



**Convention on the Elimination  
of all Forms of Discrimination  
Against Women**

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CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES  
UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION

Second Periodic Reports of States parties

Addendum

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

## PART I

General assessment of progress

In the Soviet Union, ensuring the de facto equality of women and enhancing their role in all areas of societal life is one of the State's most important tasks and a subject of constant concern on the part of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government.

The concept of the accelerated socio-economic development of Soviet society, elaborated by the Twenty-Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, includes the implementation of an active and comprehensive social policy aimed at improving the prosperity of the people, and embraces all aspects in the life of ordinary men and women - from their working and living conditions to their social, class and national relations. A social policy of this kind guarantees the genuine enjoyment by all citizens of the USSR - regardless of sex - of the rights and freedoms to which they are entitled under the Constitution and the law.

The principle of the equality of rights of women and men in all areas of economic, political and cultural life is legislatively anchored in article 35 of the Constitution of the USSR. The legislation also provides for a system of measures guaranteeing the practical observance of this principle. The implementation of the requirement of equal rights for women and men is ensured in the form of constitutionally mandated measures aimed at creating conditions to enable women to combine successfully their professional work and participation in public life with maternity and family obligations. These measures include: the availability of equal opportunities for the acquisition of education and vocational training; a ban on all forms of discrimination in the areas of labour relations, the free selection of an occupation or trade, professional advancement, remuneration for work and paid leave; State safeguards covering the work and health of women and protecting mothers and children; and the legal protection of women's rights against discrimination on the part of any person, enterprise or organization. These measures contribute to the all-round development of Soviet women and guarantee their enjoyment of human rights and basic freedoms on a basis of parity with men.

In the Soviet Union there is an operational system of agencies with responsibility for monitoring the observance of the constitutional rights of women.

In addition to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Council of Ministers of the USSR, the Supreme Soviets and Councils of Ministers of the union republics, the courts and justice authorities, and the offices exercising the supervisory powers of the public procurator, there are still other organs that are authorized to deal with issues involved in guaranteeing that women genuinely enjoy the same rights as men. In accordance with the 1980 law of the USSR on the basic powers of the territorial and regional Councils of the People's Deputies and the Councils of the People's Deputies in the autonomous regions and autonomous districts, these organs are charged with the organization of activities for the protection of mothers and children and for improvements in the living, working and leisure-time conditions of women.

The meetings of such deliberative bodies as the Presidia of the Supreme Soviets and the Councils of Ministers of the USSR and of the union and autonomous republics, as well as the executive committees of the local councils, provide forums at which questions can be raised regarding improvements in the living,

working and leisure-time conditions of women, the safeguarding of maternity and childhood, and compliance with the legislation in these areas.

Issues pertaining to the working and living conditions of women and to the protection of mothers and children are a subject of particular attention on the part of the standing commissions on the working and living conditions of women and the protection of mothers and children, which have been established by the Supreme and local councils. The two chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR - the Council of the Union and the Council of Nationalities - first created these commissions in 1976. Their tasks include the following: to formulate proposals on the working and living conditions of women and to submit them for examination by the appropriate chambers or by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR; to assist the State agencies and organizations and also the deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in their practical work of implementing the decisions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and its Presidium in the areas of women's working and living conditions and protection for mothers and children; to monitor the activities of the ministries and departments, and also of the republic and local agencies, enterprises and organizations, in carrying out legislation designed to safeguard the rights of women.

Similar commissions have been created under the Supreme Soviets of the union and autonomous republics, and also under the local Councils of the People's Deputies.

The trade unions have an enormous role to play in safeguarding the constitutional rights of women.

Operating under the Presidium of the All-Union Central Trade Union Council, there is a commission on the working and living conditions of women and the protection of mothers and children. Among its members, the majority of women are industrial, office and trade union workers as well as scientists. The tasks of this and of similar commissions set up under the trade union committees at the enterprises and organizations of the country include that of finding solutions to the important socio-economic problems of interest to working women, such as, specifically, the upgrading of professional qualifications, the introduction of healthful and safe working conditions, social security, mass cultural work, assistance to families in the raising of children, etc.

Since 1986, the country has been engaged in the establishment of a unified system of women's councils under the aegis of the Committee of Soviet Women. The women's councils operate in the districts, regions and republics of the country within working collectives and at places of residence. The basis of their work is the creative initiative and spontaneous activity of the female community in all areas of production and socio-political life, in the management of the affairs of the State and society, and in the search for solutions to social and other problems. An important task of our country's women's organizations is that of active involvement in the international women's movement and in the struggle for peace and friendship among nations.

With the participation of the women's councils, the State organs adopt their decisions on all matters pertaining to the working, living and leisure-time conditions of women.

As the economic might of the Soviet State continues to grow, the material and legal guarantees for the equality of women are also strengthened. The implementation of the social policy which is contemplated in the State plans (long-range, five-year and annual) for the economic and social development of the

USSR and which involves measures in the areas of improved working and living conditions for women, safeguards for mothers and children, and family assistance, ensures that the status of Soviet women will be steadily enhanced.

In the Soviet Union, three-quarters of the national income is expended on consumption, and if outlays for housing and socio-cultural construction are taken into account, four-fifths of this income may be said to be directly allocated to increasing the prosperity of the people.

In 1985, the national income spent for consumption totalled 417,600 million roubles, which was more than 10 per cent above the 1982 figure. During the period 1981-1985, the public's real per capita income increased by 11 per cent.

Payments and benefits financed out of the public consumption funds are rising. On a per capita basis, these expenditures amounted in 1982 to 477 roubles and in 1985 to 530 roubles, whereas for the period 1981-1985 as a whole they increased by 25 per cent. The public consumption funds are used to finance the State system of free public education, student scholarships, annual leave, and the accommodation of children in pre-school centres. In 1984, more than 50 per cent of the total sum of benefits and allowances granted was in the form of monetary payments.

