



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

Distr.: General
16 September 2014

Original: English

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

Fifty-ninth session

20 October-7 November 2014

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

**Implementation of articles 21 and 22 of the Convention on the
Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

**Reports by the specialized agencies on the implementation
of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of
Discrimination against Women in areas falling within the
scope of their activities**

**Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization****

Summary

In accordance with article 22 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the specialized agencies of the United Nations have been invited to submit to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, at its fifty-ninth session, reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities.

* CEDAW/C/59/1.

** This document was submitted late due to delayed inputs from other sources.



I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-ninth session, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will examine the national reports of Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, China, Ghana, Guinea, Poland, Solomon Islands and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).
2. As a specialized agency of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) contributes to the building of peace, the alleviation of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, and communication and information. Gender equality is the global priority of the Organization for the period 2014-2021. It is pursued through a two-pronged approach: gender-specific programming and mainstreaming of gender equality perspectives in all the UNESCO fields of competence.
3. Within the United Nations system, UNESCO has a major role in and responsibility for the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Article 10 of the Convention provides that States parties are to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure them equal rights with men in the field of education. The right to education is at the very heart of the mission of UNESCO and represents an integral part of its constitutional mandate.
4. Efforts by UNESCO to promote women's empowerment, women's rights and gender equality are guided by its medium-term strategy for 2014-2021, its organization-wide gender equality action plan for 2014-2021, which supports and guides the implementation of its global priority of gender equality, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women and UNESCO biennial and quadrennial programme and budget documents, as well as resolutions and international and regional instruments relevant to areas of action by UNESCO.
5. The commitment of UNESCO to pursuing the priority of gender equality is facilitated by the Division for Gender Equality in the Office of the Director General. As the UNESCO focal point for gender equality, the Division provides policy guidance and recommendations to senior management and programme sectors for mainstreaming gender equality considerations in UNESCO policies, strategies and programmes; carries out capacity-building; monitors gender parity and work-life balance within the UNESCO secretariat; and develops and establishes partnerships with other United Nations bodies, regional bodies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, private foundations and private sector partners that support women's empowerment and gender equality initiatives.

II. Measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention in the countries to be considered at the fifty-ninth session

Belgium

6. Belgium is not party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and did not report to UNESCO for the seventh or eighth consultations of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the UNESCO recommendation against discrimination in education.

7. Article 10 of the Constitution of 1994 guarantees every person equality before the law and equality between women and men. Under article 11, rights and freedoms must be provided without discrimination. Pursuant to article 11 bis, the law guarantees that women and men may equally exercise their rights and freedoms and have equal access to elective and appointed office.

8. Article 24 of the Constitution guarantees freedom of education. Education is free of charge, non-denominational, allows parents freedom of choice and respects the philosophical, ideological and religious beliefs of parents and students. Schools run by the public authorities offer, until the end of compulsory education, the choice between the teaching of one of the recognized religions and non-denominational ethics teaching. Everyone has the right to an education that respects fundamental rights and freedoms. Access to education is free until the end of compulsory education. All school-age children have the right to moral or religious education at the community's expense. All students, parents, teaching staff and institutions are equal before the law. The law takes into account objective differences in the characteristics of each organizing authority that warrant differentiated treatment.

9. The most important aim of education in Belgium is to guarantee to everyone, regardless of social or ethnic background, socially equal and thoroughly personal education and broad vocational training with a view to guaranteeing integration into the world of work. For this purpose, education must foster the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes, be accessible to everyone through a policy of equal opportunity, be differentiated and be adapted to different target groups.

10. Belgium is a federal State comprising three communities, three regions and four language areas. On the basis of institutional reforms, powers relating to education lie with the government, minister and parliament of each community. Since 1989, each community has had its own education system. Education jurisdictions are identical in the three communities. Although the organization of each school system varies, the general structure is the same in each community.

11. According to the Compulsory Education Act of 1983, education is compulsory for 12 years (from 6 to 18 years of age). Following basic education that is composed of preschool and primary education, secondary education is divided into three levels of two years each. The first level is a core curriculum, at the end of which students can choose between general, professional, technical and artistic sectors. Those who finish at least the first two years of secondary education and who do not wish to continue full-time until 18 years of age can then take a part-time compulsory training course.

