



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

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

**Consideration of reports submitted by States
parties under article 18 of the Convention on the
Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

Fifth periodic report of States parties

Jordan*

* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not formally edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.

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I. Introduction

1. This fifth periodic report of Jordan on its implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is submitted in fulfilment of Jordan's international obligations and pursuant to the provisions of article 18 of the Convention. The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) was responsible for preparing the report, which addresses the matters outlined below:

- Jordan's progress toward the elimination of discrimination against women in all areas, including education, health care, employment, and economic and social development. That progress has been substantial in respect of a number of the issues covered in the Convention: legislative and other measures aimed at achieving gender equality and enhancement of the status of women have been enacted in accordance with the Constitution and are in force in all regions of the country, urban areas, rural areas and semi-arid regions alike;
- Jordan's efforts to incorporate a gender perspective in its plans and strategies;
- Activities of various organizations and agencies that relate to the advancement of women, with supporting statistical indicators. A participatory method featuring cooperation with a number of bodies concerned with the status of women, both governmental and non-governmental, was used for the discussions preceding the drafting of this report. In addition, a number of workshops were organized to discuss the draft text.

2. This report surveys the articles of the Convention one by one and answers the concluding observations formulated by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in the course of its discussion with the delegation of Jordan following the submission of the combined third and fourth periodic reports on 2 August 2007. It also responds to the Committee's general recommendations, and conforms to the 2003 document entitled "Compilation of guidelines on the form and content of reports to be submitted by States Parties to the international human rights treaties" and the Beijing Platform for Action. In a word, the report summarizes Jordan's implementation of the several articles of the Convention and the progress it achieved between July 2005 and November 2009 in promoting the civil, political, economic, social and cultural status of women.

3. Jordan has submitted three reports to the United Nations on its follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action, the most recent of them, Beijing + 15, having been submitted in May 2009. Jordan has committed to the implementation of political, economic and social reform and development programmes, despite local, regional and international challenges, and has achieved significant progress in many of the areas covered in the Convention.

Jordan's reservations to the Convention

4. Jordan has withdrawn its reservation to article 15, paragraph 4 of the Convention, endeavouring as it is to fulfil its obligations under the Convention in its national regime of law, including publication of the Convention in the Official Gazette.

5. We should like to direct the Committee's attention to a recommendation adopted in November 2008 by an advisory committee established by the Chamber of Representatives to consider the role of Parliament in the application of international conventions. The

committee recommended that Jordan's reservations should be reviewed with a view to their withdrawal, where possible.

The Optional Protocol

6. With reference to the Committee's recommendations and observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports, as formulated at its thirty-ninth session, no decision has been taken as yet on ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention. The matter is under study, and Jordan is examining its other reservations as well. The National Centre for Human Rights, in its annual report for 2008, recommended ratification of the Optional Protocol.

II. Information relating to articles 1-16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Part I

Article 1

7. Jordan's efforts to enable Jordanian women to exercise their rights and perform their duties are consistent with the principles of the country's Constitution, article 6 of which provides that all citizens are fully equal in rights, duties and opportunity. Positive discrimination in favour of women is authorized under provisions of law stating that where necessary special conditions for the employment of women and young persons may be adopted, and that it is the duty of the State to ensure that all Jordanians have work, education, public order and equality of opportunity. Furthermore, the National Charter provides that all Jordanians, both men and women, are equal before the law, without distinction as to rights and duties. The 2006 "We are all Jordan" initiative affirmed the country's obligations under international treaties and other instruments relating to the status of women.

8. Jordan has ratified many international human rights instruments providing for non-discrimination on the basis of gender, including the Convention, which was published in the Official Gazette on 1 August 2007 and thereby became an integral part of Jordan's domestic law ranking above other legislation under article 24 of the Civil Code, which states, "The provisions of the preceding articles shall not apply where they conflict with any provision of a special act or international treaty in force in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan." All public authorities are required to enforce its provisions, and they have authoritative force in Jordanian court decisions on cases to which they are relevant; to treat them as invalid or to refuse to implement them would be an offence punishable by law. Legal jurisprudence has been consistent on this point; an example is the Court of Cassation's decision No. 818/2003, in which the Court held that "International treaties and conventions take precedence over domestic law, and have priority of application in the event of any incompatibility. No provision of domestic law may prevail over the provisions of an international convention."

9. In accordance with the Beijing Platform for Action, which provides for equality before the law, non-discrimination, and the strengthening of women's rights, Jordan's National Strategy for Women, 2006-2010, devotes considerable attention to legislation. In addition, work is proceeding on the task of amending existing legislation to bring it into line with international instruments and eliminate gender-based violence.

Article 2

Article 2 (a)

10. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 14, on the enactment of a comprehensive gender equality law, Jordan has emphasized in previous reports that under the Constitution, all Jordanians are equal before the law, without discrimination, and that many provisions of law and regulations currently in force contain provisions clearly and explicitly stating that women and men are equal and that gender-based discrimination is not lawful. Examples include the National Assembly Election Act, for example, in its definition of the term "Jordanian", the Labour Code of 2008, the National Centre for Human Rights Act of 2006, the Civil Service Regulations of 2007, and other statutory instruments.

11. The Government adopted a Socio-economic Development Plan for 2004-2006, and in 2005 the task of preparing a national agenda was entrusted to a steering committee established by royal decree, made up of representatives from all sectors, which set objectives for the coming decade, 2006-2015, and subsequently issued the Agenda in the context of the "We are all Jordan" initiative as a long-term strategy. To implement these two documents, the Government prepared an executive development programme for the period 2007-2009, followed by another for the period 2009-2011, adopting a participatory approach with civil society institutions and experts in the field of human rights and the advancement of women. The programme featured the integration of the Millennium Development Goals and the accompanying indicators, including in particular Goal 3, "Promote gender equality and empower women", with a view to ensuring that women would be able to exercise all their rights without discrimination. New legislation was adopted and existing legislation amended in line with the provisions of the Convention. A plan for training in gender-sensitive budgeting techniques has been included in Jordan's senior and mid-level management leadership programme in preparation for the introduction of gender-sensitive budgeting by 2011.

12. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 18, on sensitizing Parliament and public opinion regarding the importance of expediting legal reform, JNCW joined forces with civil society organizations to prepare a list of demands for 2007. The list was prefaced by a statement on the importance of moving quickly to implement legal reform, followed by a series of proposed amendments to a total of 12 acts with a bearing on the status of women and draft proposals for new legislation. It was distributed to all Members of the National Assembly and the Council of Ministers. The aim of this initiative was to work in cooperation and coordination with the Members of the National Assembly to have the amendments adopted and the draft bills enacted when they were submitted to the Assembly. Some acts have been amended, included the Labour Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Penal Code, the Civil Retirement Act, and the Associations Act of 2009. New legislation has also been enacted, including the Municipalities Act of 2007, the Disabled Persons Rights Act of 2007, the Domestic Violence Protection Act of 2008, and the Act to Prevent Trafficking in Persons of 2009.

13. In addition, a monitoring team consisting of Members of the Chamber of Representatives and members of JNCW has been established for the purpose of conducting a joint review of legislation containing provisions that are discriminatory toward women and the role of the Assembly in applying the Convention. In the Chamber of Notables (the upper house of Parliament), a committee on family affairs was established in 2008, with responsibility for studying proposals and draft legislation with a bearing on families and family affairs, studying international treaties and conventions, and discussing and studying policies and decrees with a bearing on family issues. In 2008, the National Council for Family Affairs set up a technical bureau to liaise with the Chamber of Notables and the

Chamber of Representatives with a view to strengthening the role of parliamentarians in discussing and analysing general policies relating to family matters.

Article 2 (b)

14. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 17, Jordan's legislative and other measures have evolved in recent years, confirming the country's determination to implement legal reform. Article 208 of the Penal Code as amended (Act No. 49 of 2007) has been amended to bring it into line with article 1 of the 2006 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Under the amended article 208, any act involving the infliction of pain or torture based on discrimination of any kind, or inciting any other person to commit such an act, is a criminal offence. The law ensures that the perpetrator of every such offence will be liable to severe penalties by providing that "The court shall not stay the application of the prescribed penalty for such offences or substitute more lenient measures."

15. Under article 29 of the 2008 act amending the Labour Code, sexual harassment is an offence. Under article 77, persons who contravene the provisions of articles in the chapter relating to the rights of women and children are liable to more severe penalties. The Code provides that the use of forced labour is unlawful, in line with international conventions, and offenders are liable to more severe penalties if they subsequently reoffend.

16. Pursuant to Act No. 51 of 2006, the National Centre for Human Rights receives complaints and deals with any encroachments upon or violations of human rights, either by settling cases itself or referring them to the competent executive or judicial authority to ensure that the unlawful behaviour ceases and that its effects are nullified. A commission to support public rights and freedoms has been established; it comprises two units, one to follow up cases of violations of such rights and one to look into complaints. In 2008 there were 176 complaints relating to women's rights, including 128 in the area of civil and political rights and 48 in the area of economic, social and cultural rights. In that same year, 209 women received assistance, including 140 who had lodged complaints relating to their civil and political rights and 69 who had lodged complaints relating to their socio-economic rights. The Centre has organized a working group to follow up and observe cases of administrative detention and disparities between the provisions of law and international human rights and fair trial safeguards. The Complaints and Legal Services unit receives complaints about administrative detention and conducts monitoring operations to ensure that violations have ceased, working to that end with the appropriate administrative authorities.

17. Under article 66 of the Public Health Act of 2008, every contravention of the Act or regulations made thereunder in matters relating to the organization of public health or maternal and child health is an offence.

18. The President of the Civil Service Commission is empowered to stay the application of any decision or decree that is inconsistent with the provisions of the Civil Service Regulations or the Job Descriptions Regulations, including any form of inequality of treatment or opportunity.

19. An anti-corruption agency has been established under an act adopted in 2006. Its function is to ensure that the principles of equality, equal opportunity and justice are applied. The act defines corruption as any activity identified as such in international anti-corruption instruments to which Jordan has acceded. It is noteworthy that one of the agency's members is a woman.

20. An official known as the Ombudsman has been established under a 2008 act to deal with complaints about the public administration or its officials. The Office of the Ombudsman began its work in February 2009, and as of November 2009 it had received

504 complaints from women, including 138 alleging unfairness in making appointments, 69 alleging misuse of the role of the appointment process, 183 alleging unfair administrative or judicial decisions, 14 alleging mistreatment by a public official, 7 alleging mistreatment by private individuals or institutions, 34 requests for financial relief, and 27 requests for changes to job duties. Of these complaints, 199 were denied on the grounds that the Ombudsman did not have jurisdiction or that too much time had elapsed, 17 were settled amicably, 104 were still under study and investigation at the time of writing, 57 were being followed up, 18 had been terminated with a settlement, 16 had been terminated as groundless, 2 had been withdrawn, 73 were sent back for clarification, and 9 had been retained.

21. On 28 December 2009, a complaints management unit was established within the Ministry of Public Sector Development for the purpose of receiving all complaints, proposals and questions submitted to the National Communication Centre and dealing with them in coordination with the appropriate agencies. A number of bodies cooperate to ensure that this mechanism functions successfully: the Ministry of Communications, the Complaints Management Unit within the Ministry of Public Sector Development, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Accountability Bureau, and the Board of Directors of the King Abdullah II Award for Distinguished Governmental Performance. The Prime Minister suggested to all ministries and official public agencies and institutions that they should work in coordination with the Unit and appoint liaison officers who possessed adequate skills and expertise in working with the public.

22. The education component of Jordan's National Strategy for Women includes a call for action to pursue an array of policies, including action to enforce provisions of law making education compulsory, and study of the feasibility of making heads of families who do not send their children to school liable to deterrent penalties.

Article 2 (c)

23. Under the Jordanian Constitution, judicial power is vested in the several levels of courts of all jurisdictions. They are open to all, and free from any interference in their affairs. Courts in the Kingdom of Jordan have the power to try any person of either sex, whether a citizen or an alien, without discrimination. Similarly, none of the provisions of law relating to the organization of the judiciary and competence to litigate discriminates with respect to the right to go before the courts, the procedures involved, or the relevant safeguards. The law gives the right to seek redress through the courts to everyone, whether man or woman, at all stages of trials, and also grants the right to seek damages in criminal cases through the appointment of legal counsel, whose fees will be defrayed by the State if the litigant is unable to so. With reference to the Committee's recommendation paragraph 17, existing legislation has been amended, new legislation enacted and other measures taken, as outlined in the paragraphs below.

24. Under the Judgement Execution Act of 2007, a pregnant woman may not be imprisoned until three months have elapsed following the birth of her child, and the mother of a young child may not be imprisoned until the child is two years of age. Furthermore, maintenance payments made to a mother are not subject to seizure or attachment by a creditor. In addition, under the Shari'a Judgement Execution Act of 2006, Shari'a courts are competent to monitor the execution of rulings in Shari'a cases, to facilitate and expedite the execution of Shari'a court judgements.

25. The Code of Criminal Procedure (Act No. 19 of 2009) has been amended. It now provides that the defendant in a misdemeanour case may authorize counsel to attend his trial in his stead, unless the court decides that his attendance in person is necessary in the interests of justice. This amendment is particularly beneficial for women, who were

formerly required to appear in court in person and attend every session of the trial in criminal cases.

26. Family wings have been opened in a number of courts, each containing two courtrooms dedicated to cases of domestic violence and cases involving young offenders, and also a room for civil society institutions. These family wings are equipped with closed-circuit television to ease the psychological pressure in cases where the defendant has been the victim of sexual aggression, and to protect witnesses under 18 years of age. Here we have a step forward in the application of international criteria relating to confidentiality. Testimony given under these conditions is deemed to be admissible as evidence. This technology is also used to protect the family when interviews with children are being conducted.

27. The Major Felonies Court has established a single panel to deal with what are called "honour killings". Since August 2009, that panel has been headed by the presiding magistrate of the court. It considers cases from all regions of the country in order to ensure that they are decided without delay and that a unified body of jurisprudence is established. Civil society organizations are calling for the establishment of a court dedicated to cases of domestic violence as well. A community organization has joined forces with the Ministry of Justice in a project for assessment of the performance of criminal courts in cases involving women.

28. The Ministry of Social Development has opened what it calls a "House of Hope" to accommodate the children of inmates being held in women's correctional and rehabilitation centres. In November 2009, there were six children living in the House. It is noteworthy that the services provided in this way are not available anywhere else in the Middle East.

29. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 22, the Domestic Violence Protection Act was promulgated in 2008 for the purpose of preserving family ties and minimizing the impact of criminal acts in cases of violence among family members, and also with a view to maintaining confidentiality and imposing alternative penalties, as well as precautionary measures to ensure that the victim or other family members are not at risk and measures to protect the informant. Family reconciliation committees have been established in the hope of enabling the parties to come to terms before the case is taken to court, but where that proves not to be feasible, the matter is laid before the competent court. The court, if it deems appropriate, will issue a protection order requiring the defendant to leave the victim alone. The Act makes provision for penalties in the event the protection order is not obeyed, and heavier penalties for repeated infractions. The court may order the defendant to pay compensation if the plaintiff so requests. If the parties to the case become reconciled, they are referred for family counselling and psychosocial rehabilitation. Draft Domestic Violence Protection Regulations are being submitted to the Council of Ministers. Increasingly, Jordanian courts are tending to establish family reconciliation committees.

30. The Government has taken an array of preventive legislative measures in an effort to bring about a marked reduction in the crimes referred to as "honour killings". In 2009 the Ministry of Justice prepared draft legislation amending the Penal Code, and currently a number of ministries and other agencies, including the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of the Interior and the Public Security Directorate, are working together to deal with cases where girls have been absent from their homes, as this situation is thought to be one of the main causes of "honour killings". This joint initiative has been under way since 2008. Immediate protective measures are taken, and the girl is not sent to a correctional and rehabilitation centre. Each case is dealt with on an individual basis, and the family is provided with psychosocial counselling. As of the end of 2009, 350 such cases of absence from the family home had been dealt with, and in all of them the girl's life was saved. The incidence of "honour killings" has declined markedly as a result.

31. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 22, JNCW has established a network known as Sham'a ("candle") to combat violence against women. It monitors the measures set forth in the Human Safety and Social Protection/Violence component of Jordan's National Strategy for Women and conducts education and awareness activities for law enforcement officers and the judicial system. In November 2007 and again in November 2008, Sham'a organized a campaign under the watchword, "No to violence against women!", working in cooperation with United Nations organizations operating in Jordan and civil society organizations. In addition, every year Sham'a organizes a festival to celebrate its 16-day campaign to combat violence against women. Furthermore, a conference on the theme "Toward national participatory planning to combat violence against women" was held in 2008.

32. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 14 urging the preparation of awareness and training programmes for judges to familiarize them with the provisions of the Convention, a project aimed at supporting and strengthening local capacities in the field of human rights protection was implemented jointly by JNCW and Mizan (the Law for Human Rights Group). It was meant primarily for judges, prosecutors, lawyers and members of other professional bodies and organizations concerned with legal assistance, and it sought to familiarize participants with the Convention and its standing and, on a practical level, to teach them how to adduce its provisions effectively before Jordanian courts. In 2009, a trainer training course on the Convention was organized under the title, "CEDAW: opportunities and challenges for legal redress"; the participants included a number of judges, lawyers, prosecutors and law enforcement officials. Subsequently, an alliance with the Bar Association was formed for the purpose of preparing a number of cases involving various issues, but all relying on the rights set forth in the Convention, in the light of a manual entitled "Using CEDAW in the Jordanian legal system", which had been written expressly for the purpose. Agreement was reached on an initial selection of 16 cases of various kinds that would be brought before the courts. Action to enhance awareness of the Convention has been undertaken by a number of civil society organizations, which have organized meetings expressly for that purpose, and the text of the Convention has been printed by JNCW and distributed to its various partners.

33. A Human Rights and Family Affairs Directorate has been established within the Ministry of Labour to look into a number of cases relating to domestic violence and contribute to the development of judicial investigation criteria, including in particular the judiciary's performance in cases of domestic violence and young offenders, with a view to ensuring that the judicial procedures function smoothly in such cases. The Directorate is also tasked with developing mechanisms to enhance awareness of domestic violence, using statistical data, and to identify training needs for judges, legal assistants, and senior court managerial personnel, who will in due course be invited to take courses in human rights, women's rights and the Convention. These courses will be given in the context of judges' continuing training in the area of domestic violence, young offenders, and family-related offences.

34. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 8, concerning the widespread dissemination of the Convention, the mere fact of Jordan's ratification of the Convention resulted in its publication in the Official Gazette. Under the Jordanian Constitution, all citizens are deemed to have been informed of everything published in the Official Gazette.

35. In the same framework, the Jordanian Chamber of Deputies, working in cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations Development Programme, and with the participation of members of the Chamber of Deputies, the Chamber of Notables, JNCW and civil society organizations, organized a number of seminars on the subjects outlined below:

- “The role of Parliament in applying international human rights instruments and the CEDAW Convention”, held in November 2008;
- “Legislation that discriminates against women” in March 2009. This seminar investigated human-rights frameworks and the contents of international conventions and implementation mechanisms, with a particular focus on the Convention;
- A seminar on the general State budget and equality, entitled “The role of Parliament, from preparation to auditing”.

36. The concepts enshrined in international human rights instruments, including the Convention, have been incorporated into the basic subjects taught at universities and colleges of law, and into school curricula at all levels. In response to the Committee’s request for wide dissemination of its concluding comments, on 27 August 2007, JNCW organized a meeting dedicated to a presentation of facts and the results of discussion of the third and fourth reports; the meeting was attended by representatives from official bodies, NGOs, and members of the Chamber of Representatives and the Chamber of Notables. The Committee’s observations were presented at a press conference held before the meeting.

37. With reference to the Committee’s recommendation No. 26, for replacement of the practice of protective custody with other measures, the Ministry of Social Development’s recent efforts in that connection have included the reception of seven women detainees, six of whom were returned to their families, and seven other cases that were dealt with at a women’s correctional and rehabilitation centre and the women subsequently returned to their families. Between 2008 and September 2009, six women detainees were taken in charge by a community organization and placed in special environments and accommodation such that they were able to reintegrate society far from security facilities. Another initiative has been the establishment of the “Jordanian Alliance for the Support of Women Administrative Detainees”. One spinoff from the Alliance has been the “Fresh Start” project, in which a number of official and community organizations are participating. Its goal is to develop long-term solutions for women administrative detainees and women at risk and to provide an appropriate alternative environment for these persons, including women who are in danger of violence or attempts at “honour killing”. The participating organizations, working in coordination with the Ministry of the Interior, seek to provide these women with job opportunities to enable them to carry on with their lives naturally. Twenty-five women detainees have been released since 2007. The table below presents numbers of “Fresh Start” cases, women at risk, and women administrative detainees that have been handled to date.

Cases handled under the “Fresh Start” project

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of women administrative detainees</i>	<i>Women at risk</i>	<i>Total</i>
2007	37	16	53
2008	24	11	35
2009	28	7	35

38. In the area of efforts to confront the issue of violence against women, the Ministry of Social Development has launched an initiative featuring a partnership between official

agencies and civil society organizations with a view to greater effectiveness, the coordination of efforts and flexible exchanges of data by establishing an integrated services and family justice centre within the Family Reconciliation Centre. It is hoped that the Centre will help to mitigate the suffering of victims. Its function is to support the Ministry's efforts by keeping up the spirits of many women administrative detainees, working to that end in coordination with relevant national bodies. Furthermore, action is under way to alter preventive or judicial detention conditions for girls under 18 years of age who are in need of protection or have been in conflict with the law: these girls are now sent to specialized homes for their correction, rehabilitation and care. These homes and the centres described in the table below are run by the Ministry.

<i>Agency/home</i>	<i>Type of case</i>	<i>Summary description</i>
Family Reconciliation Centre	A total of 1606 referrals since the Centre was founded. Capacity: 50 women and 35 children.	Founded in 2007. Used as an integrated services centre to confront domestic violence in November 2009, providing a safe and effective environment for the physical, psychological and emotional repose of victims of domestic violence, including both women and their accompanying children, through a creative work programme enabling victims and their families to meet with a multi-specialty rehabilitation team. The Centre receives women and their children, with no age limits in the case of girls and up to the age of 5 in the case of boys. It provides family and psychological counselling for battered women and their abusive husbands, fathers or other male relatives. Victims are received and services provided in accordance with criteria that guarantee excellence and competence. All services needed by battered women are available under one roof: medical care, psychological, social and legal counselling, training and rehabilitation for beneficiaries and their families, as well as economic empowerment.
Education and rehabilitation home for girls	Capacity: 12	Founded in 2009 in Amman, to provide psychosocial rehabilitation services for girls between 12 and 18 years of age who are in detention or have been convicted of an offence, with a view to their rehabilitation and reintegration into society, and also to prevent them from associating with other groups. Services conform to national and international standards. A total of 40 cases have been referred to the Home.
Special detention	For girl detainees	Founded in 2009 within the Al-Husayn Security Centre. Used to hold girl delinquents for 24 hours to keep them segregated from criminal offenders.
Home for teenage girls	Capacity: 12 girls	For girls at least 18 years of age who have no families and have been living in social institutions. They receive educational, psychological and social rehabilitation for independent life, in addition to educational and vocational rehabilitation.
Al-Rasifa home for girls	695 referrals since the home was founded	Founded in 2005 to provide care for girls in need of protection. A total of 595 girls have been reunited with their families, and 78 reintegrated. The home receives them from security centres and family protection offices. Inmates are provided with health-related, social and recreational services, education, physical exercise and guidance. A total of 8 girls were rehabilitated and married in 2008, and 14 in 2009. 123 girls have received vocational training.

39. The founding of the Family Reconciliation Centre in Amman was an experiment that will be adopted by other institutions in the framework of participatory institutional work aimed at combating violence. A similar Centre will be opened in Irbid Governorate early in 2010. Human rights organizations have been allowed to establish shelters for women detainees, battered women and women asylum-seekers, Iraqis and others, and to intervene to provide correction and assistance.

40. The Ministry of Social Development and Labour is joining forces with a number of specialized community associations to provide psychological and legal counselling and guidance services free of charge and to support those associations financially. The Ministry also provides the necessary medical counselling for battered women free of charge at its own centres.

41. In 2005, the first Arab Regional Conference on Family Protection was held in Amman. Its aim was to foster changes in attitudes and behaviour vis-à-vis domestic violence and to reinforce positive behaviour. The resolutions adopted at the Conference were forwarded to the Council of Ministers and the competent ministries and institutions. A second such conference was held in 2009, and was attended by a number of agencies working in the area of domestic violence protection, including both governmental bodies and NGOs.

