United Nations CEDAW/C/SGP/2

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
3 May 2001

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Second periodic reports of States parties

Singapore* **

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.
** For the initial report submitted by the Government of Singapore, see CEDAW/C/SGP/1.

01-35910 (E) 220601

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 Introduction

1.1 The government of Singapore remains committed to promoting the welfare and status of our women. Women in Singapore have continued to make progress in important areas, such as education, health and employment. In Singapore, women enjoy the same rights as men. Equal opportunities based on the principle of meritocracy has resulted in women naturally occupying important leadership positions in various spheres, e.g. judges, trade union leaders, youth leaders, Ambassadors, Members of Parliament, entrepreneurs, and more recently as Divisional Police Commander, Permanent Secretary in the Civil Service, Commander of an army unit and President of the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises.

1.2 Government ministries, namely the Ministries of Community Development and Sports, Education, Health, Manpower have continued to review, develop, strengthen and spearhead programmes and services that will benefit and enable women to:-

a) take advantage of training and lifelong learning;

b) help them reconcile career and family; and

c) cope with issues related to ageing.

2 Dialogue on Reservations tendered by Singapore on the CEDAW

2.1 Whilst the CEDAW does not require state parties to disseminate its report, Singapore's Inter-Ministry Committee on the CEDAW[1] decided to have an open dialogue with women's groups, details of which can be found in pages 4 and 5 of the Report.

2.2 This session, jointly organised by the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) and the Ministry of Community Development and Sports, was held in March 2000. Participants found the session useful.

2.3 The areas where women's groups in Singapore saw the need for review were those relating to the reservations tendered under Article 9 and Articles 2 & 16 of the CEDAW. Information on these are elaborated in the following text on the "Review of reservations tendered on the CEDAW".

[1] Set up since 1996 to monitor Singapore's implementation of the CEDAW and comprise 13 ministries and agencies.

3 Review of reservations tendered on the CEDAW

3.1 The Singapore Government has considered the recommendations of the Dialogue Session mentioned in the preceding paragraphs and will continue to review the implications of withdrawing the reservations tendered. Currently, we shall deem it necessary and important to retain these reservations given our multi-racial and multi-cultural society and the current social situation in Singapore.

4 Reaching out to women

4.1 Women participants at the various dialogue sessions organised by government, grassroots organisations, women's groups and committees to elicit feedback on women's concerns, agreed that like their male counterparts, they too must be prepared to meet the challenges of the new economy. Issues of concern brought up by our women in dialogue sessions often centred on family well being and how best to balance their family and work commitments.

4.2 To meet these concerns, the public, private and people sectors are actively engaged in efforts to promote and reinforce programmes and infrastructure support for women, e.g. life skills programmes, lifelong learning and IT classes. Several concrete measures to help men and women achieve a more satisfying balance between work and family life have been initiated.

INTRODUCTION

1 The Republic of Singapore submitted the Initial Report to the UN Committee on the CEDAW in November 1999. Data in the Initial Report covered the period 1995 (at time of accession to the CEDAW) to 1997 and in some instances, to 1998.

2 As provided under Article 18, paragraph (b) of the UN-CEDAW, this Report constitutes Singapore's Second Periodic Report.

3 This Second Periodic Report covers the period 1997 to 1999 and in some instances up to 2000.

4 The Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) was consulted in the preparation of this Report and where applicable, their inputs have been incorporated.

UPDATE ON PART 1 OF SINGAPORE'S INITIAL REPORT

General and Political Frameworks

1 The economy continues to grow despite the recent economic downturn in the region. In 1999, the per capita Gross National Product (GNP) at prevailing market prices increased to S$39,721[1] from S$ 39,310 in1997. Inflationary pressures remained low in 1998 and 1999 where the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increases were 0.3 per cent and 0.2 per cent respectively.

2 Out of 47 countries ranked by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) in Year 2000, Singapore ranked first for Social Cohesion and fifth for Justice.[2] The UNDP Human Development Index ranks each country according to its score on a composite index integrating per capita GNP, life expectancy, literacy and educational levels. Singapore was ranked 22nd out of 174 countries on the (HDI) in the Human Development Report 1999.

Social Framework

3 As at June 2000, women formed slightly more than 50% of Singapore's 3,263,209 residents. For the first time, females slightly outnumbered males. According to the Department of Statistics, this was due to two reasons: one, migration, as a large number of Permanent Residents (PRs) were women married to Singapore men, and two, the higher life expectancies of women.

4 The population density per square kilometre increased slightly from 5,768 in 1997 to 6,050 in 2000.

Some notable trends

5 Some notable social trends include the issues of falling marriage and fertility rates and their implications. Total Fertility Rate stood at 1.48 in 1999 compared with 1.96 in 1988. The general divorce rate rose from 5.2 per thousand married residents in 1988 to 7.5 in 1998. The Married Female Labour Force Participation Rate continued to increase, from 43.9 per cent in 1995 to 50.1 per cent in 1999.[3] Dual income families formed 43 per cent of households in 1999[4] as compared to 35 per cent in 1989.

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[1] Based on inter-bank exchange rate of HSBC Bank on 16 Feb 2001 in Straits Times Report at US$1 to about S$1.7, this amount of S$39,721 would be equivalent to US $23,365.29.

[2] Source: Page 418 and 419 of The World Competitiveness Yearbook 2000.

[3] Source: Ministry of Manpower. The Married Female Labour Force Participation Rate refers to the percentage of economically active married females to the total married female population.

State of Family

6 In 2000, a study by the National University of Singapore (NUS)[5] on "Family Ideology and Practice: Implications for Marital Satisfaction" involving some 1,000 women found that while the majority of Singapore women tended to be traditional in their perception of gender-specific domestic responsibilities and ideals, it noted a shift in attitudes towards domestic responsibilities. Better-educated women[6] were increasingly likely to prefer a more egalitarian role sharing relationship with their spouse.

7 The "Study on the Singapore Family" (1999), revealed that the state of the Singapore Family was generally healthy and spousal relationships were strong. Nevertheless, in anticipation of the stresses that the modern family faces, the Government has been reviewing policies and programmes to strengthen and help the family and particularly women cope with work and family commitments.

Recent Pro-Family Measures

8 To create a total environment conducive to raising a family, the Government announced several pro-family measures in August 2000. For example, the Civil Service took the lead as a family-friendly employer by introducing several initiatives such as: -

a) granting three days paid marriage leave for the first marriage;

b) granting a married male officer full pay unrecorded leave for 3 days each on the occasions of the birth of his first three children ;

c) allowing teleworking as an alternative working arrangement ; and

d) allowing ministries and departments to implement flexi-time.

9 More and better child care centres and family life programmes are being provided and there are incentives for easier home ownership. Details on these developments are reported under Articles 5 and 13.

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[4] Source: Report on Dual-Earner Families, Ministry of Manpower, 1999.
[5] By Paulin Tay Straughan, Department of Sociology, Shirlena Huang and Brenda Yeoh of the Department of Geography; The paper was presented at The Australian Sociological Association Conference 2000 held on 6-8 Dec 2000, Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia.
[6] About 20 per cent of the study group. Source: Dr Paulin Tay Straughan, Dec 2000.

Baby Bonus scheme

10 A new scheme, Children Development Co-Savings Scheme or commonly termed the Baby Bonus scheme, to encourage married couples to have 3 or more children, if they can afford it, will take effect from 1 April 2001. The Baby Bonus scheme is a two-tier grant by Government. In the first tier, the Government will provide S$500 and S$1,000 per year for second and third-order children respectively born from 1 April 2001. The second tier is an annual co-payment scheme where the Government will meet the parents' contribution, dollar-for-dollar, up to S$1,000 for the second child and S$2,000 for the third. The flat grant and co-payment will each be for six years and will be placed in a Child Development Account for the children's educational and developmental needs.

Public Education Committee on Family (PEC)

11 To give further impetus to family life programmes that are on-going, the Minister for Community Development and Sports has appointed a primarily people-sector Public Education Committee on Family (PEC). This Committee is chaired by the Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Community Development and Sports and was set up in September 2000. The PEC aims to be a facilitator and catalyst to promote family well-being. The Committee adopts a multi-pronged approach to address the concerns and needs of a wide spectrum of target groups, from pre-school children to undergraduates, from young parents to parents with marriageable age, from employers to agencies providing services to families. The PEC is expected to complete its work by July 2001.