12. All those commonalities notwithstanding, the education system of each community also has unique characteristics. In the Flemish community, schools can be established and managed without any government connection. Schools that wish to award officially recognized diplomas or certificates and to receive subsidies from the government of Flanders must, however, comply with regulations governing language use and the organization of studies. The legislation governing language use in education specifies that the language of education in the Dutch-language area is Dutch. In Flanders, school attendance is not compulsory and children can be home-schooled, provided that such schooling complies with legal requirements. The right to education also means that education is free of charge to parents. The community is responsible for providing a portion of school supplies and may give a subsidy to cover transportation costs for students who cannot find an education establishment of their choice within a reasonable distance of their place of residence.

13. In the French community, equal educational access, interventions and outcomes for all children are the main objectives. According to article 6 of the decree of 24 July 1997, the general objective of primary education is to ensure that all students have a fair chance to attain social emancipation. In French-speaking Belgium, a system of differentiated financing has been in place since 2004. In that system, establishments in which disadvantaged students are registered should receive subsidies.

14. Belgium is a member of the UNESCO-led Global Alliance on Media and Gender, which works to promote gender equality in and through the media. Civil society actors are empowered through partnerships with media organizations to cooperate on specific projects. The Alliance has prepared and distributed a research agenda to promote awareness of gender inequality and to make recommendations to achieve change. The research agenda analyses research findings and their potential links to policies, identifies research gaps and recommends research and policy actions to be taken by the Alliance and other stakeholders around the world.

15. Founded in 1998, the L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science partnership was created to recognize and promote women in science. Its programmes reward established women scientists whose outstanding achievements have contributed to the advancement of scientific knowledge, promote awareness of their benefit to society and provide support to promising young women scientists with worthy and viable projects. The partnership's fellowship programmes are relevant to the implementation of the Convention because they aim to support young women researchers at key moments in their careers. Each year, 15 doctoral or post-doctoral researchers in the life sciences are awarded international fellowships that enable them to widen their scope of expertise at recognized research institutions outside their home countries. National fellowships are also awarded, in addition to regional fellowships for the Arab States and for sub-Saharan Africa. Their aim is to help young women to launch their scientific careers while adapting said support to local realities.

Brunei Darussalam

16. Brunei Darussalam has been party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1985, but did not report to UNESCO for the consultations of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

17. The Constitution of 1959 contains no provisions concerning education, non-discrimination or gender equality.

18. The education system in Brunei Darussalam is entirely a matter of legislation. Although education is not compulsory, almost every child enters school at 5 years of age and remains there until 15 years of age (corresponding to lower secondary school). Traditionally, all children receive at least nine years of formal education. Primary education lasts six years: three of lower primary school and three of upper primary school. Children receive bilingual education in Malay and English and learn basic skills in writing, reading and mathematics. At the end of the sixth year, their suitability for secondary education is assessed and they are placed in a secondary school programme appropriate to their learning pace and ability.

19. Secondary education is divided into lower and upper secondary cycles that last five or six years. At the tertiary level, technical and professional colleges and institutes offer programmes leading to a diploma after two and a half years. The overarching aim is for students to be lifelong learners who are confident and creative, connected and actively involved in the quest for knowledge. The education system equips students with useful and necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to compete successfully at the local and international levels.

20. A government delegation actively participated in a workshop on support to policymaking and planning for the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups and communities in South-East Asia that had been jointly organized by UNESCO, Trinity College Dublin and the University of Melbourne and was held from 6 to 8 April 2014 in Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia. During the workshop, the organizing institutions presented the methodologies that they had developed to tackle the issue of social inclusion. The delegation presented the Government's vision of social inclusion, which stresses the importance of the family as an institution for building the fabric of social cohesion.

China

21. China is not party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education. On 17 October 1999, China notified the Director General of UNESCO that the Convention would continue to apply to Macao, China, effective 20 December 1999. China did not report to UNESCO for the consultations of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

22. As mentioned in the Constitution, China is a unitary, multinational State created jointly by the people of all its nationalities. Relations based on equality, unity and mutual assistance have been established among the nationalities and will continue to be strengthened. Under article 33, all citizens of China are equal before the law. Under article 34, all citizens who have reached 18 years of age have the right to vote and stand for election, regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, occupation, family background, religious beliefs, education, property status or length of residence, except those deprived of political rights according to the law. Under article 4, all nationalities in China are equal. The State protects the lawful rights and interests of minority nationalities and upholds and develops relationships based on equality, unity and mutual assistance among all the country's nationalities. It assists areas inhabited by minority nationalities in accelerating their economic and cultural

development in accordance with their various characteristics and needs. China prohibits discrimination against and oppression of any nationality, in addition to acts that undermine unity between the nationalities or that instigate division. All nationalities have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages and to preserve or reform their own folkways and customs.