42. In April 2008, the Ministry of Education implemented a systematic work project under which girl school dropouts returned to school to pursue their studies. In response to the recommendations of a 2005 study entitled, "The Ministry of Education's response to domestic violence", a section dedicated to protection from abuse was opened with the Ministry in 2007, in cooperation with many institutions concerned with the issue. The section implements programmes, strategies and projects aimed at protecting children from abuse, including a prevention programme designed to make children aware of abuse directed at them. The issue of child abuse protection has been incorporated into the curricula of the first three primary grades, and a preventive guide to the protection of pupils from violence and abuse has been published. Training in the subjects covered in the guide has been organized for 1,628 teacher trainers of both sexes, and they in turn have trained a number of male and female teachers. A manual for teacher trainers on protecting children between the ages of 0 and 8 years has been published, and 1,522 trainers of both sexes have taken training in the issues discussed in it. Another programme on providing psychosocial protection and care for children in times of crisis has been prepared, and 1,700 teacher trainers have taken the associated training courses. The Educational Guidance Section offers educational programmes on preventive measures and the protection of children from the risk of abuse, exploitation and violence and the prevention of school wastage through an information programme for children between 8 and 12 years of age, and another for pupils in the 12-18 age bracket.

43. The National Council for Family Affairs has had a role in this issue: in 2006 it prepared a national framework document on protecting the family from violence which was endorsed by the Prime Minister's Office in April 2009. The "National strategic plan for protecting families and preventing domestic violence, 2005-2009" was duly approved. In the area of family protection, the Council served as a regional centre for cooperation with the World Health Organization in 2006, and implemented several projects within that framework, including those outlined below:

(a) A project to develop measures for dealing with cases of domestic violence, covering the period 2005-2007. Under that project, a family protection section was opened within the Ministry of Social Affairs; a section on the protection of children from violence within the Ministry of Education, and a family protection section within the Ministry of Health, while family affairs directorates were established within the Ministry of Justice and the Judicial Council. Training and instruction courses on measures for dealing with domestic violence were organized for a group of law enforcement personnel at each of the target institutions;

(b) A project to enlist support and backing, especially from decision-makers, for a sustained effort to combat violence against women over the period 2007-2010;

c) A project to evaluate Jordan's response in dealing with domestic violence issues with a view to providing high-quality services.

44. The National Centre for Human Rights has implemented a youth programme for university students in an effort to put a stop to violence against women. The Ministry of Health has prepared an action guide for dealing with cases of domestic violence against women, with support from the United Nations Population Fund. In addition, the Noor Al Hussein Foundation has been preparing a training manual for health care personnel working in the private sector; the manual is designed to help them deal with women victims of violence by building the capacities of health care service providers, enabling them to detect cases of such violence at an early stage and teaching them how to deal with it and refer cases to supporting agencies and services. Psychological studies have shown that Arab women, generally speaking, are reluctant to exercise their legal rights because they believe that any complaint means disgrace, and in any case, many women are not very well informed as to what their rights are. Moreover, men, whether husbands, fathers or brothers, do not encourage women to demand their rights. Many women who lodge complaints withdraw them after the legal process has begun under pressure from those around them.

45. The table below presents the results of a population and family health survey conducted in 2007 under the supervision of the Department of Statistics with a view to obtaining data on domestic violence relating to formerly married women in the 14-49 age group.

<i>Breakdown by:</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Type of breakdown</i>	<i>Type of violence</i>
Previously battered women	32.3	General	Form of violence
	64.2	Violence by husband	Physical
	22	Violence by a brother	Physical
	18.5	Violence by mother	Physical
Place of residence	32.2	Urban area	Physical
	33.1	Rural area	Physical
Level of education	42.5	Primary education	Type of violence
	43.1	Post-primary education	Type of violence
During pregnancy	5	Violence by husband	Physical
Previously married women who had been subjected to some type of violence	20.6	Violence by husband	Physical
	20	Violence by husband	Physical
	7.6	General	Physical
% women who sought assistance after having been subjected to violence			
At least once	22.2	Violence by husband	Physical and sexual
Constantly and continuously	40.1	Violence by husband	Physical and sexual
Assistance sought from	2.5	Violence by husband	Physical and sexual
Doctor			
Social organization	0.4	Violence by husband	Physical and sexual
Relatives			
Mother	22.5	Violence by husband	Physical and sexual
Father	15.1	Violence by husband	Physical and sexual
Sisters	10	Violence by husband	Physical and sexual
Police	7.2	Violence by husband	Physical and sexual
Medical specialist	2.5	Violence by husband	Physical and sexual

46. During 2008, the Women's Guest House (a facility run by the Jordanian Women's Union) received 214 battered women and a total of 43 accompanying children. Of these women, 77 were Jordanian and 47 Iraqi, while the remainder were of various nationalities. The length of time they spent at the Guest House ranged from three days to a year, depending on each woman's personal situation and particular problem. The Guest House provides a health clinic, basically to serve the women who are staying there and women who avail themselves of the help line programme. During 2008, 184 women made use of the clinic's services. The Jordanian Women's Union works to train and empower battered women through various projects, with 150 participants in 2008. Under an agreement between the Union and the Public Security Directorate, the Women's Guest House is used as a shelter for victims of trafficking in persons pending their return to their countries.

47. The Family Protection Branch of the Public Security Directorate organizes yearly awareness campaigns targeting various groups in society in an effort to heighten people's awareness of the dangers and effects of domestic violence. The campaigns are carried on through the media, public talks, and activities in schools, universities, social centres and penal institutions. Over 1,000 talks are delivered every year, and information publications are distributed as well. The number of openly acknowledged cases of domestic violence has increased in recent years, with the highest incidence being reported in the capital, owing to the density of its population. A total of 5,811 cases were handled by the Family Protection Branch in 2009, including 475 cases that were referred to the administrative courts, 1,543 cases that were referred to the judicial system, and 3,793 cases that were referred to social service offices of the Ministry of Social Development for further psycho-social counselling and action to ensure that abuse would not recur, including the placement of victims in the Ministry's institutions and centres for care and protection. While as a rule society fears sexual aggression against girls and women, the danger of sexual violence threatens boy children as well: in 2008 there were 251 cases of sexual abuse of boys and 444 of such abuse of girls. The rising numbers of cases of violence are an indicator of increased reporting and lodging of complaints, besides heightened awareness. The National Forensic Medicine Centre deals with some 700 cases of sexual violence against women every year, on average. As a result of increased public awareness, reported cases of sexual aggression in 2009 comprises 77 cases of rape and 421 of indecent assault, 193 of them involving boys and 228 involving girls. All these cases were referred to the judiciary for prosecution.

48. In order to create a safe environment in schools, the "River Jordan" institution has executed a "Safe Schools" project aimed at ensuring that schools meet children's needs and safeguard their rights. Heads of families receive data on the concepts of child abuse prevention and the protection of children. In addition, in 2009 the Council of Ministers approved amendments to the Civil Service Regulations prescribing more severe disciplinary penalties for anyone who causes physical punishment to be inflicted upon any child in any governmental establishment, including any educational, vocational or training institution or institution providing care or protection.

49. There is a community association that delivers a legal aid programme for refugees and asylum-seekers, working in partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The aim of the programme is to provide legal assistance (advice, legal representation before the courts, follow-up with the competent departments and agencies) for women refugees, from Iraq and elsewhere, with a view to empowering them and making them aware of their rights and obligations. In 2007, 644 women were provided with legal assistance under the programme.

Article 2 (d)

50. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 16, concerning the strengthening of national machinery for the advancement of women, the Government has provided support and backing for the issue of the status of women and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against them. A noteworthy example has been the establishment of JNCW, whose purpose is to work for the economic, social, cultural and political advancement of women through implementation of Jordan's National Strategy for Women. JNCW prepares a general framework for the setting of priorities in that connection. The discussion of article 3 below will include a summary of the tasks and functions of JNCW. Other sections of this report deal with the role played by the National Centre for Human Rights, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Anti-Corruption Agency and the National Council for Family Affairs in the field of human rights protection, and the principles of equality and equal opportunity. The Complaints and Human Rights Office that was established in August 2005 within the Public Security Directorate will also be discussed. The Office is a member of the Standing Committee on Human Rights, an arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that operates in a context defined by the provisions of law and the international criteria set forth in the international instruments ratified by Jordan.

Article 2 (e)

51. The Jordanian National Commission for Women was established as a means of furthering the elimination of discrimination against women by any person or organization.

Complaints Office

52. The Complaints Office was established in February 2009 as a mechanism for receiving complaints from women in cases of violence and discrimination in public and private life. It provides a free telephone helpline service and legal and social counselling services for women. As of September 2009, the Office had received 428 complaints. Under a memorandum of cooperation with the Anti-Corruption Agency, the Office refers any complaints relating to corruption to the Agency for follow-up investigation and action until the file is closed. The Office and the Agency also cooperate to deliver joint activities and training programmes designed to strengthen and protect human rights, and to generate accurate statistics for the purpose of establishing a national register on violence that will reflect the true situation in the country. A similar memorandum of cooperation was signed between the Ministry of Justice and JNCW on 11 February 2009 with a view to using the Complaints Office as a means of protecting women from violence. Furthermore, with a view to promoting cooperation on cases lodged with the Office, memorandums of understanding and partnership have been concluded with many governmental and community institutions working for the advancement of women. As of July 2010, the Complaints Office, which is open 24 hours a day, had provided services in response to a variety of complaints, as shown in the table below.

<i>Type of complaint</i>	<i>Number</i>
Domestic violence	208
Employment and social insurance cases	44
Nationality, residence and foreign affairs	75
Grants and assistance	53
Rights cases	19
Others	29
Domestic violence	428

Government communication network

53. The Government communication network was established as a means of fostering direct coordination with ministers and public prosecutors through communications officers. The aim of the network is to provide JNCW with data relating to the status of women and to observe the extent to which the principle of equality is being applied in official institutions.

54. With reference to the Committee's recommendations Nos. 32 and 34, it should be noted that the Civil Service Regulations of 2007 provide that the most competent applicants shall be employed on the basis of merit and having regard to the principles of transparency, justice and equality of opportunity, without gender-based discrimination. The Labour Code, for its part, was amended by an act adopted in 2008 which abrogated all articles under which the provisions of the Code did not apply to particular groups of workers. Most of the groups in question had consisted mainly of women, including migrants. In addition, under the amending act an article 29 making sexual harassment an offence was inserted into the Code. Lastly, in order to eliminate any material impediment to the right of redress through the courts in labour-related cases, the amending act provides that such cases, whether brought before the courts or before the Wage Commission, shall be exempt from all fees, including judgement execution fees.

55. The Ministry of Labour has signed an agreement with the International Labour Organization to implement a programme to promote decent work in Jordan, and has prepared draft regulations governing domestic workers and agricultural workers; the draft text will be submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval in due course. Guidelines on non-Jordanian workers in skilled industrial sectors, most of whom are migrant workers, were issued in 2008, as were guidelines for foreign worker recruitment offices. A decree making life insurance compulsory for migrant workers has been promulgated, and the Ministry of Labour has issued inspection regulations. All these measures are designed to protect workers' rights. As regards day care facilities, the Foster Care Section of the Family Affairs Directorate within the Ministry of Social Affairs is currently overseeing the task of ensuring that a suitable environment is provided for children under 4 years of age. In that connection, regulations and guidelines relating to the licensing and management of foster homes have been prepared.

Article 2 (f) and (g)

56. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 9, the National Agenda and the "We are all Jordan" initiative both recommended, in the "legislation and justice" component of their respective implementation programmes, "completion of efforts aimed at eliminating discriminatory provisions from legislation". Moreover, Jordan's National Strategy for Women emphasized the necessity of realizing equality and eliminating all forms of discrimination against women in Jordanian legislation. A number of legislative amendments have been enacted, including in particular those outlined in the paragraphs below:

- The Labour Code was amended by an act adopted in 2008 making all workers subject to the provisions of the Code. The Civil Service Retirement Act was amended by Act No. 19 of 2006, which extended the length of time that a civil servant is required to work in order to be entitled to a pension. The purpose of the amendment was to minimize cases of early retirement;
- The Civil Service Regulations of 2007 set forth clearly and in detail the cases in which a family supplement is payable to a woman civil servant, and other regulations, such as the Municipal Employees Regulations, as amended by Act No. 108 of 2007, have adopted the same criteria;

- A draft bill amending certain articles of the Social Security Act that are discriminatory toward women has been submitted to the Chamber of Representatives. This proposed legislation is discussed below in paragraph 191 of this report. Another draft bill that has also been submitted to the Chamber of Representatives is one amending the Penal Code of 2009 to bring it into line with international criteria and provide greater protection for women and children. The most important of the proposed amendments are one providing heavier penalties for the crime of rape and one raising the minimum age for extenuating circumstances;
- All existing legislation is being reviewed with a view to bringing it into line with the Convention and the Committee's concluding observation No. 9. This process is being conducted in an orderly fashion through JNCW, the National Council for Family Affairs, the National Centre for Human Rights and the Office of the Chief Justice. The only acts and regulations that have not yet been amended are a limited number relating to a few specific issues;
- A cooperation agreement has been signed between the Ministry of Political Development and JNCW under which the parties will support and promote, over a four-year period, efforts by JNCW to review national legislation and propose necessary amendments aimed at increasing participation by women in public and political life. Examples include the Elections Act, the Political Parties Act, the Associations Act and others. In addition, the parties undertake to implement programmes aimed at disseminating knowledge about political rights and citizenship rights and responsibilities on a basis of equality between women and men, focusing in particular on young persons of both sexes, including pupils at schools and university students. The object of the exercise is to activate the role played by women in political parties through the implementation of programmes designed to promote awareness of the importance of their participation in those parties' work, and also through such specialized mechanisms as either of the parties may devise;
- In June 2007, the Department of Lands and Survey issued a circular stating that a woman could lawfully sign as a witness in land registration transactions of all kinds, without discrimination on the basis of gender. Previously, the Department had not accepted women as witnesses in real estate transactions conducted under its auspices.

57. With a view to protecting women more effectively, a draft bill amending the Penal Code of 2009 is being submitted to the Chamber of Deputies. The purpose of the amending bill is to bring the Code into line with the Convention and international criteria. The proposed amendments include those outlined below:

- Amendments to the provisions of the Code relating to indecent assault and the penalties to which offenders are liable, with the age of the victim counting more heavily as an aggravating circumstance and additional protection for a child under 18 years of age. Under an amendment to article 279, it will become a criminal offence to perform marriage rites or to be a party to such performance except under the conditions set forth in the Personal Status Act or any other act or religious law applicable to the wife and the husband. The point of this amendment is that under the article in its present form, it is not an offence to marry a young woman who is not yet 15 years of age. This is incompatible with the Personal Status Act, which sets the minimum age of marriage for both prospective spouses at 18 years. Under the amendment, the same penalty will be incurred by anyone who contracts marriage with a young person under 18 years of age, regardless of whether that person is male or female. Furthermore, the penalty will be incurred by any man who marries a young woman under 18 years of age with her guardian's consent, whereas hitherto

such marriages have been lawful under the Code. Offenders will henceforth be liable to a heavier penalty.

58. Article 304 of the Penal Code is also to be amended: persuading a woman under 18 years of age, or over 18 years of age where a virgin, to engage in sexual intercourse by means of a promise of marriage will now be a criminal offence. The range of admissible evidence in such cases is to be broadened to include e-mail messages, and an offender will now be liable to heavier penalties. In addition, a new article is to be inserted into the Code making it unlawful to allow extenuating circumstances or stay the execution of judgement in cases of indecent assault where the victim is under 18 years of age, whether male or female. Article 62 of the Code, under which corporal punishment is lawful, is to be amended to make such punishment subject to the condition that the punishment may not give rise to any offence contemplated in the Code. This provision serves to protect girl children from the risk of harsh corporal punishment such as had formerly been sanctioned by custom.

59. Under another amendment to the Code, offenders will be liable to heavier penalties for rape: the penalty will henceforth be penal servitude for life at hard labour where the woman is under 18 years of age, and under a new paragraph the definition of rape will include sexual intercourse with a girl under 12 years of age, regardless of whether she has consented, and sexual intercourse with or indecent assault upon a woman who is not the offender's wife and who is unable to resist because of physical, psychological or intellectual factors. The amended Code will also prescribe heavier penalties for the above-mentioned criminal offences where the offence is committed in conjunction with gross sexual assault upon the person of the victim.

60. The amended Code will also make provision under article 294 for heavier penalties for the offence of sexual intercourse with a woman who is not the offender's wife and who is at least 15 years of age but has not yet reached the age of 18: the penalty will henceforth be imprisonment at hard labour for a term of not less than seven years, and for a term of not less than 10 years where the victim is at least 12 years of age but has not yet reached the age of 15. This article is deemed to contain a loophole in the Code at present because no penalty is prescribed specifically for the offence in cases involving a girl in that age bracket. In addition, indecent flirting or behaviour will henceforth be a criminal offence. Under an amendment to article 301 of the Code, it will be an aggravating circumstance to commit the offence where the offender knows himself to be infected with HIV/AIDS and where the victim becomes infected. Under amendments to articles 310, 311 and 312, heavier penalties will be prescribed for all these offences, as we shall see in due course in our discussion of article 6 below.

61. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 24, to the effect that perpetrators of "honour" crimes do not benefit from a reduction of penalty under article 98, it should be noted that under the Jordanian Penal Code, where the offender thinks of killing before proceeding to do it, makes preparations for what he intends to do, and plans to execute his design with a calm mind, the factor of premeditation is deemed to be present. This principle of the Court of Cassation was a feature of its ruling No. 8/53, which reads in part, "The victim's disgraceful conduct does not really constitute an unjust action against the perpetrator within the meaning of the law, and cannot be deemed an extenuating circumstance, inasmuch as the act of killing did not occur at a time when the perpetrator had surprised one of his female relatives in the act of adultery." The Code does not allow the perpetrator of such a premeditated crime to benefit from extenuating circumstances; this is an interpretation that the Court of Cassation has adopted in many of its rulings, including its ruling No. 99/81, which reads in part, "Inasmuch as the accused had become aware of his sister's disgraceful conduct several days before the killing was committed, and that was a sufficient length of time for the heat of the anger that had overcome him upon learning of

that conduct to have cooled, the factor of extenuating circumstances cannot be deemed to have been present in this case.” Another relevant ruling is No. 13/80, which reads in part, “Inasmuch as the unjust action to which the victim subjected him, namely the act of adultery, had occurred some time before the killing was committed, and inasmuch as the accused’s action of killing her was not carried out upon his learning of it, it cannot be said that he committed the crime while affected by the heat of strong anger within the meaning of article 98 of the Penal Code; rather, he committed it only when he saw his mother and sister affected by the victim’s action in committing adultery. Accordingly, the factor of extenuating circumstances cannot be held to have been present in this case.”

62. The draft bill amending the Penal Code also includes an amendment to article 97 of the Code, prescribing heavier minimum penalties in cases where perpetrator is entitled to the benefit of extenuating circumstances. Where the offence is punishable by death, penal servitude at hard labour for life, or life imprisonment, the penalty shall be imprisonment for a term of not less than a term of seven years; where the offence is punishable by penal servitude at hard labour for a term of 15 years, the penalty shall be imprisonment for a term of not less than five years. Under the proposed amendment, it shall be unlawful to allow extenuating circumstances in cases of felonies or misdemeanours where the penalty may currently be lightened as a result of such circumstances.

63. With reference to the Committee’s recommendation No. 22, the treatment of “honour killings” on the same footing as other violent crimes and the assurance that perpetrators will be tried and punished is now standard practice, without the slightest discrimination as far as judicial procedures are concerned. A criminal offence is a criminal offence, regardless of the perpetrator or his motives. There is no such thing as a “crime of honour” or an exception in favour of those who allege that the crime was committed for reasons of honour. All people are equal before the law, and Jordanian courts do not accept allegations of motives of honour as justification for handing down reduced sentences, as is clear from their records. There are between 20 and 25 so-called “honour killings” in Jordan every year; they are investigated by the competent public prosecutor and referred to the appropriate court, and the records show that extenuating circumstances were recognized in only four cases in 2006 and four in 2008-2009.

64. With reference to the Committee’s recommendation No. 23, concerning the possibility that rapists may escape punishment by marrying their victims, the Jordanian Penal Code allows this possibility under article 308, subject to the following conditions: (1) that the marriage is a valid one; (2) that the marriage is concluded between the rapist himself and his victim; (3) that the marriage continues. In enshrining this possibility on family and social grounds, the Penal Code shows how greatly it is concerned for the woman’s future and how earnestly it seeks to ensure her support and maintenance. However, it cannot itself ensure her welfare, nor create a solution by means of which she will achieve what it is no longer feasible for her to achieve, and as a rule the victim accepts marriage with her aggressor in order to avoid being shamed or out of fear of her family’s vengeance. Accordingly, her wish is nearly analogous to compulsion, and since this is incompatible with a valid contract of marriage, NGOs are asking the Government to amend this article of the Code.

Article 3

65. The records of successive Governments show clearly that obstacles to the advancement of women have been removed, that Governments are concerned with women’s issues, and that action has been taken to prevent gender-based violence. In reviewing public policies and strategies in various political, cultural, social and health-related areas, Governments have consistently sought to strengthen the situation of women

in respect of the pursuit of justice and equality. A review of public policies, strategies and agendas reveals that women occupy a prominent place in all of them. Resources are invariably allocated for the benefit of women in all areas, and there are a number of indicators showing that Governments have chosen to promote equality between women and men in respect of rights and decision-making centres within the legislative, executive and judicial powers.

66. JNCW itself was established as a concrete expression of the Government's support for and promotion of the advancement of women, in line with the Committee's recommendation No. 6. On 13 May 2008, the Commission was reconfigured by a decree of the Council of Ministers for a period of two years: it is now chaired by HRH Princess Basma and has 22 members, including a number of ministers, representatives from various councils, institutions and other organizations, and prominent national figures. It is thus a Government-level institution tasked with observing the status of women on a comprehensive basis and submitting comments on the implications of all governmental policies for women. JNCW endeavours to promote participation by women in all areas of economic, social, cultural and political life. The programmes and projects that it executes are funded from the State budget; the amounts allocated for these purposes are shown in the table below. It also receives contributions from donor agencies to fund specific programmes and projects; these contributions amounted to approximately 22,000 Jordanian dinars (JD) in 2005, and by 2008 had increased to JD 104,000.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Value (JD) of State budget allocations to the Jordanian National Commission for Women</i>
2005	80 000
2009	200 000

67. JNCW has performed a number of functions, including those outlined below:

- Updating of Jordan's National Strategy for Women, 2006-2010, a task that JNCW performed in cooperation with various governmental institutions, NGOs and individuals. The Strategy was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2006, thereby becoming part of the Government's action plan to enhance the status of women. The Secretariat carries out its assigned functions, and the Commission's activities are pursued through its Projects Unit, its Strategic Planning, Follow-up and Evaluation Unit, its Legislation and Legal Awareness Dissemination Unit, its Media and Information Technology Unit, its Complaints Office, its Management Unit, and its Knowledge Production Unit for documentation, information and data gathering, and studies and research relating to women. JNCW also has a number of committees and action groups, including the Legal Action Group, the Government Communication Network, the Committee for Coordination with Civil Society Institutions, the University and Professional Women's Committee, the Media Action Team, the Women and Political Parties Committee, the *Sham'a* Network, the *Nashmiyat* Women's Knowledge Network, and an ad hoc action group tasked with monitoring the implementation at the national level of Security Council resolution 1325, which deals with the status of women in war and peace;
- Participation in the approval of the Domestic Violence Protection Act and information and awareness campaigns relating to it;
- Launching of the *Waraqati* ("My paper") project, which is aimed at promoting awareness of women's and children's rights in Jordanian domestic law and international instruments on a wide scale, both in cities and in rural areas. An Internet site was set up to present legal information and answer frequently asked questions about women's rights. The "Women of Jordan" web site also presents

information about statutes relating to those rights. In order to ensure that the benefits were as widely distributed as possible, compact discs were issued in all the country's governorates and a number of centres received training and instruction in their use;

- Implementation of a number of programmes in a context of awareness and training for judges and lawyers on the Convention, Jordan's reservations to it, the extent to which the Convention and Jordan's domestic legislation are compatible, how it can be used in the national courts, and follow-up to the Committee's recommendations, in an effort to promote participation in the task of reviewing plans and activities for ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Convention;
- Formulating opinions about draft legislation of relevance for women, in cooperation with the Legislation and Opinion Bureau, and submitting recommendations for new legislation aimed at enhancing the status of women. In 2007, the Council of Ministers advised all ministries and governmental institutions that it was essential to cooperate with JNCW in preparing the work plan for implementation of the Jordanian National Strategy for Women, helping it fulfil the functions for which it had been established, and providing it upon request with information, data and statistics relating to women. JNCW was invited to participate in discussing draft statutes and regulations of significance for women when they were being considered by the Legislation and Opinion Bureau;
- Holding conferences, seminars and discussion forums and organizing training sessions with a view to promoting awareness of the role of women, and organizing action mechanisms to function as pressure groups for the application of policies and legislation;
- Conducting studies on gender analysis within ministries with a view to gathering and updating data on gender. The first of these was a study conducted within the Ministry of Labour. The study recommended that a gender team should be endowed with training skills in order to enable it to play a larger role in spreading awareness of gender issues both within the ministry and outside it. The study also recommended that equal opportunities should be available to women and men in the ministry, including opportunities for training, appointment, promotion and overtime.

