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

#### Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

The Dominican Republic's 2nd, 3rd and 4th periodic reports (CEDAW/C/DOM/2-3, 1993; CEDAW/C/DOM/4, 1997) were considered by the Committee at its February 1998 session. The 4th periodic report prepared by the government contains statistical and demographic data as well as information on, *inter alia*: the evolution of the economy and of poverty; the reform and modernization of government; amendments on key legislation, for example, the Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure, Agrarian Reform Act, Labour Code, General Health Act, General Education Act and the Elections Act; the role, functions and programmes of the Dirección General de

Promoción de la Mujer (DGPM) (the Department for the Advancement of Women), the national committee to monitor implementation of the National Plan of Action for Equality, Development and Peace; prejudices and stereotypes and programmes to overcome them; violence against women, prostitution, and trafficking in women; women heads of households; participation in political and public life; social organizations working with and for women, and women's organizations; education and illiteracy; employment, social support services, women in the work force and free-trade zones, and women-owned businesses and micro-enterprises; health, maternal mortality, HIV/AIDS, and the National Committee on Maternal Mortality; economic and social benefits; the situation of rural women and the role and functions of the Agrarian Institute; equality under the law, the Civil Code; marriage and family and the Code for the Protection of Children and Adolescents.

The Committee's concluding observations and comments (A/53/38, paras. 312–353) summarized points raised in the oral presentation of the 4th report by the government, referring to, *inter alia*: the adoption of a law against domestic violence (Ley contra la Violencia Intrafamiliar) and ongoing efforts to put into place practical measures to ensure compliance with the new law; the adoption of an education bill establishing the principle of equality of opportunity between the sexes; and proposals for inclusion of the principle of equality in the constitution.

The Committee welcomed: the ongoing work of the DGPM on a number of legislative drafts aimed at repealing or revising discriminatory laws and provisions; the adoption, in 1997, of the law against domestic violence, the holistic and integrated approach taken to address the issue of violence against women; revision of the agrarian reform law giving women the right to inherit land; the establishment, in the Electoral Law, of a 25 per cent quota for women candidates in municipal and congressional elections; women's above-average representation in secondary and higher education, noting that women's illiteracy rate is lower than that of men; the sensitivity shown by the government to the particular constraints and vulnerabilities faced by women heads of households; and the establishment of a governmental mechanism to follow up and implement the commitments of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention were noted as including the persistence of a high poverty level and of situations of extreme poverty, and the absence in practice of a clear separation of church and state.

The principal areas of concern identified by the Committee included, *inter alia*: continuing discriminatory provisions in, for example, the civil code, the nationality law and marriage and family laws, especially in areas such as the administration of marital property; discriminatory provisions regarding unmarried women, as well as single mothers, in social security provisions and in land