

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

Excerpt from the questionnaire sent on 7th December 2011

In the context of its ongoing dialogue with member states to promote and exchange views on best practices related to the elimination of laws and policies that discriminate against women, the Working Group would like to inform Your Excellency's Government about its decision to conduct thematic work in 2012 on the implementation of law and policy and effective strategies to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life and particularly during political transitions, including transitions which involve fundamental change of political regime and/or of the legal system. The Working Group notes that situations of political transition provide a unique opportunity to address women's participation in the political system and women's human rights in the legal and social systems, including the elimination of discrimination against women in law and in practice.

Accordingly, the Working Group would appreciate receiving information highlighting practices and significant legislative and policy reforms adopted for the advancement of women's rights and gender equality in times of political transition since the entry into force of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1980. It would be grateful to obtain such information from both states that have experienced themselves a situation of political transition and from the ones which would like to contribute their experiences gained at international and/ or bilateral levels. In particular, the Working Group would welcome any information on approaches related to:

- Constitutional and other legislative initiatives and reforms put in place to promote women's rights and gender equality, including through the revision and repeal of discriminatory provisions in legislation;
- Strengthening the framework of state institutions, machineries and mechanisms to implement actions in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women;
- Improving women's political participation, on equal terms with men, in the transitional and post-transitional process at all levels of decision-making, including through the adoption of temporary special measures;
- Increasing women's access to justice, including transitional justice mechanisms.

Such information will be compiled with a view to identifying established practices for the elimination of discrimination against women in law and in practice and making recommendations on ways and means to empower women in times of political transition.

The Working Group would appreciate receiving a reply by 22 February 2012 and undertakes to ensure that the reply of your Excellency's government is accurately reflected in the reports that it will submit to the Human Rights Council. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Nathalie Stadelmann (email: wgdiscriminationwomen@ohchr.org tel: 022 917 91 04) at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.