68. In 2005, the Ministry of Justice offered educational opportunities to four women judges, who went on leave to obtain advanced qualifications. Subsequently, in February 2009, a committee was established within the Ministry of Justice to monitor a training project for the ministry's most senior officials aimed at informing them about gender integration concepts. The ministry's statistics show that women judges participated increasingly and uninterruptedly in training courses held at the Judicial Institute, as will be seen from the table below.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of participating judges</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
2007	1 550	115
2008	637	130
2009	579	223

69. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation implemented a gender awareness information and training programme for more than 50 per cent of all male and female employees at functional centres. In addition, the Women and Youth Directorate within the Ministry of Political Development conducted a statistical study on the determinants of political development, which concluded that it was essential to consider the

status of women as citizens in order to attract them to organized political activity in the same way as men. The study recommended the elimination of the political discourse dealing with women as though they were a separate issue, and recommended that the ministry should engage in intensive communication with the women's sector in order to attract women and strengthen their role in political activity, especially in view of the fact that their role in the political community was still limited.

Article 4

Article 4 (1)

70. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No.28 and its general recommendations Nos. 23 and 25, the Empowerment of Women component of the National Agenda states, "In order to ensure the development and advancement of women in their practice of citizenship, it is essential to emphasize the responsibility of the State in the matter of the empowerment of women, as was seen with respect to the multiplicity of frameworks through which the political, economic, social and legal empowerment of women is being achieved." Furthermore, "All these aspects constitute an integrated whole, and it is recommended that the following general principles be applied within specific time frames:"

Support for the representation of women in reasonable proportions on elected councils

71. The representation of women in reasonable proportions on elected councils is supported in order that they may be represented fairly on those councils at the coming elections. This should be accomplished through amendments to the relevant statutory instruments." Six seats in the Chamber of Representatives have been set aside for women candidates at legislative elections, and quotas for women at municipal elections have been approved. Under the decentralization and political reform project, which is designed to broaden citizen participation in decision-making, 20 per cent of all council seats have been allocated to women.

72. Under the Nurses and Midwives Corporation Act of 1972, two of the members of the Board of the Corporation must be from the Midwifery Section, and in view of the fact that midwifery is a profession restricted to women exclusively, this means in practice that two seats on the board are always reserved for women. Under article 26 (b) of the 1999 act to amend the above-mentioned Act, nurses and midwives must be represented on all committees established by the Board, and midwives must constitute not less than 20 per cent of the membership of every such committee.

73. On the Economic and Social Council, which was established in 2007 for the purpose of submitting advisory opinions to the executive power in political, economic and social matters in general, the four groups making up the Council must include at least two women members.

74. The 2009 National Conference of Jordanian Women's Organizations, which was held to coincide with the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention, recommended greater participation by women in decision-making centres and an increase in the quota for women to 30 per cent in response to international resolutions and the indicators of the Millennium Development Goals.

Action to ensure greater participation by women in reasonable proportions in official decision-making centres

75. Seven women were appointed to the Chamber of Notables in 2009, bringing women's representation in the Chamber to over 12.7 per cent. Thanks to the Government's concern to implement the provisions of article 8 of the Convention, three women ambassadors have been appointed within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. By way of promoting the entry of women into the judiciary, article 11 of the Judicial Institute Regulations (Act No. 88 of 2007) has been amended to provide that a minimum of 15 per cent of all applicants accepted to study at the Institute shall be women. In practice, women applicants represent a much higher proportion of the total, accounting for 53 per cent of the student body, on average. In a prospective new programme known as the judges' programme, half of all applicants accepted will be female and the other half male, in all governorates. This will increase participation by women in the country's judiciary.

76. The National Training Institute organizes training courses for embryo leaders and managers. In 2009, 1,800 women civil servants took such courses, representing 34 per cent of all participants. These women were seeking advancement, under the Civil Service Regulations, from level 1 to the special level of Group 1, as any civil servant may do who has completed qualitative training programmes that are relevant to the nature of leadership and supervisory tasks.

The National Agenda

77. Under the National Agenda, political parties are encouraged to make more effective use of their women members, help them reach leadership posts, promote participation by them in electoral campaigns, and overhaul the party's policies to include programmes fostering effective participation by women in all aspects of political action.

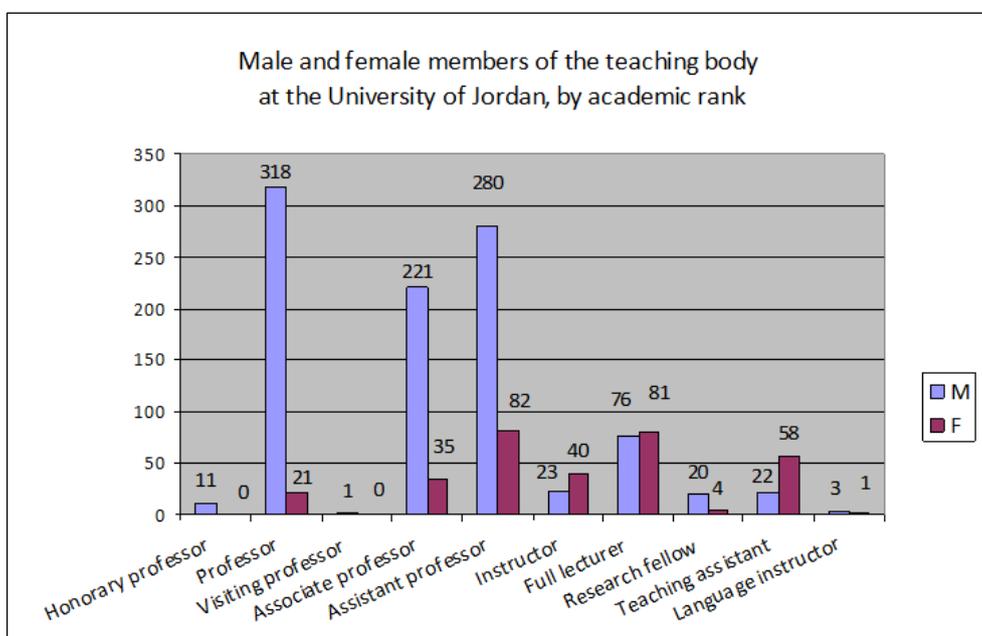
78. In an effort to promote participation by women in economic activity and make them partners in development, a number of actions have been implemented in the framework of National Agenda recommendations:

- Ministry of Labour: a project on decent work and issues affecting working women was executed in cooperation with the International Labour Organization, focusing on applying and heightening awareness of international conventions, including the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111), the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156), the Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183), and the Home Work Convention (No. 177), all of which are aimed at promoting women's economic integration. Another project, aimed at upgrading the qualifications of women community college graduates, was executed in cooperation with the World Bank. In addition, a number of projects are currently being executed at the Ministry of Labour, including one entitled "Women and work", which focuses on women's problems and work in the tourism and communications sector and is designed to facilitate the integration of women in those sectors;
- Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation: in 2007, Gender Fund/Equal Opportunity activities were launched with a view to supporting governmental and civil society institutions to promote the application of best practices in gender-related matters;
- Ministry of Education: in 2009, 400 nursing missions for women were organized, distributed over all governorates. Also in 2009, the High Council on Education decided that colleges of nursing at Jordanian universities should admit 70 per cent women applicants and 30 per cent men. Eighty-five per cent of female general secondary graduates who apply to colleges of nursing and midwifery run by the

Ministry of Health are currently admitted, and the same opportunity to compete for admission to paramedical professional institutions run by that Ministry is now open to women;

- Ministry of Social Development: funding from State budget allocations is being used to reinforce the objectives and activities of projects that conform to priority issues announced by the Ministry with a view to contributing to gender equality and promoting equality of opportunity.

79. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 30, on the low numbers of women university professors, it is noteworthy that the University of Jordan has appointed five women deans of various faculties. The university has 24 deans in all; women thus account for 22 per cent of the total. The Faculty of Dentistry, the Faculty of Graduate Studies, the Faculty of Nursing, the Faculty of Physical Education and the Faculty of Science now have women deans. The chart below presents numbers of male and female members of the teaching body at the University of Jordan, distributed by academic rank. The data are taken from the university's own "facts and figures" publication for the 2008-2009 academic year.



80. There has been an increase in the numbers of women professors at the University of Jordan. The figures for 2009-2010 are shown in the table below (Ministry of Higher Education data).

Functional title	University	Men	Women	% women
University professor	All universities	6 039	1 574	Over 20
University professor	University of Jordan	975	322	25

Article 4 (2)

81. Upon becoming pregnant, a woman receives intensive health care in the form of services delivered by the Ministry of Health's network of maternal and child care centres, which covers the entire country. Services are also available from community associations in every governorate. Measures aimed at protecting maternity are not deemed to be

discriminatory; on the contrary, they enjoy the support of all. Over and above the rights set forth in Jordan's third and fourth reports to the Committee, many new statutes have been enacted that are aimed at protecting maternity. Some of these are outlined in the paragraphs below:

- Under article 108 of the 2007 Civil Service Regulations, after a female employee has exhausted her maternity leave, amounting to three months with pay, she may take further leave without pay or allowances for a period of not more than two years to care for her infant. Under article 183 of the Regulations, a pregnant civil servant may not be required to perform physically demanding tasks that would be harmful to her health or that of her unborn child;
- The draft Social Security Act of 2009, which has been submitted to the Chamber of Representatives, guarantees new forms of social insurance coverage, such as maternity leave insurance, to correct the existing requirement for employers to bear the costs of maternity leave for a period of ten weeks, in line with the Maternity Protection Convention of the ILO. This is in addition to the provisions for the protection of maternity contained in the 2007 Judgement Execution Act, as discussed in paragraph 24 above;
- Article 4 (1) (iv) of the 2007 Disabled Persons Rights Act contains provisions for the protection of pregnant women. Competent agencies are required to provide rights and services in their respective fields, including primary health care for disabled women during pregnancy and thereafter, as well as free health care insurance;
- Under article 15 of the Correctional and Rehabilitation Centres Act of 2004, pregnant women detained in one of these centres and their children are entitled to special care and protection. Where the woman gives birth in the centre, the registry in the governorate in which the centre is located records only the place of birth, and the woman inmate is allowed to keep her child with her until the child is three years of age. Foster homes have been established for the children of these inmates.

Article 5

Article 5 (a)

82. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 30, the Ministry of Education has revised school curricula by incorporating human rights instruments into them and eliminating any references that were discriminatory or disparaging or based on stereotyped assumptions about the respective roles of men and women. The aim of this initiative was to ensure that pupils would receive a family education based on a complete understanding of the roles of men and women vis-à-vis the family.

83. The Ministry of Culture is using its network of cultural centres distributed throughout the country to hold various events aimed at altering and correcting negative socio-cultural stereotypes. In addition, youth clubs and centres and NGOs are addressing the issue of negative practices and habits related to the marginalization of women's role in society.

84. In 2006, a centre for women's studies was established at the University of Jordan for the purpose of teaching courses on women's issues in order to stimulate students' interest in that aspect. The Centre focuses on heightening awareness of women's issues in the hope of ensuring that, over the long term, they will possess the knowledge that will enable them to avoid stereotyped social and personal behaviour patterns. Women's rights are regarded as

an essential component of the Centre's activities. Courses taught at the Centre include those outlined below:

- Women and the Law features an analysis of the status of women in Jordanian legislation and conventions in particular and international conventions in general;
- An Introduction to Women's Studies examines women's roles and seeks to heighten students' awareness of the impact of gender on modern social institutions, public behaviour, the family, the workplace, politics and the media;
- Gender Issues seeks to analyse the causes of gender inequality in order to arrive at an understanding of feminist strategies for realizing equality. The course also studies a number of phenomena from historic and contemporary cultural standpoints;
- Women's Health deals with the phenomenon of domestic violence and its impacts on women's health;
- Political Participation by Women deals with obstacles preventing women from rising to decision-making posts;
- Women, Development and Human Rights and Feminist Theory;
- Women, the Media and Communication deals with information theory, including its role and effects on shaping stereotypes of women and its effective role in the elimination of bias and practices that hinder implementation of the principle of social equality for women.

85. In 2008, an agreement was signed between JNCW and media officials concerning the preparation and implementation of a media campaign on the promotion of gender integration in public life. The campaign was entitled "Hand in hand", and its purpose was to foster far-reaching changes in stereotyped roles and lay the groundwork for greater economic participation by women in the job market. It looked at content in all the media and studied it in order to encourage the media to eliminate stereotyped presentations of traditional gender roles. The result has been an increase in the numbers of women working in the media field, participation by women media personalities in a variety of programmes dealing with political social, economic and cultural issues, and more programmes dealing with the status of women. The press is also concerned with feminist activities aimed at eliminating discrimination against women, and many television programmes that deal with gender equality and family issues, including gender-based violence. According to a report prepared by the Jordanian Journalists' Association, the Association includes 154 women journalists, representing 19 per cent of its membership. Seventy per cent of these women members work for newspapers or news agencies.

86. The Media and Communication component of Jordan's National Strategy for Women offers more balanced images that express the variety of women's roles. In that connection, it has adopted the following objectives:

- Attracting media support for the full range of women's issues and rights;
- Effecting change in the stereotyped image of women conveyed by the media in favour of a more balanced image, one that will highlight women's roles within the family and in society;
- Making effective use of the media to heighten awareness and knowledge of the full range of women's issues and rights;
- Training senior media personnel with a view to altering the fixed stereotyped image of women's roles and promote their advancement to decision-making posts in the media.

87. In 2007, a study entitled “Factors affecting participation by women in the private sector” was conducted jointly by JNCW and the National Human Resource Development Centre. The study dealt with stereotyped images of men and women and the assumption that certain occupations are suitable for women and others for men, regardless of the availability of qualified women to perform the latter. It showed the importance of all aspects of women’s occupational lives compared to men’s, with the balance invariably tipping in men’s favour, and that despite laudable efforts that had changed the status of women, success remained limited.

88. A documentary film entitled “A desert worthy of its women” dealt with the issue of using the Bedouin heritage to support and strengthen women’s rights. The film was presented, as an awareness-raising tool, at a number of discussion sessions held in Bedouin encampments and at universities. The object of the exercise was to attract community support and backing for women’s efforts to obtain their rights and abolish customs that restrict those rights.

89. Various NGOs have played a noteworthy role by establishing centres expressly to heighten women’s awareness of their rights as enshrined in legislation. NGOs have also entered into partnership agreements with governmental, national and international bodies to fund projects aimed at enhancing the status of women and correcting social stereotypes. These efforts have achieved significant progress toward the elimination of many negative customs and practices.

90. With reference to the Committee’s recommendation No. 24 on virginity tests, a distinction should be drawn. There are cases in which the woman herself requests the test, as for example where she claims to have been the victim of sexual aggression by some individual, or is suspected of not being a virgin, or where she has suffered some sort of accident, such as a fall. In such cases, the test is conducted at the woman’s request and will her full consent. In some cases, a test is conducted at the family’s request, as where a child has suffered an accident that has resulted in injury to her genital area, and the family is seeking reassurance. In judicial cases, such tests are conducted at the request of the judicial authorities where a court case makes it necessary. A court may order such a test to invalidate or confirm an incident of rape or an allegation of impotence brought by a woman against her husband. The test is then conducted as an aspect of medical care. Such tests may never be conducted without the express consent of the women concerned, regardless of the circumstances of any given case. A girl who is compelled to undergo a virginity test may lodge a complaint. The Fatwa Council stated in its decision No. 9/2009 that it was lawful for such a test to be conducted where requested by the judicial authorities; it would not be deemed to constitute a false accusation against a woman of unblemished reputation. However, the test must be conducted by a woman medical specialist. A virginity test could never be conducted at the request of a fiancé; the request and the test itself were both prohibited under Islamic law. The genitalia could be uncovered only for reasons of necessity or need. We may note at this point that the Ministry of Health employs three women doctors specializing in the field of forensic medicine.

91. With reference to the Committee’s recommendation No. 20 on the implementation of measures to bring about change in accepted stereotypical roles, it is noteworthy that an important step toward breaking down barriers to women entering 23 occupations traditionally monopolized by men was taken in April 2009, when an agreement was signed between the Ministry of Labour and a community institution. The agreement established an alliance and partnership in the context of a project aimed at combating poverty and reducing unemployment among women in the country’s various governorates through an 18-month training course for 5,000 girls between 18 and 36 years of age. They would then be offered jobs in occupations that had traditionally been entirely or largely monopolized by men because of role stereotyping, male prejudices, or the weight of custom and tradition.

The trainees were taken on under modern production plans with provision for high-technology supervision and control of machinery operation.

92. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 19 concerning the publication of a guide for preachers and imams, the National Council for Family Affairs has indeed prepared a guide for men and women preachers with a view to supporting women's rights, ensuring that women are protected from all forms of violence, and strengthening the Violence against Women Prevention Department. The final version of the guide has been prepared, and it will be presented to a specialized arbitration committee to make sure that it conforms to the principles of Islamic law and human rights and that it is satisfactory in terms of the purpose for which it was prepared. The guide will then be printed and distributed to all men and women preachers in Jordan.

Article 5 (b)

93. The Ministry of Health, working through its "A home fit for children" programme, and the Ministry of Education, working through its "Early child development/parental awareness" project, are preparing an encouraging environment for children's growth and development and support for their survival, upbringing, protection and participation. In addition, parents and caregivers are being provided with appropriate knowledge and skills. The object of the exercise is to lay the groundwork for psycho-social health care and bring about a family setting in which children can grow up under sound conditions. In 2008, UNICEF executed a parental awareness project in cooperation with 13 governmental bodies and NGOs (the National Parental Awareness Programme Network) under which family training courses were given to some 70,000 family members and other caregivers; 77 per cent of the participants were women and the other 23 per cent men. The programme, among other things, sought to enable these family members and caregivers to provide a loving, safe, encouraging home environment by helping them to acquire the skills and knowledge they needed to foster the psychological, intellectual and physical growth of their children in the 0-8 age group. The programme will subsequently be expanded to 54,000 families, especially in disadvantaged regions. UNICEF has been able to train 130,000 persons with an interest in family affairs in all the country's governorates since 1996, in addition to 100 persons who work with adolescent boys and girls. Furthermore, the National Council for Family Affairs plays an important role in disseminating sound concepts of the roles of mothers and fathers in child-raising.

Article 6

94. Jordan has ratified the following conventions:

- The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children to the 2009 United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which was published in the Official Gazette on 30 April 2009;
- The Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air to that same Convention, which was published in the Official Gazette on 30 April 2009;
- The 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others;
- The 1999 Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

95. In signing and ratifying these instruments, the Government of Jordan has shown that it places high priority on human rights issues, including in particular the need to protect women and children from trafficking and sexual exploitation. Jordanian authorities are also

playing an encouraging role in efforts aimed at combating human trafficking, working in a context of regional and international coordination and cooperation.

96. Under the Human Trafficking Prevention Act (Act No. 9 of 2009), all forms of trafficking in persons are criminal offences, in accordance with the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. The exploitation of individuals as forced labour or slave or quasi-slave labour or for purposes of prostitution or any form of sexual exploitation is also a criminal offence, and an offender will be liable to a more severe penalty where the victims are women or children. Articles 4 and 5 of the Act provide that a national committee on the prevention of human trafficking shall be established and tasked with preparing a general policy for the prevention of human trafficking, developing the necessary plans for the implementation and oversight of that policy, reviewing legislation with a bearing on the prevention of human trafficking, submitting appropriate proposals and recommendations relating to such legislation, publishing a national guide containing instructions and educational material on the committee's work, adopting measures for the protection of victims of human trafficking, heightening awareness among worker recruitment personnel of matters relating to human trafficking, studying international and national reports on the subject and necessary measures and initiatives to deal with it, cooperating with all governmental and non-governmental agencies to implement necessary physical, psychological and social recovery programmes for victims and persons who have suffered harm as a result of human trafficking, and ensuring that they are given shelter in premises built or used for that purpose. Pursuant to the powers vested in the committee, a number of subsidiary organs have been established, including those described in the following paragraphs:

- A subcommittee tasked with preparing a national strategy to combat human trafficking; the strategy was published early in 2010;
- A technical committee tasked with preparing draft regulations for shelters in accordance with the Act, which states, "The Council of Ministers, at the instance of the Committee, may order the building or use of one or more facilities as shelters for victims of crimes of human trafficking and persons who have suffered harm as a result of such crimes, specify conditions for admission to and release from such shelters, deliver physical, psychological and social recovery programmes for residents, determine how they shall be managed, and set conditions governing personnel working therein in accordance with regulations to be issued for that purpose." The draft regulations are expected to be ready by the end of 2009;
- A human trafficking control unit staffed by inspectors from the Ministry of Labour and the Public Security Directorate, with the function of receiving complaints relating to victims of human trafficking for investigation and referral to the judicial system. In 2009, 12 cases of human trafficking were handled;
- A division within the Human Rights and Family Affairs Directorate (a branch of the Ministry of Labour) was established in 2009 to monitor cases of human trafficking. It follows up the Committee's decisions, examines alleged instances of human trafficking that have been brought to the Ministry's attention and prepares the necessary studies in that connection. Training for judges and public prosecutors in human trafficking cases and the application of the Act is currently under way. In addition to the foregoing, the necessary measures have been taken to deposit the accession document of Jordan to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

97. The Jordanian Penal Code of 1960 addresses various aspects of the issue of prostitution:

Women engaging in immoral behaviour

98. Under the Penal Code, every woman found to have been seeking gain by affecting the actions of a prostitute in such a way that it is clear that she is helping or compelling a woman to engage in prostitution commits a criminal offence.

Persons exploiting a woman for immoral purposes

99. As stated in the second report of Jordan to the Committee, under articles 309-318 of the Penal Code, every person who exploits a woman for immoral purposes commits a criminal offence. In addition, the Human Trafficking Prevention Act provides that every such person shall be liable to a term of penal servitude at hard labour where he is the spouse, an ascendant, a descendant or the legal guardian of the victim. A draft bill to amend the Penal Code of 2009 provides heavier penalties for the offences contemplated in article 310, which states that every person who induces or attempts to induce a woman under 20 years of age to engage in unlawful sexual intercourse with any person commits a criminal offence, and those contemplated in article 311, which deals with such acts or attempted acts accompanied by threats or intimidation. Every person who establishes, manages, operates or helps to manage a house of prostitution or who is the owner or tenant of a dwelling used as a house of prostitution, manages its affairs or allows it to be used for that purpose also commits a criminal offence. Where the woman who is the victim of aggression is unable to resist owing to physical weakness or mental deficiency, or where the offender is in a position of authority in respect of her, in accordance with articles 295 and 297 of the Code, heavier penalties apply.

Prostitution by minors

100. Jordan ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography in 2006. Under the Penal Code, every person who leads any woman who is a minor or any person under 15 years of age to engage in an act of sodomy commits a criminal offence. Under article 310 of the Code, every person who is responsible for the care of a child between 6 and 16 years of age and permits that child to live in or frequent a house of prostitution commits a criminal offence. Among the amendments included in the draft bill to amend the Penal Code is one amending article 298, under which every person committing indecent assault upon a child under 15 years of age commits a criminal offence; the amendment raises the age to 18, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and provides that the offender shall be liable to a term of imprisonment at hard labour where the victim is unable to resist because of physical weakness or mental deficiency. In addition, every person who is responsible for the care of a child and permits that child to live in or frequent a house of prostitution is liable to a heavier penalty.

101. In accordance with the Committee's observation No.33 on compliance with regulations related to the employment of domestic workers, including migrants, in May 2006 the Ministry of Labour established its Domestic Workers Directorate to maintain discipline among recruitment offices and oversee their performance. A hotline has been set up to answer any questions or complaints relating to workers' issues and to promote awareness of migrant workers' rights. A total of 755 complaints were submitted to the Directorate in 2007, of which 7209 were settled, while the corresponding figure for 2008 was 800 complaints, of which approximately 500 were settled. Eight offices were shut down for failing to conform to instructions, and 250 cases were referred to the Office of the

Public Prosecutor, while other cases were referred to other agencies, such as the Family Protection Branch. A small number of complaints were dismissed.