In recent years, centralized measures have been introduced in the area of labour remuneration. Wages have been increased in a number of branches, and also for a substantial portion of the country's agricultural workers. New wage benefits have been introduced for workers in the textile, light and chemical industries, as well as in the non-manufacturing area, where women account for more than one-half of all employed persons. In September 1984, a stage-by-stage salary increase was initiated for teachers of secondary general education schools and for the teaching staff of secondary special education establishments, industrial vocational training colleges, boarding schools and kindergartens.

Since 1986, there has been a gradual rise in the salaries paid at health care and social security institutions. Remuneration for workers at these establishments is to increase by 35.6 per cent.

During the period 1986-1990, new higher wage rates and salary scales will be introduced for workers in the production branches of the national economy.

Improvements are being made according to plan in the living conditions of the Soviet family. Every year more than 2 million new flats are being built. During the period 1981-1985, over 50 million persons experienced an improvement in their housing situation.

Rent has remained unchanged since 1928 and, when utilities are included, currently accounts, on the average, for only 3 per cent of family income. In 1982, the practice was introduced of granting interest-free loans, with a repayment period of up to eight years, for housing improvements or in order to enable young families to set up a household. With the birth of a second and third child, this loan is partially liquidated by the enterprise. In total, these liquidations amount to one-third of the loan.

In accordance with the State Plan for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for the Period 1981-1985, a broad range of measures has been put into effect for the purpose of further improving the material situation, housing and living conditions, and leisure-time opportunities for families with children, and of creating favourable conditions for the raising of children and for the

performance by women of their functions within the home and at the work-place. During the period in question, the following measures were implemented: additional leave was instituted for working women with two or more children of up to 12 years of age; partially paid child-care leave was introduced for mothers of children who have not yet completed their first year; supplementary unpaid leave was extended until the completion by the child of its eighteenth month, in addition to which one-time maternity allowances were introduced for the mother's first three children; greater opportunities were provided for obtaining children's allowances in the case of low-income families; benefits in connection with payment for the accommodation of children in pre-school centres and pioneer camps were increased; more generous material assistance to single mothers was made available; and temporary benefits for minor children were increased to cover the period spent in searching for parents guilty of evading their support payment obligations.

In the next few years, in accordance with the Basic Directions of Economic and Social Development for the Years 1986-1990 and for the Period to the Year 2000, there is to be continued implementation of measures aimed at further improving the status of mothers, at assisting families in the performance of their social functions and the raising of children, and at upgrading the material, housing and living conditions of families with children and of newly married couples.

## PART II

### Participation of Soviet women in the struggle for peace

Soviet women unanimously support the peace-loving foreign policy of the Government of the Soviet Union. They warmly welcomed the enactment in our country of the Law on the Defence of Peace (1952), which declared the propagandizing of war to be a crime of the most grievous kind against humanity. The Constitution of the USSR proclaims as the overriding foreign policy objectives of the Soviet State the pursuit of peace, the strengthening of the security of nations and the cultivation of broad international co-operation (article 28).

Soviet women wholeheartedly and fully endorse the initiatives of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government on behalf of peace, the programme to achieve nuclear disarmament by the end of the current century, the proposals on security and peaceful co-operation in the Asian-Pacific region, the range of measures jointly proposed by the member States of the Warsaw Pact on the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, the concept of the creation of a comprehensive system of international security, and the unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosions that has more than once been extended by the Soviet side. All these initiatives, in addition to being aimed at the search for mutual understanding, dialogue and a strengthening of peaceful coexistence as the universal norm in relationships between States, define the principal thrust of the struggle for the elimination of the nuclear threat.

For Soviet women the struggle for peace is a continuing and daily commitment, and as such it is inseparable from the struggle for the consolidation of socialism. Soviet women understand that their personal happiness, the happiness of their families and the future of their children is indissolubly linked to the fate of their country and to its achievements.

Not only are Soviet women participating in manifestations of solidarity, forums and meetings devoted to the cause of peace, but they may also be found protesting the outrageous and arbitrary acts of the imperialist aggressors and co-operating with women's anti-war movements in other countries.

They are actively involved in the work of the Soviet Peace Foundations, which was created under the initiative of many public organizations, \* including the Committee of Soviet Women. The Soviet Peace Foundation endeavours to promote the development of relations and contacts between the Soviet public and the peace-loving community abroad, to which end it makes available financial resources to Soviet public organizations. The Foundation assists in conducting scholarly research into the problems of peace, in putting out publications and posters, and in producing documentary films dealing with the subject of peace and friendship among peoples. At the district, municipal and working-collective levels, 350,000 co-operating committees for the support of the Peace Foundation have been established, bringing together some 5 million persons. The majority of the Foundation's republic and regional committees are headed by women. Nearly two-thirds of the Foundation's local active members are also women.

At the present time, the Soviet Peace Foundation numbers more than 90 million participants, i.e., nearly one out of three inhabitants of our country is contributing materially, through the Foundation, to the noble and humane cause of the struggle for peace.

Soviet women regard the task of inculcating in the rising generation the spirit of peace and friendship among peoples as one of the key approaches to their work on behalf of peace. All the institutions connected in our country with the education of the younger generation - the family, the pre-school centres, the schools, the vocational, secondary technical and higher educational establishments, the information media, the publishing community, the theatre and the cinema - are involved in this work. The school year begins with a "peace lesson", the purpose of which is to instil in the young the spirit of peace and friendship among nations.

Soviet women are endeavouring to forge strong and friendly ties with women of different countries and continents. In the international women's movement and at international, regional and national forums, the women of the Soviet Union are represented by the Committee of Soviet Women, a public organization which was created in 1941 and whose primary objective is the maintenance and strengthening of peace. Matters pertaining to the participation of Soviet women in the struggle for peace are included in the agendas of the Committee's annual plenary sessions. These sessions are regularly attended by women industrial and collective farm workers, teachers and doctors, engineers and scientists, representatives of the world of literature and the arts, and public and political figures. The 1985 plenum of the Committee of Soviet Women addressed to the women of the world a declaration entitled "For the peoples' right to life", which contained an appeal to do everything possible in order to avert a repetition of the horrors of war and fascism.

