



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Thirteenth session

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights,  
civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by the Hawa Society for Women, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[15 February 2010]

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\* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

## **A Call for Sudan to Ratify CEDAW**

In her last report presented to the 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council in Sept. 2008, the Special Rapporteur for human rights in Sudan, Dr. Sima Samar recommended that the government of Sudan should ratify the Convention of the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). We, in Hawa Society for Women, share the same view and encourage the government of the National Unity to ratify this Convention without further delay.

The CEDAW issue has taken enough discussions among the civil society organizations in Sudan and within the government itself. However, so far we cannot see any serious move towards ratification, as there are still divisions among the government ranks regarding some of the provisions of the convention especially those seen as contradicting with the Islamic law.

We believe that most of the international conventions, including most of the provisions of CEDAW only emphasize what has already stated by religions, such as the concept of equality, and the non discrimination according to genders. The issues related to the women political rights, and their rights to sign contracts, possess property, inherit and choose her husband, are all stipulated by revealed religions, but unfortunately some beliefs, and negative traditions sometimes deprive women of their rights in inheritance, hinder their political participation and prevent them for enjoying their rights to vote and stand as candidates in the elections.

Sudan is far ahead of many developing countries in terms of preserving the rights of women. As there is no discrimination in holding political positions or getting paid equality for the same type of job. In the contrary, sometime in Sudan women get more protection and respect than what is given to them in the international conventions including CEDAW. In inheritance, for example, sometimes women get more than the share of the man depending on relation to the dead person, except for when she inherits with her brother, he gets more because he is supposed to pay her living expenditures.

Article 16 of the Convention which is related to the family life, and the life of the woman as a mother gives the same right for man a women at the marriage, the same right for selecting the spouse, the same rights and responsibilities during the marriage and at the divorce, the same rights as a parent, the same rights on the children, and the same personal rights including choosing the name of the family, the profession and career. She also has the same rights as her husband in the possession of property, supervising them and enjoying them without pay.

We as women prefer to be judged by the revealed religions that never do injustice to us. Therefore, we do not want to drop our right that husbands should take the responsibility for paying for the expenditure of their families, and pay the dowry, because now women are overworked to support their families and do the work at home and take care of the children at the same time.

The issue is not equality or not equality. It is a matter of rights, duties and responsibilities distributed equality for the interest of the family and the interest of both the woman and man, so that the family will not be a boxing arena. We believe that calling for absolute equality between men and women jeopardizes the rights of women, therefore we call for ratifying the CEDAW with the necessary reservations especially on articles 15 and 16, which we think compromise the rights of women compared to what is given to them in our societies.