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REPORT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMISSION ON  
THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE  
SUB-COMMISSION ON PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND  
PROTECTION OF MINORITIES

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In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 48 (IV), the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities invited the Commission on the Status of Women to send a representative to attend its seventh session, which was held at United Nations Headquarters from 4 to 29 January 1955.

Miss Minerva Bernardino, Chairman of the Commission on the Status of Women, attended fourteen consecutive meetings of the Sub-Commission.

On the opening day of the Sub-Commission's seventh session, the representative of the Commission on the Status of Women pointed out that the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Commission on the Status of Women had a common aim and common problems, as the purpose of both bodies was the total abolition of discrimination, including discrimination on grounds of sex.

The agenda of the Sub-Commission's seventh session included three items of vital importance to the Commission on the Status of Women, namely:

1. that relating to discrimination in the field of education;
2. discrimination in the field of employment and occupation, and
3. that relating to the procedure to be followed in carrying out studies of discrimination in the matter of political rights mentioned in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In connexion with the first of these items, the representative of the Commission on the Status of Women drew attention to the valuable reports on that important topic submitted each year by UNESCO for discussion by her Commission.

She also stressed the importance of eliminating in the educational field inequalities based on sex. She referred particularly to the under-developed countries, the Trust Territories and the Non-Self-Governing Territories. She said that it was observable in practice that the countries least disposed to

grant educational opportunities to women were precisely those in which women did not enjoy their full political rights.

In connexion with the item relating to discrimination in the field of employment and occupation, the representative of the Commission on the Status of Women stated that in many parts of the world women were subjected to groundless discrimination in that field. She also pointed out that the Commission gave priority to the topic every year when discussing the reports of the International Labour Office. She stressed the importance of that Organization's Convention No. 100, which to a certain extent provided for equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value.

She emphasized that it was a mistake to believe that men were entitled to higher remuneration for their work on account of their family responsibilities, as many women were in fact compelled by the pressure of economic necessity to work outside the home.

When the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities discussed item 7 on its agenda, it had before it a report by the Rapporteur, Mr. Hernán Santa Cruz,

The representative of the Commission on the Status of Women thanked Mr. Santa Cruz for the reference made in his report to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, particularly as that Convention was the only international instrument signed under United Nations auspices for the elimination of discrimination on grounds of sex in the matter of political rights. She stated that the Convention was the most important advance yet made in the field of women's rights.

She pointed out that the Convention had already been signed by thirty-nine States and ratified by nineteen. She stressed, however, that there were still countries or regions of the world where women were subjected to discrimination.

Several members of the Sub-Commission expressed great satisfaction with the reports prepared annually by the Secretary-General for consideration at the yearly sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women. It was urged more than once that those reports should serve as an example for the future work of the Sub-Commission.

Each time the representative of the Commission on the Status of Women took part in the discussion, she stressed the need to maintain the closest contact between the two organs, with their common objectives in the field of discrimination.

In the reports on agenda items 5, 6 and 7 of the seventh session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, the Rapporteurs included paragraphs embodying the comments made to the Sub-Commission on those items by the representative of the Commission on the Status of Women.

The attendance of a representative of the Commission on the Status of Women at all sessions of the Sub-Commission must be regarded as vitally important.

The Chairman and several members of the Sub-Commission praised the work being done by the Commission on the Status of Women.

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