

**Mandate of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice**

REFERENCE: OL  
BHR 14/2014:

14 November 2014

Excellency,

I have the honour to address you in my capacity as Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 23/7.

The Working Group is following up on the information on Bahrain, published by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in its 2014 annual note regarding **gender equality in legal provisions in nationality laws**. According to this information, current nationality law in Bahrain discriminates against women in that it allows mothers to confer their nationality to their children born either in their home countries or abroad only if the fathers are unknown or stateless. On the contrary, men automatically confer their nationality to their children.

In this regard, the Working Group wishes to recall CEDAW's Concluding Observations on Bahrain (CEDAW/C/BHS/CO/3), in which the CEDAW Committee noted the slow pace of adoption of the draft amendments to the Nationality Law and expressed concern that such amendments will not automatically grant children of Bahraini women married to foreigners the nationality of their mothers, but will only codify the existing system according to which, women, upon request and royal decision, can transfer their nationality to their children. The Committee urged the State to expedite the amendments to the Nationality Law to bring it into full compliance with Article 9 (2).

The Working Group would also like to recall the recommendations made in the context of the Universal Periodic Review Second Cycle of Bahrain, which are supported by Bahrain, which called for the adoption of measures to ensure that Bahraini women are able to pass their nationality to their children on an equal footing with men, including the adoption of new legislation and speeding up the amendments to the Nationality Law.

The Working Group would like to draw to the attention of your Excellency's Government the existence of wide spread good practices by States in your region which,

in recent years, have repealed legislative provisions which discriminate against women in the matter of nationality.

In order to clarify the measures being taken by your Excellency's Government to repeal the discriminatory legislative provisions on nationality, the Working Group would be grateful if you could address the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information on the current status of the relevant legislation with regard to the right of women to pass their nationality to their children on an equal footing with men;
2. Please provide information on any measures that your Excellency's Government has taken or intend to take in order to implement the recommendations by UN human rights mechanisms, referred to above, and to bring its legislation into compliance with international human rights law.

The Working Group would appreciate a response within 60 days and remains available for any type of technical advice on legislative reform that your Excellency's Government may require.

This communication and your Excellency's Government's response will be made available in a report to be presented to the Human Rights Council for its consideration.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Frances Raday  
Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of  
discrimination against women in law and in practice