



**PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT  
BY THE HEAD OF THE GREEK DELEGATION**

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**ON THE SIXTH PERIODIC REPORT OF GREECE  
SUBMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION  
ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS  
OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN  
UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE UN COMMITTEE  
ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION  
AGAINST WOMEN**

**NEW YORK  
24 JANUARY 2007**

*Chairperson,  
Distinguished Members of the Committee,*

It is, indeed, an honor and a privilege for me to appear before your Committee in order to present and elaborate on the 6<sup>th</sup> Periodic Report of Greece, submitted under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. I look forward to engaging with you in what I expect to be a frank, fruitful

*Chairperson,  
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Greece attributes great importance and strives to fully respect its international commitments. The need to comply with the CEDAW and to put into effect the Beijing Platform for Action led the Greek State to undertake active initiatives and adopt legislative and other measures aiming at improving women's situation in all sectors. The preparation of our periodic National Reports, as well as sustained effort to implement the Observations and Recommenda

- An **obligatory 1/3 quota in favour of each sex** has been established in the

coordinates a Plan for cross-border and interregional cooperation and operational action of police services in the countries of S.E Europe under the code name “ILAEIRA”. The Vice President of the European Commission Fratini argued that the objective of “ILAEIRA” is the dismantling of organized trafficking networks of a transnational character and the release, protection and assistance of victims.

*Chairperson,*

*Distinguished Members of the Committee,*

## **1. Elimination of negative stereotypes concerning the role of men and women in society and the family**

The most important tools for eliminating negative stereotypes are educational process and sensitization of parents and particular fathers, on which our country is focusing. Special programs addressed to minors and adults – both women and men, teachers and parents - are being implemented. I will indicatively mention some of them.

- At the level of Secondary Education and Initial Vocational Training, a programme for the sensitisation of public school teachers has been launched. It has a total budget of 25 million Euros and is implemented in all regions of the country. In the course of its implementation, 7.500 teachers are being trained in order to implement specially designed educational programmes, from which a significantly large number of students is benefiting.
- Aiming at tackling professional segregation and stereotypes, we are implementing a Program of enriching libraries with relevant material in all public schools of technological education (764 in total), following the identification of specific needs and a study on the existing of titles on gender issues.
- Another significant Program entitled “**Equal partners – reconsidering the role of men in work and private life**” was recently completed within the scope of the 5<sup>th</sup> Medium-Term Community Action Plan of the European Commission for Gender Equality. The objective of the program was to raise awareness of public opinion and society on how to reconcile work and family life with men’s involvement. The main target groups were pre-school children, adolescents and fathers.
- In order to challenge stereotypes as to the role of men and women, special training programs are being implemented throughout Greece in the so called “Parents’ Schools” that were first created in 2003 and constitute a distinctive structure of lifelong learning, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. During the period 2003-2006, **54 Parents’ Schools** were established and have been operating in all Regions of the country.



### **3. Measures to combat sexual harassment**

In August 2006, a new law was adopted, which addresses sexual harassment in the workplace, incorporating, at the same time relevant EU Directive into domestic law and responding to related recommendations of this Committee. **For the first time, sexual harassment is defined by Greek law and is explicitly regarded as a form of discrimination in the workplace on the grounds of gender, and is forbidden both as regards access to employment, the whole spectrum of the labour relationship and occupation.**

### **4. Fighting against trafficking of women and girls**

Since 2001, Greece started to tackle trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation of women and girls, in a systematic way. Since August 2004, the Greek government has been implementing an integrated National Action Plan against trade and trafficking in persons. This Plan covers all the spectrum of actions and more specifically: screening, identification, protection and support of the victim, granting of a residence permit, a work permit and a reflection period, voluntary repatriation with financing of reintegration programs, training of police officers, judges and public prosecutors, information and raise awareness of the society and the creation of a national database for monitoring the phenomenon. The National Action Plan is coordinated at political level by a Special Inter-ministerial Committee of Secretary Generals in cooperation with specialised NGOs and the IOM.

- An important turning-point was a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Special Committee on the one hand and twelve (12) NGOs and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on the other.
- There has been an extensive television campaign, aiming to raising the awareness of the public opinion.
- Training seminars have been organized for Judges, Public Prosecutors, Police officers and Health Officials concerning the screening and referral process, run by the State in cooperation with NGOs and other bodies (for instance, the Association of Public Prosecutors, the I.O.M., the International Association of Police Officers etc.).



- The National Centre for Social Solidarity (E.K.K.A.), a legal entity supervised by the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity, is providing a 24 hours

enterprises. Supporting women's employment constitutes a special objective of our country's National Reform Program 2005-2008 as well.

