

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

REFERENCE: AL
SYR 7/2014:

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 Expert Group is following up on the information on the Syrian Arab Republic, 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, legislation in the Syrian Arab Republic discriminates against women in that they can only confer their nationality to their children if they are born in the Syrian Arab Republic and the father does not establish filiation in relation to the child.

In this regard, the Expert Group wishes to recall CEDAW's Concluding Observations on the Syrian Arab Republic (CEDAW/C/SYR/CO/2), in which the CEDAW Committee expressed concern about discriminatory provisions against women in article 3 of the Nationality Law. The Committee recommended that the State repeal all discriminatory provisions of the Nationality Law and other relevant legislation, regulations and directives.

The Expert Group would also like to recall the recommendations made in the context of the Universal Periodic Review of the Syrian Arab Republic, which are under consideration or are supported by the Syrian Arab Republic which called on the State to bring national laws fully into line with its obligations under CEDAW and maintain positive momentum in improving legislation and institutions particularly in relation to women rights (see recommendations 100.2 & 100.3 in A/HRC/19/6).

The Expert Group would like to draw to your attention the existence of good practices by States in your region, which, in recent years, have repealed legislative provisions that discriminate against women in the matter of nationality.

In order to clarify the measures being taken by your Excellency's Government's to repeal the discriminatory legislative provisions on nationality, the Expert 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 the 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 Expert 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