102. The Ministry is currently conducting a study of bilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding signed with States that send migrant workers to Jordan or those workers' States of origin with a view to overhauling those agreements or MOUs to organize recruitment operations along more satisfactory lines and ensure that workers are not exploited or at risk of trafficking. The Domestic Workers, Cooks, Gardeners and Similar Workers Regulations have been issued, as have regulations and guidelines for recruitment offices. The Ministry is conducting inspection campaigns to ensure that such offices comply with the law. In addition to its other efforts in this connection, the Ministry issued a guide for migrant workers and domestic workers in Jordan in 2006, printed in Arabic, Filipino, Indonesian and Sri Lankan. The guide, which contains information on the obligations and duties of employers and employees, is distributed at airports and border crossing points. Furthermore, print media, radio and television information campaigns featuring cartoons or short scenes are being used to heighten citizens' awareness of migrant workers' rights.

103. In accordance with the Committee's recommendation No. 19, and in the context of the measures taken by the Government to prevent human trafficking, the Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with the Office of the Chief Justice has published instructions making it obligatory for every Jordanian man who wishes to marry a non-Jordanian woman to apply to the Ministry of the Interior for authorization to conclude the marriage contract. The purpose of this initiative is to address the possibility that in these marriages, the woman may be in imminent danger of violence or mistreatment and to prevent cases of sham marriage concluded for the purpose of exploiting the woman as a prostitute. Jordan hosted the High-Level Regional Government Forum on "Women Migrant Workers, Trafficking and Labour Law Reform", which was organized jointly by the Ministry of Labour and the United Nations Development Fund for Women. The aim of the Forum was to raise the participants' awareness of the dangers of human trafficking and strengthen the human rights and labour standards relating to women migrant workers, including domestic workers in particular.

104. Human trafficking is not a phenomenon in Jordan, and for that reason the act was named the Human Trafficking Prevention Act: its aim is to prevent the crime before it occurs. In view of the fact that the Jordanian judiciary has to deal with various new matters and its senior members require training and skills upgrading, in 2009 the Ministry of Justice organized a training workshop that was attended by 75 judges and prosecutors, besides five senior members of the Public Security Directorate, from all the country's governorates. The issue of human trafficking was addressed, the relevant domestic legislation and statutory instruments were reviewed, and the difficulties facing efforts to combat human trafficking, such as legal obstacles and the effects of the dominant culture, were discussed. The workshop focused on the victims of human trafficking, and in that connection the participants considered hypothetical cases of forced domestic labour and human trafficking for purposes of prostitution.

105. With reference to the Committee's comment No. 22, the Domestic Violence Protection Act of 2008 is based on the principle of the protection of human rights, not merely respect for human rights. In the matter of supporting services for women or rehabilitation programmes for girls who have been victims of violence or abuse, the Ministry of Labour intends to establish a committee tasked with opening a shelter for victims of human trafficking. The committee will be chaired by the Minister of the Interior, and its membership will include the Ministers of Labour, Social Development, Health and Justice. It will then establish subcommittees to study cases with a bearing on human trafficking, training for judges and labour inspectors on dealing with such cases, receiving

any complaints relating to foreign workers, looking into all cases that arise, and registering them to ensure that they lead to concrete results, working in cooperation with all competent agencies.

Part II

Article 7

Article 7 (a)

106. Under the Constitution and domestic law, Jordanian women enjoy the right to participate in all periodic elections by voting as electors and candidates. Participation by women and the voting procedure are not subject to any restrictions or conditions. Under the 2003 regulations governing electoral districts and the seats allocated to each of them, six seats were designated for women candidates in the country's electoral districts, those seats being added to the total of seats being contested at the legislative elections, subject to the condition that the provisions of that particular article of the regulations should apply only once, at the elections for the first Chamber of Representatives. However, the Council of Ministers was authorized to issue a decree keeping those provisions in force at subsequent legislative elections, and prior to the elections of 2007, the Council of Ministers did issue such a decree, so that seats were reserved for women for a second time. Women represent 48.5 per cent of Jordan's population, according to the 2004 population and housing census, but they do not participate in public affairs to an extent commensurate with their numbers. Only 52 per cent of eligible women are registered on voters' lists, and there were only 199 women candidates in the entire country. Seven of them were elected to the Chamber of Representatives, accounting for 6.4 per cent of all members (the corresponding figure for 1989 was 1 per cent). Only one woman candidate won a contested election; the other six members occupy seats reserved for women. .

107. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 27, JNCW launched an intensive information programme shortly before the 2007 municipal elections in a continuing effort to make women aware of their political right to vote and their right to stand for election, encourage them to register on voters' lists, cast their ballots, and attract support for the effort to have the Elections Act amended to increase the quota for women municipal councillors to 20 per cent, on the model of the Municipalities Act and the decentralized councils project, both of which assign a quota of 20 per cent women. It is hoped that the same figure will be used in the amended Elections Act, which should be in force by the date of the 2010 legislative elections, and that the mechanism for determining the winners of seats allocated to women will be reviewed.

108. Under the Municipalities Act (Act No. 14 of 2007), no fewer than 20 per cent of the members of any municipal council must be women, consisting of those women candidates who have received the largest numbers of votes. In the event that there are not enough women candidates for this quota to be reached, a number of women members sufficient to make up the shortfall shall be appointed by the Council of Ministers. This requirement applies to the elected members of the Greater Amman council as well. Women who win contested races for seats on municipal councils are not included in the 20 per cent. At the 2007 municipal elections, there were 2070 candidates in all, of whom 380 were women, accounting for 18.4 per cent of the total, and women voters were 51 per cent of all those who cast ballots. Women thus participated meaningfully in those elections and won 226 seats, 27.4 per cent of the total number of seats on all the country's municipal councils, compared to 10 per cent at the 2003 municipal elections, and one woman defeated her opponent to become President of a municipal council. Another woman was elected second

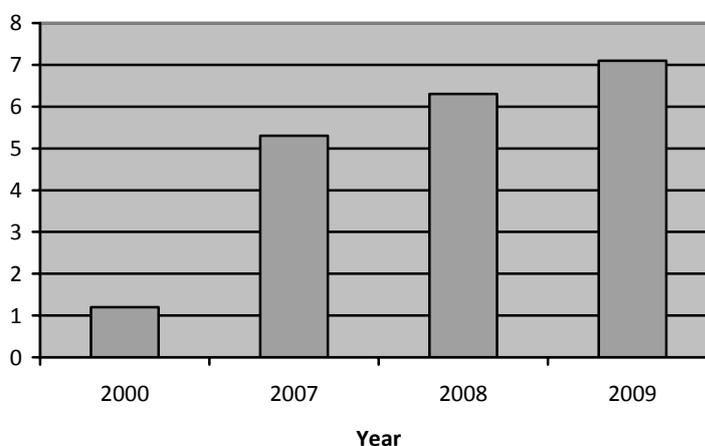
Vice-President of the Jordanian Chamber of Commerce; she had previously been elected second Vice-President of the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

Article 7 (b)

109. Women contributed to the drafting of the National Agenda, and succeeded in having a component dedicated to women inserted into it. Women have also contributed to the preparation of many strategies at all levels. The various measures that JNCW has taken include action aimed at securing an equal presence for women in high-level political or managerial posts, in accordance with the Committee's recommendation No. 23, through its "Who is she?" project, which is designed to establish and maintain lists of distinguished women in society by developing a dedicated data system for that purpose.

110. The presence of women in the judicial corps has increased significantly. According to the Ministry of Justice, there were 48 women judges in 2009, up from 42 in 2008, as will be seen from the table below. We may note at this point that progress has been qualitative as well as quantitative: a woman judge has been appointed as presiding magistrate at the Amman court of first instance, and the body of judges who hear Court of Appeal cases includes a number of women judges. In 2007-2008, 43 per cent of the entering students at the Judicial Institute were women; by 2008-2009, women students accounted for 53 per cent of the year's intake. It is worth noting here that this percentage increase in women students has resulted from competition, and not from the application of a quota. Owing to this increase in women law students under the "Judges of the future" programme, women judges are expected to account for a significantly larger proportion of the Jordanian bench within a few years.

Women members of the Bench



111. Jordanian women have made significant progress in filling Government posts and decision-making centres, as will be seen from the table below.

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Vacancy</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Council of Ministers	Ministerial portfolios	4	14	16.1 % in 2009, which is close to the world average. This is an appointment without portfolio and having no immediate connection with the status of women.
Chamber of Notables	Members	7	12.7	Figure for 2009, compared with 7.5 % in 2004.
Highest group	Secretary	7 secretaries and 9 secretaries of subsidiary bodies		In addition, the first woman was appointed to the post of supervisor at the Ministry of the Interior in 2007. Women were appointed as secretaries to: the Jordanian National Commission for Women, the National Council for Family Affairs, the High Council on Population, the Ministry of Health, the High Council on Disabled Persons Affairs, the Jordanian Nursing Council, the Information and Communication Directorate of the Office of the Prime Minister, and the Director of Jordanian Television. In addition, a woman doctor is Director of a hospital.
Legislation and Opinion Bureau	Adviser	2	66	In 2009
University boards of trustees	Chairperson	1		In addition to a number of women members of university boards of trustees.
Police	Head of directorate	3		Directorate of Women's Police Services, women's correctional centre. A total of 2 960 women occupy security posts in judicial bodies at the Court of Appeal, including 185 officers, 3 colonels and 13 lieutenant colonels.

112. In 2008, according to Civil Service Commission statistics, there were 64,555 women civil servants, representing 49.9 per cent of all Civil Service personnel. UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, employs three Directors of Health, of whom one is a woman. UNRWA's Nursing Section is also headed by a woman. In addition, a number of health centres have women directors.

Article 7 (c)

113. Political parties in Jordan represent a valuable arena for training women in the acquisition of political and leadership skills. Most of them are committed under their charters to the principle of gender equality. The statistical data show clearly that in 2005,

participation by women in political parties was slight, no more than 6.8 per cent. By 2007, that figure had increased to 7.5 per cent, according to one study. Participation by women in the founding organizations of the various parties was as follows: Islamic Party, 6 per cent; Party of the Left, 5 per cent; National Party, 6 per cent; Centre Party, 11.5 per cent. However, after the adoption of the Political Parties Act (Act No. 19 of 2007), participation by women increased, as the Act imposed a minimum number of founding members for any party. The Act also laid down conditions relating to place of residence and representation for every governorate. Accordingly, in order to comply with the law, parties sought to attract new members to meet the minimum numerical requirement for membership, and this led them to try to recruit women. As a result, participation by women in political parties has increased to the point where they now account for 28.76 per cent of all members, and one party has a woman as its party secretary.

114. Professional associations, for their part, are characterized by a high level of activity, but women do not play a very prominent part in that activity: only 160,000 Jordanian women belong to professional associations, accounting for approximately 28 per cent of their total membership. No more than six women sit on boards of directors of professional associations, representing a mere 4.8 per cent of a total of 123 members, although the corresponding figure for trade unions is 21 per cent. All professional associations have now established special committees on the affairs of professional women.

115. With reference to the Committee's comments Nos. 37 and 38, Jordanian women participate extensively, without let or hindrance, in the work of associations concerned with various social and economic issues and public life. In 2005 there were 550 such associations registered with the Ministry of Social Development; by 2009, they had multiplied to such an extent that there were 1,250 charitable associations, 149 women's associations, and 223 not-for-profit associations, including three unclassified organizations that will be added to the number of registered associations in due course, in accordance with the Associations Act, as amended. The work of these associations is becoming increasingly diversified: they pursue goals with a bearing on the economic, cultural, cultural, social and scientific empowerment of women, especially in such areas as family organization, literacy, human resource development, orphan care, poverty mitigation, care for disabled, elderly and refugee women, development for rural women, the founding of foster homes, maternal and child care, and action to combat violence against women. Financial support for women's associations from the Ministry of Social Development grew from JD 41,000 in 2005 to JD 115,100 in 2007. The boards of directors of women's associations are 100 per cent women, while women account for 5 per cent of the membership of the governing bodies of other associations with mixed membership.

116. When the Associations Act (Act No. 51 of 2008) was adopted, it attracted comments from civil society representatives, and this gave the Government an opportunity to enter into a dialogue with civil society about those comments. Agreement was reached on amendments to the Act following a series of meetings and encounters, and the result was the 2009 Act to amend the Associations Act. Under the amended Act, the Register Management Council was established with a membership including four representatives from civil society organizations, the number of individuals required for the establishment of a new association was reduced, and the requirement for the Minister's approval of the results of elections to the governing body and liability to imprisonment were eliminated, although liability to fines remains. The Act makes provision for heavy fines, and associations are calling for lighter ones. They would also like to see the judiciary become the authority with competence to dissolve associations, rather than the Ministry, and they want Government oversight to be exercised after the association in question has announced its budget and submitted its report rather than before, especially as regards the matter of securing prior approval from the Council of Ministers for foreign funding.

Article 8

117. With reference to the Committee's recommendations Nos. 23 and 8, on women as representatives of the Government at the international level, the Jordanian Diplomatic Corps Regulations of 1993 and amendments thereto do not contain any conditions for advancement or diplomatic postings that discriminate between men and women members of the corps or members' wives and members' husbands, nor any discrimination in respect of remuneration or supplementary allowances for male and female members. Women still are not very strongly represented in the diplomatic corps, especially the higher ranks, accounting for 17.2 per cent overall. There are three women ambassadors, the first of them being Jordan's Ambassador to France, who was appointed in 2001, while the other two were appointed in 2006, to the United Kingdom and Italy, and there is one woman Head of Mission. All these women continue to serve their country satisfactorily. In addition to these, Jordan has one woman minister plenipotentiary, three counsellors, one first secretary, six second secretaries, 14 third secretaries and 15 attachés. There is one woman member of the Permanent Mission of Jordan to the United Nations, three woman diplomats out of four in Vienna, two out of three in London, and a woman Assistant Secretary of the League of Arab States. These relatively small levels of women may possibly be attributable to the nature of the diplomatic profession and the fact that it is difficult for a woman diplomat's husband to accept the idea of having to change jobs every few years as his wife is reassigned. Furthermore, under the regulations as amended in 2007 (amendment No. 55), a diplomat married to another diplomat cannot serve in a Jordanian mission while his or her spouse is serving in that mission, except where the mission comprises more than five diplomats. Where a diplomat wishes to be assigned to the same mission as his or her spouse, the Minister has discretion to authorize the assignment without pay or allowances. This provision of the regulations undoubtedly affects married couples, since the wife must choose between working without pay or allowances and sacrificing her own career prospects in order to accompany her husband.

118. Jordanian women have participated effectively and with distinction in regional and international forums and celebrations. The Chamber of Notables has been a member of and effective participant in events, activities and conferences organized by Arab and international parliamentary unions and organizations, and its delegations have included women members of the Chamber. Women have been part of Ministry of Labour delegations representing Jordan at conferences abroad, including the Arab Labour Conference in April 2009, where women accounted for 40 per cent of the delegation's members, and the International Labour Conference in Geneva in July 2009, where 50 per cent of the delegation consisted of women. Women members of the Chamber of Representatives, for their part, have regularly accounted for not less than 20 per cent of Jordanian delegations attending meetings of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. JNCW, at the request of the Government of Jordan, has represented the country at various international events of relevance for the status of women, along with women representatives of NGOs. A Jordanian woman is a member of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda with the rank of judge, and another is a member representing the States of Western Asia on the Committee of Experts on Public Administration of the Economic and Social Council. A Jordanian woman holds the post of General Commissioner for Civil Society Affairs with the League of Arab States. In addition, there are a number of Jordanian women who hold high-level posts with international and regional bodies, but statistical data are not available.

119. Jordan has embarked on an initiative aimed at enlisting women for service with the Public Security Directorate, with responsibility to perform all tasks and duties relating to operations of international organizations, thereby giving effect to Security Council resolution 1325. Jordan was one of the first countries to include women members from Public Security forces among its peacekeeping forces sent to war zones and areas of

conflict. It did this in 2007, and for the first time, the Secretary-General of the United Nations subsequently asked Jordan to extend the women's tour of duty for an additional six months. Seven women from Public Security and Women's Police forces are currently serving with peace-keeping forces. Four of these women are assigned to Kosovo, and one of them, a lieutenant colonel, is a district leader; the other three are in Darfur. A number of women officers from the Women's Police Service attended a workshop with UNHCR.

Article 9

Article 9 (1) and (2)

120. Jordan is required to comply with the provisions of international conventions on nationality, and accordingly, a number of amendments have been introduced into the Nationality Act of 1954 and amendments thereto for the purpose of minimizing cases of absence of nationality, avoiding cases of dual nationality, giving adult women the right to change their nationality, and eliminating the arbitrary withdrawal of nationality because of marriage, termination of marriage, or change of nationality on the part of a husband or father. Jordan is committed to complete equality between men and women in all matters relating to the granting, withdrawal or forfeiture of nationality. Jordan is also committed to minimizing cases of absence of nationality: every person born in the Kingdom of Jordan of unknown parents is deemed to be of Jordanian nationality, and a child found in the Kingdom is deemed to have been born there unless and until he or she is proved to have been born elsewhere. The Act regulates the effects of marriage upon husband, wife and children: where a Jordanian man marries a non-Jordanian woman, the fundamental principle under the Act is that the non-Jordanian woman may not be required to take Jordanian nationality, except at her own request and provided she indicates her consent in writing. Minor children, both boys and girls, retain their Jordanian nationality in the event that their Jordanian father acquires a non-Jordanian nationality.

121. With reference to the Committee's question No. 11, Jordan maintains its reservation to paragraph 2, reiterating the information given in the previous report: the States of the League of Arab States have agreed that no Arab State shall grant nationality to Palestinians in order to preserve the Palestinian identity. A child born to a Jordanian mother and a non-Jordanian father is entitled to Jordanian nationality if born in Jordan and the father is of unknown nationality or has no nationality, or if the child's relationship to the father cannot be proved at law. In 2007, a list of demands concerning statutory instruments that should be amended was submitted to the Prime Minister and the members of the Chamber of Representatives and the Chamber of Notables; among those demands was one for an amendment that would allow a Jordanian woman to transmit her nationality to her children in all cases in the same way as a Jordanian father is allowed to do. Furthermore, there are some civil society organizations that read article 9 of the Act, "The children of a Jordanian are Jordanian, wherever their place of birth", as implying that the children of a Jordanian mother enjoy Jordanian nationality, arguing that while the masculine form of the term "Jordanian" is used in the expression "the children of a Jordanian", the use of the masculine form is general and absolute wherever it occurs and may designate either a woman or a man equally well. According to these organizations, the same interpretation applies to the wording of article 2 of the same Act, which reads, "The word 'Jordanian' [*masculine form*] means every person possessing Jordanian nationality for purposes of the provisions of this Act."

122. We may note at this point that under the Passports Act of 2003, the Minister of the Interior may, in humanitarian cases and with the consent of the Prime Minister, issue a regular passport for a period of five years, renewable, to the children of a Jordanian woman. Applications for Jordanian naturalization submitted by children of a Jordanian woman are

handled in the same way as other applications where the conditions set forth in the Act are met. The children and husband of a Jordanian woman are exempt from the fines to which they would otherwise be liable if they contravene the laws governing residence, regardless of the size of the fine in question. Moreover, Jordanian law has lightened students' financial burden by exempting them from school fees for the 2009-2010 school year and the preceding year, and this exemption applies to the children of a Jordanian mother by her non-Jordanian husband. The Ministry of the Interior, as a discriminatory measure in favour of Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians, grants one-year residence permits to their children where owing to circumstances the children are in their mother's care. In that connection, the Complaints Office of JNCW is preparing a questionnaire for Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians with a view to identifying any difficulties that they are encountering, helping them and placing all possible facilities at their disposal.

Part III

Article 10

Article 10 (a)

123. According to the 2007 *Education for All Global Monitoring Report*, the Education for All development index has improved steadily to 0.948, with the result that Jordan ranks first among the Arab States with medium EDI potential, and second among all States in that group. It ranks 49th world-wide in terms of its EDI, and is making every effort to move up into the group of high EDI potential States.

124. Under the Education Act, education is divided into three stages: (1) kindergarten, for children two years of age and over, is not compulsory; (2) basic education (lasting 10 years), compulsory and free; and (3) secondary education (lasting two years), free and not compulsory. The Ministry of Education supervises informal education and provides educational opportunities, both academic and vocational, for those who do not have access to education or are prevented by circumstances from attending school.

125. School enrolment and literacy indicators for the period 1990-2008 show clearly that universal education is attainable by 2015. By 2008, net enrolment rates for primary education had reached 97.7 per cent, and illiteracy among young people had declined to 1 per cent. These results are attributable to the Government's commitment to education for all, both boys and girls, education planning, teacher preparation and the rights of the child. As regards enrolment rates for all levels, in 2007 the enrolment rate for girls at the primary level was 101.1 per cent, while the corresponding rate for boys was 98.5 per cent; for basic education, the rates were 100 per cent for girls and 98 per cent for boys. The same trend was apparent at the secondary level, all branches taken together, with enrolment rates of 69 per cent for girls and 64 per cent for boys.

126. The budget of the Ministry of Education constitutes 9.3 per cent of the general State budget for 2009. While this is somewhat lower than the corresponding figure for 2008, it none the less amounts to JD 12 million, thanks to the increase in the State budget as a whole, and this is positive evidence of the growing reality of educational opportunity. The Ministry's services cover 70 per cent of all schools in Jordan, the remainder comprising schools run by UNRWA (8 per cent), private schools (21 per cent) and schools run by the military and other ministries (1 per cent). At the secondary level, 89.4 per cent of all students receive services provided by the Government.

127. The National Agenda confirms the Government's intent to expand opportunities for children to attend kindergarten, with particular emphasis on remote, disadvantaged areas. In

pursuit of the Millennium Development Goal relating to gender equality by 2015, the Ministry is working to eliminate the various aspects of gender disparity and promote educational readiness through early childhood education with a view to providing equal opportunities for boys and girls. In 2008-2009, there were some 708 Ministry of Education kindergartens with an aggregate capacity of 17,700 children of both sexes; these kindergartens were attended by 13,858 children, distributed throughout the country. Early childhood development and kindergarten excellence criteria have been prepared, and a training programme and guide have been issued to upgrade teachers' skills; 318 women teachers received training under the programme in the 2008-2009 school year. In that same year, Jordan had 1,194 private kindergartens, with an average of 20.4 children per teacher. One of the objectives of the Education for All plan is to raise the kindergarten attendance rate to 56 per cent by 2015.

128. In an effort to make progress with the task of changing attitudes and convictions held over from a long heritage of social customs and traditions, a review of the Ministry's policies has been undertaken with a view to ensuring their consistency with contemporary thinking by incorporating a gender perspective into the main principles and objectives of the National Education Strategy, including gender concepts and issues in development plans, systems and guidelines, empowering the Ministry's women employees, developing a vocational education plan, encouraging the integration of women into the workforce, encouraging the use of information about job market opportunities as a guide to educational choices, reducing school wastage in general and wastage among girls in particular, providing school allowances, health programmes and school meals, reviewing and developing curricula and training teachers to use them efficiently, linking teaching methods and learning skills to life needs and job market demand, and providing support services and special programmes to meet the needs of disabled students.

129. In accordance with the 2006 National Education Strategy, the Ministry has prepared programmes and approaches aimed at reducing the gender gap in teaching and training quality and meeting labour market needs, having regard to United Nations initiatives on girls' education and the United Nations Literacy Decade. These programmes and approaches are structured around eight major themes featuring elements of the educational process. The Ministry is seeking to develop methods of selecting, supporting and empowering educational leaders and to realize gender fairness within governance, administration and leadership structures. The Ministry's own leadership structure includes 16 per cent women, compared to 9 per cent in 2004. It should be noted that there is a disparity in the numbers of school directors, of whom 4,147 are women and 1,523 men. This is attributable to the fact that most primary schools have women directors owing to women's particular ability to deal with children in that age group. The numbers of women school directors seem likely to grow in the years ahead, as they are appointed to schools with classes up to Grade 6.

130. The Ministry's forward-looking programmes up to the year 2015 feature more active participation by women and gender fairness in its policies, plans and programmes, continued updating and development of curricula to ensure that all of them include a gender perspective, a sustained effort to reduce illiteracy rates, especially among women, and action to raise the proportion of women in leadership posts to 50 per cent. At the Ministry of Higher Education, there are six women heads of directorates or units, nine women section heads, and four advisors with the rank of director among senior personnel. Opportunities for training at the Ministry have been scarce in recent years, but such as they have been, most of them have been offered to women.

