

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
CONSIDERATION OF THE THIRD PERIODIC REPORT OF SURINAME
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF
ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)**

THE SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

BY

Mr. JEFFREY JOEMMANBAKS

HEAD OF DELEGATION



Esteemed Chair and members of the CEDAW Committee,

It is an honour for me today to lead the delegation of Suriname to present the Third Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and efforts to further the recommendations from the initial and second report. Together with my delegation we expect to have a constructive dialogue with the members of this Committee.

I regret to inform you that the Minister also responsible for Gender affairs, who was initially assigned as Head of Delegation, could no longer be present at this meeting.

He sends his best wishes for a fruitful session. He furthermore requested me to convey to

Madame Chair,

discrimination is prohibited in our national legislation, while Article 35 Paragraph 2 of our Constitution explicitly lays down equality of men and women. A positive development is that the Minister of Justice and Police is still committed to his

Referring to the positive comment of your Committee (Article 34 with regard to the Integral Gender Action Plan 2000-2005), I am pleased to inform you that on Saturday 2 December 2006 the Integral Gender Action Plan 2006-2010 was launched simultaneously with the opening of a branch of the National Bureau of Gender Policy in the District of Nickerie, and in the presence of representatives of our National Assembly, Non State Actors (NGO's), international organizations and diplomatic corps. The aforementioned IGAP for the period 2006-2010 was drawn up by a consultant for the Government together with the NGOs. As in the preceding IGAP, the input of non state actors was essential in formulating various activities. NGOs will have the opportunity to carry out activities themselves in the framework of the IGAP, while the National Bureau for Gender Policy will facilitate the process and, where necessary make available expertise and other resources.

In this respect it is also worth mentioning that last Tuesday we had a fruitful meeting at the Suriname mission with the representative of the NGO's who also participated in your session on January the 22nd.

Madame Chair,

The Integral Gender Action Plan forms the core of the activities to be carried out in the

coming years regarding the following priority areas:

1. Institutional arrangements for improved gender policy development.
2. poverty reduction from a gender based perspective.
3. macro economic planning from a gender based perspective to increase economic development and the participation of women in the labour market.
4. equal participation of men and women in decision making.
5. development of legal and policy instruments to enhance human rights.
6. elimination of domestic and sexual violence.
7. increased participation in education and reduction of gender stereotyping in the assignments of jobs.
8. inclusion of sexual and reproductive health, reduction of HIV/AIDS and suicide in

Various specialized positions will shortly be filled after a recruitment process, for which the Ministry will use affirmative action for women. Affirmative action is also obvious in

The National Bureau of Gender Policy will also establish more branches in the capitals of the other districts, preferably at the office of the district commissioner.

The "Committee on Gender Legislation", works in a number of fields. Research and the introduction of new legislation has resulted in recommendations for bills on maternity leave, concubinage, pension, domestic violence, marriage law, labor law, the environment, the media. Our report makes reference to some of these bills in more detail. One of these is a general maternity leave regulation, which will be modeled on a general old age pension regulation; the idea is to create a fund in which contributions can be made, so as

Under legal protection, the Government's Policy Statement explicitly mentions tackling domestic violence and drugs-related crime, while a special judicial committee is currently carefully investigating the adjustments required to bring national legislation in line with CEDAW. For instance, institutionalization of a Bureau for Women and Children whose main tasks will be to tackle domestic violence, act as a focal point and expert center for

harassment at work; in anticipation of adoption and effectuation of this Act, the Ministry of Justice and Police has established a complaints committee, where individual complaints

The Surinamese Civil Code only provides for the legal

17 years for boys and 15 years for girls. Some adjustments have been made to the Penal Code regarding Trafficking in Persons (TIP). This act came into force in April 2006; the penalty for trafficking in minors under the age of 16 has been sharpened (the penalty for TIP is a minimum of 8 years, but there is a minimum penalty of 10 years for trafficking in

A gender perspective has been integrated in production and development activities: because of their vulnerable position, women, people with a disability, and the youth are classified as priority groups in the employment policy; The Education Sector Plan will focus on conducting a study to analyze gender issues in

education, with a view to gender mainstreaming at all levels and types of education. The analysis will make it possible to elaborate implications which will lead to the following:

- all levels and types of schools accessible to both boys and girls.
- gender awareness incorporated in the curricula at all levels of education and all stereotyping removed.

gender awareness training for teachers, school principals and others involved in

Madame Chair,

I think that it is also important to mention that on the highest educational level recently an Institute for women, gender and development studies was proclaimed at the University of Suriname.

Madame Chair,

In Suriname women are free to become a member of any political party of their interest. Political parties still do not have specific programs or measures in place to get more women elected while women form half of the constituency. There is however a tendency within some parties were women become more visible in the political arena and were women are also placed on the list of candidates to be nominated for the national elections on the national, district and regional levels.

While some legislation was adopted regarding the mentioning of the maiden name of the women candidate on the ballots these new regulations will become applicable at the next elections in 2010.

Madame Chair,

We are aware of our responsibilities to effectively implement what we agreed to when