



reproduction; and the inter-ministerial decree outlining the sanctions to be imposed on perpetrators of sexual violence.

7. The most important recent measure concerned the adoption of the Code on Persons and the Family which outlawed the levirate, set the legal age for marriage for boys and girls at 18, and established monogamous marriage, parental authority and equal inheritance rights for children, regardless of gender.

8. The Code has been promulgated in 2004, and activities were being carried out throughout the territory to publicize and raise awareness about it.

9. The representative mentioned that the seventh section of the Government's programme of action for 2001-2006 was entitled "gender promotion". It included specific objectives for the advancement of women.

17. The Committee congratulates the State party for the recent legislative reforms to eliminate discrimination against women, including the adoption of law number 3 of 2003 prohibiting the practice of female genital mutilation and the Personal and family code in 2004.

18. The Committee welcomes the ratification by the State party of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in December 2004.

Principal areas of concern and recommendations

19. While the Committee notes with satisfaction that, following ratification, international treaties prevail over national laws, it remains concerned about the status of implementation of the Convention. In particular, the Committee is concerned about limited compliance in national laws and policy with the provisions of the Convention and the definition of discrimination contained in article 1. The Committee is especially concerned about the State party's narrow focus primarily on de jure equality rather than the realization also of de facto, or substantive, equality of women as required under the Convention. The Committee is concerned about lack of efforts to assess the impact of laws and policies on women's equality in such sectors as decision-making, education, employment and health.

expresses its concern regarding the State party's position that the use of temporary special measures such as quotas might be considered to be in violation of the principle of

require the permission of their husbands to obtain contraceptives and family planning services.

32. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures, in accordance with general recommendation 24 on women and health, to improve and increase women's access to health care and health-related services and information, particularly in rural areas. It calls on the Sta

for Action, which reinforce the provisions of the Convention, and requests the State party to include information thereon in its next periodic report.

41. The Committee also emphasized that a full and effective implementation of the Convention is indispensable for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It calls for the integration of a gender perspective and the explicit reflection of the provisions of the Convention in all efforts aimed at the achievement of the MDGs and requests the State party to include information thereon in its next periodic report.

42. The Committee notes that States' adherence to the seven major international human rights instruments¹