The aspirations of Soviet women to safeguard the peace are reflected on the pages of the press, including the central and republic journals, among them those published specially for women. The journal "Soviet Woman", which is published by the Committee of Soviet Women in 14 languages, devotes half of its articles to the contribution of Soviet women to the struggle for peace.

The magazine carries a permanent feature entitled "Tribunal of the world's scientists: For averting the threatened destruction of life on Earth", along with articles by doctors, jurists, ecologists, biologists, physicists, chemists and

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\* Translator's note: The term "public organization" may refer to any organized non-productive society.

others. The purpose of these writings is to drive home the catastrophic consequences that would result from the use of nuclear weapons, and to make it clear that any talk about the feasibility of limited nuclear war is a hideous deception, that neutron warfare threatens an unavoidable cataclysm, and that the unleashing of a nuclear war simply must not be permitted.

Soviet women warmly endorsed the noble aims of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development, Peace. They were very actively involved in the preparation and deliberations of the World Conferences in Mexico City (1975), Copenhagen (1980) and Nairobi (1985), which called upon the international community to take genuine measures to improve the status of women, pointing in particular to the need to strengthen the peace as a means of achieving the objectives and tasks that had been set to this end.

A joint statement drafted by the delegations of the socialist countries at the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women (Nairobi, 1985) emphasized that the major lesson of the Second World War, which had brought incalculable suffering to hundreds of millions of the world's women, was that war had to be fought before it began. This requires the joining of active and concerted efforts.

Soviet women greeted with profound satisfaction the decision adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session to declare 1986 an International Year of Peace. As part of the observance of the Year, a peace school was conducted in Leningrad with the participation of women representatives of the national women's organizations and anti-war movements of the participating countries of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. The city of Tashkent was chosen as the venue for a seminar on the subject "Women and development: Women's contribution to the maintenance of peace", in which women's organization representatives from Asian and Pacific Ocean countries took part.

These events were also attended by representatives of international non-governmental organizations and of the United Nations system, including its specialized agencies.

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, Secretary-General of the United Nations, sent a message of greetings to the participants of the Tashkent seminar, in which he expressed high praise for the contribution of Soviet women to the pursuit of the noble objectives underlying the International Year of Peace.

#### Participation of Soviet women in the socio-political life of the country

At the heart of the Soviet Union's official policy of involving women in political and public life is the principle that holds the participation of women in the management of the affairs of State to be an essential element of genuine equality in terms of sex. At the current stage of national development, the massive involvement of the workers, both men and women, in the management of society and the State means steady progress towards the goal of socialist self-administration by the people at a time when this administration is being effected not only in the interests of the workers but, increasingly, by the workers acting directly on their own behalf.

The Constitution of the USSR (article 48) grants all citizens - men and women - the right to participate in the management of State and public affairs. This right is secured through the possibility of voting and being elected to the Councils of the People's Deputies and other elected governmental bodies, and of participating in nation-wide discussions and votes, in the exercise of people's control, in the work of State agencies, public organizations and voluntary

non-governmental bodies, and in meetings organized by working collectives and at the citizen's place of residence.

The level of Soviet women's public and political activity continued to rise during the period 1982-1985. This is confirmed by the comparative statistical data for 1982 and 1985. For example, the number of women elected to the organs of State authority - the Councils of the People's Deputies - increased during the four years in question from 1,146,000 to 1,160,000.

A high level of participation by women in the work of the Councils is characteristic of all the union republics. According to the data for the latest elections (1985), women accounted for 51 per cent of the membership of the local councils in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), 50 per cent in the Ukrainian SSR, 50 per cent in the Byelorussian SSR, 48 per cent in the Uzbek SSR, 50 per cent in the Kazakh SSR, 51 per cent in the Georgian SSR, 48 per cent in the Azerbaidzhan SSR, 50 per cent in the Lithuanian SSR, 50 per cent in the Moldavian SSR, 50 per cent in the Latvian SSR, 50 per cent in the Kirgiz SSR, 50 per cent in the Tadzhik SSR, 50 per cent in the Armenian SSR, 50 per cent in the Turkmen SSR and 50 per cent in the Estonian SSR.

The 1984 elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR also confirmed the increasing involvement of Soviet women in the public and political arena. A total of 492 women were elected to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, representing 33 per cent of the deputies to that body (in 1979 there were 487 women deputies to the Supreme Soviet, or 32 per cent of the total membership). This increase in the number of women deputies in the country's highest organ of authority extended to both houses - the Council of the Union and the Council of Nationalities. Women deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR are drawn from industrial and collective farmworkers and the intelligentsia and represent many nationalities and ethnic groups from within our country, different generations and occupations.

Women deputies have seats on the commissions of both chambers of the Supreme Soviet, including the Commission on Foreign Affairs, the Commission on Youth Affairs, the Commission on Public Health, the Commission on the Working and Living Conditions of Women and the Protection of Mothers and Children, etc. They participate in the discussion of proposed legislation, in the approval of national economic development plans and the State budget, and in the adoption of decisions regarding the most vital issues of domestic and foreign policy.

Tens of thousands of women hold responsible positions in the local Councils of the People's Deputies and serve as chairmen, deputy chairmen and executive committee section heads. Women also participate in the management of the production sector, where they perform a wide range of functions (planning, organization and supervision), in addition to which they account for some 65 per cent of the personnel of the agencies of State Government and economic administration and of the bodies with responsibility for managing the activities of co-operative and public organizations at all levels.

Women represent 11 per cent of the supervisory staff at production combines and enterprises.

