

**Response of the Syrian Arab Republic to the memorandum  
of the Secretary General no. DAW/2005/002  
30/MAR/2005**

The Syrian Committee for Family Affairs has taken several measures with regards to the forms of violence against women, they are as follow:

First: The association held a seminar on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on 25/11/2004 – for the first time in Syria – during which it hosted all Non-Governmental Organizations which endeavor to eliminate violence against women and has put forth the following recommendations:

- The creation of a national committee (governmental and civil) to strategize common work to combat violence against women in Syria.
- The preparation, by the Syrian Committee for Family Affairs, of a national plan which will focus on the issue of violence against women.
- Raising awareness to combat violence against women and finding the mechanisms to enact this.

Second: The Syrian Committee for Family Affairs has created a committee for the elimination of violence against women, composed by governmental entities concerned with the issues of women (the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Information) and non-governmental entities (the Association of Syrian Women, the Social Enterprise Initiative, the National Assembly for the Advancement of Women, the Syrian Nunhood), in addition to the General Union for Women and several national experts (both female and male).

Third: The committee has founded the 'national project plan' to eliminate violence against women and it will be referred to the specialized entities (Ministries and Organizations) for declaration and execution.

Fourth: The Syrian Committee for Family Affairs has endeavored to advocate the agreement on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women by establishing five workshops associated with the agreement. The first workshop includes the concerned governmental entities (the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Endowment, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Culture...). The four remaining workshops held talks with members of the People's Assembly in four Syrian counties (Aleppo, Tartous, Edlib and Damascus) and hosted clerics in each workshop to present the viewpoint of Islamic jurisprudence with regards to reservations and the extent of their breach of the Shari'a Law. All workshops reached the conclusion that all reservations be lifted off all articles except for paragraphs "c" and "f" of Article 16 because they are incompatible with the Shari'a Law, as well as Article 29 so it may not be used against the sovereignty of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Fifth: The Committee has established, in cooperation with the civil society and governmental entities concerned, the First Report of the Syrian Republic regarding the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, after its ratification on 25/09/2003.

A training workshop for the team was also established on 15, 16, 17/03/2005 for the mechanisms of presenting reports to the United Nations Women's Committee in cooperation with the Embassy of Sweden. Additionally, a smaller workshop has been set up with an expert from ESCWA to review the report dated 29, 30/04/2005.

Sixth: A poster of the Convention has been issued and distributed to all Governmental and Non-Governmental entities, seminars and workshops. The Convention has also been printed and distributed to all the governmental and civil society entities.

Seventh: The activities of the Committee related to the issue of violence against women have been covered by all local newspapers (tishrin, The Revolution, the Ba'th and Al Nour newspapers), national magazines (White & Black and The New Woman's Magazines...), electronic magazines (Syria's Rich Women), in addition to Syrian television, its three national channels and Syrian radio stations.