12 There has been increasing awareness on the importance of fathers' involvement in the upbringing of the young. Fathers are beginning to realise and appreciate their own involvement in the development of their children. The Centre for Fathering (Singapore), a non-profit company, has been working with individuals, corporations and community groups to create public awareness, equip fathers with parenting skills through fathering seminars and emphasise the importance of strong marriages in providing a nurturing environment for children.

Singapore's approach to the UN-CEDAW

13 As reported in the Initial Report, the Inter-Ministry Committee on the CEDAW set up since July 1996, continues to monitor Singapore's implementation on the CEDAW.

14 In March 2000, a dialogue session on Singapore's Initial Report to the UN CEDAW was organised jointly by the Ministry of Community Development and Sports (MCDS) and the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO), the umbrella body of women's groups in Singapore. The objectives of the Session were:-

a) to facilitate feedback for the SCWO to put up an independent commentary on Singapore's Initial Report to the UN Committee on the CEDAW; and

b) to provide opportunity for clarifications on the work of the Inter-Ministry Committee (IMC) on the CEDAW.

15 The Session was attended by participants from the 41 affiliates of the SCWO[7], 2 non-affiliates, non-governmental and governmental agencies involved with women's matters in Singapore. Members of the IMC on the CEDAW served as Resource Persons and responded to queries raised on the reservations tendered by Singapore on the CEDAW. Participants were provided with a copy of the UNIFEM Information Kit on the CEDAW. Based on the evaluation of participants, the Session was deemed a success and most participants looked forward to more of such sessions in the future. The Question and Answer Session was chaired by Professor Tommy Koh, Singapore's Ambassador-At-Large.

16 In the light of the sentiments and reasons put forth at the Dialogue Session mentioned above, the respective Ministries involved reviewed the reservations tendered on five of the Articles of the CEDAW, i.e. Articles 2 and 16, 9, 11 and 29 (2).

Beijing Platform for Action

17 The Government of Singapore remains committed to achieving the goals set at the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Beijing POA continues to provide a reference point in the process of formulating Singapore's policies. As mentioned in the Initial Report, the progress of implementation of the Beijing POA of 1995 was reported at the annual meetings of the ASEAN Sub-committee on Women (ASW), of which Singapore is a member. The 19th Session of the latter was held in Bali, Indonesia in November 2000 where we reported on the progress made to the Outcome Document adopted at the UN General Assembly Special Session on Women held in New York in June 2000.

Advancement of status of women

18 The Women parliamentarians of ASEAN have formed a new Women's Committee ("WAIPO" for short) under the umbrella of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentarian Organisation (AIPO) in August 1998. Its second meeting was held during the 21st AIPO Meeting in Singapore in September 2000. It adopted three Resolutions relating to women's rights at work, the effects of globalisation on women and women's health.

[7] The SCWO now has 44 affiliates, as at 8 December 2000.

19 Singapore prefers to adopt an equal opportunity policy for both sexes. There are no barriers or obstacles to women's participation in all sectors of society. As meritocracy is a deeply entrenched guiding principle of Singapore society, gender mainstreaming is not a major issue. Nevertheless, the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations participated in the APEC Advisory Group on Gender Integration ("AGGI", for short) to lend support to the other APEC economies. The AGGI was formed in 1999 for a 2-year period to promote gender sensitivity in APEC deliberations. A Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC was drafted and adopted for use by APEC economies. The implementation of the Framework is the responsibility of all levels and throughout APEC economies. The SCWO, as member of the "AGGI" facilitated a gender training workshop for the APEC Transportation Working Group on 28th March 2000 and the APEC Budget and Management Committee on 30th March 2000. Both were held in Singapore.

20 Women's groups take on an advocacy role to promote the status of women in various capacities. Notable examples include the launch of the book "Women's Future, World's Future: Book of Women's Visions for the Year 2050" on the eve of the new millennium by the University Women's Association of Singapore. The book is a culmination of contributions by 500 women from 90 countries. Its objective was to initiate and develop a joint commitment to work towards a better world and to increase global awareness of women's potential. Another example is the launch of "Rape: Weapon of Terror" published and launched in August 1998 by the Association of Women for Action and Research to promote greater awareness and sensitivity to address the issue of violence against women in the context of war and civil conflicts in some countries.

21 A leading women's magazine in Singapore, Her World, has been conferring The Woman of the Year Award since 1990, to acknowledge top women achievers. The nominating criteria include being a role model to inspire, lead and influence other women. A new award was created in 1999, the Young Woman Achiever Award, to recognise and reward young women below the age of 35 years, who are an inspiration to other young women.

22 Since 1998, the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (ASMEs) of Singapore[8] has also been organising the Women Entrepreneur of the Year Award to recognise and acknowledge outstanding local women entrepreneurs who have been in business for at least two years. The women selected would have shown extraordinary entrepreneurial skills besides having contributed to society and particularly to the development of women in Singapore. For the year 2000, 11 of the 60 women members were nominated for the Award. The ASME Mentor Chapter was launched in Year 2000 to foster and encourage a keener awareness of business opportunities and practices through sharing valuable experiences, networking events and training programmes.

[8] ASMEs are companies or businesses with a staff strength of fewer than 200 and turnover of not more than S$30 million a year.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS UNDER RESPECTIVE ARTICLES OF THE CEDAW – PART 2 OF INITIAL REPORT

1 For the period under review, the report highlights not only updated statistics of women's involvement/participation in key sectors but also new developments and initiatives. These pertain namely to Articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13 & 16 of the CEDAW.

2 ARTICLE 5 - SEX ROLE STEREOTYPING, PREJUDICE AND FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Sexual Crimes Against Women

2.1 There are legal provisions in place to deal with crimes committed against women of a sexual nature. The number of cases prosecuted under the Penal Code for rape and outraging modesty has fluctuated over the years as seen in Table 1 below: -

Year	No. of prosecuted cases	No. and % of convicted cases out of prosecuted cases
1995	360	260 (72.2%)
1996	333	225 (67.6%)
1997	301	174 (57.8%)
1998	313	152 (48.6%)
1999	169	72 (42.6%)
Jan to Jun 2000[9]	110	56 (50.9%)

Raising awareness on personal safety

2.2 The New Paper, one of our local news dailies, launched The Personal Safety for Women Campaign in May 2000 and carried reports on how women living alone could go about their daily routines safely.

Safeguards from dangers related to internet and television programmes

2.3 Currently, the Singapore Broadcasting Authority (SBA)'s Free-to-Air TV Programme Code has clauses which address stereotyping of women and girls and commercialism of sex and violence against women and girls. For example, the Programme Code states that "programmes should avoid portrayals which make careless references to people as being inherently inferior or are likely to encourage discrimination against any section of the community on the account of sex, age,

[9] Updated as at 26 Jan 2001. Of the 110 prosecuted cases of rape and outraging of modesty, there may be a few cases still pending convictions.

disability, or occupational status." It also discourages scenes or excessive violence or suffering such as close-up shots of persons being brutally killed and tortured and visual descriptions of rape scenes.

2.4 With regard to content regulation on the Internet, the Government, through SBA, has adopted a three-pronged approach where a consultative, transparent and light-touch regulatory framework is supported by industry self-regulation and public education programmes. At the same time, SBA blocked 100 mass-impact pornographic websites as a matter of principle.

Sexuality education programme in schools

2.5 A Sexuality Education Programme was implemented in early 2001 by the Ministry of Education for students aged 11 to 18 years. The progamme involving at least 6 hours of sexuality education, goes beyond the basics of sex and contraception. Younger children learn about puberty and the changes that happen to their bodies. Teenagers in secondary schools learn about boy-girl relationships, pregnancy, pornography, dangers of sexually transmitted diseases, sexual harassment etc. The programme is supported by a multi-media package called the Growing Years.