23. According to article 48 of the Constitution, women in China enjoy equal rights with men in all spheres of life, including the political, economic, cultural, social and family arenas. The State protects the rights and interests of women, applies the principle of equal pay for equal work to men and women alike and trains and selects cadres from among women.

24. Article 46 of the Constitution stipulates that Chinese citizens have both the duty and the right to receive an education. According to article 45, both the State and society have a role in making arrangements for the work, livelihood and education of persons with disabilities.

25. The Education Act of 1995 guarantees the strategic position of education in social and economic development. Article 9 stipulates that all citizens have the right and duty to be educated and enjoy equal education opportunities regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, occupation, social status or religious beliefs. The State Council and local people's governments at all levels are to guide and administer education according to the principles of differentiated management and with a suitable division of responsibilities.

26. Pursuant to the law on compulsory education adopted in 1986 and amended in 2006, the State establishes and administers schools of various types, universalizes a nine-year compulsory primary education and promotes preschool, secondary, vocational and higher education. Primary schooling is provided to children generally from 6 to 11 years of age. All children who have reached that age have equal rights and the obligation to receive compulsory education regardless of gender, nationality, race, family status, property ownership or religious beliefs. Primary schools are usually run by local education authorities and are free of charge, although some private schools are owned by enterprises and individuals. Secondary schooling is provided to children generally from 12 to 17 years of age. The first three years of secondary school are compulsory and free. Senior high school is not compulsory and students must pay nominal tuition fees. Although private secondary schools often offer specialized education programmes and have a more vocational bent, the qualifications that they offer are considered to be on par with those of State-run secondary schools. Higher education is provided by universities, colleges and institutes and includes programmes that lead to vocational certificates or to undergraduate, postgraduate or doctoral degrees.

27. The State has set up education facilities with the goal of eliminating illiteracy and providing political, scientific, technical and professional education to workers, farmers and civil servants, among others. It encourages people to educate themselves through independent study.

28. Chinese is the basic oral and written language used in schools and other educational institutions. Those enrolling mainly students from ethnic minority groups may use the language of the respective ethnic community or the language commonly adopted in the region.

29. The 1990 law on the protection of persons with disabilities was revised in 2008. The 1994 regulation on the education of persons with disabilities stipulated that the State would protect students with disabilities and called for a gradual increase in financial inputs and improvements to their education.

30. Activities under the UNESCO HIV/AIDS and sexuality education programme in China often highlight gender issues. Examples of activities undertaken in this regard include support for the development of model lesson plans to promote sexuality and gender education through film; promotion of HIV/AIDS and sexuality education to young men and women through a new media virtual classroom; advocacy for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights; developing a response to homophobic bullying in educational institutions in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, universities and schools; a study on sex education, health and disabilities; and scaling up gender-responsive and rights-based comprehensive sexuality education in China through curriculum reviews, educator training and outreach activities for key youth populations.

31. Some of the projects implemented by UNESCO have a special focus on disadvantaged young women. Under a joint project on young people, employment and migration (2009-2012), UNESCO, as one of the participating United Nations agencies, contributed to improved access for potential migrants to information and skills development and enhanced the provision of social services for young migrants, in particular women and girls. Even after the completion of the project, national project partners have continued to give special attention to the rights and health-care services of young female migrant workers.

32. Systematic efforts have been made to analyse gender-disaggregated educational data to determine gaps in access to education. UNESCO and the United Nations Children's Fund recently supported the preparation of the country's decennial report on progress towards achieving its Education for All goals, in which the need to lower female illiteracy rates was highlighted, among other issues. The report has been published and widely distributed.

33. UNESCO participates actively in United Nations country team discussions and initiatives relating to gender in China. The Director of the UNESCO Beijing office chairs the United Nations thematic group on gender. UNESCO was fully involved in the preparation of the confidential report by the United Nations country team on the implementation by China of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

34. In Beijing, a baseline study was conducted on women and men's awareness of and attitudes towards domestic violence. The survey documented existing services and interventions in pilot counties and assessed the extent to which women and men were aware of those programmes. In April 2014, UNESCO organized an international expert round table on family violence legislation in China that focused on women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities. Specific recommendations arising from the round table included the importance of stipulating the State's responsibility to adopt legislation to prevent family violence, the elaboration of a more inclusive definition of family violence and the establishment of a multi-institutional intervention and reporting system to eliminate family violence. Fact sheets on ending violence against persons with disabilities were developed. UNESCO is providing technical input as part of a United Nations task force established to contribute to the enactment of a new family violence law.

Once adopted, this law will have important policy implications for gender equality and the respect of the rights of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities throughout China.

35. Within the framework of the Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund joint programme on improving nutrition, food safety and food security for the most vulnerable women and children in China, a training manual on the new food safety law and rights protection was developed. The manual was adopted by the local women's federation for future training sessions, and action plans on food safety were drafted by relevant government entities in pilot sites. Advocacy activities were also integrated into their daily work.

36. In close collaboration with Yunnan University, the UNESCO Beijing office initiated a project to raise awareness among all stakeholders, to promote the rights and empowerment of migrant women and their access to decent work, education and housing with a view to improving the social inclusion of female migrants, and to develop policies preventing violence and discrimination against women.

37. China is a member of UNESCO-led Global Alliance on Media and Gender (see paragraph 14 for general information on the work of the Alliance).

38. The UNESCO fellowship programme granted a fellowship for the period 2013-2014 to a young woman researcher from China for her research in the field of transport engineering and transportation technology systems and devices.

39. The Great Wall fellowships programme, co-sponsored by UNESCO and the Government of China, has awarded seven fellowships for the period 2012-2013 to young women researchers from Cabo Verde, Guinea, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Kyrgyzstan for their research in fields such as information and communication engineering, pharmacology, cartography and geographical information systems, economics, business administration and the Chinese language.

40. The L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science programme awarded an international fellowship and a national fellowship to two women scientists from China.

Ghana

41. Ghana is not party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, but reported to UNESCO for the eighth consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education. In the summary report on the results of the consultations submitted to the Executive Board of UNESCO, it is acknowledged that, in Ghana, children from poor households often struggle to afford continued education, notably children and teenagers who are forced to begin working at an early age to support their families financially, and students who live too far from a school or who lack the resources necessary to travel. Ghana has therefore put in place financial measures, aid initiatives and programmes to facilitate access to education. Given that school fees are not the only economic obstacle for families sending their children to school, Ghana has also devised policies to eliminate other costs relating to education, especially for children living in rural or remote areas. Such measures include forms of financial aid to students and schools, such as merit-based and needs-based scholarships, loans, subsidies, awards and fee exemptions.

Ghana has reported on its provision of free transportation and free school meals. It is also noted in the report that Ghana is taking steps to counter stereotypes, specifically those involving women and science.

42. The Constitution of 1992 contains many provisions on equality and non-discrimination. The preamble refers to the natural and inalienable right of the people to establish a framework of government, which is to secure for themselves and posterity the blessings of liberty, equality of opportunity and prosperity. Article 12 guarantees that every person in Ghana, whatever his or her race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, religion, creed, economic status or gender, is not to be discriminated against and is entitled to the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual, subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest. Article 17 stipulates that all persons are equal before the law. Under article 35, the State will actively promote the integration of the peoples of Ghana and prohibit discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of place of origin, circumstances of birth, ethnic origin, gender, religion, creed or other beliefs; will foster a spirit of loyalty to Ghana that overrides sectarian, ethnic and other loyalties; and will achieve reasonable regional and gender balance in recruitment and appointment to public offices.

43. The Constitution also contains provisions on gender equality. Under article 36, the State will afford equality of economic opportunity to all citizens; in particular, it will take all steps necessary to ensure the full integration of women into the mainstream of the economic development of Ghana. Under article 22, spouses have equal access to property jointly acquired during marriage. Pursuant to article 27, special care will be accorded to mothers during a reasonable period before and after childbirth and working mothers will be accorded paid leave during those periods. Facilities will be provided to care for children below school-going age to enable women, who have traditionally assumed the bulk of childcare tasks, to realize their full potential. Women will be guaranteed equal rights to training and promotion without impediment.

44. The education reform programme of 1987 made education more relevant to the socioeconomic realities of the country, so that the Ghanaian children would be able to live productive and meaningful lives. One of its guiding principles is the achievement of equity and quality in the education system. Since the reform of 2002, the system has aimed to create well-rounded individuals, with the requisite knowledge, skills, values and aptitudes needed for self-actualization and the socioeconomic and political transformation of the nation.

45. Article 38 of the Constitution stipulates that the State will provide educational facilities at all levels and in regions and make those facilities available to all citizens. Functional literacy will be encouraged or intensified to the extent possible. Under article 25, all persons have the right to equal educational opportunities and to the facilities needed to fully realize that right. Basic education is therefore free, compulsory and available to all. Ghana provides 11 years of basic education, which consists of 2 years of kindergarten, 6 years of primary school and 3 years of junior high school. Ghana also offers four years of secondary and other pre-university education, as appropriate, which is equally accessible to all. University or equivalent education (with an emphasis on science and technology) will be made equally accessible on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular through the progressive introduction of free education. The system

culminates with four-year bachelor's degree programmes, two or three-year master's degree programmes and doctoral degree programmes that last at least two years. Free adult literacy programmes, vocational training, rehabilitation and resettlement of persons with disabilities and lifelong education will also be provided. Every person has the right to establish and maintain, at his or her own expense, a private school at such levels, of such categories and in accordance with such conditions as may be provided by law.

46. Ghana is a member of UNESCO-led Global Alliance on Media and Gender (see paragraph 14 for general information on the work of the Alliance).

47. The UNESCO fellowship programme has awarded five fellowships for the period 2013-2104 to young female researchers from Ghana for their research in the fields of agricultural science, sustainable energy development and use of isotope techniques in evaluating the dynamics of hydro-geochemical and nutrient pathways.

48. The L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science programme awarded an international fellowship in 2013 to a woman scientist from Ghana.

49. An extrabudgetary project was implemented in Ghana during the period 2012-2013 to develop a transformative leadership training curriculum for women in Africa.

Guinea

50. Guinea has been party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1964 and reported to UNESCO for the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

51. Under article 1 of the Constitution of 2010, Guinea guarantees equality before the law and solidarity for all citizens regardless of race, sex, ethnic origin, religion or creed. Pursuant to article 8, all human beings are equal before the law. No one will be privileged or disadvantaged, nor be subject to prejudice in his or her employment on the basis of gender, birth, race, ethnicity, language, religion, or philosophical and political beliefs. Article 4 stipulates that racial, ethnic and religious discrimination is punishable. Article 2 contains a provision relating to gender equality, which stipulates that both men and women are equal citizens and voters who enjoy civil and political rights.

52. The education system of Guinea was patterned on that of France prior to Guinea gaining its independence. All schools were nationalized in 1961. French remains the language of instruction. Education is free and officially compulsory for all children between 7 and 13 years of age. The first six years of the 11-year pre-tertiary education system take place at primary school. In practice, however, many rural children never even get that far. A far smaller number of students go on to secondary education, the first four years of which take place at lower secondary school, followed by three years of upper secondary school. This secondary education is, however, accessible only to young people fortunate enough to have parents who can afford the school fees. Higher education in Guinea is delivered at two universities — Conakry and Kankan — and at three professional institutes annexed to the universities.

53. Several non-governmental organizations are contributing to the improvement of the education system. They participate in the construction and equipping of schools. Some give support by providing school supplies and assisting in improving primary education. Consultation frameworks have been established with various partner organizations.

54. The UNESCO fellowship programme has awarded two fellowships for the period 2013-2014 to young women researchers from Guinea for their work in the fields of information and communication engineering and capacity development for basic education.

55. The UNESCO participation programme provided \$26,000 to finance a project pertaining to the issue of violence against women and girls.

Poland

56. Poland has been party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1964 and reported to UNESCO for the eighth consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education. According to the report, given that access to justice may be further out of reach than access to education, Poland has reported on the ombudsman offices that deal with discrimination in education, because complaints to said offices can be addressed more easily. Poland has established the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, an organ that monitors compliance with the principle of equal treatment in legal and social terms (including the assessment of legal acts) and initiates, implements, coordinates and monitors action aimed at ensuring equal treatment and protection against discrimination in all fields of social life. Poland has made one year of pre-primary school education compulsory. The goal of this progressive expansion of free compulsory education was to increase access and educational opportunities for all people and at all levels. In addition, a free schoolbook policy has been implemented to help children from poor households.

57. Students with disabilities in Poland have a right to assistance and to have a special study plan. Public schools are required to provide students with psychological and pedagogical assistance that recognizes their individual psychophysical capabilities and satisfies their individual developmental and educational needs. Moreover, Poland provides a programme for young people who have left school and a skills development programme that integrates individuals without educational qualifications into the labour market. The State reported on its creation of literacy programmes in prisons. It has also emphasized the importance of formal qualifications. Consequently, it has institutionalized a pathway for adults to complete primary and secondary education and provided financial support for adult learning.

58. According to the report, Poland has launched several initiatives in recognition of the right of national minorities to carry out their own educational activities and to foster their inclusion in society. Poland has launched language teaching initiatives focused on the immigrant population that aim to facilitate their integration into society. A programme was developed in which assistants provide additional expertise to help to improve the education of Roma children. Teaching assistants equipped with an understanding of minority cultures facilitate collaboration between teaching assistants of Roma background, parents of Roma children and parents of

children of different ethnic backgrounds, who have been encouraged to send their children to school and had the importance of education explained to them. Furthermore, specialists and educators in those educational institutions have the opportunity to better understand the issues relating to the education and social integration of Roma children.

59. After assessing the strengths and weaknesses of its own educational results, Poland reported that its main challenge was to focus more on developing creative and critical thinking, self-organization, effective communication and teamwork.

60. Under article 6 of the Constitution of 1997, the State will provide conditions for people's equal access to the products of culture, which are the source of national identity, continuity and development. Article 32 stipulates that all persons are equal before the law and entitled to equal treatment by public authorities. No one will be discriminated against in political, social or economic life for any reason whatsoever. According to article 60, Polish citizens enjoying full public rights will have equal right of access to public services. Everyone has a right to protection of health. Pursuant to article 68, public authorities will provide special health care to children, pregnant women, persons with disabilities and older persons.

61. Gender equality is guaranteed under article 33 of the Constitution. Men and women in Poland have equal rights in family, political, social and economic life, in particular in education, employment and promotion, and have the right to equal compensation for work of similar value, to social security, to hold office and to receive public honours.

62. The Constitution also contains provisions on equality between national and ethnic minorities. Article 35 stipulates that the State will ensure that Polish citizens belonging to national or ethnic minorities have the freedom to maintain and develop their own language, to maintain customs and traditions and to develop their own culture. National and ethnic minorities have the right to establish educational and cultural institutions, institutions designed to protect religious identity and to participate in the resolution of matters connected with their cultural identity.

63. According to article 70 of the Constitution, everyone has the right to education. Education to 18 years of age is compulsory. Education in public schools is free. Public authorities will ensure universal and equal access to education for all citizens. To this end, they will establish and support systems for individual financial aid and organizational assistance to students. Statutes may permit the charging of fees for some services provided by public institutions of higher education.

64. The objective of schooling is to provide students with the conditions necessary for their development and to prepare them to fulfil family responsibilities and civic duties based on the principles of solidarity, democracy, tolerance, justice and freedom. It also prepares them for active and responsible participation in social, cultural and economic activities at all levels and counteracts the exclusion and marginalization of individuals and social groups. The Polish education system was reformed in 1999 and changes have been implemented over the course of several years. Education is now compulsory from 7 to 18 years of age; however, some non-school alternatives are made available to students beginning at 16 years of age, including apprenticeships. Higher education is composed of undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral-level education and is provided by the newly created

higher vocational schools, universities, technical universities and specialized academies such as those of medicine and music.

65. Poland is a member of the UNESCO-led Global Alliance on Media and Gender (see paragraph 14 for general information on the work of the Alliance).

66. The fellowship programme co-sponsored by UNESCO and the Government of Poland awarded six fellowships for the period 2012-2013 to young women researchers from Brazil, Cuba, India and the Lao People's Democratic Republic for their work in fields such as engineering technology and geotourism.

67. The L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science programme awarded an international fellowship and a national fellowship to two female scientists from Poland.

Solomon Islands

68. Solomon Islands has been party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1982, but did not report to UNESCO for the consultations of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

69. According to article 15 of the Constitution of 1978, no law will contain any provision that is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect. No person will be treated in a discriminatory manner by any person acting by virtue of any written law or in performing the functions of any public office or any public authority. No person will be treated in a discriminatory manner in access to shops, hotels, lodging houses, public restaurants, eating houses, in places of public entertainment or in places of public recreation maintained in whole or in part by public funds or that dedicated to the use of the general public.

70. The education system consists of the following stages, which correspond to approximate age ranges: early childhood education for children from 3 to 5 years of age; primary education for children from 6 to 11 years of age; secondary education for children from 12 to 18 years of age; and higher education for adults over 18 years of age. There are two post-secondary education providers: the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education, which is the main State-supported tertiary institution in Solomon Islands and offers both vocational and tertiary courses, and the University of the South Pacific, in which Solomon Islands is a regional partner, which operates a campus in Honiara.

71. Education was disrupted by civil turmoil from 1998 to 2003 and by a tsunami in 2007. Extensive reconstruction notwithstanding, the education system fails to meet the needs of the country's young people. Although primary education is free, school attendance is not compulsory, with the result that only 60 per cent of students attend primary school. An adult literacy rate of approximately 75 per cent may be linked to the issue of poor school attendance. School fees and the cost of supplies are significant barriers to secondary education for children from poor families. Secondary school entry is also highly competitive. Places are allocated on the basis of performance in examinations, with fewer places available at each level of secondary schooling. Very few students are able to complete the full seven years of secondary study. The education system suffers from a lack of qualified teachers, overcrowded classrooms, poor facilities, a shortage of basic teaching materials and

an inadequate supply of textbooks. Half of all primary teachers are either unqualified or uncertified. The language of instruction in all schools is English. Only a small proportion of the population in rural areas or on remote islands is proficient in the language, however.

72. In its most recent national report on progress made in meeting the goals of the Education for All initiative (2014), Solomon Islands reported that more girls were enrolling in schools than boys. In a society such as that of Solomon Islands, where the cultural stereotype is for women and girls to stay at home and do housework while men and boys have more freedom of choice, the growth in female school attendance is an encouraging development. The Government's priority to expand secondary education and to have equal numbers of boys and girls attend has led to the creation of a basic education policy and a senior secondary education policy. The Government will encourage gender balance at educational institutions and seek to eliminate stereotypical thinking about predetermined responsibilities based on gender.

73. Although progress has been made in enrolment, gender equality remains a concern when it comes to the sharing of resources and completion rates at both the primary and secondary education levels. The most negatively affected students are those in rural and remote areas. In addition, the stereotype in some societies that boys are more important and are to have more freedom of choice than girls does not encourage girls to go to school. Such thinking is an obstacle to achieving national and international gender equality goals. At the senior secondary and tertiary levels, where male students are the majority, the rate of female enrolment is lower than that of their participation in other sectors of society. The steep pyramid structure of the education system may also contribute to the inequity and inequality seen at the secondary and tertiary levels of education.

74. The UNESCO fellowship programme awarded a fellowship for the period 2013-2014 to a young woman researcher from Solomon Islands for her work in the field of basic education capacity development.

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

75. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has been party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1968, but did not report to UNESCO for the consultations of member States on the implementation of the Convention and the recommendation against discrimination in education.

76. Under article 2 of the Constitution of 1999, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is constituted as a democratic and social State of law and justice, which holds as superior the values of its legal system and highly values life, liberty, justice, equality, solidarity, democracy, social responsibility and the pre-eminence of human rights, ethics and political pluralism. The Constitution guarantees the right to life, work, learning, education, social justice and equality, without discrimination or subordination of any kind. Article 21 stipulates that all persons are equal before the law. No discrimination based on race, gender, creed or social standing will be permitted, nor will any discrimination with the intent or effect of nullifying or encroaching upon the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of the rights and liberties of every individual on equal terms. The Government will adopt affirmative measures to benefit any group that is discriminated against, marginalized or

vulnerable; protect in particular those persons who, because of any of the aforementioned circumstances, are in a manifestly weak position; and punish those who abuse or mistreat such persons.

77. Family relationships are also based on equality of rights and duties, solidarity, common effort, mutual understanding and reciprocal respect among family members. Under article 75 of the Constitution, the State guarantees protection to the mother, father or other person acting as head of the household. Marriage, which is based on free consent and the absolute equality of rights and obligations of the spouses, is protected by article 77 of the Constitution.

78. According to article 88, the State guarantees the equality and equitable treatment of men and women in the exercise of the right to work. The State recognizes work at home as an economic activity that creates added value and produces social welfare and wealth. Housewives are entitled to social security benefits in accordance with the law. Article 91 guarantees the payment of equal salary for equal work for both men and women. Article 100 stipulates that the folk cultures that comprise the national identity of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela are to enjoy special attention and that intercultural relations are to be recognized and respected under the principle of equality of cultures.

79. The Constitution contains provisions pertaining to the right to education. Article 102 deems education to be a human right and a fundamental social duty that is to be democratic, free of charge and compulsory. Article 103 guarantees the right to a full, high-quality and continuing education under conditions and circumstances of equality, subject only to limitations arising from one's own aptitudes, vocation and aspirations. Education is obligatory at all levels, from preschool to secondary. Education offered at State institutions is free of charge up to undergraduate level. To this end, the State will make priority investments in accordance with United Nations recommendations. The State will create and sustain sufficiently equipped institutions and services to ensure school admission, continuing education and programme completion. The law guarantees equal attention to persons with special needs or disabilities and to those who have been deprived of liberty or who do not meet the basic conditions for admission to and continuing enrolment in the education system. The contributions of private individuals to public education programs at the secondary and university levels are tax deductible in accordance with the law.

80. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the first nine years of education are compulsory. Some 95 per cent of citizens are literate and more than 92 per cent of children attend primary school. Many children under 5 years of age attend preschool prior to enrolling in six years of primary school until 11 years of age. After receiving their basic education certificate, students move on to middle school to complete three more years of compulsory education. Upon reaching ninth grade at around 14 or 15 years of age, they must choose either a humanities programme or a sciences programme. Although education is compulsory, some poor children do not attend school because they must work to support their families. Some schools provide professional education as well. A steadily growing industrial economy demands a rethinking of the national education strategy, and an increasing number of young people continue their professional education at a range of technical schools. There, they are presented with self-improvement opportunities ranging from short courses to full-blown trade certification. There are almost 100 institutions

of higher education in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, with a total enrolment of 1 million students, all free of charge. Technical institutes produce technicians after three years of training, while university students take five years to graduate. Students may then choose to enrol in masters and doctoral degree programmes. Higher education is provided free of charge under the Constitution.

81. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is a member of the UNESCO-led Global Alliance on Media and Gender (see paragraph 14 for general information on the work of the Alliance).

82. The UNESCO fellowship programme awarded a fellowship for the period 2013-2014 to a young woman researcher from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for her work in the field of anthropological approaches to theories of conflict and the culture of peace.

83. The L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science programme awarded an international fellowship in 2013 to a woman scientist from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Annex

**Educational statistics for countries reporting to the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against
Women at its fifty-ninth session: gross enrolment ratios of
women and men and gender parity index**

Country	Year	Gross enrolment ratio, primary		Gross enrolment ratio, secondary		Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary		Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, primary	Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, secondary	Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, tertiary
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female			
Belgium	2009	104	105	103	106	72	58	1.00	0.97	1.24
	2010	104	104	104	107	75	60	1.00	0.97	1.25
	2011	103	104	105	108	77	61	1.00	0.97	1.26
	2012	103	104	106	109	80	62	0.99	0.97	1.28
Brunei Darussalam	2009	104	105	100	99	25	14	0.99	1.01	1.78
	2010	101	101	101	100	23	12	0.99	1.01	1.85
	2011	98	99	103	103	25	15	0.99	1.01	1.74
	2012	95	96	109	107	31	18	0.98	1.02	1.74
China	2009	129	130	81	78	22	21	1.00	1.04	1.06
	2010	129	129	84	83	24	22	1.00	1.01	1.08
	2011	128	128	87	86	26	23	1.00	1.01	1.11
	2012	128	128	90	88	28	25	1.00	1.02	1.13
Ghana	2009	105	106	55	62	7	11	0.98	0.89	0.59
	2010	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2011	106	107	54	60	9	15	0.99	0.90	0.59
	2012	106	113	55	61	9	15	0.94	0.90	0.61
Guinea	2009	77	92	–	–	5	13	0.84	–	0.34
	2010	78	95	–	–	5	15	0.82	–	0.33
	2011	82	96	29	47	5	15	0.85	0.63	0.35
	2012	83	98	–	–	5 ^a	14 ^a	0.84	–	0.37 ^a
Poland	2009	97	98	97	98	84	59	0.99	0.99	1.43
	2010	98	99	97	98	89	59	0.99	0.99	1.51
	2011	99	99	97	98	90	58	1.00	0.99	1.55
	2012	101	101	97	98	89	58	1.00	0.99	1.55
Solomon Islands	2009	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2010	142	146	45	52	–	–	0.97	0.86	–
	2011	142	147	46	50	–	–	0.97	0.91	–
	2012	140	142	47	50	–	–	0.98	0.94	–

Country	Year	Gross enrolment ratio, primary		Gross enrolment ratio, secondary		Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary		Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, primary	Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, secondary	Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, tertiary
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female			
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2009	102	105	86	79	–	–	0.97	1.09	–
	2010	101	104	86	79	–	–	0.97	1.10	–
	2011	101	103	87	80	–	–	0.97	1.09	–
	2012	101	103	89	82	–	–	0.98	1.09	–

A dash indicates data not available.

^a UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimate.