CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

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The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was United Nations treaty. It was ratified by the UK in 1986.

Article 1
For the purposes of the present Convention, the term “discrimination against women” shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction based on sex, which has the effect or purpose ofnullifying or impairing recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, of all rights and freedoms, as set forth in the present Convention, whether the said distinction, exclusion or restriction be made by law, custom or other social practices, in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other realm.

Article 2
States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and to this end undertake:
(a) To embody the principle of the equality of women and men in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation;
(b) To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women;
(c) To establish legal protection of the rights of women, men and children, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and curricula which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children;
(d) To facilitate, in the light of the international consensus on sexual roles for men and women, the introduction at all levels of society of non-stereotyped roles for women and men;
(e) To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maturity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of man and woman in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interests of the children will take principal consideration in all cases.

Article 3
States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on an equal footing with men, the right:
(a) To vote in all elections and referenda and to be eligible for election to all public bodies and public offices;
(b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;
(c) To participate in non-governmental organizations working in the public and political life of the country.

Article 4
States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on an equal footing with men and without any discrimination, the right to freedom of conscience and religion, including freedom to change their religious affiliation and freedom, either alone or with members of their families, to manifest their religion or belief, either individually or in community with others, and to freely observe the rites of their religion or belief.

Article 5
States Parties shall take all appropriate measures:
(a) To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and practices and of all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotypes of roles for men and women;
(b) To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maturity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of man and woman in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interests of the children will take principal consideration in all cases.

Article 6
States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country in particular, to:
(a) Ensure that women are elected or appointed to public bodies and public offices, and that all public officials and representatives of the public and any person occupying an office of public trust are elected or appointed so that women and men shall be equally represented;
(b) Ensure that women are able to participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;
(c) Encourage the formation of organized women’s groups, and other bodies, concerned with the political and public life of the country.

Article 7
States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on an equal footing with men and without any discrimination, the right to freedom of conscience and religion, including freedom to change their religious affiliation and freedom, either alone or with members of their families, to manifest their religion or belief, either individually or in community with others, and to freely observe the rites of their religion or belief.

Article 8
States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on an equal footing with men and without any discrimination, the right of women and men to marry, to found a family, and to have children, including in all cases:
(a) The right to marriage, without any discrimination as to requirements of residence, net result of marriage and fees;
(b) The right to the same employment opportunities as men, subject to the same conditions of employment, including prerequisites for taking office, and to equal treatment in terms of pay, promotion, and overall working conditions.

Article 9
States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on an equal footing with men and without any discrimination, the right of women and men to have the same legal capacity in all matters of personal status, including marriage, adoption and guardianship.

Article 10
States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on an equal footing with men and without any discrimination, the right:
(a) To be free from arbitrary interference with family life and communications;
(b) To access to all medical, social and legal services in connection with family planning;
(c) To decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise those rights;
(d) To have access to adequate health care services, including family planning services, to the same extent as men;
(e) To enjoy adequate living conditions, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy.

Article 11
States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on an equal footing with men, the right:
(a) To pursue their studies and to have access to all forms of education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, and to have equal access to scholarships and other study grants;
(b) To have access to adequate health care services, including family planning services, to the same extent as men;
(c) To enjoy adequate living conditions, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy.

Article 12
States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on an equal footing with men, the right:
(a) To pursue their studies and to have access to all forms of education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, and to have equal access to scholarships and other study grants;
(b) To have access to adequate health care services, including family planning services, to the same extent as men;
(c) To enjoy adequate living conditions, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy.