

WOMEN'S COMMISSION

Preparation of the Second Report under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

PURPOSE

This paper aims to:-

- (a) present for Members' information the progress made by the Administration in preparing the second report of HKSAR under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);
- (b) present for Members' information a revised timetable on preparation of the second report of HKSAR under CEDAW; and
- (c) invite Members' views on a draft preface of the CEDAW report.

BACKGROUND

2. The Administration presented a paper (25/02) regarding the second report of HKSAR under CEDAW at the 11th meeting of the Women's Commission, at which the Administration sought Members' views on the draft outline of the Report, as well as on the proposed way forward regarding preparation of the Report. Members had made useful suggestions on improving the content and presentation of the CEDAW report. It was also suggested that the work plan on the preparation on the Report should be revised to give an early opportunity and allow more time for Members to comment on the draft report.

PROGRESS MADE

3. Subsequent to the consultation meeting with the Women's Commission on the draft report outline, the Administration commenced a public consultation on 23 September to invite interested parties to submit views on the implementation of the Convention in respect of those topics included in the draft outline, as well as to suggest (and comment on) any additional topics that they consider should be addressed. In addition, a public consultation session was held on 12 October 2002 at which 37 representatives from 22 organizations attended.

4. The consultation period ended on 26 October 2002. As at 5 November 2002, we received eight submissions from individuals, women's groups and services agencies. Apart from giving specific comments on topics included in the draft report outline, the following general comments were made at the 12 October consultation session:

- (a) the report should contain a review of developments since the last hearing of the CEDAW Committee on the initial report by HKSAR;
- (b) the report should explain progress made in enhancing / improving status of women in Hong Kong;
- (c) obstacles in making progress for women should be identified; and
- (d) the report should also look forward to the future.

5. Suggestions have also been made in submissions to include the some additional topics in the second report which we are considering. We have also received detailed and specific comments on the following major issues:-

- (a) co-operation between government and NGO sector on work in combating domestic violence;

- (b) the role, function, structure and work of the Women's Commission;
- (c) the influence of prejudiced perceptions on the role, values and abilities of the two genders;
- (d) factors hindering women from social participation;
- (e) protection for vulnerable women and services for survivors of violence;
- (f) the need for suitable capacity building programmes for women; and
- (g) progress on implementing CEDAW in Hong Kong.

Relevant bureaux and departments have been asked to address the above when contributing input to the report.

6. DS(Women) and PAS(Women) have attended a LegCo Home Affairs Panel Meeting on 8 November 2002 to present a paper on the subject. Ten deputations were also invited to present their views. We shall address the views and suggestions received at the meeting and during the consultation period when we prepare the second report under CEDAW.

REVISED TIME TABLE

7. On Members' suggestion about the need for early consultation on the draft CEDAW report, the Administration has accordingly revised the work plan on the preparation of the Report, to consult Members early on the draft preface. We intend to seek Members' views on the first draft of the Report in early January 2003 before finalization.

DRAFT PREFACE

8. At the meeting held on 10 September 2002, in addition to giving specific comments on the draft outline, Members made the point that there should be a section in the report to present an overall picture of the status of women in Hong Kong and to give a holistic view of the administrative and legislative measures taken to address women's concerns. Members also pointed out that the opportunity should be taken to present strategies adopted to address women-related issues which would not be possible by reporting activities carried out in an article-by-article manner. Taking Members' views into account, we have now attempted a draft preface.

9. The major topics covered in the preface include the following:-

- (a) general state of women in Hong Kong;
- (b) major developments relating to women's issues since the initial report (e.g. setting up of the Women's Commission);
- (c) empowerment, gender mainstreaming and public education as the strategy for promoting women's advancement;
- (d) existing legislative protection and services for women; and
- (e) partnership with the community on women's issues.

10. Members may wish to note that the purpose of the draft is to seek Members' comments on the content only. We shall try to improve the format and style to make the preface more focused, concise and readable to members of the public.

WAY FORWARD

11. Bureaux and departments have been invited to contribute to the draft report in early November 2002. In preparing the report, we shall try to address the views and suggestions made by the public (including LegCo). We

intend to complete initial drafting of the report by December 2002 and Members will be invited to give view on the first draft in early January 2003. It remains our commitment to submit the second HKSAR report under CEDAW to Central People's Government in March 2003.

ADVICE SOUGHT

12. Members are invited to:

- (a) note progress made to-date regarding preparation of the second report under CEDAW (paragraphs 3-6);
- (b) note the revised timetable on preparation of the second report under CEDAW (paragraph 7); and
- (c) consider and comment on the draft preface of the Report (paragraphs 8-10).

Women's Division
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