



**Convention on the Elimination  
of all Forms of Discrimination  
Against Women**

Distr.  
GENERAL

CEDAW/C/5/Add.10  
3 February 1983

ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
Against Women (CEDAW)  
Second Session

UN LIBRARY

JUL 13 1983

UN/SA COLLECTION

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES  
UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION

Initial reports of States Parties

ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

1. The Egyptian Constitution provides for non-discrimination between citizens on the grounds of sex, origin, language, religion or belief. It also provides for the State to ensure harmony between women's family duties, their activity in society and their equality with men in political, social, cultural and economic fields of life, without prejudice to the prescriptions of Islamic religious law.
2. Complete equality between men and women before the law is a constitutional issue and is in conformity with Islamic religious law; it is already being enforced in the areas of rights, duties, equal pay and wages and the holding of various positions.
3. Laws in Egypt do not grant any privileges to men over women, either in employment or in education or civil and political rights.
4. The law ensures the participation of women in politics, at all levels. It allocates them 30 seats in the National Assembly, which are filled by direct election, in addition to the right of women to be candidates, like men, for the rest of the seats of the Assembly. Moreover, a proportion varying between 10 and 20 per cent of the seats in local councils, at Governorate level, is reserved for women, and the women's organizations of political parties undertake to spread awareness among women.
5. The Personal Statute Law was amended in 1979 and also the Labour Law, to the benefit of women, in order to protect their rights, whether they are working, housewives, mothers, sisters or daughters.
6. In the educational field, Egyptian women have proved their capacity to learn and to achieve excellence, as well as their increasing desire to do so. In university education alone the proportion of female students is 46.7 per cent of the total number of students, i.e. about one half, and this proportion is in constant increase. Egyptian women have been able to accede to the highest positions of the State: there are women ministers, ambassadors, university professors, doctors, engineers and journalists. Consequently, women's participation in all fields is effective and positive.
7. In the health field, the Egyptian Government exerts every effort with a view to providing the necessary health care to all citizens, especially women, who need special health care. Particular attention is given to rural women who are considered a national asset for Egyptian society. For this reason the Government is establishing many rural health centres.

8. Egypt's reservations on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women bear on the following:

(a) A reservation on the text of article 9, paragraph 2, concerning the granting to women of equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children, which consists in stipulating that this shall be "without prejudice to the acquisition by a child issuing from a marriage of his father's nationality", in order to avoid the acquisition by the child of two nationalities if his parents have different nationalities, so as not to impair his future. It is worth mentioning that access by the child to his father's nationality does not affect the principle of equality between men and women since it is the current practice for a woman, when she marries a foreigner, to agree that her children bear the father's nationality.

(b) A reservation on article 16 concerning the equality of women and men in all matters relating to marriage and family relations, during marriage and at its dissolution, which consists in stipulating that this shall be without prejudice to the rights guaranteed by Islamic religious law, in counterpart to those of the husband, in order to ensure a fair and just balance between the two parties. This is made in consideration of the sacred character of marital relations in Egypt which is derived from firmly established religious tenets that cannot be violated, because it is considered that a complementarity between rights and duties which achieves real equality between the spouses is one of the most important foundations for marital relations, rather than the manifestations of formal equality which do not give the wife any useful interest to be obtained from the husband so much as they burden her with restrictions. This is so because the Islamic religious law obligates the husband to fully support his wife from his own money, and pay her alimony thereafter when divorced, while the wife retains all her rights to her monies, and is not obligated to support herself thereby.

(c) Adherence to the reservation provided for in article 29, paragraph 2, concerning the right of a State signatory of the Convention to declare its commitment to paragraph 1 of that article as concerns submitting to arbitration any dispute among States regarding the interpretation or application of the Convention.