Soviet women occupy responsible positions in the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Councils of Ministers of the union republics. There are 22 women at the head of ministries in the union republics, including ministers of various branches of industry, education, culture, foreign affairs, justice and social security.



The role of women in the different organs of the justice system is increasing. In 1985, 3,968 women were elected as people's court judges, representing 37 per cent of the total number of people's court judges in the Soviet Union. Among the lay court assessors there are 420,551 women, which is 56 per cent of the total number of lay assessors.

Women are participating constructively and energetically in the activities of different public organizations and mass worker associations. The participation of these broad-based organizations in the activities of the common Soviet State is provided for under the Constitution of the USSR. Not only may their representatives be found in election commissions at all levels, but the public organizations also have the right to put forward their own candidates for deputies, and in fact they make active use of this right. The views of the public organizations are taken into account when preparing new laws and other standard-setting regulations. In a number of cases, these organizations are granted the right to block the execution of managerial decisions.

For young women, the country's youth organizations provide an excellent training school for public activity. Women represent more than half of all the members of the All-Union Leninist Communist Youth League (Komsomol) and more than half of the secretaries of the primary Komsomol organizations. They account for about 30 per cent of the secretaries of the League's regional and territorial committees and of the Komsomol central committees in the union republics.

Practically all working women are trade union members and are broadly represented in supervisory positions within the unions. Women account for more than half of all trade union members. They represent 35.8 per cent of the staff of the leading trade union body, the All-Union Central Trade Union Council, 44 per cent of the staff of the central committees of the branch unions, 47 per cent of the staff of the trade union councils, and 51 per cent of the staff of the republic, territorial and regional trade union committees. Of the trade union committee chairmen, more than 60 per cent are women.

Women's involvement in the co-operative organizations is also considerable. For example, women represent 67 per cent of the share-holding members of the consumer co-operative movement. Within their co-operatives, many women have been elected to the board of directors, the control and auditing commission and other committees. One out of every three consumer society board chairmen is a woman.

Women are actively working in such public organizations as the Committee of Soviet Women, the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, the Soviet Committee for the Defence of Peace, the Soviet Peace Foundation and others.

The large-scale involvement of women in public production, their rising general cultural attainments and professional qualifications, and their increasing knowledgeability are all factors that ensure a reliable basis for further advances in their participation in public and political life.

#### Guarantees of equal rights in the area of education

In accordance with the Basic Principles of the Legislation of the Soviet Union and the Union Republics on Public Education in the USSR, all of the following are guaranteed: the equality of all citizens of the USSR in respect of opportunities for acquiring education, regardless of sex; general and compulsory secondary education for young people; the public character of all educational and training establishments as institutions of the State; freedom to choose the language of instruction; instruction in the student's own language or in the language of

another national group within the USSR; the free nature of all forms of education, the provision of full State support for a part of those engaged in studies, the issue of textbooks at no charge, the availability of scholarships for students and the eligibility of the latter for specified allowances and other forms of material assistance; the unity of the system of public education and the continuity of all types of academic establishments, making it possible to advance from lower to higher levels of education; the relevance of the younger generation's training and education to the genuine concerns of life and to the practical objective of building a new society; joint instruction for persons of both sexes; etc.

The implementation of these principles has opened up for women broad access to technical vocational training and to education at the specialized secondary and higher levels. With account taken of the needs of the society, women are able to acquire any profession in keeping with their inclinations, calling and abilities. Marriage in no way limits a woman in terms of her free choice of a profession or occupation (article 11 of the Basic Principles of the Legislation on Marriage). She may independently and without the consent of her husband decide where she wishes to acquire her vocational training - whether at an educational institution or directly on the job. Any actions on the part of the husband aimed at restricting his wife's freedom to choose a profession or occupation represent grounds for the dissolution of the marriage.

Within the enrolment at higher institutions of learning, women represented 52 per cent of the student body during the 1981-1982 academic year, and 54 per cent during the 1984-1985 academic year. Women appear to be most interested in educational programmes in the area of economics and law (where female students account for 71 per cent of the enrolment), education, art and cinematography (72 per cent) and public health (59 per cent). They account for 42 per cent of the students enrolled at higher institutions of technical education. The number of women at intermediate secondary technical schools also increased from 56 per cent in 1982 to 58 per cent in 1984.

There has been a continuous rise in the level of education of Soviet women: in 1979, of every 1,000 women employed in the national economy, 801 had a background of secondary and higher education (complete or partial), whereas by 1984 the figure had risen to 862.

The availability of equal opportunities in education and employment has led to the extensive involvement of women in science. For the country as a whole, women accounted for 39.9 per cent of the total number of scientific workers in 1980, and for 40.0 per cent in 1984. Of the total number of women pursuing careers in science, 14 per cent held a doctorate degree and 28 per cent the degree of Candidate of Sciences.

At a time of scientific and technical progress, great importance attaches to the increasing percentage of women within the engineering community. In the industrial sector, every other engineer is a woman. Some 3 million women are members of the All-Union Society of Inventors and Rationalizers.

The reform of the general educational and vocational school system in progress within the country is contributing to an improvement in the whole area of education and to an upgrading in the training given to the younger generation to equip them for life and work. This reform is aimed at increasing the effectiveness of education, ensuring that students are familiar with the use of computers, and radically improving the preparation of youth for independent life and work.

Some 11,000 million roubles have been allocated from the State budget for the implementation of the measures connected with the reform of the general educational

and vocational school system. This sum includes, calculated on a yearly basis, 3,500 million roubles for salary increases for teachers and other educational workers, of whom women represent 75 per cent.

During the twelfth five-year plan (1986-1990), in addition to some 800 technical trade colleges, new schools are to be built to provide 7 million places, i.e., nearly twice as many as during the 1981-1985 period.

#### Equality in employment

Women in the USSR enjoy the same right as men to work, i.e., to guaranteed employment under which their labour paid in accordance with its quantity and quality and not below a minimum level set by the State. This includes the right to the selection of a profession or occupation and of work in accordance with the individual's calling, abilities, professional training and education, and with account taken of the needs of society (article 40 of the Constitution of the USSR). This principle has been given concrete expression in the labour legislation.