In all training programs for unemployed run by the Greek Manpower Organization, a quota of at least 60% in favour of women is set. In 2005 and the first quarter of 2006,

## **8. Women's participation in decision-making**

The balanced participation of men and women in the organizations and bodies of the public sector and the local authorities, has been guaranteed by law since 2000, with a participation quota of 33% of each gender in the collective bodies of the above-mentioned organizations. In addition, since 2001, a quota of at least 1/3 participation of each gender in electoral lists for local **elections** is provided for.

At the same time and in view of the recent local elections that took place in October 2006, the State supported women candidates with seminars of training, empowerment and elaboration of educational handbooks on communication skills for women followed by a television campaign. As a result there was an increase of **47.5% of women Mayors elected compared to 2002.**

**As concerns the application of qualified women for high-ranking positions in academia, we would like to stress** that women's participation in the teaching and research staff of universities has been increased from 25% in 2001 to 30% in 2004. Moreover, in Technological Education Institutes women represented **39%** of the teaching staff in 2004.

## **9. Women's career in the Diplomatic Corps**

Members of the Diplomatic Service are appointed following successful attendance of the Diplomatic Academy, after a special examination. From 2001 onward, there is an almost balanced distribution of the two genders in the posts of students admitted to the Academy (for instance, 11 women and 12 men in 2001, 8 women and 7 men in 2006). It follows that under-representation of women, which, today may still be observed in highest ranks of the diplomatic service, is expected to disappear gradually

## **10. Elimination of discriminations and acceleration of efforts for improving employment and education of women belonging to minority groups and Roma**

**The Roma, women and men, form** an integral part of the Greek population, and **enjoy full protection of the Greek Constitution and law.** Taking into consideration their way of life and their special living conditions, they are recognized by the State as a **socially vulnerable group of the population,** in favor of which **positive measures and actions** are adopted. Since 2002, an **Integrated Action Plan for the Social Integration of Greek Roma** has been implemented, under the auspices of an Inter-Ministerial Committee coordinated by the State Secretary of the Ministry of Interior. Within the context of this Plan and up to this day, 728 Roma women participated in programs of social integration, 70 Roma women have been placed in new work positions in enterprises and 20 Roma women have been subsidized in order to create small individual companies. Moreover, 715 Roma women participated in programs facilitating their integration into the labour market. Besides, 1,200 Roma were trained during the year 2005-2006 in Adult Education Centres, **women comprising 83.5% of them.**

Women members of the Muslim minority of Thrace are beneficiaries of various programs addressing their education and employment. For example, in the region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace a special Project of integrated interventions aims at

## **11. Women's Health Issues**

The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs implements programmes on Health Education in schools. 70 experts in charge of Health Education Programmes have been appointed to the 58 Directorates of Primary and Secondary Education, to coordinate and support the implementation of those programmes by training teachers.

During the period 2000-2006, 4.500 programmes on Health Education issues have been realized, on average, annually.

Educational material on the subject, prepared especially for secondary school students was produced and respective material for primary school students has been ordered by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs.

During the present School Year, (2006-2007), a training programme on Sexually transmitted diseases addressed to primary and secondary school teachers is being implemented, aiming at informing students through properly trained teachers, a practice that will be supplemented by lectures given by the experts in charge of Health Education.

Moreover, lectures on contraception methods were given in more than 100 schools, i.e. 70.000 students, all over Greece, organized by the Greek Association of Family Planning and the Ministry of Health.

As regards the issue of the caesarean section, the percentage of deliveries by this method in our country is quite high, reaching 37%. Among the measures implemented

## **12. Amendment to article 20 para 1 of the CEDAW**

December 12, 2006, for the Members of Parliament who participate in the Special Committee for Equality and Human Rights, a permanent Parliamentary Committee of the Greek Parliament.

*Chairperson*

*Distinguished Members of the Committee*

The Greek government attributes great importance to the promotion of gender equality issues, which have become, since 2001, a matter of **national strategic planning, in accordance to the Beijing Platform for Action.**

In the current period (2004-2008), an integrated cohesive intervention strategy relates gender issues to national priorities, namely development, employment, education and social cohesion. A political program focusing on four (4) axes is being implemented:

1. Improving women's employment.
2. Combating stereotypes through education.
3. Preventing and combating violence against women.
4. Strengthening women's participation in decision-making.

I would like to reassure you of the Greek State's strong commitment to continue working towards the achievement of the Convention's goals to the maximum. We look forward to your Committee's recommendations, which will be taken seriously into consideration, in order to achieve the common goal. We strongly believe that the work undertaken here today will contribute to the enhancement of women's position