2.6 The programme aims to reinforce core values such as responsibility, commitment, respect for self and others. Topics such as abortion have been included to address the problem of teenage abortions. Teenage Abortion Rates (under 20 years old), as percentage of total abortions have averaged 10.47 per cent per year since 1996 and are appended as follows: -

Year	Teenage Abortion Rate
1996	10.4%
1997	11.2%
1998	9.9%
1999	10.4%

Family life education

2.7 In a Muslim family, the male should shoulder the bulk of the responsibility of caring for the family and it was felt that fathers should be more active role models for their sons. In a 1999 study by Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS - the Muslim Religious Council) on 1,000 Muslims, it was found that children would approach mothers first with their problems and fathers ranked fifth in order of preference. In September 2000, the Muslim Family Campaign 2000 on early childhood parenting in Muslim families was launched to focus on the role of the son in the family. The month-long campaign organised by the MUIS was based on the Muslim acronym, "Taqwa", which refers to responsibility, trustworthiness, strength, vision, and integrity. The campaign also covered the Indian Muslim Community

through the involvement of the Singapore Kadayanallur Indian Muslim League, a voluntary welfare organisation.

2.8 In October 2000, the Ministry of Community Development and Sports (MCDS) launched the Family Life Ambassador (FLA) Programme to form partnerships with communities, civic groups, social service agencies, government, businesses and individuals, to create strong and stable families by extending family life education to all. They promote, encourage and organise family life education programmes for employees and the community, disseminate family life education information to staff and act as source of information, referral and contact point for family life issues. The MCDS supports the programme by providing family life resource materials, access to professional resource speakers and researches on family life issues. This people's movement also forms the platform for exchanging best practices.

3 ARTICLE 6 - OFFENCES RELATED TO TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND PROSTITUTION

3.1 The number of persons charged and convicted in court for offences relating to anti-vice activities for the period 1997 to 1999 declined when compared to the earlier years from 1995 and 1996, as shown in Table 2 below: -

Year	Number of persons charged and convicted
1995	109
1996	118
1997	79
1998	86
1999	90

4 ARTICLE 7 -WOMEN'S RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATION IN FORMULATION OF GOVERNMENT POLICY AND IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Formulation of government policy

4.1 As at June 1999, 4 out of the 83 elected Members of Parliament were women and 2 of the 9 Nominated Members of Parliament were women. More than half (57.7 per cent) of the Superscale and Division I officers in the Singapore Civil Service were women.

4.2 Women representatives are appointed on various committees, boards and councils across government bodies/sectors such as the Ministries of Education, Health, Environment, Information and The Arts, National Development, and Community Development and Sports.

Participation in non-governmental organisations

4.3 The proportion of women participating in the management committees of grassroots organizations increased from 22.2 per cent in December 1997 to 25.3 per cent in December 1999 as shown in Table 3 below: -

Table 3: Women's participation in grassroots organisations from December 1997 – December 1999

Grassroots Organisations	Total Membership			Female Members		
	Dec 1997	Dec 1998	Dec 1999	Dec 1997	Dec 1998	Dec 1999
Community Development Council	227	226	231	16 (7.0%)	17 (7.5%)	18 (7.8%)
Citizens' Consultative Committees	2,687	2,800	2,893	213 (7.9%)	227 (8.1%)	296 (10.2%)
Community Centre/Club Management Committees	2,768	2,742	2,776	395 (14.3%)	391 (14.3%)	407 (14.7%)
Residents' Committees	11,041	11,202	11,499	2,742 (24.8%)	2,898 (25.9%)	3,141 (27.3%)
Neighbourhood Committees	-	227	528	-	45 (19.8%)	114 (21.6%)
Area Sub-Committees	736	786	684	74 (10.1%)	79 (10.1%)	57 (8.3%)
Civil Defence Executive Committees	1,207	1,357	1,441	219 (18.1%)	251 (18.5%)	267 (18.5%)
Youth Executive Committees	1,484	1,516	1,535	602 (40.6%)	613 (40.4%)	623 (40.6%)
Senior Citizens' Executive Committees	1,502	3,792	4,512	550 (36.6%)	1,375 (36.3%)	1,674 (37.1%)
Total	21,652	24,648	26,099	4,811 (22.2%)	5,896 (23.9%)	6,597 (25.3%)

4.4 In 1999, the proportion of women represented in the management committees of the various voluntary welfare organizations under the National Council of Social Service of Singapore remained the same as in 1997, i.e. 28 per cent.

4.5 In 2000, the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (ASMEs) with about 400 members, elected its first women President, Mrs Diana Young, for a

term of 2 years. 4 women members of the ASMEs were elected for the current 2-year term from November 2000. Besides organising the Entrepreneur of the Year Award, a Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Award was launched by the ASME in November 2000.

Singapore Youth Award

4.6 The Singapore Youth Award was launched in May 1993. The Award was set up to confer national honour and recognition upon Singaporean youth who had made significant achievements and contributions to society. In 1993, it added a new category, Entrepreneurship. Since 1993, 23.3 per cent of the recipients (10 out of 43) were females, as shown in Table 4 below: -

Year	Total No. of Awards	Female Recipient
1993	8	2
1994	3	1
1995	3	0
1996	6	0
1997	6	3
1998	5	1
1999	6	1
2000	6	2
Total:	43	10 (23.3%)

Participation in the labour movement

4.7 Of the 300,918 workers represented in the trade unions affiliated to the National Trade Union Congress (NTUC), as at December 1999, 43.4 per cent were women. Since April 1997, 4 out of the 21 members of the NTUC Central Committee, the highest policy-making body of the labour movement, were women.

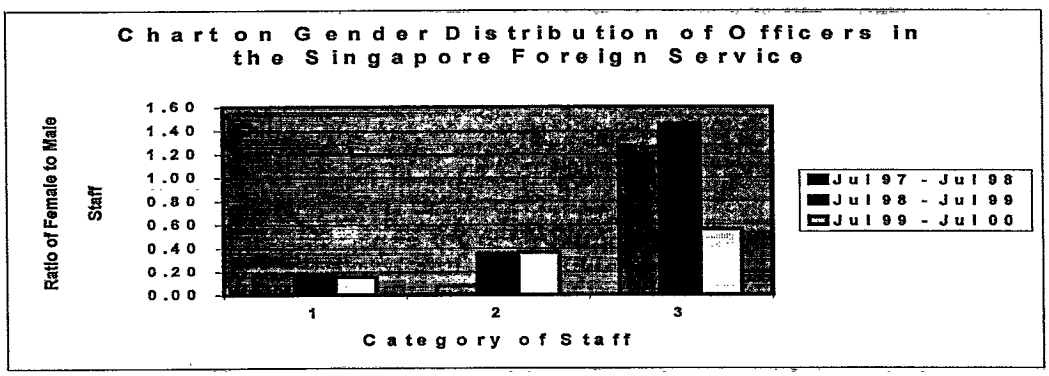
5 ARTICLE 8 – REPRESENTATION AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

5.1 Meritocracy is a hallmark of the Singapore Civil Service. The Singapore Foreign Service has a similar recruitment and deployment policy.

5.2 Table 5 and chart below shows the gender distribution of officers in the Foreign Service from July 1997 to July 2000: -

Category	Diplomatic Positions	July 1997 - July 1998			July 1998 - July 1999			July 1999 - July 2000		
		Total Officers		Ratio	Total Officers		Ratio	Total Officers		Ratio
		Male (M)	Female (F)	F/M	Male (M)	Female (F)	F/M	Male (M)	Female (F)	F/M
1	Senior Management	45	8	0.18	39	7	0.18	39	6	0.15
2	Middle Management	94	7	0.07	65	23	0.35	44	16	0.36
3	Officers	78	98	1.26	97	141	1.45	137	77	0.56

Catcgory 1: Senior Management: Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Directors.
Category 2: Middle Management: Senior Deputy Directors, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors
Category 3: Officers: Assistant Directors, Foreign Service Officers, Senior Officers



Recruitment of female officers in Foreign Service

5.3 Gender does not determine the jobs that officers are assigned to do. Neither does it determine the recruitment of officers into the Foreign Service. Singapore's delegates are selected based on their competence and qualifications.

5.4 Between January 1997 and July 1998, the male-female ratio of officers recruited to the Foreign Service was 1:1. However, between January 1999 to July 2000, this ratio improved to 1:1.3. These female officers will in time move up the ranks to occupy the middle to senior management positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), thus raising female representation at that level.

5.5 Singapore has had several female Heads of Mission. Our Ambassador to Washington (Prof. Chan Heng Chee), Roving Ambassador to Switzerland and Italy (Ms Pang Cheng Lian), Ambassador to Vientiane (Ms Seetoh Hoy Cheng), the Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva (Ms Margaret Liang) and the 2 Deputy Permanent Representatives to the United Nations in New York (Ms

Christine Lee and Ms Tan Yee Woan) are females. In April 2000, Mrs Jayalekshmi Mohideen, formerly our Ambassador to Brussels [November 1989 to December 1992], was made non-resident ambassador to the Czech Republic.