The law prohibits any direct or indirect limitation of rights, or the establishment of any direct or indirect advantages in hiring, for reasons of sex, race, national origin or attitude towards religion (article 9 of the Basic Principles of the Legislation on Labour).

The labour legislation makes it illegal to refuse to hire women, or to reduce their wages, for reasons connected with the fact that they may be pregnant or nursing a child.

The dismissal of pregnant women, nursing mothers, and women with children of up to one year of age at the initiative of the management is not allowed, except in cases involving the total liquidation of an institution, enterprise or organization, at which time dismissal is permitted, but with the mandatory requirement that new employment must be provided (article 73 of the Basic Principles of the Legislation on Labour).

Under State planning of the socialist economy - with its goals of the uniform development of all regions of the country and the different branches of the national economy, the rational allocation of production forces, the comprehensive exploitation of natural resources, the creation of new industrial centres, the accelerated development of new forms of production under the influence of scientific and technical progress - there is a guaranteed and stable demand for labour. By regulating the availability of labour according to plan and on a scale embracing the entire society, it becomes possible to use such workers as are released in the course of economic restructuring at alternative sites, thereby effectively guaranteeing the full employment of the economically active population.

For the practical solution of questions relating to job placement, State agencies with responsibility for the utilization of labour resources have been established throughout the country. Working together with the ministries and enterprises, and with the participation of the trade unions, these organs review the issues involved in the redistribution of industrial and office workers within specific enterprises, within the national economy and within a specific territory.

Thanks to the use of the full range of socio-economic, legal, political and demographic factors on a planned basis, the USSR has succeeded in ensuring near-maximum employment of women in the economy. Of the total pool of women of employable age, 92 per cent are either working or studying at day-time educational establishments, and of this number 84 per cent are working only. In 1982, the number of women employed as industrial and office workers totalled 58.9 million,

and in 1985 - 60 million. The percentage of women among all specialists employed in the national economy has reached 60 per cent.

The far-reaching restructuring of the economy which is taking place in the country on the basis of the latest achievements of science and technology brings with it greater demands in terms of the general educational level and technical proficiency of the workers. Qualified workers for key posts are trained in the USSR at technical trade schools, where girls are free to select at will the trade or occupation in which they wish to become qualified. During the instruction period, all students, regardless of sex, are fully supported by the State, which pays them a stipend, provides them with food and issues them a uniform.

Beside the State system of vocational technical training, the enterprises themselves are directly involved in training workers for different occupations and also in upgrading their qualifications. To this end, an extensive system of courses, programmes, schools and teaching associations has been set up at the enterprise level.

In order to create conditions conducive to the continuous improvement by the workers of their skills, the enterprises are given annual worker training and proficiency-improvement assignments, which since 1979 have included special assignments for upgrading the qualifications of women. Moreover, not only do women enjoy equal opportunities with men in the skill-improvement area, but a number of advantages as well. For example, mothers with children of up to eight years of age are released from their basic work-related duties, but retain their average monthly wage during the period they spend in retraining or in qualification-enhancement programmes.

Women account for nearly 50 per cent of the supervisors and specialists undergoing training to increase their skill ratings.

A number of special benefits have been established under the law for persons engaged in part-time training (i.e., with no disruption of their job-related duties). These include: a reduction of the working week or in the duration of daily work with payment in the amount of 50 per cent of the regular wage, and also paid training leave.

The consistent policy of the USSR is to create firm guarantees to enable every woman to exercise her right to work. All persons who have successfully completed their vocational training are ensured employment. According to data for 1984, women are most prominently represented in health care, physical culture and social security (82 per cent), public education (75 per cent) and culture (74 per cent).

As part of their active role in the professional world women are entitled to equal remuneration for their labour. The Basic Principles of the Legislation of the Soviet Union and the Union Republics on Labour (article 36) make it illegal to apply a lower wage or salary entitlement for reasons of sex, age, race or national origin. The right to equal pay for equal work is guaranteed under the system of centralized wage control. This system includes among its elements unified wage and salary scales for the performance of identical kinds of work in different branches, regardless of sex. In 1982, the average monthly pay of industrial and office workers amounted to 177.3 roubles, and in 1985 to 190 roubles. During the period 1981-1985, the wages and salaries of industrial and office workers increased by 13 per cent, and of collective farm workers by 29 per cent. Taking into account allowances and benefits financed out of the social consumption funds, the average monthly wage in 1982 was 246.8 roubles, and in 1985 - 268 roubles.

A particular feature in the way Soviet women's right to work is implemented in practice may be seen in the fact that the employment provided entails favourable working conditions of a kind that pose no threat to either the woman's health or to the performance of her maternal function.

Work-place safeguards for women include a range of economic, legal, medical and technical measures aimed at creating the kind of working conditions that will allow every woman to combine a professional career in the public sector with her role as mother.

As planned, measures are being introduced, in all branches of the economy, to bring about improvements in the working conditions of women. For example, production processes are first mechanized and automated at work-sites where women are employed. At present, women account for about half the workers engaged in mechanized labour, for 78 per cent of automatic assembly line operators, and for 40.3 per cent of operators working with automatic machines.

To a very considerable extent, the active involvement of women in the labour market, their professional growth and the availability of favourable conditions for the raising of their children depend on the arrangements for day-to-day living. The Soviet Government is greatly concerned with improving the performance of the service and amenities sector. For the country as a whole, the number of enterprises operating in this sector totalled 276,000 in 1982 and 286,000 in 1984. During the same period, the monetary volume of amenity services to the public increased from 8,800 million roubles to 9,800 million roubles. It was to address the problems in this area that the Government adopted in 1985 the Comprehensive Programme for the Development of Consumer Goods Production and the Amenity Service Sector over the Period 1986-2000. This programme looks forward to an increased volume of more diversified and better-quality goods and services for the purpose of completely satisfying the public's growing requirements in a variety of areas having to do with housing, utilities, amenities and with social and cultural opportunities. Other related objectives are the lightening of housework and the provision of more adequate conditions for relaxation and the constructive use of leisure time. In this connection, the development of the service sector is to be particularly accelerated in rural localities and in newly settled regions.