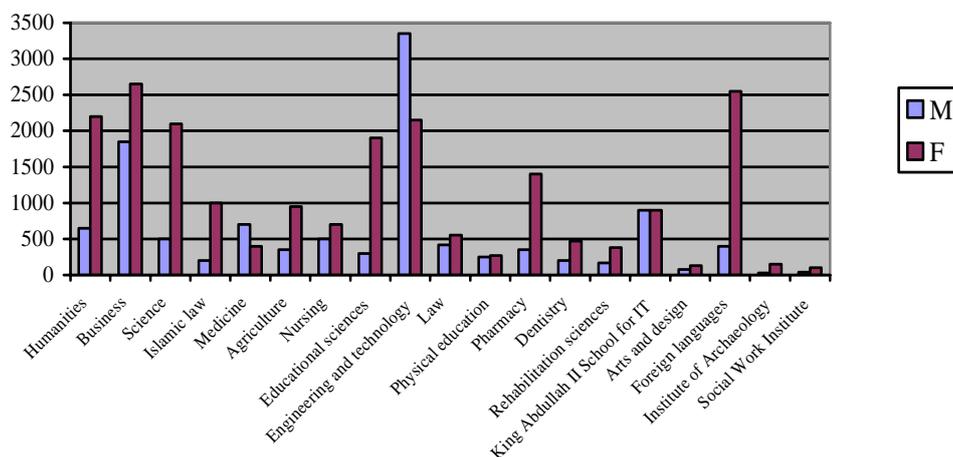
131. Under the National Strategy for Women, 2006-2010, education is regarded as a mainstay of action for the advancement and empowerment of women. The Strategy states expressly that, while women's school enrolment at all levels has increased, there are still

some problems in that area, including a persistent gender gap in illiteracy rates, and it calls for a new orientation toward forward-looking educational policies that will lead to the empowerment of women and contribute more effectively to their integration into all aspects of economic and political development. The Strategy also calls for quantitative and qualitative expansion in programmes aimed at heightening awareness of violence issues among students and school personnel, and action to ensure that schools play their role in that connection as a means to eradication of the phenomenon of violence against women.

132. Jordan has a total of 26 universities, of which 10 are State-run, besides four academies and university-level colleges. The country is experiencing a wave of predominance by women in terms of acceptance at State-run universities. Women regularly earn the highest marks at general secondary examinations, winning the top ten places in all branches in the 2009-2010 school year. Forty-four of the top 56 students in that year (80 per cent) were women, and no male student placed in the first 10 in humanities, introductory data processing, agriculture or home economics. With those results, the women qualified for admission to State-run universities with ease, and the consolidated acceptance list shows that in the 2008-2009 academic year, 111,545 women applicants and 107,823 male applicants were accepted to various faculties of Jordanian universities. A total of 17,500 students were enrolled in advanced study programmes in that year, of whom 8,000 were women.

133. The University of Jordan had 11,509 male students and 21,115 women students in that same year, i.e. women accounted for 64.72 per cent of the total. The policy of devoting care and attention to higher education has clearly yielded rapid development. Jordan has come to occupy a leading position among the States of the region in this respect, as was noted in the 2008 World Bank report. A booklet entitled *The University of Jordan: facts and figures*, which is published by the University, indicates that in the 2008-2009 academic year, the distribution of undergraduates by faculty and sex showed that women students were markedly predominant in most faculties, including those of Humanities, Business, Science, Educational Sciences, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Rehabilitation Sciences.

**Distribution of undergraduates by faculty and sex,
2008-2009 academic year**



134. Women now account for 51.3 per cent of all students enrolled at universities, including 45.6 per cent of those in scientific faculties. For theoretical faculties, the balance is tipping in favour of women students, who account for 55.8 per cent of total enrolment. The figures for university education show that, in most cases, male students opt for subjects that are in demand in the job market. To illustrate, women account for 47.7 per cent of all

students in faculties of medicine, 32.2 per cent of those in engineering, 40.6 per cent of those in computer science, and 64.9 per cent of those in natural science, and these are fields of specialization for which there is not much market demand. Women graduates in engineering accounted for 29.7 per cent of the total, those in communications, 16.3 per cent, and those in computer science, 37.8 per cent. At the postgraduate level, 42.7 of all M.A. students, 30.2 of all Ph.D. students and 61.3 per cent of postdoctoral degree students are women. Women staff members in scientific faculties account for 20.7 per cent of all staff, while the corresponding figure for theoretical faculties is 15.5 per cent. For community colleges, a total of 17,377 women students were enrolled in the 2008-2009 academic year, representing 57.8 per cent of the total student body.

135. The problem of early marriage is not a common one in Jordan. Department of Statistics data from the year 2000 show that the mean age at first marriage was 25.9 years for women and 28.9 years for men. By 2007, these values had risen to 26.4 years for women and 29.5 years for men. This points to a positive trend: more girls will have an opportunity of pursuing their education, and that in turn foreshadows the prospect of a steadily improving educational level among the country's women. The illiteracy rate for women in the 15-49 age group who had been married declined from 6 per cent in 2002 to 4 per cent in 2007, while women who had completed primary or secondary school accounted for 58 per cent of all Jordanian women in 2002, but 60 per cent in 2007.

136. With reference to the Committee's observation that a woman's choice of a field of study is affected by stereotyped attitudes, it is noteworthy that as part of the Government's efforts to bridge the gap and promote women's workforce participation and study in non-traditional fields, the Vocational Training Institute has prepared training programmes and courses aimed at providing training and practical work in various fields and encouraged women to enrol in them. In 2009, 665 men and 68 women took tourism and hotel management courses. In the context of a project for tourism development, a specialized tourism and hotel management programme is being designed, with hotel management skills development sections and upgraded trainer competence. Some 4,500 male and female hotel management trainees were trained and qualified between 2006 and 2010. Since the beginning of the project, a total of 1,949 persons, male and female, have been trained, and 814 of them have entered the field. Of 466 graduates, 237 have found work. The project is being executed at 11 centres distributed over three regions (north, central and south). The Institute itself has 699 trainees.

137. Ministry of Education statistics on enrolment in various branches of education indicate that progress has been achieved as regards the acceptability of industrial education in the eyes of girl students. As will be seen from the table below, 168 girls in the first and second years of secondary school enrolled in industrial education courses in the 2008-2009 school year. Previously, hotel management courses for girls had not been available, but girls now enter that branch, as the table shows, with 30 girls in the first and second years. The picture is the same for agriculture courses, with 244 girl students, whereas formerly girls went in for cosmetics, domestic arts and children's education exclusively. At the university level, women students accounted for 26.17 per cent of all students in agriculture programmes at the Al-Balqa' Applied University, with 39 women in such programmes compared to 110 men, while women accounted for 39.7 per cent of the total enrolment in hotel management programmes, with 75 students compared to 114 men.

Distribution of students in vocational education, by sex, 2008-2009

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Students</i>	
		<i>Total</i>	<i>Girls</i>
General total	All	22 904	9 121
	First	12 229	4 885
	Second	10 675	4 236
Agriculture	First	763	123
	Second	672	121
Industrial arts	First	5 449	101
	Second	4 733	67
Hotel management	First	1 025	17
	Second	926	13
Garment manufacturing	First	1 203	1 154
	Second	998	966
Traditional crafts	First	67	67
	Second	56	49
Vocational training centres	First	352	53
	Second	305	35

138. The Ministry of Labour is conducting a capacity-building training project in conjunction with a package of activities aimed at providing students and their families with greater knowledge and awareness of the advantages and range of possible career choices in economic sectors that call for technical and technological skills, and giving girls an incentive to go in for non-traditional or technical trades. It is a four-year project that seeks to respond to needs in the area of employment, training and vocational and technical education. The project comprises four components: institutional capacity-building for the Ministry of Labour, the Vocational and Technical Employment, Education and Training Council, curriculum development and institutional capacity-building, and support for funding mechanisms from the standpoint of employers. Similarly, the "Women and work" project focuses on women's employment problems in the tourism and communications sectors with a view to integrating women into those sectors.

139. UNRWA contributes to the provision of education services for Palestinian refugees up to the end of the basic education stage, accounting for 10.4 per cent of total expenditure, and provides vocational training for students at the secondary level, accounting for 0.28 per cent of the total. In the 2009-2010 school year, UNRWA ran 173 schools, including 73 schools for girls and 14 coeducational schools, with 62,140 male and 60,081 female students in all; these schools employed 2,107 men teachers and 2,322 women teachers. UNRWA also two intermediate-level university colleges with 863 men and 763 women students, and a university with 41 men and 819 women students.

140. Under the Disabled Persons Rights Act of 2007, every department and agency, each in its own area of competence, is required to provide disabled persons with opportunities for general, vocational and higher education, depending on the group and type of disability, and to treat women and men equally in respect of rights and duties. Statistics indicate that 566 disabled women and 4,725 disabled men had jobs in 2004. Disabled women have lower educational levels than their male counterparts: for the education system as a whole, from primary school to doctoral studies, a total of 6,747 disabled women and 15,323 disabled men were enrolled. At the university level, approximately 430 disabled students,

both men and women, received assistance enabling them to pursue disputes over fees and financial assistance for outstanding university students following a decision by the Higher Education Council in 2007 to give disabled individuals the right to attend institutions of higher education with a 90 per cent reduction in tuition fees for persons with a disability greater than 40 per cent.

141. In addition, the Council of Ministers decided that 4 per cent of all posts listed in Civil Service manning tables, i.e. approximately 400 posts, should be set aside for disabled persons. In 2009, 154 disabled persons were employed through the Civil Service Commission, of whom 64 were women and the remainder men. The Ministry of Social Development and the High Council on Disabled Persons Affairs provide financial assistance for charitable associations working for the benefit of disabled people. In accordance with the National Strategy for Disabled Persons, 2007-2015, and in cooperation with one of the State-run universities, intensive sign language courses were held beginning in mid-2009. At Tafila Technical University, the Centre for Social Participation has been established within the College of Educational Sciences for the purpose of investigating the needs of disabled persons and harnessing all available resources and scientific expertise for their. The College also prepares specialized teachers who are able to protect the rights of disabled persons, with no discrimination on the grounds of gender, in line with global trends.

Article 10 (b)

142. General Secondary Certificate examinations are unified and are the same for all students, with no gender-based discrimination and with no discrimination between students from rural and urban areas. Teaching staff appointments are subject to the same requirements and qualifications. The Ministry of Education has made significant efforts to incorporate a gender perspective and ensure equity and equality of opportunity in its policies and programmes, and those efforts have been reflected in positive trends for gender indicators in various fields of education. Among other things, it has prepared a White Paper on gender strategy with the aim of incorporating a gender perspective in school textbooks and eliminating discrimination phenomena from curricula and education policies by 2015.

143. Women make only a limited contribution to the preparation of school textbooks: there are only 11 women on arbitration committees, while there are 84 men, 81 on national teams as against 169 men, 151 on drafting committees as against 300 men, and 35 on oversight committees, compared to 240 men. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education is working at the leadership level to apply a leadership competence upgrading programme for 88 women section heads. A gender training guide has been produced, and central and subsidiary field teams have been established and trained for the task of incorporating the gender concept into policies and programmes. In addition, an institutional culture supportive of greater empowerment of women and greater representation for women in mid-level and upper leadership centres has been developed, and a centre for training teachers to work with advanced curricula has been instituted. It is noteworthy, moreover, that women are signing up for in-house courses on teachers' professional grades and levels. Women teachers account for some 65 per cent of all teachers in Jordan as a whole and 60 per cent of all teachers employed by the Ministry.

144. The issues of school premises, equipment and infrastructure and a child-centred environment have been addressed through the "My school" initiative, which seeks to enlist the public sector and private institutions in the tasks of upgrading the infrastructure of Government schools and providing high-quality teaching tools. By the end of 2008, this initiative had been extended to approximately 500 schools in all parts of the country.

Article 10 (c)

145. The “We are all Jordan” document urges Jordanians to eliminate gender-based discrimination phenomena from school curricula in order to present a positive image of women in both school and university curricula. The Ministry of Education has embarked on a review of school textbooks in order to analyse their gender sensitivity and develop them appropriately. A technical gender team has been tasked with incorporating true-to-life practices and concepts, including a balanced portrayal of women in place of a stereotyped one, to ensure that family education is based on full understanding of the roles of men and women in relation to the family and maternity and to inculcate the values of justice and equity between the sexes in young people’s minds. The concepts of reproductive health, women’s rights, family organization and the Convention on the Rights of the Child have been integrated into curricula. The Ministry is pursuing the process of ensuring that women are given disproportionate representation in the activities and programmes that it prepares, especially in respect of curriculum and textbook management: in the area of adult education and literacy curriculum preparation and drafting, for example, over 60 per cent of drafting personnel are women. In textbooks and curricula, the infinitive is now used for instructions to pupils, instead of the masculine imperative.

146. In the 2007-2008 school year, coeducational schools accounted for 63.44 per cent of all Jordanian schools, all supervisory authorities taken together, compared to 60.3 per cent in 2005. In all, the country has 3,597 coeducational schools, of which 1,474 are run by the Ministry of Education, representing 45 per cent of all Ministry of Education schools.

Article 10 (d)

147. The guidelines on educational grants stipulate gender equality, and Boards rely on applicants’ general secondary results. The fact that girls achieve outstanding scores at their general secondary examinations has helped them gain admission to State-run universities and be selected for educational grants and loans: 60 per cent of all student grants and loans from all funds for State-run universities and community colleges go to women applicants. In the 2008-2009 academic year, 2,892 women students were recipients of grants, compared to only 2,410 men.

148. Ministry of Education data show a growing proportion of women candidates for a programme leading to qualification to teach outside Jordan. In 2007, women accounted for 33 per cent of all candidates for the programme; in the following year, they accounted for 59.4 per cent. Furthermore, 45 per cent of M.A. students and 25 per cent of doctoral-level students are now women.

149. Women account for 29 per cent of all participants in external training courses, while in the case of in-house training courses, at the kindergarten level, 92 per cent of the participants are women, but for information and communication technology courses, that figure drops to 60 per cent.

Article 10 (e)

150. The “We are all Jordan” document points to the need for an awareness campaign aimed at encouraging women, in particular, to enrol in literacy programmes. Literacy programmes are regarded as among the most important educational services available to adults. Persons who enrol in them are provided with free books and paper, and incentives are available for persons who work in literacy centres. The Ministry of Education, responding to the designation of the period 2003-2012 as the United Nations Literacy Decade, is establishing adult education centres with a view to providing continuing education, reducing illiteracy rates and eliminating illiteracy altogether by 2020. The Ministry has adopted a twin-track approach in this area, preventive and curative, with post-literacy programmes, an academic course, evening and home-study courses, and a

vocational course. The network is expanding: a new centre is opened in any community where there are 10 persons who wish to take literacy training. Priority is given to women, who are encouraged to sign up for courses, and centres for women only are being opened. In the 2008-2009 school year, there were 29 literacy centres for men, with 472 participants, and 482 centres for women, with 5,745 participants. The Ministry has been progressively implementing a programme aimed at eradicating illiteracy, beginning with the semi-arid desert region in 2008 and subsequently extending the idea to other regions. In an effort to deal with difficulties associated both with students and with the curriculum, in 2009 the Ministry drafted new, sophisticated curricula and enlisted the cooperation of the media to disseminate awareness of informal education and the programmes available as a means of encouraging people to sign up. This marked a shift in emphasis from basic literacy to functional literacy.

151. The adult education and literacy system was launched on 15 December 2005, and thanks to the effort that has gone into it, illiteracy among the 15-and-over age group declined from 4.8 per cent for men and 13.3 per cent for women in 2005 to 4.1 per cent and 11.4 per cent respectively in 2008. Illiteracy is almost undetectable among under-40 age groups (men and women taken together).

Article 10 (f) and (g)

152. The role of the Ministry of Education is summarized in the paragraphs below:

- To reduce school dropout rates. School wastage in Jordan cannot be called a phenomenon, as statistics show that the dropout rate in the 2007-2008 school year was a mere 0.004 per cent. At the present time, the Ministry's regulations do not permit married women to return to Government schools as students. However, any woman who wishes to do so is free to study privately, take the examinations and earn her certificates. A prominent forward-looking trend in the educational development plan for 2008-2015 is the provision of education for all, with any legal guardian or other person who prevents a boy or girl from attending compulsory education being liable to criminal prosecution, and with financial assistance being made available to students who are unable to defray the indirect costs of their education. An informal education programme aimed expressly at dropouts attracted 2,859 participants, 581 of them girls, including both Jordanians and persons of other nationalities, notably Iraqis. Owing to the low level of interest in the programme, measures have been taken to ensure that more dropouts sign up for it and to expand it to include many Iraqi children;
- Providing all students with opportunities to participate in all activities, including sports, scouting, culture, and competitions for boys and girls on a footing of equality. Women with disabilities have participated to a significant extent, thanks to the well-equipped facilities of the Jordanian Sports Federation for the Handicapped;

153. In the course of the past two decades, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research have cooperated to incorporate reproductive health gradually as a subject in primary and secondary school curricula. Health-related subjects, like other living scientific subjects, are regularly overhauled and brought up to date in the interests of promoting pupils' awareness of the importance of family health care, including nutrition, preventive measures and family planning. Population and development concepts are integrated into the framework of the compulsory national education course for students at all Jordanian universities, both State-run and private.

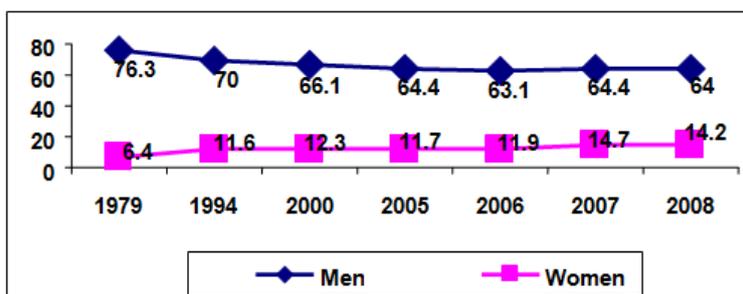
Article 11

Article 11 (1) (a)

154. Jordan's domestic legislation includes women's rights based on commitment to and respect for their role as mothers, without prejudice to their employment situation, in line with the Constitution, which provides that special conditions shall apply to the employment of women. Department of Statistics data for 2008 show that women participate in the workforce to a much lesser extent than might be supposed from indicators on women's fertility and education rates and age structure. The "gender gap" indicator shows that Jordan is close to closing the gap in the areas of education and health care, but that it is still there in economic participation and political empowerment. This shows that despite Jordan's decades-long investment in human energies, it has been unable to turn them to account and has not attained a level of 48.5 per cent for Jordanians nation-wide, at any rate not consistently, even though in 2008, 51.3 per cent of all university students were women.

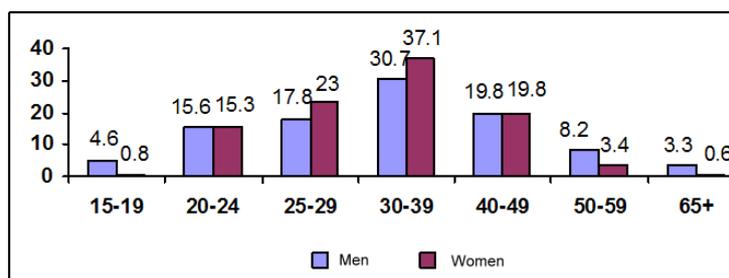
155. In 1979, 52 per cent of Jordanian women were educated; by 2008, that figure had risen to 88.6 per cent. Primary and secondary school enrolment rates for girls have increased, yet economic activity among women in the 15-and-over age group is still lower than it should be, with 14.2 per cent workforce participation, compared to a rate of 64 per cent for men, despite higher education rates and the fact that the mean age at first marriage for women rose from 24.7 years in 1990 to 26.4 years in 2008, and also despite the employment opportunities available to women through various projects and institutions. The chart below presents adjusted economic participation data for Jordanians 15 years of age and older, by sex. As will be seen, participation by women continues to lag behind the level attained by men. Greater efforts in this connection will thus be required.

Adjusted economic participation rates for Jordanians 15 years of age and older



156. A percentage breakdown of employed Jordanians based on Department of Statistics data (see the table below) reveals that over half the women with jobs (60.1 per cent of them, to be precise) are in the 25-39 age group. This shows that younger individuals are increasingly concerned with economic pressures and accommodating their needs to their source of income. Young men realize that they cannot sustain the burden of marriage on their own, and consequently it has become essential to look for a wife with an income; as a result, society has come to see women's work in a different light and now acknowledges that women play a number of roles. Low participation rates for women in the 15-24 age group are attributable to the growing trend for both sexes, but more particularly women, to pursue their education, while a 3.4 per cent rate for women in the 50-59 age group is due to early retirement. It is also interesting to note that 51.5 per cent of all women with jobs are married. The great majority of employed women are paid wages. Half of them work in the public sector, owing to the fact that public-sector jobs offer stability, the possibility of adjusting working hours to family circumstances, health insurance, various kinds of leave, and pensions.

Percentage distribution of employed Jordanians 15 years of age and older, by sex and age group, 2008



157. Statistical data from a labour and unemployment survey conducted by the Department of Statistics in 2008 shows that there are two main activities that have attracted over 56 per cent of employed women, namely teaching and health. The tendency for women to seek jobs in those two sectors has led to a preponderance of women teachers and health care workers. There can be no doubt that an important factor attracting women into those fields is social approval. In 2008, 73 per cent of all employed Jordanian women had skilled or semi-skilled jobs. This is attributable to their educational qualifications: 74.7 per cent of all employed women were educated beyond the secondary level. A breakdown of employed Jordanians by occupational status (15-and-over age group) is shown in the table below. Percentage values for women are as follows: wage employment, 17.5 per cent; Government sector, 22.6 per cent; private sector, 17.1 per cent; employers, 5.3 per cent; self-employed, 4.20 per cent; unpaid domestic work, 18.5 per cent; and unpaid work, 30.8 per cent.

Employed population by employment status (15-and-over age group) (%)

<i>Employment status</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Gender gap*</i>
Wage employment	17.5	82.5	65.0
Government sector	22.6	77.4	54.8
Private sector	17.1	82.9	65.8
Employer	5.3	94.7	89.4
Self-employed	4.2	95.8	91.6
Unpaid domestic work	18.5	81.5	63.0
Unpaid work	30.8	69.2	38.4

158. One entire chapter of the National Strategy for Women is devoted to the economic empowerment of women, owing to the difficulties attending their economic participation and the low income levels resulting from their tendency to hold low-paying jobs, discrimination against them in terms of wage levels, their low qualification levels, and their tendency to work in the informal sector. The Strategy adopted the following objectives: (1) creation of an appropriate legislative environment, (2) more readily available economic opportunities, and (3) more women in decision-making posts.

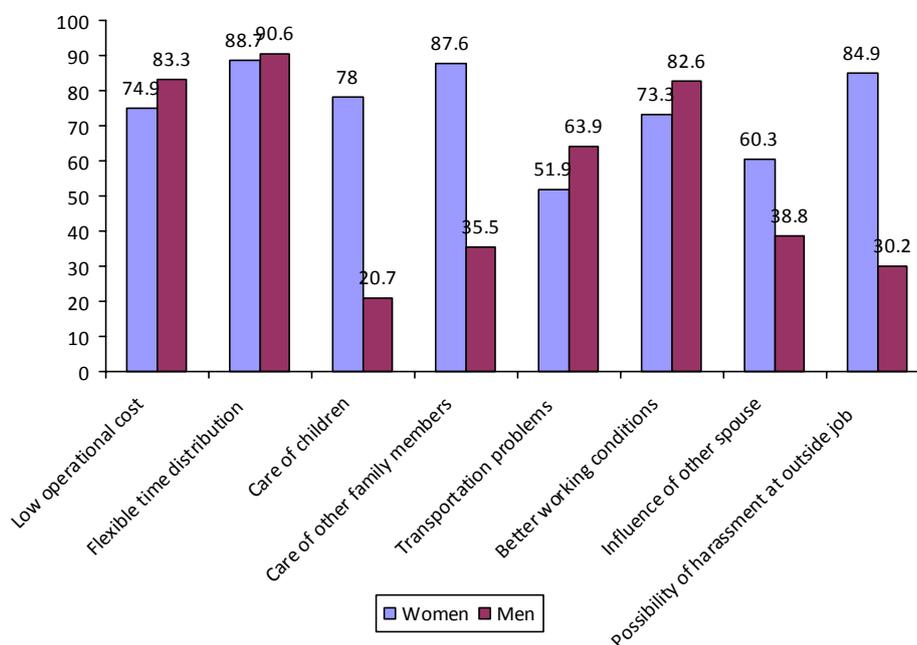
159. JNCW, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Planning and international cooperation agencies have joined forces to implement a project aimed at the integration of a gender perspective in public life. One of the activities executed in the context of that project was the creation in 2009 of a data base at the Ministry of Labour on women with jobs in the public and private sectors, by demographic and economic characteristics, sex, nationality,

educational level and degree of skills, with detailed information on pay levels by occupational category and average number of paid hours worked.