5.6 The Singapore Government does not restrict Singaporean women from being employed by international organisations. They are well represented in international organisations such as the UN. There are 11 Singaporean women compared to 10 Singaporean men working in the UN Secretariat. Ms Noeleen Heyzer, a Singapore national, is the Director of the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

6 ARTICLE 10 –RIGHTS TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6.1 The Singapore Government continues to place great emphasis on education, training and life-long learning to prepare citizens for the knowledge-based economy. Literacy rate of Singapore women aged 15 years and over continued to improve from 88.5 per cent in 1997 to 89.8 in 1999.

6.2 Student population increased to 602,435 as at December 1999, compared to 577,960 in 1997. In 1999, Singapore had 199 primary schools, 152 secondary schools, 14 junior colleges, 2 centralised institutes, 10 institutes of technical education, 4 polytechnics and 2 universities.

6.3 Table 6 below shows the enrolment of males and females in the various institutions had increased at all levels in 1999 except at the secondary educational level in 1999. Compared to 1997, the 1999 proportion of female enrolment had remained about the same at about 47 per cent. However, the percentage of females enrolled in Institutes of Technical Education and Polytechnics increased in 1999 from 25.45 to 26.35 and 45.26 to 46.32 respectively.

Table 6: Enrolment in the various educational institutions in 1999

Level	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Primary Schools	155,513	51.81	144,640	48.19	300,153
Secondary schools, Junior Colleges & Centralised Institutes	101,934	51.47	96,105	48.53	198,039
Institutes of Technical Education	12,125	73.65	4,339	26.35	16,464
Polytechnics	27,248	53.68	23,510	46.32	50,758
Universities [for 1st degree only and includes National Institute of Education (NIE) figures]	18,134	48.98	18,887	51.02	37,021
Grand Total	314,954	52.28	287,481	47.72	602,435

(Source: Education Statistics Digest 2000)

6.4 In the tertiary institutions, annual female enrolment remained consistently large. Table 7 below shows that female students comprise about 50 per cent of the annual university intake from 1997 to 2000. In the polytechnics, the percentage of female intake was around 47 per cent. More females are taking up courses previously dominated by males, such as in engineering. In 1998, 1 in 3[10] of the first year engineering students at the universities were females, compared to 1 in 8 in 1994.

[10] Source: Table 18.11 of the Yearbook of Statistics 2000, page 232.

Table 7: University undergraduate and polytechnic full-time intakes for Academic Year 1997/98 to 1999/2000

Academic Year	97/98			98/99			99/2000		
Sex	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Universities [for 1st degree only and includes National Institute of Education (NIE) figures]	4,988 45.9%	[illegible]	10,862 100%	5,348 47.0%	[illegible]	11,373 100%	6,043 45.6%	[illegible]	13,245 100%
Polytechnics	8,777 53.3%	[illegible]	16,484 100%	9,060 52.8%	[illegible]	17,173 100%	9,229 52.8%	[illegible]	17,477 100%
Total	13,765 50.3%	[illegible]	27,346 100%	14,408 50.5%	[illegible]	28,546 100%	15,272 49.7%	[illegible]	30,722 100%

(Source: Education Statistics Digest 2000)

Scholarships and Bursaries

6.5 Table 8 below shows the proportion of females awarded scholarships. The numbers awarded remained consistently high in relation to the number of applications for the period 1997 to 1999: -

Table 8: Number of scholarships awarded to male and female applicants from 1997 to 1999

Year of Award	Applications Received		Scholarships/Bursaries Awarded	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1997	799 (64%)	[illegible]	157 (67%)	[illegible]
1998	912 (62.7%)	[illegible]	157 (61.1%)	100 (38.9%)
1999	873 (61.4%)	549 (38.6%)	210 (60.5%)	137 (39.5%)

School drop-outs

6.6 The general drop out rate for primary and secondary schools remains low averaging 0.3 per cent from 1997 to 1999. Table 9 below shows the breakdown by gender.

Table 9: Breakdown on school drop-out rate by sex from 1997 to 1999[11]

Year	Enrolment	Dropouts			General Dropout Rate (%)	% of female dropouts
		Male	Female	Total		
1997	452,218	1085	861	1946	0.4	44.2
1998	452,324	879	704	1583	0.3	44.5
1999	454,907	690	584	1274	0.3	45.8

Compulsory Education (CE)

6.7 Although Singapore does not practise compulsory education at the moment, education attendance at the primary and secondary levels is almost universal.

6.8 Nevertheless, the Government is committed to ensuring that every child has an equal head start in education in order to develop his/her potential to the fullest. A Committee on Compulsory Education in Singapore, chaired by Dr Aline Wong, Senior Minister of State for Education, was formed in December 1999 to seek the views of community leaders, interest groups and members of the public on the need for compulsory education. On 9 October 2000, the Compulsory Education (CE) Bill was passed by the Singapore Parliament to make six-year primary education in national schools compulsory. This will take effect with the cohort entering Primary 1 from January 2003.

6.9 Compulsory primary education is defined as education in national schools for Singapore citizens residing in Singapore. Parents who fail to register their children in Primary 1 in such schools from 2003 will be counselled to do so. Every effort at counselling and mediation will be made to ensure that they send their children to school. If these efforts fail, as a last resort, the force of the law can then be brought upon such parents.

6.10 Exemptions from CE will, however, be given to four categories of pupils who attend the schools for religious education, i.e. the "madrasahs" (for Muslims), the San Yu Adventist School (for Christians) and children receiving home-schooling as well as children with special needs who could attend the special education schools run by the voluntary welfare organisations with the help of Government and the National Council of Social Service. The numbers involved are small.

[11] Figures comprise Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents in Primary & Secondary Schools. Drop-out rate is total number of drop-outs as a percentage of enrolment.

7 ARTICLE 11 –RIGHTS TO EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORTING SOCIAL SERVICES, INCLUDING CHILD CARE

7.1 Female Labour Force Participation Rate continued to improve, from 51.3 per cent in 1998 to 52.7 per cent in 1999. Our better-educated women are making their presence felt in the economy. In 1999, better qualified women (i.e. those with Post-secondary, Diploma and Degree qualifications) increased to 14.1 per cent of the total number of economically active persons aged 15 years and above. It was 12.7 per cent in 1997. Not only were there more women in employment and in fields traditionally the preserve of men, more women were also earning higher pay. In 1994, only 18 per cent or 113,400 working women earned more than S$2,000 per month[12]. Within five years, this number rose by 146 per cent to 278,900 working women[13].

7.2 The difference in wages between the sexes has slowly been narrowing over the years. In 1998, the average monthly earnings of females was 71.8 per cent that of the males (S$2,256 out of S$3,141)[14], while in 1999, this figure was 72.2 per cent (S$2,327 out of S$3,222).

7.3 ILO Convention 100 on "Equal Remuneration" aims to ensure non-discrimination of salary for men and women for work of equal value. In Singapore, working women enjoy good social status and income that are comparable to their male counterparts. Our practices emphasize payment of salary based on performance and meritocracy. Hence, Singapore is able to give effect to the principle and spirit of this Convention.

7.4 Singapore takes its international obligations seriously. The Ministry of Manpower will carry out a thorough study on the requirements and the follow-up actions under ILO Convention 100, in consultation with the National Trades Union Congress, (NTUC), the Singapore National Employers' Federation (SNEF) and other relevant agencies, with the view to ratifying the Convention if there are no major difficulties doing so.

7.5 With improved education, the proportion of women in Professional, Administrative, Technical and Managerial positions continued to improve from 33.7 per cent in 1997 to 35.5 per cent in 1999. The proportion of women in the Financial,

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[12] Based on exchange rate of US$1 to S$1.7 as at 16 Feb 2001, this would be about US$1,176.

[13] i.e. about 35 per cent of all working females in 1999.

[14] Data from 1998 onwards are not comparable with the previous years as the earnings data from Central Provident Fund Board are compiled using 5-digit fields instead of 4 digit.

Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities was 48.7 per cent in 1999.[15] In 1999, we had the first woman commander of a police division and the first woman permanent secretary in the Civil Service. The Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (ASMEs)[16] with a membership of about 4,000 members, elected its first woman president for a 2-year term from November 2000.