#### Social security for women

Like the right to work, so too the right to State and publicly funded social security serves as an economic guarantee of material security for women.

The principle of the equality of women in the social security area is reflected in the fact of equal entitlements for both men and women. The basic old-age pension benefit is set according to the beneficiary's earnings, ranging between 50 and 75 per cent of his or her previous wages or salary.

During the period 1981-1985, a 20 per cent pension supplement was introduced for industrial and office workers with lengthy and uninterrupted service at one and the same enterprise.

The legislation also provides for special social insurance benefits for women only. Women become eligible for old-age pensions at age 55 and after a period of service of not less than 20 years, whereas for men the earliest age is 60 years after not less than 25 years of service (article 8 of the Law of the USSR on State Pensions). Women who have given birth to five or more children and who have raised them until their eighth year, and also mothers with a child disabled from its earliest years, may claim an old-age pension at age 55 with only five years of working service (article 12 of the Law of the USSR on State Pensions in the wording

of the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 2 September 1981).

In 1985, outlays for social security and social insurance measures totalled 61,100 million roubles, representing an increase of 12 per cent over the 1982 figure.

All pensioners, regardless of sex, are entitled to the equal enjoyment of the collective forms of social security and services for the elderly and the disabled: boarding houses and residential homes fully supported by the State. Elderly persons living at home can call on a range of social services (currently being expanded) that are delivered directly to their place of residence. Such persons, in addition to having food and other products brought to their homes, are provided with the necessary utility and amenity services, medical care and the like.

#### Situation of women in rural localities

In the USSR, all the provisions of the Convention are also observed in the case of women living in rural localities. Their equality with men is secured through their enjoyment of all the rights contemplated in the Constitution of the USSR. Rural women are also eligible for all the privileges and benefits available under Soviet legislation.

These women fully exercise their right to education and vocational training, to the free selection of a profession or occupation, and to equal pay for equal work.

All women wishing to work in agricultural production are ensured of employment, and women in fact account for 45 per cent of the collective farm work-force.

Training for workers who are to assume key positions in agriculture is provided at the agricultural trade schools, and training for specialists at the higher institutions of learning and technical colleges, where during the 1984-1985 academic year women accounted for 35 and 36 per cent of the enrolment, respectively.

Women represent a substantial portion of the country's agricultural specialists. Among the agronomists, animal specialists, veterinary doctors and economists with higher education, they account for 37 per cent, and among those with secondary specialized education for 52 per cent.

The number of women mechanization experts is increasing. These women are assigned agricultural machines equipped with seats and cabins of the most advanced design. Moreover, they also benefit from additional privileges: for example, women tractor operators engaged in agricultural production are granted 12 days of additional leave; for women mechanization specialists working on tractors, combines and other complicated farm equipment, 10 per cent lower output standards are in effect; preferential conditions apply to the awarding of old-age pensions, for which women in this occupational category become eligible at age 50 after a period of service of only 15 years.

The increasing mechanization of agricultural operations, the introduction of modern equipment, the organization of large-scale specialized agricultural complexes, etc., are all factors that are conspiring to bring about a convergence in the nature of agricultural and industrial work, while at the same time substantially adding to the opportunities of rural women to exercise their right to work.

The constitutional requirements for safeguards in the employment of women are fully observed in rural localities as well. This applies to the ban on the employment of women in jobs involving strenuous and harmful working conditions, and also to the area of special work-site protection during the period of active maternity. Soviet women take full advantage of the privileges and special benefits established under the laws of the USSR for all working women: children's allowances, special benefits for pregnant women and nursing mothers, the granting of pregnancy, maternity and child-care leave, regular medical examinations for preventive purposes, and the like.

Outlays for pensions and benefits, education and health care for rural residents are financed out of the State budget and the centralized social security fund for collective farm workers. In 1980, the minimum pension entitlement for women collective farm workers was increased by 40 per cent. Since 1985, minimum pension benefits have been raised for collective farm members to cover old age, disability and the loss of a breadwinner, in addition to which pension entitlements set more than 10 years ago have been increased. Measures have been taken to build additional boarding homes for pensioners and disabled persons in rural areas. These and many other measures introduced in recent years have had a positive effect on the status of elderly women in rural communities.

Public funds for the care of children and the provision of amenity services are being substantially increased throughout the countryside. In rural areas, alongside the facilities that are in permanent operation during the period of field work, seasonal nurseries and kindergartens are being set up. In 1985, these facilities provided care for more than one million children.

With the expansion and improvement of public services, the planned goal of creating better and more comfortable living conditions for rural inhabitants is being achieved. The volume of amenity services provided in rural localities increased in 1984 by a factor of 3.8 in comparison with 1970. Housing construction continues to gain momentum: during the period 1976-1980, at the collective farms alone 57,500,000 square metres of housing were built, and in the single year of 1984 - 11,900,000 square metres.

The increase in the participation of women in the agricultural labour market has been accompanied by a high degree of public and political activity on their part. Rural women are represented in all the organs of State authority without exception - from the rural Councils of the People's Deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Many rural working women have been elected to leadership positions in Party, Komsomol and trade union organizations, in addition to which they are serving as directors of collective and State farms, on collective farm councils, as members of the governing boards and auditing commissions of rural consumer collective organizations, and in other capacities as well.

The forward-looking changes that are currently taking place in agricultural production, coupled with the accelerated expansion of the social infrastructure in rural communities, are contributing to a convergence of the levels of economic development in the towns and countryside and to a more uniform life-style on the part of the urban and rural populations.