160. There are no transparent statistical data on women in the informal sector for Jordan as a whole, despite great advances in the field of statistics, especially in respect of data-gathering methods. One of the most serious problems confronting women in that sector is that very little is known about them, owing to their low income levels, long working hours, casual work, absence of social insurance coverage, the fact that the skills of knowledge workers in that sector do not mesh with the available job openings, and lack of training. An initial survey on the informal job market was conducted in 2008. One of its objectives was to build a statistical data base on women's participation in the informal sector in the Greater Amman district and to perform an in-depth analysis of the findings based on information about the demographic, economic and educational characteristics of women working at home. The results showed that economic activity by women in the informal/home-based sector was in processing industries, while their male counterparts worked primarily in facilities outside the home. Persons with jobs in the informal/home-based sector, including both men and women, accounted for approximately 9 per cent of all employed heads of families.

161. One of the main causes impelling women to work in the informal/home-based sector, according to the survey, was child care and flexible time distribution (see the chart below), while the operational cost was low. Flexible time distribution was a major factor leading men to work in that sector as well. There was little difference between men and women with respect to the issue of transport.

Main reasons given for preferring home-based work,
2008 (%)



162. There were a number of reasons why men and women working at home were unwilling for the wife to work outside the home, foremost among them being social customs and family traditions: 52.4 per cent of male respondents and 31.1 per cent of female respondents answered that for a woman to take a job was not consistent with the

family's traditions. The second most commonly given reason was that for a woman to take a job was not in accordance with the nature of the family: 25.7 per cent of female respondents and 22.4 of male respondents gave this answer. The third most frequently mentioned reason was care of children: 25.6 per cent of female respondents and 15.7 per cent of males said that if a woman took a job, she would be unable to care for her children. Furthermore, there can be no doubt that economic factors in Jordan generally, which have been negatively affected to a palpable extent by the global economic crisis, have led to a shrinkage of financial resources and have exerted a braking effect on the effort to improve economic participation by women.

Main reasons for home-based work, 2008, by sex (%)

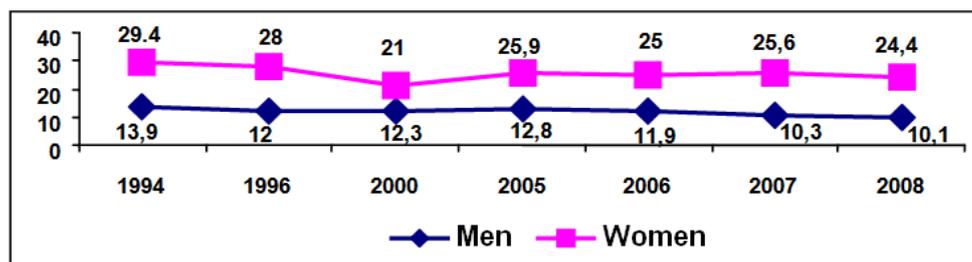
<i>Reason</i>	<i>Sex</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Family does not need income	4.7	7.1
Outside job not consistent with nature and situation of family	22.4	25.7
Woman could not care for children	15.7	25.6
Risk of sexual harassment	0.7	10.4
Social customs and family traditions	52.4	31.1
Other	4.0	0.0

Acceptability of woman's holding a job outside the home (%)

<i>Conditions</i>	<i>Sex</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
No conditions	55.70	41.50
Family needs additional income	12.3	16.4
Interesting job	3.7	0.0
High-paying job	7.3	8.5
Nature of job (requisite skills)	20.0	20.7

163. Unemployment rates are regarded as an important source of accurate information about the true economic situation and the job market in a society, and it appears that unemployment rates among women in Jordan have been more than double the corresponding rates for men for many years. This shows that women face additional obstacles in finding jobs, partly because they tend to study subjects that are not much in demand in the job market, and the situation is aggravated by the fact that the Jordanian economy's ability to absorb new job market entrants has been in decline. Unemployment rates display significant differences for married and single individuals, being markedly higher for the latter, both men and women, at 19.4 per cent for men and 34.1 per cent for women in 2008, while being much lower for married people, especially men. However, there is nothing surprising about this, as unmarried people tend to be either students or recent graduates who have not yet found jobs.

Unemployment rates for Jordanian labour force participants, 15-and-over age group



164. Educational level does not correlate positively with lower unemployment levels among women. Data from the 2008 Labour and Unemployment Survey indicate that the educational level of more than half (55.5 per cent) of all unemployed women was B.A. or higher. The same survey shows that approximately half of all unemployed women were in the 25-39 age group, a finding that is consistent with the fact that most of the women in question were educated. High unemployment levels among educated women mean that they are being outcompeted by unskilled women for the available jobs, and that in turn shows that their educational attainments do not mesh with job market needs. The data suggest that the job availability situation for educated, skilled women is unlikely to improve any time soon.

Unemployment rates for persons 15 years of age and over in the labour force, by educational level and sex, 2004, 2006 and 2008

<i>Educational level</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2008</i>
Males			
Illiterate	9.5	9.8	7.6
Less than secondary	13.9	13.5	11.5
Secondary	9	10.1	8.4
Intermediate diploma	8	6.8	6.5
BA and higher	9.2	11	9.1
Total	11.8	11.9	10.1
Females			
Illiterate	3.8	3.1	3.7
Less than secondary	10.8	17.9	23.7
Secondary	12.1	22.4	20.3
Intermediate diploma	19.9	26.3	22.8
BA and higher	18.1	27.6	26.5
Total	16.5	25	24.4

165. It appears from the foregoing discussion that the economic empowerment of women in Jordan is still unsatisfactory. This means that the country's human resources are not being optimally used, and that women are being prevented from earning a level of direct income that would empower them economically and socially.

166. With reference to the Committee's observation No. 25, on the availability of services for victims of violence against women, we may note that the Ministry of Labour has established a committee tasked with opening a shelter for working women who have

fled from their homes and have encountered harassment and other problems. Besides the shelter, the committee has established a dedicated complaints office as a means of enabling women to seek justice in cases of sexual harassment or discrimination. It offers interpretation services for speakers of Sri Lankan, Indonesian and Filipino. The Ministry has also set up a directorate known as the Home Workers Directorate for the purpose of maintaining pressure on recruitment offices. The Directorate has issued regulations expressly designed to regulate the work of offices that recruit non-Jordanians, and monitor their performance and the work they do. It has set up a hotline to answer any questions or respond to any complaints from workers. It also organizes awareness campaigns on the rights of migrant workers.

167. A significant proportion of the inspectors employed at the Workers Affairs and Inspection Directorate are now women, including women with disabilities, thanks to the fact that working conditions there are safe and healthy and conform to national and international standards for workers. The Directorate has thus followed the example of some other sectors in which women are heavily represented, such as private schools, beauty salons and weaving. A cooperation agreement is to be signed shortly between the Directorate and the Private Education Directorate within the Ministry of Education in order to reduce disparities and create a mechanism aimed at making sure the standards are observed and preventing violations, even if that should mean that some non-conforming facilities could no longer be used. In 2006, the Directorate had 14 women inspectors and 65 men, while by 2009 it had 46 women inspectors and 98 men. All these inspectors have taken training courses on matters relating to the distinctive aspects of the employment of women. The Ministry, with the support of the International Labour Organization, has established a centre dedicated to labour inspector training. It has conducted inspection campaigns targeting the private education sector and the service sector, and has observed cases of non-compliance and violations. As yet few nursery schools established for the children of working women meet the conditions set forth by law, as most institutions covered by the Labour Code do not fulfil the requirements of article 72 of the Code.

168. Another initiative has been the development of an inspection questionnaire designed to ascertain whether working conditions conform to the Code. There have been no complaints of sexual harassment among the cases investigated by the Inspection Directorate, owing to the sensitivity of the subject. In essence, working women demand complete freedom and all their rights as workers, but they are unwilling to lodge complaints or allegations of sexual harassment because of the social aspects of such complaints and allegations. Jordan has ratified ILO Convention No. 81 and the international experts' report submitted to the 2009 annual meeting of the International Labour Conference, and Jordan was among the 10 best States in terms of its application of that Convention, winning particular recognition for its good practice in implementing the article that calls for equality in appointing labour inspectors.

169. With reference to the Committee's questions Nos. 33 and 34, domestic workers, including migrants, are subject to the provisions of the 2008 Labour Code. Furthermore, the draft Social Security Act provides that its terms shall apply to workers in the informal sector. The Act in its present form covers migrant workers under the same conditions as Jordanian workers, owing to the fact that Jordan has ratified ILO Convention No. 118, on equal treatment of nationals and non-nationals as regards social security. In addition, the provisions of law regulating employment apply without discrimination to women workers performing the same jobs as men, without prejudice to special provisions relating to women employees.

170. Jordan's National Strategy for Women devotes particular attention to women with disabilities, deeming it essential to adopt the programmes of organizations focusing on the issues of women in that group. The Disabled Persons Rights Act of 2007 provides that

appropriate vocational training shall be made available to persons with disabilities, that their capacities shall be developed in accordance with job market needs, and that they shall have equal opportunity in the area of employment to the extent that their educational qualifications and intellectual capacities permit. Under Jordanian law, every public or private sector institution and every commercial firm having not fewer than 25 and not more than 50 employees is required to hire one person with a disability. Institutions and firms with more than 50 employees are required to hire a number of persons with disabilities corresponding to 4 per cent of their total workforce, in so far as the nature of the work permits. The Civil Service Regulations, for their part, provide that persons with disabilities shall be appointed where the disability is not such as to prevent the person concerned from discharging the duties of his or her post. The Civil Service Regulations and guidelines specify that 6 per cent of the persons selected and appointed to fill vacancies in governmental departments and agencies shall be humanitarian cases, of which there are four categories, one of them persons with disabilities. In all, 295 men and 678 women have applied for such posts, and 91 of the men and 90 of the women have been appointed.

171. UNRWA plays a role in strengthening and empowering Palestinian women, enhancing their self-confidence and self-reliance and promoting their participation in decision-making within their families and their local society. Twenty-eight women's centres have been opened in various regions, both inside refugee camps and outside them, and those centres have become local society organizations that are run by elected local committees. Their main activities include vocational training programmes, cultural and awareness programmes, and service programmes offering loans and community support. UNRWA has also opened legal consultation centres, seven nursery schools accommodating 70 children, and 15 kindergartens with 1,600 children, all to help women workers integrate into the activities of the various centres.

Article 11 (1) (b)

172. The creation of employment opportunities represents the greatest challenge facing the Jordanian economy, especially in view of the fact that is a State that is short of economic resources but has an abundant supply of labour, to say nothing of the world-wide economic crisis affecting all countries. Accordingly, it was necessary to obtain indicators on the volume of jobs being created in the Jordanian economy by estimating numbers of new jobs. This is considered to be an important indicator, one that yields a picture of economic activity and reflects the impact of economic growth on individuals' standard of living as they move into new jobs.

173. The Department of Statistics conducts a yearly survey on new job opportunities created by the economy. This survey is important because it presents a clear picture of change in the numbers of jobs available, while also yielding information about the characteristics of the individuals who have filled the jobs in question, and is thus a useful aid to the drafting of development policies aimed at boosting economic growth and employment and reducing poverty and unemployment rates in Jordan. According to the 2008 survey, the net number of jobs created by the Jordanian economy in the course of that year was approximately 65,000, from some 112,000 new jobs. The net number of jobs filled by men was approximately 50,000, representing close to 76 per cent of total net jobs created, while the net number of jobs filled by women was approximately 15,000, or 24 per cent of the total. This disparity is attributable to the fact that 58 per cent of the new jobs created in 2008 were in the private sector, which tends to hire men.

174. The results of the survey show a clear difference between men and women in terms of the net distribution of new job openings created in various economic sectors. Approximately 16,000 of the jobs taken by men were in the public administration sector, which thus accounted for roughly 33 per cent of all new job openings filled by men. Next

came the trade sector with 16.8 per cent of the total, followed by processing industries with 7.3 per cent. Job openings filled by women were concentrated in the domestic sector, with 27.2 per cent of total new jobs taken by women, a result that is attributable to increased demand for domestic workers. The education sector came second, accounting for 22.2 per cent of all new job openings taken by women.

175. The efforts of successive Governments, their development plans and the measures they have taken, as expressed in practical terms through their policies, have encouraged the employment of women and opened all fields to them. Thanks to the success of education policies in raising education levels and promoting literacy, important gains have been achieved in terms of women's employment generally, especially in the public sector. The Civil Service Regulations of 2007 are founded on a number of principles, including the right to employment itself, justice, impartiality and equal opportunity. Article 43 of the Regulations sets forth the conditions governing appointment: applicants must meet the requirements and conditions for the vacant post, with no gender-based discrimination. The table below, which was published by the Civil Service Commission, presents numbers of applicants for Civil Service posts and the numbers of men and women who were appointed. The extent to which women applied for vacancies and succeeded in obtaining appointments is thus clearly shown. As will be seen, women with university degrees clearly accounted for much of the increase in numbers of applicants: over the period 2005-2008, numbers of women applicants grew from 61,987 in 2005 to 92,265 in 2008, while over that same period, numbers of male applicants grew from 37,500 to 43,447. The reason for this may have been the fact that the private sector offers only limited employment opportunities to women, together with the fact that it is difficult for them to travel far afield in search of work. Moreover, women tend to prefer public-sector jobs: employment with the Government is better suited to their social situation, there are public-sector institutions in all governorates in Jordan, and women wish to work in order to contribute to the family's income.

Applicants for vacancies and appointments, by educational level and sex

Year	Educational level	Number of applicants			Number appointed		
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
2005	University	37 544	61 987	99 531	4 348	4	9 215
	Diploma	10 031	40 710	50 741	1 322	1 651	2 973
	Total	47 575	192 697	15 072	5 670	6 518	12 188
2006	University	43 175	73 805	116 980	4 330	5 600	9 930
	Diploma	10 621	42 786	53 407	713	698	1 411
	Total	53 796	116 591	170 387	5 043	6 298	11 341
2007	University	41 699	82 264	123 963	4 253	4 778	9 031
	Diploma	9 582	44 514	54 096	969	1 105	2 074
	Total	51 281	126 778	178 059	5 222	5 883	11 105
2008	University	43 447	92 265	135 712	4 523	3 429	7 972
	Diploma	9 645	46 118	55 763	911	1 141	2 052
	Total	53 092	138 383	191 475	5 454	4 570	10 024

176. The 2008 Department of Statistics survey on new job opportunities shows (see the table below) that the private sector helped provide more than two thirds (68.3 per cent) of the net number of new jobs for women, while the public sector provided 30.7 per cent. We

may note at this point that the NGO sector did not contribute significantly to new job creation for either men or women.

Percentage distribution of new job holders by employment sector and sex

<i>Employment sector</i>	<i>Men</i>		<i>Women</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Public sector	22 121	44.7	4 698	30.7	26 819	41.4
Private sector, formal	25 928	52.4	10 194	66.6	36 122	55.7
Private sector, informal	1 244	2.5	264	1.7	1 507	2.3
Non-governmental organizations	225	0.5	155	1.0	379	0.6

Article 11 (1) (c)

177. The “We are all Jordan” document affirms that it is essential to increase participation by women in gainful employment and production through training, skills upgrading, appropriate support and the elimination of obstacles. The 2007 Civil Service Regulations are based on the principles of transparency, justice, equal opportunity and non-discrimination (gender equity) in dealing with the rights, duties and responsibilities of civil servants in the performance of their work, and the Civil Service Commission observes those principles in its planning, human resource management, and selection and appointment procedures. In the area of pay increases, both regular and discretionary, the Commission does not apply any conditions discriminating between men and women. As will be seen from the table below, women received a greater share of regular pay increases, while women and men received discretionary pay increases in approximately equal proportions.

Total pay increases in Government ministries and agencies, 2009

<i>Discretionary increases</i>			<i>Regular increases</i>		
<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>
7 734	8 495	16 229	2 187	1 880	4 067
3 143	4 106	7 249	658	806	1 464
10 877	12 601	23 478	2 845	2 686	5 531

178. Selection for missions is determined by competition among employees, both male and female, in accordance with the guidelines used by the Civil Service Commission. The table below, published by the Civil Service Commission, shows that for selected years, women as well as men have been sent on missions and training courses, both within the country and abroad. Between 2006 and the first half of 2009, a total of 1,179 women civil servants were selected for missions within Jordan, and 16 for missions abroad. Only 16 women civil servants were sent on missions abroad. In the matter of training courses, it is noteworthy that in 2008, more than six times as many male civil servants as female were sent to take training outside the country. At the same time, the gender factor is clearly linked to the duration of courses and missions; in general, women tend not to apply for longer courses or missions or training courses outside Jordan.

Women's representation in missions and courses in-country and abroad

Year	In-country		Abroad		Total		% women		Total
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	In-country mission	Mission abroad	
3006	457	251	48	4	394	255	42	8	39
2007	488	441	44	6	532	447	47	12	46
208	368	464	30	5	398	469	56	14	54
2009/7	28	23	15	1	43	24	45	6	36
Total	1 230	1 179	137	16	1 367	1 195	49	10	47

179. Chapter 11 of the Civil Service Regulations defines the process of managing and evaluating individual performance, training and development based on advance planning mission orientation and programme planning, as well as the individual's attainment of a superior level of performance that contributes to realization of the service's institutional objectives. The individual's role in fulfilling his tasks is assessed, action and monitoring plans are prepared, and his strengths and areas for improvement are reinforced, while his weaknesses are avoided. The individual is given the opportunity of familiarizing himself with his level of functional and professional performance. There is no discrimination between men and women, and this shows that the word "civil servant", as used in the masculine form in the regulations, actually denotes both male and female civil servants equally.

180. The Employment, Training and Vocational and Technical Education Council Act was promulgated in 2008. The tasks assigned to the Council and the powers vested in it to enable it to attain its objectives include the power to propose a general policy on employment, training, vocational and technical education, and such plans and programmes as may be required to implement that policy, with no gender-based discrimination. The Act also provided that an employment, training and vocational and technical education fund should be established for the purpose of supporting employment, training and vocational and technical education activities and developing various training procedures in the public and private sectors. Moreover, a national electronic employment system has been introduced, and is to be used to prepare an ambitious plan in the field of training and employment with equivalent training programmes. Other councils may be established in the various governorates in order to extend these benefits to the country as a whole.

Article 11 (1) (d)

181. With reference to the Commission's recommendation No. 13, concerning equal pay for equal work, average wages and salaries in Jordan vary widely both for men and for women, depending on the individual's trade, economic sector and field of employment. In the case of the public sector, this issue is governed by the Civil Service Regulations and the Unified Supplementary Allowance Regulations, under which men and women receive equal pay upon initial appointment, with no discrimination in the way they are treated, the evaluation of their work, or their entitlement to supplementary allowances. Wage disparity appears in so far as male civil servants are entitled to a family allowance, whereas their female counterparts are not, except where the husband is deceased or retired, or where the woman is her children's breadwinner.

182. As regards the private sector, the ratification by Jordan of ILO Convention 100 of 1951, the Equal Remuneration Convention, has made its provisions binding in Jordanian law. The Ministry of Labour, acting through its Women's Employment Directorate, is publishing advertisements at intervals in wide-circulation daily newspapers to announce the

ratification of the Convention by Jordan and to notify employers that they are required to comply with its provisions.

183. As will be seen from the table below, Department of Statistics data show that in 2007, the average monthly wage earned by employed males was approximately JD 315, compared to JD 277 for employed females. The combined figure for men and women was thus JD 305, men's average monthly wages being 4 per cent above that figure while women's average monthly wages were 10 per cent below it. It is clear from the data presented in the table that the average earnings for 2007 represent a marked increase over the wages earned by both men and women compared with the corresponding figures from 2005.

Average monthly wages (JD) earned in public- and private-sector establishments and wage gap, 2005-2007

<i>Year</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men and women combined</i>
2005	273	231	262
2006	291	249	280
2007	315	277	305

184. Concerning the matter of wage protection, the Constitution provides that "Every worker shall receive wages commensurate with the quantity and quality of his work," while under the Labour Code, "A worker's action in signing a statement or record of wages or a receipt for the value of the amount specified thereon shall not entail the loss of his right to any increase in the amount received pursuant to the Code or to the relevant regulations or contract." The Council of Ministers, for its part, appoints a committee made up of equal numbers of representatives from the Ministry of Labour and businessmen and assigns it the task of setting minimum wages. As of 2009, the amount was JD 150, and since the enactment of an amendment to the Labour Code in 2008, it applies to all groups of workers. Furthermore, the right to a wage is protected under the Labour Code, which provides that the Council of Ministers shall appoint a wage authority to look into wage-related court cases in a specific region as a means of facilitating the settlement of labour disputes. Such cases are also exempt from the usual fees, including judgement execution fees.

185. Between 2002 and 2008, percentage figures for employed women performing unpaid work remained generally stable at not more than 0.5 per cent of all employed women. This may be attributable to the fact that Jordanian families nowadays do not need women working without remuneration, because they have been replaced by women migrant workers. The 2006 survey on new job opportunities showed that one fifth, or 20 per cent, of new job openings were filled by women migrant workers, primarily in the domestic activity sector. By 2008, that figure had grown to 26 per cent of all new job openings. This is an indicator of the growing recruitment of domestic workers from non-Arab countries in response to demand from families.

186. Average monthly wages are not the same for all lines of work. Statistical studies have shown that in 2007, the highest monthly average wages in the public sector were paid to legislators and senior officials of both sexes: men earned an average of JD 877 per month, while women earned JD 566. Next came men in skilled occupations, who earned JD 489 per month, followed by service and sales personnel in women's shops, who earned, on average, JD 430 per month. The greatest disparity between men's and women's monthly earnings in 2007 was in financial brokerage activity, where there was a gap of JD 159 in favour of men. Conversely, women employed in transport, warehousing, communications, hotel and restaurant management, mining, public administration and social insurance

activities commanded higher pay than men, owing to the fact that women employed in these sectors are more highly educated than their male peers.

187. There is a difference between the public and private sectors in the matter of average daily working hours, the workday in the public sector being seven hours a day, with five workdays per week, while a private-sector employee works eight hours a day for an average of six days per week. It may well be the shorter hours, besides the other factors mentioned above, that attract women to jobs in the public sector.

Article 11 (1) (e)

188. Under the Social Security Act of 2001, insured persons, both men and women, enjoy coverage for work-related injuries, occupational diseases, old age, permanent or temporary disability, and death. The Social Security Administration is strategically oriented toward coverage for all establishments in Jordan that have one or more employees, and on 1 November 2008, it began to introduce broader coverage by geographic regions, beginning with the Aqaba Special Economic Region. On 1 November 2009, it launched Phase II of the project in Irbid Governorate, and it is now taking the necessary measures to initiate comprehensive coverage in Ma'an Governorate, the Petra Region Authority, and the remainder of Aqaba Governorate. It is expected that the process will be completed by the end of 2011 for all governorates, with coverage for all persons who work for establishments having one or more employees. Health insurance for workers and other entitled persons in the private sector is not available as yet; however, most firms are taking measures to obtain health insurance coverage for their employees. Public-sector employees have enjoyed health insurance coverage since 2004 under two separate regimes, while members of the armed forces have been entitled to care for participants and beneficiaries since 2007. A woman participant's husband is also covered, provided that he is not insured under any other agency's health insurance regime.

189. Women are entitled to special privileges under the Social Security Act, as discussed in paragraphs 159 and 161 above. Statistical data from 2008 indicate that women insured under the Social Security Administration accounted for 25.3 per cent of all participants in 2007. In all, 88,830 male participants (88.5 per cent of the total) had retired because of old age, disability or death, compared to 11,558 women participants (11.5 per cent). As will be seen from the table below, insured persons of both sexes in the agriculture sector accounted for under 1.2 per cent of all participants, a total of 1,493 of them being women, while the largest number of insured persons was found in the "other services" sector, with 148,987 participants. It is noteworthy that significant progress has been made in terms of the numbers of insured women in all sectors, especially tourism, which had 2,186 women participants in 2008, up from 1,825 at the end of 2005. The same is the case for the construction sector, which had 1,774 insured women in 2008, compared to 1,059 in 2005.