7.6 Instead of legislating employment equality, our approach has been to provide equal access and opportunities to education, training and employment which would better meet the objective of enhancing the status of women. The Government, namely the Ministry of Manpower, together with the National Trade Union Congress and the Singapore Employers' Federation has adopted a promotional approach to dissuade employers from specifying discriminatory criteria in job advertisements. In March 1999, a set of tripartite guidelines to advise employers on non-discriminatory job advertisements was formulated and implemented by the Ministry of Manpower, the National Trade Union Congress and the Singapore National Employers Federation. The implementation of these guidelines on non-discriminatory job advertisements has been very effective. To-day, less than 1 per cent (as at October 2000) of job advertisements stipulate discriminatory criteria such as gender, age and race. This figure was 32 per cent in January 1999, before the implementation of the Guidelines. Employers are continuously reminded to select candidates based on merit and qualifications and not on discriminatory considerations.

Women in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF)

7.7 The Ministry of Defence accords both men and women in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) equal opportunities for training and development. Women can hold various appointments in the SAF if they meet the requirements of the job. They are given the same training as the men and are expected to achieve the same level of proficiency and professionalism.

7.8 In terms of development, the qualities for a successful career in the SAF include commitment to the organisation, will power, leadership, ability to work as part of the team, and a desire to meet challenges. None of these qualities are gender-specific. Job progression in the SAF is based on merit and performance.

7.9 Female SAF officers and non-commissioned officers comprise about 13 per cent of the SAF's regular force. The number has increased in recent years and more of them are assuming higher appointments. To date, the SAF has some 380 female officers in the Army, Air Force and Navy. Several have reached key appointments including the commanding officer of an artillery battalion and an airforce squadron. Four women are commanding ships in the Republic of Singapore Navy.

[15] Source: Table 14 of the Report on the Labour Force Survey of Singapore, 1999.
[16] Small and Medium Enterprises are companies with staff strength fewer than 200 and with turnover of not more than S$30 million a year.

7.10 The women in the SAF participated in UN peacekeeping operations. Several women served on the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET) as part of Singapore's efforts to help restore peace and stability in East Timor.

Worker Skills Training and Upgrading

7.11 Workers are encouraged to improve their skills through continuing education and employer-based training programmes. Employers are given various kinds of financial incentives to provide training and upgrade their workers' skills through the Skills Development Fund (SDF). Besides training employed individuals, the SDF also provides training for retrenched persons. These training schemes are open to both men and women workers.

7.12 In addition, the Skills Development Fund (SDF) also supports the training of housewives and retirees in Core Skills and Job Skills Training to facilitate their entry/return to the workforce under the "Back To Work" Programme. Apart from the SDF, the Singapore Government has also set up the Manpower Assistance Scheme (MDAS) to provide funding for manpower development initiatives. Two key programmes have been developed under the MDAS, namely the Skills Redevelopment Programme (SRP) which aims to retrain less-educated workers to enhance their employability, and the Strategic Manpower Conversion Programmes (SMCP) aims to develop manpower for strategic industries. Both those programmes are employer-based funding programmes and are open to both men and women workers.

Training Programmes

7.13 One of the core strategies of The Manpower 21 Plan is lifelong learning. A host of training programmes is in place and available to male and female employees. For Financial Year 2000, the Government allocated a budget of S$200 million for a 5-year Manpower Development Assistance Scheme (MDAS) for skills upgrading initiatives to prepare our workforce for the demands of a knowledge-based economy. Apart from governmental efforts, the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) provided IT and computer-training courses at highly subsidised rates for union members. For the year ended 1999, 47 per cent of the 23,448 participants were women. In the case of the Skills Redevelopment Programme, which was initiated by NTUC with funding support from the government, 41 per cent of the 14,286 trainees in 1999 were women.

7.14 Job referral services are provided on-line via the Employment Town web-site. Information on the Back to Work Programme and how women can register for the Programme are available on the internet. In addition, in July 2000, the Ministry of Manpower's Manpower Deployment Department (MDD), previously known as the Employment Services Department (ESD), set up a one-stop career centre, called CareerLink@mom.

Extension of the Retirement Age

7.15 The minimum statutory retirement age was raised from 60 to 62 years from 1 January 1999 under the Retirement Age Act. This benefits both male and female employees who are given the opportunity to continue working until the age of 62 years.

7.16 The Third Child Paid Maternity Leave will be implemented in April 2001. Currently, paid maternity leave for eight weeks is provided only for the first two children under the provisions of the Employment Act. With the enactment of a new legislation, the Government would pay up to eight weeks' salary for women taking maternity leave for their third child, subject to a maximum of S$20,000[17].

Civil Service Takes The Lead As Family-Friendly Employer

7.17 Since 1 October 2000, the Civil Service has implemented the following work practices that will allow its employees to have a better work-life balance:

(a) granting three days paid marriage leave for the first marriage[18];

b) granting a married male officer full pay unrecorded leave for 3 days each on the occasions of the birth of his first three children[19];

c) allowing teleworking as an alternative working arrangement, particularly for parents with young children; and

d) allowing ministries and departments to implement flexi-time.

7.18 These measures are in addition to the many pro-family measures that were mentioned in Singapore's Initial Report. These include no-pay leave for child care for periods of up to four years for each child and part-time employment for working mothers for periods of up to three years, regardless of the age of the child

[17] About US$11764.

[18] Marriage Leave: On the occasion for first marriage, an officer is eligible for full-pay unrecorded leave for 3 days. The leave must be taken by the officer within one year from the date of the solemnisation of the marriage, taking into account that an officer may wish to take leave for the traditional ceremony. Leave taken for marriage and paternity reasons will be counted against the annual cap of 14 calendar days of full pay unrecorded leave for approved reasons.

[19] Paternity Leave: The officer may take the paternity leave within 8 weeks from the date of birth of his child.

Family Friendly Practices

7.19 In 1998, the Ministry of Community Development and Sports (MCDS) together with the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), the Singapore National Employers' Federation (SNEF) and the National Trade Union Congress (NTUC) launched the Family Friendly Firm (FFF) Award. The objectives of the "FFF" Award are to recognise companies for their pro-family efforts and to encourage them to introduce and promote innovative pro-family practices/policies for their employees.

7.20 A Work-Life Unit was set up in September 2000 in the Ministry of Community Development and Sports to promote the importance of family friendly practices.

7.21 New technologies and e-commerce open up new opportunities and options for our women to enjoy economic independence and enjoy the family. More than half of our economically active women are married (56.3 per cent in 1999). Women presently made up the majority of part-time workers, increasing from 2.3 per cent in 1996 (or 39,700) to 7.1 per cent (or 56,400) of the total labour force in 1999[20]. This trend is likely to increase.

7.22 Government as facilitator, will continue to provide a supporting environment to help our women and their families cope with the challenges in this new economy. The Ministry of Community Development and Sports, and the Ministry of Manpower are actively involved in promoting family-friendly work practices such as flexible work hours, working from home and job sharing.

8 ARTICLE 12 – RIGHTS TO HEALTH CARE

8.1 The government budgetary allocation for health was 0.8 percent of the GDP. This translates to S$1.1 billion for the year 2000.

8.2 The public healthcare delivery system has been re-organised into two vertically integrated delivery networks. Each network will provide the full range of acute services ranging from primary care to secondary and tertiary care at regional and tertiary hospitals and national centres, thus creating a seamless healthcare service to Singaporeans, women and children. This is augmented by a private system, which provides 80 percent of primary health services from private clinics and 20 percent of hospital services through 13 private hospitals. The total number of hospital beds is 11,742 for a population of 3.894 million. There are 5,325 doctors, of whom 32 percent are registered specialists, 942 dentists/dental specialists, 15,947 nurses/midwives, and 1043 pharmacists (as at 31 Dec 1999). In addition, the Government provides screening, preventive medicine and health education to encourage all Singaporeans including women & children to stay healthy.

[20] Source: Reports on the Labour Force Surveys. 1996-1999, Ministry of Manpower.

8.3 Female life expectancy at birth reached 79.7 years in 1999, compared to 75.7 for men. Women have equal access to nutrition, education and health programmes in Singapore. In addition, women aged 50 to 64 years are eligible for a 50 per cent subsidy on the fee for mammography done in polyclinics. Infant Mortality Rate fell from 8.0 to 3.3 per thousand resident live births from 1980 to 1999. In 1999, the Maternal Mortality Rate was 0.1 per thousand live and still births. The Total Fertility Rate dropped further from 1.6 per woman in 1997 to 1.48 per woman in 1999.

8.4 Women made up 54.96 per cent of those aged 65 years and over in 1999 and among those aged 80 years and above, the proportion averaged 61.26 per cent from 1995 to 1999. Compared to 1965, the proportion of single women aged 30-39 years increased from 4.2 percent to 17.5 per cent in 1999. These statistics have implications for the ageing population. The proportion of the elderly population is expected to increase to 8 per cent in 2010, 13 per cent in 2020 and 18 per cent in 2030. Since women live longer than men, women will be the majority among the "old-old" population, i.e. those aged 75 years.

8.5 A National Committee on Women's Health was established in 1997 to look into the areas of concern on women's health. The Committee proposed programmes to fill existing gaps to improve women's health. Various community groups (Community Development Councils) are implementing the programmes. The Health Promotion Board (a Statutory Board) to undertake public education programmes will be set up later in Year 2001.

Needs of elderly women

8.6 To upgrade professional standards and to improve integrated seamless care for those elderly who require step-down care, geriatric departments in regional hospitals[21] are tasked to provide the professional leadership, structured training programmes, and doctors to step-down facilities like Community Hospitals and Nursing Homes.

8.7 An Elder Care Fund was set up by Government[22] in April 2000 to finance operational subsidy to elderly care facilities and services run by the voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs) in the future. With a rapidly aging population and a shrinking tax base due to a proportionately smaller working population, Singaporeans will find it harder and harder to pay for increasing health care needs of the elderly

[21] Regional hospitals are Alexandra Hospital, Changi General Hospital and Tan Tock Seng Hospital.

[22] Government has pledged S$200 million of the FY 2000 Budget to establish this Fund to help the low-income families support their elderly relatives requiring nursing care. Source: Policy Digest, Feedback Unit, MCDS Issue 08/00.

population after 2010. By putting aside funds now, our future subsidies to the elderly will be secured without having to fall back on tax increases. The Government will provide S$1 billion (about US$588,235,294) funds by Year 2010. Interest generated from the Fund will be used to fund the operating cost of the step-down care.

8.8 Subsidies for nursing home care are pegged at 3 levels: 75, 50 and 25 per cent and means tested, so that the financially deserving receive subsidized nursing care. The Government is also planning to introduce an insurance scheme for long-term disability, to be implemented in 2 to 3 years' time.

8.9 The Ministry of Community Development and Sports works with service agencies and grassroots organisations in promoting a strong network of community-based programmes targeted at enabling elderly persons, regardless of gender, to remain socially, physically and mentally active. These programmes are also intended to support the family as the primary care-giving unit of the elderly. Some of these programmes include:-

a) Senior Activity Centres (which will progressively be upgraded to Neighbourhood Links) to provide outreach and befriending services;

b) Mutual help groups which are essentially informal clusters of 8 to 10 elderly persons to look out for each other and to engage in social recreational activities on a regular basis;

c) Other community-based programmes such as Day Care Centres for the frail elderly, counselling programmes and support for care-givers.

8.10 Institutional care is considered as a last resort. There are 2 types of residential care for elderly persons, i.e. sheltered homes and nursing homes, which provide alternative residential care for a minority of elderly, mainly the destitute and those without family support or who require regular nursing care. Elderly persons requiring residential care and who meet the admission criteria are admitted regardless of gender.

Mental health of women

8.11 As recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole, Singapore had been promoting the mental well-being of women and girls as part of primary health-care system. Mental health is promoted by the Ministry of Health as part of the national healthy lifestyle programme to the general public. Together with various non-government associations, Mental Health Week is promoted annually. Its public education focuses on early recognition, destigmatisation and where to turn to for professional help.

Substance abuse among females

8.12 The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole had urged governments to promote or improve information programmes and measures to eliminate/address the issue of increasing substance abuse among women and adolescent girls[23]. Substance abuse among females in Singapore is not a serious problem. Number decreased from 513 cases in 1994 to 358 in 2000. The decrease could be attributed to the integrated approach of intensive drug enforcement, high profile preventive drug education programmes and a system of through-care introduced in 1994. Examples of such preventive programmes included the Anti-Drug Abuse Campaign launched on 30 June 2000, Anti-Drug Exhibitions and a multi-game event organised to drive home the anti-drug message to raise greater awareness of students and the general public. The Central Narcotics Bureau works closely with schools at all levels, self-help groups and voluntary welfare organisations to inculcate the correct attitudes toward drugs. Enforcement efforts and preventive drug education programmes are gender-neutral. The penalty for drug consumption is a maximum of 10 years or a fine not exceeding S$20,000, or both, for first-time offenders. For repeat offenders, the minimum sentence is not less than 3 years' imprisonment.

9 ARTICLE 13 – RIGHTS TO FAMILY BENEFITS, RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

Public housing

9.1 The Housing & Development Board (HDB) is the sole provider of public housing in Singapore. The eligibility criteria for Singapore's various housing policies are gender neutral. Ownership of public housing by women climbed from 48% in 1992 to 51% in 2000[24].

9.2 Many young couples prefer to start married life in their own matrimonial home, but have problems raising the cash required for the 20 per cent down payment for their flat. To help these couples, a 2-stage down payment scheme was introduced by the Housing and Development Board (HDB)[25] on 1 October 2000. Married or engaged couples, with either the husband or wife aged between 21 and 30 years, are eligible if they apply for a 4-room flat. Instead of paying 20 per cent of the flat price as down payment, they now pay 10 per cent when the couple signs the Agreement with the remaining 10 per cent to be paid upon completion of the flat.

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[23] Page 32 of the UN Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly.

[24] About 86 per cent of Singaporeans live in public housing built by the Housing and Development Board (May 2000).

[25] The HDB's mission is to provide affordable and sanitary housing to the citizens and their families.

CPF Housing Grant

9.3 In 1994, HDB introduced the CPF[26] Housing Grant Scheme to enable first-timer Singaporean families buy a HDB resale flat with the help of a grant from the Government. In 1998, the Scheme was extended to first-timer singles. The CPF Housing Grant for Singles is S$11,000. To support family bonding, an additional S$10,000 would be given, if couples buy a resale flat close to their parents' home.

Priority Schemes

9.4 The Priority Schemes accord priority in allocation of new HDB flats, to meet social objectives such as family cohesion and care for the elderly. These values are also encouraged in the Beijing Platform for Action (POA). Information on these schemes i.e. the Multi-Tier Family (MTF) Scheme, the Third Child Priority (TCP) Scheme and the Joint Selection Scheme for married children can be found in paragraph 14.6, page 40 of the Initial Report to the UN Committee on the CEDAW.

Studio Apartments for the Elderly

9.5 HDB builds specially designed, "elderly friendly" Studio Apartments ("SAs") to help meet the housing needs of an ageing population. Launched in 1998, "SAs" include useful features such as support hand-bars and an alert alarm system. All Singaporean HDB residents aged 55 years or above are eligible to buy SAs.

Recreational and Sports Activities

9.6 Singapore endorsed the fundamental principles in the Brighton Declaration and the subsequent Windhoek Call to Action, adopted at the first and second international conferences held for women and sports in Brighton and Namibia in 1994 and 1998 respectively[27]. During the first national conference organised by the Singapore Sports Council on "Women and Sport: New Horizons" on 15-16 March 1999, a Resolution was adopted to, amongst other things, set up a Working Group comprising governmental and non-governmental organisations to draw up action plans to promote women's participation in sports at all levels and in all capacities. This Women and Sports Working Group (WSWG) was formed in November 1999. It organised a three-day sports camp for girls in May 2000 and conducted a survey to find out what problems women athletes faced and how national sports associations could help solve them. A book on women and sports is among the projects in the pipeline for Year 2001.

[26] CPF refers to the Central Provident Fund Scheme, details of which can be found in paragraph 12.21, page 34 of Singapore's Initial Report. It is a compulsory social security savings scheme for working adults.

[27] Copy of both declarations can be found in Appendices 1 and 2 of the Report.