#### Motherhood - a social function of women

##### State assistance to the family

The Constitution of the USSR provides for the legal protection and for the material and moral support of maternity and childhood (article 35).

The arrangements for the protection of mothers and children include a range of labour-related privileges and additional guarantees for pregnant women and mothers. It is, for example, not permissible to refuse to hire a woman or to reduce her wage or salary for reasons connected with the fact that she is pregnant or nursing a child (article 73 of the Basic Principles of the Legislation on Labour). Pregnant women or mothers with children of up to one year of age may not be required to work at night, on holidays or on overtime, nor may they be sent on mission. Women with children of up to eight years of age may not be assigned to overtime work or sent on mission without their consent (article 69 of the Basic Principles).

The State discharges its task of protecting motherhood through a system of special institutions - maternity homes, hospital maternity departments, medical consultation offices for women, etc. - which have been given the responsibility of caring for the health of women. In the USSR, all women are eligible for free medical attention.

With each passing year there are new additions to the network of medical and obstetrical facilities providing care for pregnant and recently confined women. In 1985, there was a total of 27,800 women's consultation offices, children's clinics and out-patient centres.

Under the general scheme of public dispensary treatment being implemented in the country, particular attention is paid to the health of women and children.

In connection with pregnancy and childbirth, women are entitled to 112 calendar days of fully paid pre- and post-natal leave, which is extended to 126 days in the event of pathological complications.

During the period 1981-1983, the Government introduced partially paid child-care leave for the child's first year of life, along with supplementary unpaid leave until the child completes its eighteenth month. This leave, as well as the pregnancy and maternity leave, is credited towards the woman's total uninterrupted period of service and job seniority in her area of specialization. In all the cases cited, the woman retains the right to return to her job. One-time benefits have been introduced for the birth of a child in the amounts of 50 roubles for the first child and 100 roubles for the second and third.

Women who have adopted newborn children directly from a maternity home are treated, as far as rights and privileges are concerned, in the same way as mothers.

Working women with two or more children of up to 12 years of age are eligible for three days of supplementary paid leave and two weeks of unpaid leave. Leave of this kind may also be taken by the father in cases in which he is responsible for the raising of the children (death of the mother, dissolution of the marriage, etc.).

Since 1981, there has been an increase in the monthly allowance to single mothers. This benefit is paid until the child completes its sixteenth year, or, if the child is studying and not receiving a scholarship, until its eighteenth year.

In 1985 alone, 5,100 million roubles were allocated from social insurance and social security funds for the payment of pregnancy and maternity benefits, allowances to single mothers and mothers with numerous children, and in the form of benefits for the birth of a child, for child-care during the first year of life and for children in low-income families.



In our country, concern for the family, which plays a crucial role in raising the younger generation and strengthening its health, in securing the economic and social progress of society, and in improving demographic patterns, is a subject of enormous and increasing importance. It is within the family that a human being's basic character traits are formed, his attitude towards work is moulded, and his fundamental moral, ideological and cultural values are instilled. The socialist society is vitally interested therefore in a strong, spiritually and morally sound family.

The family in the USSR is under the protection of the State, which shows its concern for it by maintaining and expanding an extensive network of children's educational institutions, by improving the service infrastructure and public dining facilities, and by making available allowances and special benefits to families with numerous children and on the birth of a child, as well as other forms of family assistance.

During the period 1982-1985, implementation continued on a range of measures to increase assistance to families with children, to create favourable conditions so as to enable mothers to combine professional careers with the raising of their children, and to provide support to young families.

Additional facilities were added to the network of children's pre-school establishments: in comparison with 1982, the number of these establishments increased in 1985 by 7,300 to a total of 140,100 pre-school centres with an aggregate enrolment of 16.1 million children.

Since July 1984, allocations have been increased for the meals of children in pre-school institutions. Tuition at these centres is free for children from low-income families, and has been reduced by one-half for children from families with four or more children. On the whole, the State assumes 80 per cent of the costs of accommodating children at pre-school establishments.

Each family is entitled to enrol a child in a pre-school establishment. For acceptance at nursery-kindergartens, however, preference is given to the children of working mothers, mothers with numerous children and also mothers pursuing studies at evening schools, through correspondence courses and at full-time educational establishments. A priority right to the placement of a child in a pre-school children's institution is also accorded to single mothers.

Family assistance for school-age children is provided through the system of general educational schools and technical vocational training centres. During the 1984-1985 academic year, 40.8 million students were enrolled in the country's general educational schools.

There has been an increase in the number of extended-day schools and schools with extended-day groups from 83,100 during the 1981-1982 academic year to 85,800 during the 1984-1985 year. During the same period, the number of students in these groups rose from 11.3 million to 12.8 million persons. Under this form of instruction, the children remain at the school after class under the supervision of teachers and instructors until their parents return from work.

Of considerable assistance to parents in raising their children are the extra-school children's institutions, which help in developing the children's aptitudes and inclinations and their interests in social activity, work, science and technology, art and sports, as well as in organizing their leisure time along cultural lines. More than 40,000 such institutions - pioneer homes and centres, young technicians' and young naturalists' stations, musical, artistic and choreographic schools, children's railways, etc. - are attended by millions of

children. The use of these facilities costs the family budget nothing, since they are fully supported by the State.

The trade unions are a source of great assistance to families by organizing the summer vacations of children and parents. In 1985 alone, more than 17.2 million children and adolescents vacationed at the health camps operated by the trade unions. A summer vacation for the children is within the reach of every Soviet family. Since 1983, 50 per cent of the total number of authorizations to pioneer and other health camps for schoolchildren have been made available at no charge, while the remaining half have been issued at a price representing only 20 per cent of the cost.

As a result of the decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the All-Union Central Trade Union Council, adopted in 1982 and entitled "On measures for further improvements in the treatment provided at sanatoria and resorts and in the recuperation of workers and on the expansion of the network of trade union health facilities", every year has brought greater opportunities for joint vacationing by parents and children. During the period from 1982 to 1984, the number of sanatoria and recuperation establishments increased by 1,300, reaching a total of 15,300 at the end of that time. Of the total number of accommodation places at these establishments, 964,000 were reserved for family vacations and 13,000 for the treatment of children accompanied by their parents.

An important instrument for the health care of working women and their children has been developed in the form of the preventive sanatoria which are attached to industrial enterprises and at which a medical base providing comprehensive, sanatorium-type treatment has been created. In 1984, health programmes for more than 300,000 mothers and their children were organized at these preventive sanatoria. In recent years, it has become a common practice to use the medical base of these preventive sanatoria for the prophylactic and health-strengthening treatment of children attending pre-school institutions.

#### Marital and family relations

Article 53 of the Constitution of the USSR states that "marriage is based on the mutual consent of the man and woman; the spouses are fully equal in the area of family relations". The mutual consent of the persons entering the marriage, as well as their attainment of the marriagable age, are among the mandatory conditions for the contraction of a valid marriage (article 10 of the Basic Principles of the Legislation of the Soviet Union and the Union Republics on Marriage and the Family). The failure to observe either of these conditions will result in the recognition of the marriage as invalid (article 15 of the Basic Principles). All the rules pertaining to the contraction of marriage apply equally to both the woman and the man. The law forbids any direct or indirect limitation of rights whatsoever or the establishment of any direct or indirect advantages at the time of entering marriage or in family relations on the grounds of national origin, race or attitude towards religion (article 4 of the Basic Principles).

The constitutional disposition on the equality of women and men in family relations is developed not only in the general provisions of the Basic Principles of Civil Legislation of the Soviet Union and the Union Republics on Marriage and the Family and in the family codes of the different republics, but also in the norms of family law designed to regulate specific marital and family relationships.

In accordance with Soviet legislation on marriage and the family, the personal rights of the spouses, including the right to the selection of a family name when entering into marriage, the right to the joint settlement of issues pertaining to

family life and the raising of children, and the right to the free selection of an occupation, profession and place of residence, belong to both spouses on a basis of parity. The spouses also enjoy equal rights with respect to the ownership, use and disposition of property acquired during the marriage (article 12 of the Basic Principles).

The spouses - the wife and husband - also enjoy equal rights and duties in the event the marriage is dissolved.

In the interest of protecting the woman in her role as mother, the law provides for the obligation of the husband to support his wife, regardless of her ability to work, during the period of pregnancy and for 18 months following the birth of a child. This right is maintained even after the marriage has been dissolved.

The father and mother have equal rights and duties with regard to their children. These rights remain equal in the event also that the marriage of the parents is terminated. The parents are also fully equal in their rights and duties with regard to their children when a child has been born out of wedlock, on the condition that the paternity has been established either in the form of a joint declaration to this effect by the parents at a civil registration office or by decision of the court (article 16 of the Basic Principles).

The rights of parents may not be exercised contrary to the interests of their children (article 18 of the Basic Principles). Primary account is taken of the children's interests when settling any issue pertaining to them, e.g., when selecting the child's name and family name, when determining with which of the two separated parents the child is to live, when establishing procedures for the participation of a separated parent in raising a child and maintaining contact with it, etc.

The woman has the right to determine on her own the question as to whether or not to give birth to a child. If she does not wish to have a child, she has the right to an abortion, which is performed free of charge at State-operated medical institutions. Women can receive counselling on the avoidance of pregnancy at special women's consultation offices.

Women are entitled, on a basis of parity with men, to act as a tutor or guardian or to adopt children, and they enjoy equal rights in the performance of these duties (articles 24 and 26 of the Basic Principles). Adoption in the USSR is permitted only in the interests of the children. When establishing tutelage or guardianship or selecting the tutor or guardian, once again it is solely the interests of the children that are the guiding factor.

In continuing its efforts on behalf of a stronger family, the Soviet State has enacted more effective legal provisions to safeguard the rights of women in the area of family relations and has carried forward its policy of material support for single mothers and of protection for the rights of children. Measures have been adopted to increase material assistance for children whose parents are evading their responsibility to provide support. In February 1984, a decree was adopted by the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR that simplified the court proceedings for the exaction of support for minor children in cases in which there is no dispute between the parents.

#### Penal legislation

In the penal legislation of the Soviet Union and the union republics there neither are nor can be any provisions of a discriminatory nature against women,

since, as has already been noted, the Constitution of the USSR forbids discrimination on the basis of sex. On the contrary, a number of criminal law provisions are aimed at safeguarding the rights and interests of women. In accordance with article 134 of the Criminal Code of the RFRSR and the corresponding articles in the criminal codes of the other union republics, it is a crime to refuse to hire a woman, to dismiss her or to lower her wages for reasons connected with pregnancy or the nursing of a child. Criminal responsibility is also provided for rape, the illegal performance of an abortion under conditions constituting a threat to the health of the woman, malicious evasion of child support payments, the operation of a den of vice, pandering for personal profit, the payment of acceptance of a bride-price, the act of coercing a woman to enter marriage or of preventing her from doing so, bigamy or polygamy, etc. The amnesty acts adopted in the USSR apply in the first instance to women who have minor children.

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The Soviet Union, as one of the first States to accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, is meticulously observing all these provisions.

The information contained in this report attests to the fulfilment by the Government of the USSR of all of its commitments under the Convention.

The broad-based participation of Soviet women in the management of State affairs, in the public production sector, in scientific activities and in the creation of spiritual values is a major objective of the socialist society and a necessary condition for its development.

The acceleration of the socio-economic development of the country, the consistent and steady expansion of socialist self-management by the people, and the further elevation of national prosperity are all factors that are opening up new and favourable opportunities for the enhancement of the role of women in the labour market, in society and within the family, and for the display by women of initiative and creative activity.