Participation in cultural life

9.7 Table 10 shows more women benefiting from scholarships, bursaries and training grants for the past three financial years, from 1997:-

Table 10: Gender distribution of scholarships, bursaries and arts training grants[28] from financial year 1997 to 1999

Type of Grant	Financial Year 1997			Financial Year 1998			Financial Year 1999		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Scholarships	13	16	29	7	12	19	11	13	24
Bursaries	42	74	116	35	72	107	31	64	95
Arts Training Grants	3	4	7	13	16	29	3	5	8
Total	58	94 (61.8%)	152	55	100 (64.5%)	155	45	82 (64.6%)	127

10 ARTICLE 15 – EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN

10.1 Figures on women in the judiciary, particularly in the Subordinate Courts from 1997 to 1999 are given in Table 11 below:

Table 11: Gender distribution of judicial officers from 1997 to 1999

Type of Courts	1997 Total : 90		1998 Total : 88		1999 Total : 87	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Judges : Supreme Court	19	2	18	2	16	2
Subordinate Courts	39	30	37	31	39	30

Internet access to information on the law

10.2 The LawNet, located at http://www.lawnet.com.sg, is an electronic service produced by the Singapore Academy of Law to provide legal information to the public in an instantaneous and convenient way. Information on some of Singapore's laws relevant to the CEDAW has been included e.g. Constitution of Singapore and the Women's Charter. Also available are information on the various Subordinate Courts Practice pamphlets e.g. Enforcement of Maintenance Orders in the Subordinate Courts.

[28] Source: Ministry of Information and the Arts.

10.3 Legal information can also be obtained from the Law Awareness section of the Law Society's website at Http://www.lawsoc.org.sg. Some of the on-line informative pamphlets to be located at this website are on Divorce, Making a Complaint, Custody and Maintenance, Proceedings in Court etc.

10.4 A joint website to provide a one-stop source of legal information for members of the public called "Law for the Layman on the Web" will be launched by the Law Society and the Ministry of Law some time in 2001.

Other community projects by the Law Society

10.5 Women charged with non-capital offences and who claimed trial to the charges may apply to the Criminal Legal Aid Scheme (CLAS) which is still being run by the Law Society of Singapore, a non-governmental organisation providing legal aid on criminal cases. The Scheme is open to all, irrespective of nationality. It covers offences under 13 statutes[29] including the Penal Code and excludes offences that attract the death penalty where the State will assign two lawyers for those who cannot afford one. The CLAS is meant for needy persons who are subject to a Means Test.

10.6 As at September 2000, volunteer lawyers of the Law Society were providing free legal counselling service at 23 Family Service Centres in the community.

Publication of "Family Court Practice"

10.7 The Family Court handles a wide range of family-related legal issues, from divorce, adoption, family violence to maintenance and maintenance enforcement proceedings. To fill a lacuna in the legal literature and to assist family law practitioners, a book entitled ""Family Court Practice" has been produced by the judges and deputy registrars of the Family Court. This book, available since August 2000, also includes information on leading cases.

11 ARTICLE 16 – FAMILY LAW, MARRIAGE & GUARDIANSHIP OF CHILDREN

11.1 As mentioned in the Initial Report, we have two types of laws governing marriage and divorce, i.e. the Women's Charter and the Muslim Law or the Syariah Law.

[29] Details of the 13 statutes under the Criminal Legal Aid Scheme (CLAS) are in the booklet on "Know the Law", produced by the Law Society of Singapore.

Dissolution of marriage under Muslim Law

11.2 The Administration of Muslim Law Act (AMLA) which regulates matters relating to Muslim marriages, dissolution of marriages and maintenance was amended since the submission of Singapore's Initial Report. These amendments came into force on 1 August 1999. Although these amendments applied equally to both genders, they provided greater relief to divorced women than before. Details of these amendments are spelt out below.

Section 47, new subsection (6)

11.3 A new sub-section, subsection (6) was added to the existing Section 47. This new provision defines the meaning of "married woman" in the AMLA to include a woman against whom a "talaq" (a word pronounced by the Muslim man or uttering other words to the effect to show intention to divorce his wife) has been pronounced by her husband. This regularises the rights of a Muslim woman to apply to the Syariah Court for divorce, although the husband has already pronounced the divorce on her. It clears the ambiguity that once the husband has pronounced the "talaq", she is thus deemed not to be a married woman and cannot, therefore, file for divorce with the Syariah Court.

Sections 51 and 52 of AMLA, new subsections 51(5) and subsection 52(13)

11.4 Two new sub-sections were also introduced to Sections 51 and 52 of AMLA. They make a breach or non-compliance with any order of the Syariah Court a criminal offence and prescribed a penal sanction of up to 6 months imprisonment. These legal provisions provide better protection to ensure compliance of the Syariah Court orders. They impose compliance by ex-husbands to pay to their ex-wives, maintenance (nafkah iddah) and the consolatory gift (mutaah), as ordered by the Syariah Court. Failure to do so could mean an imprisonment term of up to 6 months. Prior to these 2 new subsections, there had been cases of blatant non-payment by ex-husbands.

New section 53A

11.5 A new section 53A was also provided to the AMLA. It empowers the Syariah Court to sign on behalf of the defaulting party who refuses to sign the documents necessary to sell or transfer ownership of a flat to the other party. Prior to this amendment, there had been cases where one party refused, without good reason, to execute any documents that were necessary to sell or transfer his rights in a flat to the other party. The aggrieved party then had to go by the more circuitous and costly route i.e. to the High Court for an order signed by the High Court on behalf of the defaulting party. The Syariah Court is now empowered to do this. This saves the aggrieved party time and money. A significant number of the parties who sought relief through this section were women.

12 Article 24 –Measures to implement the CEDAW

On-going programmes for Domestic Violence Against Women

12.1 Examples of on-going programmes coordinated by the Ministry of Community Development and Sports include campaigns to create public awareness on the issue of domestic violence and the mandatory counselling programme that was implemented since 1997.

Mandatory Counselling Programme

12.2 Section 65(5)(b) of the Women's Charter empowers the Court to order the perpetrator, victim and/or family members of a victim to attend counselling or any other related programme e.g. rehabilitation or recovery programme for perpetrators or victims in trauma which the court deems necessary. Attendance is compulsory and non-compliance can constitute a contempt of Court.

12.3 The objectives of the mandatory counselling are to counsel and rehabilitate the perpetrator to prevent the recurrence of family violence, eg. to stop violence, and to render support and assistance to the victims and their children. The main objective is to ensure the safety and protection of the victims and children.

12.4 Mandatory counselling is provided by the Family Protection and Welfare Service of the Ministry of Community Development and Sports, and social service agencies identified by the Ministry. These include family service centres and social service centres.

12. 5 The number of cases seeking medical assistance at public hospitals for domestic violence increased to 658 in 1998 compared to 617 in 1997. However, this figure decreased to 535 in 1999. The number of spousal violence reports lodged with the police increased from 25 in 1997 to 2,223 in 1998 and 2,360 in 1999.

12.6 The number of applications for Personal Protection Orders (PPOs) by wives increased 68 per cent in 1999 (1,909 cases) as compared to the period May to December 1997 (1,136 cases).[30] The amendments to the Women's Charter to enhance, amongst other things, wider protection to victims of domestic violence, came into force in May 1997. Details of these amendments can be found in paragraph 19.4, page 51 of the Initial Report. The number of PPOs issued had also shown an increase of 226 per cent from 1,067 cases in 1996 (prior to the amendments of the Women's Charter) to 3,480 cases in 1999. Public education programmes that have been on-going and greater awareness on the support available to such victims could have played a role in the increasing numbers of wives seeking protection and help from the law and other concerned agencies.

[30] For the period January to September 2000, a total of 1,428 applications for PPOs were from wives. Source: Family Protection and Welfare Services, MCDS.

Annex I

The Brighton Declaration on Women and Sport

INTRODUCTION

The first international conference on women and sport, which brought together policy and decision makers in sport at both national and international level, took place in Brighton, UK from 5-8 May 1994. It was organised by the British Sports Council and support by the International Olympic Committee. The conference specifically addressed the issue of how to accelerate the process of change that would redress the imbalances women face in their participation and involvement in sport.

The 280 delegates from 82 countries representing governmental and non-governmental organisations, national Olympic committees, international and national sport federations and educational and research institutions, endorsed the following Declaration. The Declaration provides the principles that should guide action intended to increase the involvement of women in sport at all levels and in all functions and roles.

In addition, the conference agreed to establish and develop an international women and sport strategy which encompasses all continents. This should be endorsed and supported by governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in sport development. Such an international strategic approach will enable model programmes and successful developments to be shared among nations and sporting federations, so accelerating the change towards a more equitable sporting culture worldwide.

BACKGROUND

Sport is a cultural activity which, practised fairly and equitably, enriches society and friendship between nations. Sport is an activity which offers the individual the opportunity of self-knowledge, self-expression and fulfilment; personal achievement, skill acquisition and demonstration of ability; social interaction, enjoyment, good health and well-being. Sport promotes involvement, integration and responsibility in society and contributes to the development of the community.

Sport and sporting activities are an integral aspect of the culture of every nation. However, while women and girls account for more than half of the world's population and although the percentage of their participation in sport varies between countries, in every case it is less than that of men and boys.

Despite growing participation of women in sport in recent years and increased opportunities for women to participate in domestic and international arenas, increased representation of women in decision making and leadership roles within sport has not followed.

Women are significantly under-presented in management, coaching and officiating, particularly at the higher levels. Without women leaders, decision makers and role models within sports, equal opportunities for women and girls will not be achieved.

Women's experiences, values and attitudes can enrich, enhance and develop sport. Similarly participation in sport can enrich, enhance and develop women's lives.

A. SCOPE AND AIMS OF THE DECLARATION

1. SCOPE

This Declaration is addressed to all those governments, public authorities, organisations, businesses, educational and research establishments, women's organisations and individuals who are responsible for, or who directly or indirectly influence, the conduct, development or promotion of sport or who are in any way involved in the employment, education, management, training, development or care of women in sport. This Declaration is meant to complement all sporting, local, national and international charters, laws, codes, rules and regulations relating to women or sport.

2. AIMS

The overriding aim is to develop a sporting culture that enables and values the full involvement of women in every aspect of sport.

It is in the interests of equality, development and peace that a commitment be made by governmental, non-governmental organisations and all those institutions involved in sport to apply the Principles set out in this Declaration by developing appropriate policies, structures and mechanisms which:

- Ensure that all women and girls have the opportunity to participate in sport in a safe and supportive environment which preserves the rights, dignity and respect of the individual;
- Increase the involvement of women in sport at all levels and in all functions and roles;
- Ensure that the knowledge, experiences and values of women contribute to the development of sport;
- Promote the recognition of women's involvement in sport as a contribution to public life, community development and in building a healthy nation;
- Promote the recognition by women of the intrinsic value of sport and its contribution to personal development and healthy lifestyle.

B. THE PRINCIPLES

1. EQUITY AND EQUALITY IN SOCIETY AND SPORT

Every effect should be made by state and government machineries to ensure that institutions and organisations responsible for sport comply with the equality

provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Equal opportunity to participate and be involved in sport whether for the purpose of leisure and recreation, health promotion or high performance, is the right of every woman, regardless of race, colour, language, religion, creed, sexual orientation, age, martial status, disability, political belief or affiliation, national or social origin.

Resources, power and responsibility should be allocated fairly and without discrimination on the basis of sex, but such allocation should redress any inequitable balance in the benefits available to women and men.

2. FACILITIES

Women's participation in sport is influenced by the extent, variety and accessibility of facilities. The planning, design and management of these should appropriately and equitably meet the particular needs of women in the community, with special attention given to the need for childcare provision and safety.

3. SCHOOL AND JUNIOR SPORT

Research demonstrates that girls and boys approach sport from markedly different perspectives. Those responsible for sport, education, recreation and physical education of young people should ensure that an equitable range of opportunities and learning experiences which accommodate the values, attitudes and aspirations of girls, is incorporated in programmes to develop physical fitness and basic sports skills of young people.

4. DEVELOPING PARTICIPATION

Women's participation in sport is influenced by the range of activities available. Those responsible for delivering sporting opportunities and programmes should provide and promote activities which meet women's needs and aspirations.

5. HIGH PERFORMANCE SPORT

Governments and sports organisations should provide equal opportunities to women to reach their sports performance potential by ensuring that all activities and programmes relating to performance improvements take account of the specific needs of female athletes.

Those supporting elite and/or professional athletes should ensure that competition opportunities, rewards, incentives recognition, sponsorship, promotion and other forms of support are provided fairly and equitably to both women and men.

6. LEADERSHIP IN SPORT

Women are under-represented in the leadership and decision making of all sport and sporting-related organisations. Those responsible for these areas should develop policies and programmes and design structures which increase the number of women coaches, advisers, decision makers, officials, administrators and sports personnel at all levels with special attention given to recruitment, development and retention.

7. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Those responsible for the education, training and development of coaches and other sports personnel should ensure that education processes and experiences address issues relating to gender equality and the needs of female athletes, equitably reflect women's role in sport and take account of women's leadership experiences, values and attitudes.

8. SPORTS INFORMATION AND RESEARCH

Those responsible for research and providing information on sport should develop policies and programmes to increase knowledge and understanding about women and sport and ensure that research norms and standards are based on research on women and men

9. RESOURCES

Those responsible for the allocation of resources should ensure that support is available for sportswomen, women's programmes and special measures to advance \ this Declaration of Principles.

10. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Government and non-government organisations should incorporate the promotion of issues of gender equity and the sharing of examples of good practice in women and sport policies and programmes in their associations with other organisations, within both domestic and international arenas.

Brighton 8 May 1994

Annex II

International Working Group on Women and Sport

The Windhoek Call for Action

The 400 delegates from 74 countries present at the 2nd World Conference on Women and Sport held in Windhoek, Namibia, 19-22 May 1998 called for action throughout the world to further the development of equal opportunities for girls and women to participate fully in sport in its broadest sense. This call reflected an overwhelming desire on the part of all delegates to seek greater co-operation and co-ordination between the many agencies and organisations responsible for women's issues, and recognised and stressed the importance that sport can and should play in the advancement of girls and women

The Conference recognised the need for linkages into existing international instruments, in particular the Beijing Platform for Action and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, that impact directly and indirectly on advancement of girls and women.

The Conference celebrated the successes achieved by and for girls and women since the endorsement of the Brighton Declaration in 1994. These success stories demonstrate clearly the potential of sport to impact positively on lives of girls and women.

This Call for Action is addressed to all men and women in those national and international sport organisations, governments, public authorities, development agencies, schools, businesses, educational and research institutions, women's organisations, who are responsible for, or who directly influence the conduct, development or promotion of sport, or who are in any way involved in the employment, education, management, training, development or care of girls and women in sport.

In addition to re-affirming the principles of the Brighton Declaration, the Conference delegates called for action in the following areas:

1. Develop action plans with objectives and targets to implement the principles of the Brighton Declaration, and monitor and report upon their implementation.

2. Reach out beyond the current boundaries of the sport sector to the global women's equality movement and develop closer partnerships between sport and women's organisations on the one side, and representatives from sectors such as education, youth, health, human rights and employment on the other. Develop strategies that help other sectors obtain their objectives through the medium of sport and at the same time further sport objectives.

3. Promote and share information about the positive contribution that girls' and women's involvement in sport makes, inter alia, to social, health and economic issues.

4. Build the capacity of women as leaders and decision-makers and ensure that women play meaningful and visible roles in sport at all levels. Create mechanisms that ensure that young women have a voice in the development of policies and programs that affect them.

5. Advert the "world crisis in physical education" by establishing and strengthening quality physical education programs as key means for positive introduction to young girls of the skills and other benefits they can acquire through sport. Further, create policies and mechanisms that ensure progression from school to community-based activity.

6. Encouraging the media to positively portray and significantly cover the breadth, depth, quality and benefits of girls' and women's involvement in sport.

7. Ensure a safe and supportive environment for girls and women participating in sport at all levels by taking steps to eliminate all forms of harassment and abuse, violence and exploitation and gender testing

8. Ensure that policies and programs provide opportunities for all girls and women in full recognition of the differences and diversity among them – including such factors as race, ability, age, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, culture or their status as an indigenous person.

9. Recognise the importance of governments to sport development and urge them to develop appropriate legislation, public policy and funding monitored through gender impact analysis to ensure gender equality in all aspects of sport.

10. Ensure that Official Development Assistance programs provide equal opportunities for girls' and women's development and recognise the potential of sport to achieve development objectives.

11. Encourage more women to become researchers in sport, and more research to be undertaken on critical issues relating to women in sport.

Windhoek, Namibia
22 May 1998