Numbers of insured women engaged in economic activity, by sector (2005-2008)

<i>Economic activity sector</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>
Agriculture	1 028	1 207	1 426	1 493
Processing industries	25 125	25 154	23 296	20 241
Trade	7 763	8 148	9 178	9 443
Construction	1 059	1 306	1 530	1 774
Transport	1 359	1 436	1 566	1 483
Finance and banking	5 384	5 971	6 894	7 488
Tourism	1 825	1 977	1 992	2 186

<i>Economic activity sector</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>
Other services	108 204	123 953	137 098	148 987
Undetermined	95	100	107	116
Total	151 842	169 252	183 087	193 211

190. Statistics on the numbers of women participants in the various monthly pay categories show 47,350 in the under-JD 125 category, 37,316 in both the JD 225-JD 250 and the JD 250-JD 275 categories, and 2,632 in the JD 600-JD 700 category, but then 7,081 in the over JD-700 category. The average monthly pay for male participants was JD 319, while for women participants it was JD 275. Nearly a quarter of the women participants (23.6) per cent had requested coverage voluntarily.

191. The draft Social Security Act of 2009 is going through the legislative process. It has been approved by the Council of Ministers, and provisions covering a number of issues are being submitted to the Chamber of Representatives. These are outlined in the paragraphs below:

- Expansion of social protection to cover all workers, especially unpaid housewives, in accordance with the Convention and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Coverage is also being broadened to include new types of insurance, such as unemployment insurance, health insurance and maternity insurance, in an effort to promote participation by women in the job market;
- Under the Act as it stands at present, a wife is allowed to combine her own retirement pension and the share of her late husband's pension which she is entitled to inherit. However, under article 58 of the Social Security Act, a wife with a job can combine with her own income only so much of her late husband's pension as does not exceed a specified minimum amount. Under the draft amended version of this article, a wife will be able to combine her retirement pension with her employment earnings;
- An amendment affecting early retirement by women. The Act distinguishes between women and men in the matter of age of retirement, length of participation and reductions for purposes of calculating retirement pensions. For women, the reduction begins at 10 per cent of her pension, whereas for men the reduction is 18 per cent. It is obvious that this factor serves as an incentive for a woman employee to take early retirement. The draft amendment does not distinguish between men's and women's entitlements in the matter of pensions and retirement benefits.

192. The Social Security Act does enshrine one advantage for women: the pension of a deceased participant is payable to his mother, widow, daughters, unmarried sisters, or widows or divorced wives at the time of his death, but ceases to be paid upon the marriage of the woman in question; however, it reverts to her in the event of her divorce or the death of her husband. This reinforces the concept of the dependent woman, and consequently the Act is in need of amendment such that marriage has no effect on a woman's entitlement. Another necessary amendment is abrogation of the provision under which the husband of an insured woman is entitled to his pension rights only on condition that he is wholly disabled and has no income from employment or an equivalent retirement benefit from another source.

193. In the matter of the right to paid leave, the draft act does not alter the existing provisions concerning paid leave except maternity leave, annual leave, secondment leave or sick leave. However, under the Civil Service Regulations a woman employee is not entitled to nursing breaks, as she is under the Labour Code; management has discretion whether to

allow her to take an hour off to nurse her infant, subtracting the time from her annual leave balance.

Article 11 (1) (f)

194. Previous reports submitted by Jordan have discussed the rights and privileges granted to women workers under the Labour Code. In addition, the Code provides that the length of maternity leave following the birth of a child shall be not less than six weeks, and that the mother may not return to work before that period of time has elapsed. Under article 72 of the Code as it stands at present, every employer who has at least 20 women workers on his payroll is required to provide day care facilities for their children. Employers have tended to make sure that they have fewer than 20 women workers expressly to evade that obligation, and consequently an amendment to the article in question has now been drafted: under the amended wording, article 72 will refer to “not fewer than 20 workers” on the payroll, instead of “20 women workers”. This should help make day care facilities more readily available and should also help reduce discrimination against women in hiring.

Article 11 (2) (a) and (b)

195. The Labour Code prohibits the dismissal of a woman worker because of pregnancy or during maternity leave, or because of her marital status. Neither the Labour Code nor the Civil Service Regulations contain any provisions inconsistent with the principle of equality between men and women; on the contrary, both make provision for special privileges for women that are designed to promote the welfare of women workers and help them reconcile their family obligations and those of their jobs. As stated in previous reports, the provisions of the Labour Code relating to women workers’ entitlement to maternity leave have not been amended. Under the 2007 Civil Service Regulations, a pregnant woman employee is entitled to maternity leave with full pay and allowances. The Regulations provide that the benefits enjoyed by women employees shall not entail loss of employment, seniority or allowances, such as entitlement to leave in the event of the death of a sufficiently close relative.

196. The Civil Service Regulations have also introduced leave for a woman employee until she completes the waiting period prescribed by the Shari‘a after her husband’s death, such leave not to exceed four months and ten days and to be unpaid, and leave for a period of not more than two years following the end of maternity leave to care for her infant child. In addition, a woman employee is entitled to leave without pay or allowances to accompany her husband if he is working abroad. A woman employee who is appointed under a full benefits contract is entitled to leave without pay or allowances for a period of not more than one month per year to care for one of her parents, her husband, a wife or one of the children when the person concerned is ill or under exceptional circumstances justifying such care. It has been suggested that the Regulations require amending: at present, they make no provision for nursing breaks for women public-sector employees, or for day-care facilities in Government departments and agencies, in contrast to the Labour Code. Furthermore, neither the Code nor the Regulations include provisions granting parental leave to either parent.

Article 11 (2) (c) and (d)

197. Statistical data from the Ministry of Social Development show that as of December 2009, there were a total of 800 registered day care facilities, including 283 private ones, 61 operated by volunteers, and 456 attached to institutions, in addition to five belonging to the Ministry itself. The Ministry is currently monitoring the performance of existing day care facilities and applying the Day Care Facilities Regulations (Act No. 52 of 2005), the Day

Care Fee Schedule Instructions (Act No. 1 of 2008), and the Government School Day Care Facilities Regulations made under the latter act, and non-conforming day care facilities are being closed temporarily pending compliance. Day care facilities accept children between 0 and 4 years of age. In addition, the Ministry of Education is opening kindergartens. We may note at this point that few parents put their children in day care in remote rural areas, even where suitable facilities are available, as families in need of child minders prefer to enlist the help of their relatives. For women magistrates, assistance is available from the Women Magistrates Support Fund, the purpose of which is to enable them to reconcile the claims of their professional duties and their family responsibilities by providing day care for the benefit of those of them who have children.

198. Both the Jordanian National Plan of Action for Children, 2004-2013, and the National Agenda call for more Government/private-sector kindergartens in remote rural areas and an increase in the enrolment rate to 50 per cent by 2012 and 60 per cent by 2017.

199. The Ministry of Labour has established a committee consisting of representatives from the Ministry itself, employers, JNCW, Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Health and mandated it to review article 69 of the Labour Code, which deals with the kinds of work that women may not be assigned to perform at certain times or when they are pregnant, with a view to determining whether it would be appropriate to amend the relevant decree issued by the Minister of Labour by virtue of the authority vested in him. The object of this exercise is to ensure that the amended article is consistent with international instruments.

Article 11 (3)

200. Article 43 of the Labour Code was amended in 2008. The amended version reads as follows: "There shall be established within the Ministry a tripartite committee on labour affairs, chaired by the Minister and having a membership consisting of equal numbers of representatives from the Ministry, workers and employers, its mandate being to submit opinions on working conditions, examine and evaluate questions relating to Arab and international labour standards, and determine to what extent labour policies and labour-related legislation are consistent with the needs of social and economic development and international labour standards."

Article 12

201. "The task of improving citizens' standard of living calls for attention to health care, which is the right of all citizens, men and women, for an individual who is healthy and enjoys peace of mind about his own health and that of his children and family is the individual who is able to work productively." This is a statement by His Majesty the King of Jordan.

202. Both the National Agenda, in its "health care" component, and the "We are all Jordan" document include among their objectives family planning and effective reproductive health services within a safe health care environment, the expansion of health insurance coverage to all low-income persons, and the provision and upgrading of health care services, especially family planning and reproductive health services.

203. In 2008, the budget of the Ministry of Health represented 7.49 per cent of the general State budget. Maternal and child health is a major concern at the highest levels of both the State and the Ministry. Under the Public Health Act (Act No. 47 of 2008), these services are currently provided, in the governmental sector, through 420 maternal and child care centres, 30 hospitals administered by the Ministry of Health, 11 hospitals administered by the Royal Medical Services, two university hospitals, 58 private hospitals, numerous

private clinics, and approximately 66 clinics run by NGOs. Services to women were expanded early in 2008 through the introduction of two new programmes. One of these is known as the women's health programme, and its aim is to provide women with integrated services at every stage in their lives. Among other things, it seeks to prevent domestic violence directed at women and to protect them from it by integrating these services into the health care services provided at the Ministry's institutions. The other programme features the introduction of a system for providing modern family planning methods with the aim of ensuring that the necessary supplies are available without interruption and free of charge to all health care facilities in Jordan except private-sector facilities.

204. Jordan sees itself as an effective part of the global system, and has always sought to comply with the provisions of international instruments. Accordingly, it is committed to work toward the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, including those with a bearing on health. This task has largely been accomplished: the Government has demonstrated its concern with women's reproductive health and family planning in the framework of its population policy. Advances in that connection are summarized in the paragraphs below:

- Increased numbers of health units and centres in villages and guidance and therapeutic services for women. This has been reflected in an improved health situation for the country's people, as shown by health indicators. As will be seen from the table below, life expectancy at birth is now 74.4 years for women and 71.6 years for men. There have been significant improvements in under-5 mortality and mortality in the first year of life, which is now down to 19 deaths per thousand births;
- Improvement in the level of maternal and child health care and in people's awareness and use of health care services, as well as expanded coverage. Services are readily obtainable in 97 per cent of all cases, and the average time required to reach the nearest health care facility is 30 minutes;
- In the area of prevention programmes, one of Jordan's most outstanding achievements has been the maintenance of a high immunization coverage rate of over 95 per cent, with all types of vaccines provided free of charge under national immunization programmes;
- Family planning services, ultrasonic scans, blood groups, Rh factor, antibodies, haemoglobin, pregnancy confirmation, testing for sexually transmitted diseases and diabetes, clinical examinations, and general and routine urinalysis in accordance with the relevant protocol.

205. The Ministry of Health is also executing a number of projects aimed at developing the health sector. Among the most noteworthy of these are support for health care systems such as reproductive health, action to enlist media partners for the promotion of women's health, joint action to improve the health sector, action to tackle breast cancer and empower women, action to combat tuberculosis, and action to combat AIDS.

206. Jordanian children under 6 years of age are treated free of charge at hospital centres under Ministry of Health administration provided they do not have any other health insurance coverage. In addition, Jordan has a national nutrition programme designed to prevent malnutrition among children and mothers. It features the application of comprehensive health programmes, such as the enrichment of flour with iron to combat anaemia and the addition of iodine to table salt to prevent thyroid diseases.

207. Jordan has also adopted a policy of compulsory premarital medical examinations. Both prospective spouses must undergo an examination to detect hereditary blood disorders. Over 40 per cent of prospective couples found to be at risk of thalassaemia

decide not to marry because of the danger to their potential offspring. The marriages of couples and families with hereditary disorders are monitored for continuity, and advice about heredity is placed at the disposal of the persons concerned.

208. Some extremely costly therapies are provided free of charge to people suffering from particular conditions (such as cancer, renal disorders, AIDS, alcohol and drug addiction and anaemia), regardless of ability to pay. Pregnant women are covered under the civil health insurance plan, which also provides women with protection from domestic violence.

209. The Ministry of Health is implementing health-related programmes and activities aimed at combating widespread non-contagious disorders such as heart disease, vascular disorders, cancer, diabetes and other conditions that may jeopardize public health. Moreover, a number of ministries and agencies have joined forces to implement local development programmes in underprivileged regions in various parts of the country; under these programmes, mothers are provided with educational activities relating to reproductive health, maternal health clinics, and immunization services. The Ministry of Health also provides reproductive health services without charge to Iraqi women.

Indicators of progress achieved in health-related issues/Ministry of Health

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2008</i>
Total fertility rate	3.6
Number of health units per 100 000 population	24.4
Average life expectancy at birth, males	71.6
Average life expectancy at birth, females	74.4
Infant mortality rate per 1 000 live births	19
Under-5 mortality rate, ‰	22
Measles immunization rate (%) for children aged 12-23 months	94.3
% women using family planning methods (15-49 age group)	57.1
Number of physicians per 1000 population	3.5
Number of nurses (registered nurses, midwives, nurses' aides) per 1000 population	33.2
Total number of hospitals	103
Number of comprehensive health care centres, Ministry of Health	68
Number of primary health care centres, Ministry of Health	375
Number of secondary health care delivery centres, Ministry of Health	240
Number of maternal and child health care centres, Ministry of Health	420
Number of dental clinics, Ministry of Health	313
Maternal death rate per 100 000 live births	19.1
Family planning use rate during the postpartum period	37
Number of maternal and child health care units per 100 000 population	7.2

210. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 14, on female genital mutilation, practices such as these are not found in Jordan.

211. In the context of an effort to heighten awareness of reproductive health issues among young people and promote knowledge of family planning, a survey was conducted in 2005 by the United Nations Population Fund. The survey found knowledge gaps and erroneous concepts among both girls and boys in the area of sexual and reproductive health, but the

girls were better informed than the boys about these matters. All the respondents covered by the survey wanted to be informed about healthy lifestyles, including aspects relating to psychology, emotions, puberty, sexual health, mixing between the sexes, pregnancy, and AIDS prevention. Accordingly, the High Council on Population has joined forces with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education to incorporate population and reproductive health concepts progressively into primary- and secondary-level curricula, and to include information about the impacts of population on Jordan's economic development in the National Education Curriculum, which is a compulsory course taken by all Jordanian students at public and private universities. Half the country's male and female preachers have been trained on how to address reproductive health issues in their religious lessons and when talking with young people planning marriage; the training was organized jointly by the High Council on Population and the Ministry of Religious Endowments. Three hundred women facilitators from local communities have also received training and information in reproductive health concepts. Lastly, some 700 preachers and imams of mosques were trained in family and reproductive health issues in 2007.

Contraceptive methods used in 2007

	<i>Use rate %</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Use rate (%)</i>
Modern methods	41.9	Pill	8.4
		Sterilization	3.7
		IUD	22.3
		Condom	5.3
		Injection	0.7
		Lactational amenorrhoea and other methods	1.5
Traditional methods	15.2	Periodic abstention	4.1
		Withdrawal	10.8
		Popular methods	0.3
	57.1		

212. The High Council on Population was established as a support and implementation mechanism for the national population strategy, with particular emphasis on a number of components: reproductive health and family planning, population and sustainable development, justice and equity between the sexes, and the empowerment of women. The High Council on Population has adopted the watchword "Empowerment of women! Family planning, with transparency and accountability! Given the opportunity, the demographic gift will be realized!"

213. Furthermore, the High Council, with the participation of all relevant national institutions, has embarked on the task of preparing implementation plans for the strategy, following the first national plan of action on reproductive health (2003-2007). The second plan (2008-2012) aims at achieving a better environment for reproductive health policies, more high-quality reproductive health/family planning services, and greater demand for those services. These plans contain realistic, quantified national objectives on reproduction, and are consistent with reproductive rights and human rights, and also with the ongoing effort to strike a balance between Jordan's population and its resources.

214. According to a study undertaken by the High Council on Population, women's health care activities are confronted with serious problems, including morbidity associated with pregnancy and foetal mortality, which are the second-commonest cause of

hospitalization for women, the most common being birth. Other factors are high fertility levels in rural areas (3.7 per cent) and in urban areas (3.6 per cent). In view of these demographic challenges, it is clearly important to continue to plan development programmes that will help bring the total reproduction rate down to 2.5 births per woman by 2017. The use of family planning methods, especially modern methods, is still below the desirable level.

215. One positive indicator that has emerged from the 2007 population and family health survey is that approximately 99 per cent of all women who have been married are familiar with at least one modern family planning method. Another is that in 2007, the percentage of women in the 15-49 age group who use family planning methods was 57.1 per cent (including 41.9 per cent who used modern methods and 15.2 per cent who used traditional methods), thanks to the efforts of numerous governmental, community, international and private-sector organizations working to make modern family planning methods more widely known. The most noteworthy developments have been increases in the use of the IUD (22.3 per cent), and in the use of condoms (5.3 per cent).

216. It appears that women in Jordan prefer relatively long intervals (more than 36 months) between births, with 41.2 per cent of them reporting in 2007 that they practised child spacing, up from 37 per cent in 2002. This small increase may reflect the introduction of the national health programme on child spacing, which is a component of the National Population Strategy. Data from 2007 and 2002 indicate that approximately two thirds of Jordanian children are born after an interval of at least two years following the birth of the previous child, compared to 56 per cent of them in 1997. A study conducted by the High Council on Population found that the interval between children born to younger women and women with fewer children was shorter than the corresponding interval for older women and women with more children. There is also a very small disparity related to place of birth, with rural women and women living in the southern part of the country and in semi-arid regions displaying a slightly shorter interval between births than women living in other regions. The results of the study also show that for lower-income women who have been educated up to the primary and secondary level, after the birth of a daughter, the interval before the birth of the next child is shorter than is the case for other women. It appears that the effect of the dominant culture continues to influence individuals' behaviour, with customs, traditions and practices tending to cause recently married men to prefer to have a child immediately. In addition, some husbands object to child spacing methods.

217. The High Council on Population has conducted studies and reviewed achievements in the areas of population, poverty, sustainable development, gender equality, the empowerment of women, reproductive health, reproductive rights, the reproductive health of young people and adolescents, AIDS, and advocacy for change in behaviour patterns. The Council's aim is to ensure that the demographic transition period (the "demographic gift"), which is expected to occur between 2010 and 2015, will be successful through action to upgrade the social and health structure, expand high-quality reproductive health services, invest in infrastructure in remote areas, provide health care services free of charge to indigent people, and expand preventive health services.

218. Acting upon the findings of a study entitled "Analysis of health care institutions' response to violence", which was conducted by the National Council for Family Affairs, the Ministry of Health has established a section known as the Domestic Violence Section.

219. The Ministry of Health and the National Council for Family Affairs have joined forces to produce a White Paper containing protocols and measures for dealing with cases of domestic violence, for the use of health care institutions. In addition, a training programme targeting health care providers has been developed with the support of the United Nations Population Fund. The programme also deals with measures and protocols for dealing with cases of domestic violence in health care institutions.

220. An abuse prevention and child protection programme was introduced in 2008 with the aim of integrating these services into health care services provided at institutions administered by the Ministry. The Ministry's concern with this issue has been pursued under a joint Ministry/UNICEF project covering the years 2000-2007 and 2008-2012. Various successful outcomes have been achieved, including in particular the breaking down of the barrier of silence, greater awareness of the issue of child abuse prevention, and training for trainers and senior health personnel. Furthermore, a strategy for the prevention of child abuse has been developed, along with a manual of procedures for dealing with cases of violence against children.

221. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 15, on combating acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), there is no discrimination between men and women in the area of health care. The Government has monitored the disease assiduously from the outset, launching a national AIDS control programme and a national AIDS coordinating committee, setting up a national telephone hotline, and opening centres that provide counselling, voluntary examinations and treatment for sufferers and those living with the disease. These institutions pursue their work in confidentiality, respecting the privacy of victims of the disease. They provide all services free of charge, and they provide support and financial assistance for low-income people and counselling for AIDS patients. The Ministry of Health has intensified its supervision of blood transfusions, and has organized many awareness campaigns targeting young people everywhere, working in cooperation with governmental bodies and NGOs. These efforts have been crowned with some successes: there is now a high level of awareness of the disease and ways of preventing it among the general public, and many non-Jordanians who have been residing in Jordan for more than a month now receive examinations; on the other hand, the condom use rate is still no more than 5.3 per cent. The Ministry has been successful in reaching groups that engage in unsafe sexual practices after it joined forces with NGOs to conduct a survey on the subject.

222. The national AIDS control programme targets women in several ways: (1) conducting awareness and information campaigns through various media aimed at women; (2) providing AIDS counselling services and performing voluntary examinations; and (3) enlisting women to participate in awareness and information programmes and activities and to join the National AIDS Control Committee.

223. Between 1986 and November 2009, 432 cases of AIDS among men and 280 among women had been reported in Jordan; of the women victims, only 38 were Jordanian. Women thus accounted for 39 per cent of all cases. Twenty-seven of the victims, i.e. 4 per cent of all cases, were children under 15 years of age. Children who contracted the disease from their mothers constituted 3.8 per cent of all reported cases. In this context, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria regards Jordan as a regional model in terms of its efforts to overcome these diseases through its in-depth, comprehensive prevention and treatment programmes which are implemented accurately and promptly. The Fund has signed an agreement with the Ministry of Health under which it will provide support for the national AIDS control programme in Jordan. One of the objectives of the National Health Strategy, 2006-2010 is the implementation of measures aimed at stopping the spread of AIDS by 2015, with the incidence of the disease beginning to recede after that date. Furthermore, the "health" component of Jordan's National Strategy for Women emphasizes the importance of strengthening preventive programmes aimed at protecting women from health risks throughout their lives, including in particular reproductive health issues and AIDS.

224. The broad lines of the updated national AIDS control strategy for 2010-2014 are already in place following a review of the obstacles and challenges that confronted the strategy for 2005-2009. The general objective of the new strategy is to prevent the

transmission of HIV in Jordan, to ensure that services delivered under the national AIDS control programme are directed at groups that are at the greatest risk of infection, and to provide care and treatment for HIV-positive persons, despite the low spread rate of the disease (0.02 per cent).

225. The strategy emphasizes the importance of providing a suitable environment for supporting and activating the national AIDS control response through the development of policies and action to eliminate AIDS-related stigma and discrimination against people with the disease. Eighteen areas for implementation of the strategy have been identified, including detection of cases of infection, monitoring, assessment, prevention activities for groups most at risk, and action to inform young people, besides supplying antiviral drugs and treatments for other disorders (opportunistic diseases) and psychosocial support for AIDS sufferers.

226. In March 2009, the Ministry of Health and the Al-Hussein Cancer Centre joined forces to launch a broad-scale national campaign in the context of the Jordan breast cancer programme under the slogan "Self-examination now means safety". The objective of the campaign was to heighten community awareness and encourage women over 40 years of age to perform early self-examinations, at a time when Jordan was joining with other countries around the world to mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The Jordan breast cancer programme has organized training courses on breast cancer for senior medical and technical personnel working in family units. The National Committee on Early Detection of Breast Cancer, for its part, conducted 29,645 confidential examinations in October 2009 under a programme launched with the watchword, "We're 40 now, and a breast examination will be beneficial". More than 300 women were referred for X-ray examination (mammography). A study of the results of the programme was conducted for future planning purposes.

227. Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among Jordanian women; according to the national cancer register, Jordan has some 900 new cases every year. The mean age of onset is between 45 and 50 years. The programme has been successful in reducing the rate of detection of cases that have reached the third and fourth stages (which are considered to be the most dangerous stages of the disease) from 70 per cent before the initiation of activities under the programme to 35 per cent during its two years of intensive activity. According to the national cancer register, the incidence of cancer among women in all age groups was 82.4 cases per 100,000 in 2007. Cancer is the second most common cause of death in Jordan, accounting for approximately 13 per cent of all deaths, and of those deaths, 15 per cent are caused by lung cancer and breast cancer. Jordanian citizens who do not have any form of insurance are treated at Ministry of Health hospitals, with 90 to 100 per cent of the costs being borne by the State.

Incidence of cancer among Jordanian women, according to National Cancer Register data, 2007

<i>Type of cancer</i>	<i>Incidence (%)</i>
Breast cancer	35.8
Colorectal cancer	10.6
Uterine cancer	5.5
Blood cancers	5.1
Thyroid cancer	4.7

228. Article 4 of the Public Health Act provides that programmes relating to health care activities for elderly persons shall be duly implemented and that the institutions delivering

them shall be appropriately supervised. The Ministry of Health has a role to play in the delivery of preventive, curative and rehabilitational health care services for elderly people and providing suitable devices for those with auditory, visual or motor disabilities, with 75 per cent of the cost of such devices being borne by the State where the user does not have the means to pay for them, and 100 per cent of the cost of all diagnostic and therapeutic interventions, including operations, for Palestinian green card holders, with the possibility of referral to other hospitals. Since 2007, all persons 60 years of age or older have been covered under the health insurance plan, and the 2009 general State budget includes allocations expressly designated for senior citizens. Under issue 4 of the Financial Assistance Guidelines of 2007, financial assistance in the amount of JD 40 monthly is payable to invalid elderly persons.

229. In the “Human Security and Social Protection” component of Jordan’s National Strategy for Women, two objectives are formulated under the heading “Old Age”: (1) dissemination of reliable information about the situation and problems of elderly women through school curricula, and (2) appropriate action to ensure that elderly women receive suitable care and that their needs are met by organizing training for senior personnel, making premises available in all facilities, reviewing the relevant legislation, encouraging the establishment of associations to provide service programmes, and striving to foster positive values emphasizing respect for the elderly. In this context, the Ministry of Social Development is preparing to issue a preliminary draft version of a prospective Senior Citizens Protection Act.

230. Issues affecting elderly people have emerged as a result of increases in life expectancy for both men and women. In 2005, elderly people accounted for 5.2 per cent of the Jordanian population; by 2020 that figure is expected to rise to 7.6 per cent, with a corresponding increase in demand for health care and psychosocial services.

231. Homes for the elderly in Jordan fall into two categories: those that are run by volunteers and those that are private. In 2009, there were a total of 11 institutions operating under licences issued by the Ministry of Social Development, with 328 residents of both sexes. These provide adequate capacity not only to meet current demand but to accommodate anticipated growth in demand in the years ahead. Care in these homes is provided by 140 workers, so that the ratio of residents to staff is 3 to 1, which is consistent with international criteria. Residents receive basic shelter care. Jordan also has seven day care facilities for seniors, and there are a host of extra-institutional projects, programmes and services delivered by community organizations.

232. The National Jordanian Strategy for Senior Citizens, 2008-2010 emphasized protection for elderly people from violence through the measures outlined below:

- Drafting of legislation enshrining support for their rights and providing a safe environment for their care, but also with a focus on their economic and psychosocial empowerment;
- Creation of a data base on elderly people and promotion of scientific research on their situation with a view to more effective planning to meet their future needs;
- Encouragement for home care; the Jordanian Nursing Council is preparing guidelines and conditions relating to home care for the elderly.

233. The National Strategy for Disabled Persons, 2007-2015, has been launched. It contains 86 proposals with 86 corresponding action plans which the relevant agencies will be required to apply within specified time frames. Services for delivery to disabled persons under the Disabled Persons Rights Act (Act No. 31 of 2007) are outlined in the paragraphs below:

- Health insurance free of charge, primary health care for disabled women during pregnancy and the perinatal period;
- Medical and psychological rehabilitation services, treatment at all levels, and training through rehabilitation and physiotherapy units;
- Early detection of disabilities, with a compulsory screening programme for newborns to detect phenylketonuria, establishment of a specialized clinic, provision of a special diet, free medical monitoring and treatment for hypothyroidism at full-spectrum maternal and child care centres, of which there are 61 covering all parts of the country. At six of those centres, an experimental early detection programme will be conducted early in 2010.

234. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 24 and access by women to health care services without the permission of their husbands or families, under the provisions of article 12 of the Public Health Act, every physician is prohibited from prescribing any product for the purpose of causing a pregnant woman to abort or performing any operation upon her for that purpose except where necessary and after obtaining prior written consent to such operation from the pregnant woman concerned. Where she is unable to write or speak, such consent shall be obtained from her husband or legal guardian. These provisions show the concern of Jordanian law to respect women's rights and to ensure that women can exercise complete free will in matters relating to their health and access to health care services.

Article 12 (2)

235. The Public Health Act of 2008 devotes particular attention to the health of women and children and the provision of necessary services for them, including the essential requirements of reproductive health. The package of maternal and child health services delivered by the Ministry of Health includes the benefits outlined below:

- Maternal care during pregnancy and the perinatal period, family planning services, child care, health education, and some other elements of reproductive health, such as early detection of breast cancer, genital tract infections, and anti-tetanus vaccination for mothers. The Ministry is currently in the process of incorporating other elements of reproductive health into this package of services;
- The Ministry delivers a number of maternal and child health services free of charge, including (1) laboratory diagnostic testing for all mothers and children, (2) family planning services for mothers, such as temporary contraceptive methods and tubal ligation at maternal and child care centres administered by the Ministry and maternal and child health centres within hospitals administered by the Ministry, and (3) pharmaceuticals for both mothers and children; pregnant mothers have been covered under the health insurance system since 2006.

236. A recent study on maternal mortality, conducted in pursuit of the objectives of the National Population Strategy (2000-2020) and those of the National Agenda (a two-thirds reduction in maternal mortality by 2015), found that the maternal mortality rate in Jordan over the 2007-2008 period was 19.1 deaths per 100,000 live births, compared to 40 per 100,000 live births during 1995-1996. This is a noteworthy decline, averaging 4.5 per cent every year since 1995, whereas the corresponding figure for the world as a whole has been 1.1 per cent yearly. Jordan is thus a leader in terms of the reduction of maternal mortality, and that situation reflects the country's excellent level of health care services and its high-quality maternal care in particular. Such a reduction in maternal mortality indicates that the fifth Millennium Development Goal has been attained. The above-mentioned study found that 56.6 per cent of maternal deaths were attributable to haemorrhage, which was the most common cause, followed by thrombosis and toxicosis, and that 53.9 per cent of those deaths

could have been avoided if the causes had been recognized early enough or if the patients had been treated without delay. Moreover, 70 per cent of the deaths occurred during the postpartum period, and 60 per cent of the mothers in question had suffered from gynaecological disorders during birth or the postpartum period.

237. Urinary tract infections, for their part, headed the list of disorders affecting women during pregnancy, followed by vaginal infections, blood loss, early haemorrhage, hypertension, and finally diabetes. Caesarean deliveries were performed in 27.7 per cent of all births, a higher rate than the 18.5 per cent reported in the 2007 population and family health survey. According to the World Health Organization, caesareans should account for not less than 3 per cent and not more than 15 per cent of all deliveries.

Medical care for women at time of giving birth, 2007-2008 (Ministry of Health data)

<i>Item</i>	<i>%</i>
Births under qualified medical supervision	99
Health care provided by medical practitioner during pregnancy	99
Birth at a health care facility	99
Gynaecological disorders during birth and in the postpartum period	60
Normal delivery	69
Delivery by caesarean section	27.7
Vacuum delivery	3
Postpartum care	68
Baby naturally breastfed (0-3 months)	94

Disorders during the perinatal period

<i>Type of disorder</i>	<i>Incidence (%)</i>
Urinary tract infection	20.2
Vaginal infection	19.4
Anaemia	10.9
Early haemorrhage	6
Hypertension	5.9
Diabetes	3

238. The study recommended that maternal health should be regarded as a high-priority national issue calling for greater attention and the application of all available financial, cultural and administrative resources, tools and initiatives for maximum effectiveness. In addition, proposed strategies and action plans designed to promote safe pregnancy should be implemented to support the national effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. A clear-cut action plan should also be prepared in order to track the decline in mortality rates resulting from implementation of the recommendations of the study, and a vital statistics registration system should be developed. The study also recommended the establishment of a national maternal mortality register and continued national efforts to promote maternal health. In particular, community development, strengthening and empowerment should be targeted for investment with a view to more effective maternal and child health care at the local level. The study concluded that educational subjects with a bearing on maternal health and subsequent standard-setting protocols should be

incorporated into the curricula of medical institutions, including the various professional institutes in the medical field that are supported in Jordan.

239. In accordance with the principle of equality in medical care and access to the associated services, the Ministry of Health and the Civil Status and Passports Directorate, working in cooperation with the High Council on Population and outside organizations, have set out to implement what they call the “Mabrouk” initiative as one of the aspects of a campaign entitled “My life is sweeter”. The aim of the campaign is to disseminate health and awareness messages relating to health, and more precisely to family planning. These messages are distributed when the family record book is issued for the first time at one of the offices of the Civil Status and Passports Directorate, which are located throughout the country. To date, 66,000 copies of the “Mabrouk” package of documents have been distributed.

240. With reference to the Committee’s observation No. 9, concerning abortion for victims of incest, under the Penal Code abortion is prohibited. The act of causing abortion by means of beating, injury, the use of drugs or other means, or the use of such means to cause abortion without the consent of the woman concerned, is a criminal offence, and the Code provides for heavier penalties where the abortion or the means used to cause it result in the death of the woman, whether the woman in question deliberately causes her own abortion or permits some other person to cause her to abort. However, a woman who causes her own abortion in order to preserve her honour may plead extenuating circumstances, as may one of her descendants or other relatives to the third degree who commits the offence for that reason. The Public Health Act of 2008 and the Penal Code provide for heavier penalties where the offender is a physician, surgeon, pharmacist or midwife, except where the abortion is essential to protect the pregnant woman from imminent danger to her health or the probability of death. However, NGOs have repeatedly called for consideration of the advisability of making abortion permissible for victims of incest, at least in the early months of pregnancy.

241. UNRWA provides health care services free of charge for Palestinian refugees registered with it in Jordan, of whom there were 1,951,000 in 2008, 17 per cent of them living in 10 camps and the remainder in communities around the camps or in various other places in the country. Most of these refugees hold Jordanian nationality, apart from approximately 135,000 refugees from Gaza, and consequently are eligible to receive the health care services delivered by the Ministry of Health and the Royal Medical Services, and those delivered by NGOs and the private sector to Jordanian citizens. UNRWA delivers primary health care to Palestinian communities through 25 health centres, including 12 inside camps and 13 elsewhere, the latter being part of its efforts to bring services to people living outside camps. A total of 1,105,000 refugees, i.e. 57 per cent of all refugees registered with UNRWA in Jordan, received health care in 2008. UNRWA is endeavouring to expand its service coverage over a wider area: in 2006 a centre serving 16,000 refugees was opened in Aqaba, and in 2009 another one was opened in the Taiba-South Amman region, serving 26,000 refugees in that region.

242. UNRWA centres provide both treatment and preventive services. Treatment services include general and specialized clinical services, laboratory analyses, radiographic and dental services, and physical treatment, all free of charge. Preventive services cover health care for children from birth up to 3 years of age, including growth monitoring, vaccinations, and treatment as required; beginning in 2010, this coverage will be extended to children up to 5 years of age. UNRWA delivers preventive care to mothers before they become pregnant, during pregnancy and following pregnancy at all its health centres to detect high-risk pregnancies, i.e. pregnancy accompanied by a disease condition such as diabetes, a glandular disorder or a cardiac problem. Pregnant women are eligible for these services until delivery. UNRWA urges them to register early in their pregnancies in the interests of

optimal service delivery, and statistics from 2008 show that 71 per cent of pregnant women did register for pregnancy care in their first trimester. Between the beginning of pregnancy and delivery, these women visited a clinic 6.7 times on average, a figure that considerably exceeds the 4 clinical visits recommended by the World Health Organization. A large majority of registered pregnant women – 88 per cent – visited a clinic at least four times during their pregnancies, 99.6 per cent were vaccinated against tetanus, 99.9 per cent gave birth under medical supervision, and 99.7 of all births took place in a health care institution. Complications, i.e. disease conditions accompanying pregnancy, such as diabetes, hypertension or anaemia, were detected through an integrated, comprehensive health care programme, and each case received appropriate treatment. Pregnant women also receive dietary supplements during pregnancy and lactation.

243. UNRWA is now seeking to cover all births in hospitals under an agreement with the Ministry of Health. Refugees who can afford to do so pay 25 per cent of the costs of their treatment, while those who cannot afford that much pay 5 per cent, and UNRWA pays for the balance. This arrangement covers pregnant women who live in areas that are far from the Agency's health centres. As a rule, UNRWA assumes not less than 75 per cent of the cost of care for high-risk pregnancy cases in private hospitals, but in view of the Agency's current financial difficulties, it has lowered the ceiling for private hospital care to JD 150 for low-income patients and JD 100 for all others, regardless of the type of delivery. Owing to lack of financial support from donor States for the period 2010-2011, however, UNRWA will no longer provide this assistance as of the beginning of 2010. In 2008, it provided postpartum care for 91 per cent of all registered pregnant women. It provides modern family planning services free of charge, supplying IUDs, contraceptive pills, hormone injections, condoms and vaginal suppositories; in 2008, a total of 35,246 women used these services regularly, including 9,000 new users. Use rates for these methods were: IUD, 40.2 per cent; pills, 30.7 per cent; condoms, 24.2 per cent; suppositories, 2 per cent; and hormone injections, 2.9 per cent.

244. In 2008, family size for Palestinian women in Jordan was 5.1, while data from 2005 show a fertility rate of 3.3 per cent. In the five host countries for Palestinian refugees, maternal mortality was 24 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2008, whereas the corresponding figure for Jordan was 8 deaths per 100,000 live births.

245. In 2009-2010, UNRWA began to implement a pre-conception care programme at all its centres with a view to minimizing maternal mortality by identifying and treating risk factors and also in an effort to eliminate disabilities among children. Accordingly, it screens women for hereditary disorders such as hypothyroidism and phenylketonuria in order to avoid cases of mental retardation arising from these disorders, working in cooperation with the Jordanian Ministry of Health.

246. UNRWA seeks to empower Palestinian women and protect children through a child abuse and domestic violence detection programme. Senior health personnel have been trained to administer the programme, deal with cases, and refer them to the Family Protection Department.

247. A brochure on maternal and child health has been produced under a joint project executed by UNRWA and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and will be distributed to pregnant refugee women beginning early in 2010. This brochure will serve as a portable medical registration for pregnant women, covering the pregnancy and recording the child's growth and immunization history up to his or her fifth year of life. The table below shows numbers of women, out of a total of 1071 personnel of all categories, working to deliver the UNRWA health care programme.

Numbers of UNRWA health care personnel

<i>Field of specialization</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
Physician	12	101
Dentist	8	22
Pharmacist	0	2
Assistant pharmacist	31	43
Laboratory staff	25	30
Medical administration	76	46
Registered nurse	46	0
Registered midwife	34	0
Nursing assistant	181	6
Other personnel	41	376

Article 13**Article 13 (a)**

248. Upon the death of one spouse, the other spouse inherits his or her pension and benefits on a basis of equality, in accordance with the provisions of the Jordanian Labour Code, with no gender-based discrimination. Pensions, indemnities or benefits payable to eligible heirs are distributed on a basis of equality under article 36 of the Civil Retirement Act. Under article 34, upon the marriage of a woman civil servant who has acquired a pension entitlement in consideration of her services, she retains that entitlement, regardless of her marriage. Article 24 of the Act states, "Where a woman employee with a retirement pension entitlement receives a stipend by inheritance, her pension entitlement shall be calculated and she shall receive whichever of the two amounts is larger and shall forfeit the other." This is a general principle under article 38, which provides that two retirement pensions shall not be combined, and that where one members of a family is entitled to more than one pension, he or she shall be awarded the largest of them. A woman employee's retirement pension is inherited by her heirs in accordance with the provisions of article 34, which states that upon the death of a retired woman employee in receipt of a pension, her pension shall be paid to her lawful heirs subject to proof that they are in need of it and also subject to proof that the former woman employee was directly responsible for their support.

249. Where a woman employee dies while still in service, her family is given a retirement stipend equal to 75 per cent of the pension to which she would have been entitled had she not died. There is no discrimination in this matter between male and female civil servants.

250. Under article 25 of the 2007 Civil Service Regulations, a woman civil servant whose husband is dead or disabled is entitled to a family allowance, provided she is her children's means of support. Under article 105, a woman employee is entitled to maternity leave with the full pay and allowances to which she is entitled. Where a male or female employee dies while in service, his or her heirs under Islamic law are paid compensation equivalent to his or her full pay and allowances. However, under the Civil Code and the Labour Code, the widow, daughter, mother or sister of a deceased beneficiary ceases to be entitled to her inherited share of his pension upon marriage, since by law her husband is required to support her and provide for all her needs.

Article 13 (b)

251. The “We are all Jordan” document contains a number of programmes and an array of recommendations aimed at combating poverty. The document advocates action to make small business financing services more widely available in poor communities, and action to strengthen savings and loan institutions in order to facilitate lending procedures and encourage more people to use their services, with particular attention to women and their right to have access to these services on easy terms. The document affirms the need for an expanded role for the National Small Loans Bank in the effort to combat poverty and unemployment in Jordan, and to upgrade the capacities of the Development and Employment Fund.

252. Many loan institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, have helped to foster and promote economic participation by women by encouraging them to borrow money and launch small business ventures that will reduce unemployment rates among women and improve their families’ standards of living. The approval rate for loan applications from women was 24 per cent in 2000; by 2008, it had more than doubled to 55 per cent. The value of loans to women applicants represented 46.4 per cent of the total value of all loans in 2008, up from 21.4 per cent in 2000.

253. As of September 2009, 47,725 women had received support from the National Assistance Fund, representing 58 per cent of the total assistance made available. The Fund has implemented a number of projects and programmes aimed at combating the feminization of poverty, in addition to recurrent financial assistance, emergency cash assistance, disabled care, physical rehabilitation and vocational training programmes. As was noted in the previous report, the Fund’s guidelines discriminate in favour of various groups of women, including women heads of families, who are 11.1 per cent of the female population as a whole and 23.6 per cent of it for the 60-and-over age group. In Jordan, women are not subjected to discrimination in the area of access to loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit: loan application forms and the personal interviews with bank officials that are part of the loan approval process do not feature any discrimination against women. However, risk is a factor that banks may take into account in considering loan applications.

254. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation has adopted numerous strategies, programmes and projects by means of which it hopes to achieve development. Those programmes and projects include the ones outlined in the paragraphs below:

- In the area of microfinance, a number of agreements for support of the microenterprise sector in Jordan have been concluded with a view to making more loans available and enlarging that sector’s geographic coverage. We may note in that connection that approximately 80 per cent of all microfinance loans to date have been granted to women. In 2007, an agreement was signed under which a pioneering institution in the field of small business start-up financing in Jordan, the Fund for Women, obtained a long-term loan to support the small business sector. The year 2008 saw the signing of an agreement between the Spanish Government, represented by the Spanish Ministry of International Cooperation, and the Fund for Women whereby the former made a loan available to the latter on favourable terms. This type of financing helps the institution in its efforts to expand into low-income areas outside the main towns of governorates and diversify its financial products to provide target social groups, including women in particular, with sources of microfinance;
- Funding for more than 40 social productivity projects of various kinds designed to benefit women’s associations and organizations throughout Jordan has been

provided under two programmes, an economic and social productivity enhancement programme and a small grants and direct intervention programme;

- Under the “loans” component of the programme, small loans are made available through revolving loan funds specifically for small income-generating business ventures. To date there have been 252 such ventures and accompanying loans. Women beneficiaries of loans under this component have accounted for over 60 per cent of all loan beneficiaries.

255. The National Small Loans Bank makes loans and financial services available on a continuing basis to small business owners, including women in particular. It has endeavoured to achieve a broad measure of geographic continuity both in urban and in rural areas by opening an extensive network of branch offices and building partnerships with other institutions and programmes, and 89 per cent of women small business owners made use of its services in 2009. The Bank also provides financial services designed to improve living conditions for women heads of households and their families. Working in cooperation with the Bank and under the auspices of the King Abdullah Development Fund, the “We are all Jordan” Youth Commission has recently launched a fund intended to provide financing for ground-breaking projects. It will make loans available to finance pioneering initiatives, ideas and projects originated by young people in an effort to help solve the problem of youth unemployment in Jordan and provide them with a useful source of income.

256. In 2006, the Al-Aman Fund for the Future of Orphans was founded as a charitable association to provide care for orphaned boys and girls who have been accommodated at shelters and the facilities of orphan care associations in Jordan. The Fund steps in after the orphans have reached 18 years of age and have left those facilities; its function is to help secure a viable future for them.

Article 13 (c)

257. The Jordan Olympic Committee was established pursuant to the Jordan Olympic Committee Act of 2007. The Committee is tasked with fostering and developing sport at the national level, combating discrimination, and encouraging women’s sports. Jordanian women, like their male counterparts, enjoy the right to participate in recreational activities, games and sport. The Higher Council for Youth, which was established pursuant to the Higher Council for Youth Act of 2005, is concerned both with young men and with young women; there is nothing discriminatory either in its enabling legislation or in any of its activities and programmes. By 2009, the Council had opened 43 centres with 9,460 women members enrolled and 95 women supervisors.

258. Under the sports federation regulations issued by the Jordan Olympic Committee, the Sports Federation Council is required to include in its membership at least one woman from the “distinguished” group, while major federations must have at least two women members from the “distinguished” group. Over the period 2005-2009, the Council implemented all nine themes of the National Strategy for Youth with no gender-based discrimination. The Council oversees all youth clubs and organizations that have both men and women members. It was instrumental in amending the basic conditions governing eligibility for financial support so that a higher level of support is available to clubs whose governing bodies and boards of directors include women among their members. The Council is currently working to upgrade the qualifications of youth leaders and persons working with young people, both men and women, with no discrimination in respect of opportunities for appointment, career promotion, skills enhancement or selection for missions under internal or external education grants.

259. In 2006, the Hashemite Fund for Development of Jordan Badia was established for the purpose of supporting scientific, cultural, sporting, educational, skill-enhancing and social activities in semi-arid regions of the country, providing incentives for innovative residents in various fields, with no gender-based discrimination. The Fund also provides women inmates in correctional and rehabilitation centres with rehabilitational programmes, such as religious guidance and cultural instruction.

260. Women's cultural production is growing steadily. Recent years have seen unprecedented outspokenness in discussing general issues through newspaper articles, novels, television serials, film recordings and plays. Two projects entitled "The family bookshop" and "Reading for all" have been among the most important cultural projects in the country, thanks to their contribution to the promotion of reading among family members by making books available at low prices. Both these projects have been executed in every governorate in the country.

Article 14

Article 14 (1)

261. Both the "Social well-being" theme in the "We are all Jordan" document and the National Agenda emphasize the importance of development for rural women and action to combat poverty and eliminate disparities between governorates, and both advocate greater participation by women in economic activity. As will be seen from the table below, Department of Statistics data show that in 2008, 13.7 per cent of rural women were economically active. Adjusted economic participation rates for urban and rural women display disparities owing to differences in their economic and social characteristics, notably in respect of education, marriage, and fertility levels, and the fact that job opportunities tend to be concentrated in urban areas. Agricultural work and home-based work performed by rural women has not been taken into account for the purpose of calculating these participation rates.

Labour force participation rates for rural and urban areas, by sex, 2008

<i>Area</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Men (%)</i>	<i>Women (%)</i>
Jordan as a whole	Crude participation rate	40.3	9
	Adjusted participation rate	64	14.2
	Employed population, 15-and-over age group	57.5	10.8
Urban	Adjusted participation rate	64.5	14.4
Rural	Adjusted participation rate	61.8	13.7

262. The Hashemite Fund for Development of Jordan Badia was established as part of a drive to promote comprehensive development in Jordan's semi-desert regions. The Fund is mandated to originate and develop productivity enhancement projects, strengthen the developmental role played by women in semi-desert regions, facilitate access to the financial and technical resources required in that connection, and support associations that contribute to training and vocational skills development for residents of those regions. The Fund has established a number of mechanisms and delivered various programmes aimed at promoting participation by women in economic activity, and, in particular, encouraging them to seek employment in non-traditional sectors.

263. Unemployment rates among women in the labour force vary by area of residence: Department of Statistics data for 2008 show that unemployment among rural women was

31.4 per cent, while for women living in urban areas, it was 23 per cent. This disparity may be attributable to the fact that there are more job openings available to women in urban areas than there are in rural areas. Accordingly, a White Paper on agriculture issued in 2009 focused on a number of main themes representing action priorities, including family food security, the elimination of rural poverty, and lower unemployment rates among women.

Unemployment rates, by sex and area of residence (%)

Areas	2003		2005		2008	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Urban areas	12.5	19.5	11.8	24.6	9.7	23.0
Rural areas	17.0	26.9	17.5	33.0	12.4	31.4
Total	13.4	20.8	12.8	25.9	10.1	24.4

264. Various actions have been taken to promote the integration of women into development, including those outlined in the paragraphs below:

- The Gender and Rural Development Section within the Ministry of Agriculture has developed a number of projects featuring the use of traditional means of production in home-based work, with training and orientation targeting rural women in remote areas. Eight such projects have been executed to date, including those outlined below:
 - “The home garden”: its objective is to increase the family’s income, improve its food supply situation, and integrate women into development;
 - “Food security”: a programme executed in cooperation with the Hashemite Fund. This programme targets farm women in rural areas, and its objective is to ensure that local communities are not left to their own devices, with the inhabitants leaving to look for stable sources of income in neighbouring cities;
 - “Additional income/food security for poor rural families”: this project has been under way since 2008 in various regions of Jordan. In 2009, its activities were expanded to cover pockets of poverty. To date, it has targeted 54 villages and 1001 families. The project also features courses designed to provide rural women with training on reproductive health, family planning and other health-related issues;
 - “Managing agricultural resources, phase 2”: encouragement for starting income-generating small business ventures. The project features training in food processing and marketing, and it makes loans available in cooperation with the Agricultural Loans Institution. In 2008, instruction courses for farm women were held in various parts of Jordan, attracting a total of 691 women. Courses on reproductive health and family planning were attended by 223 women, in addition to 24 courses attended by 466 women. The corresponding figures for 2009 were 35 courses attended by 689 women;
 - “Rural development”: is based on the same principle. The project features training and skills upgrading for families headed by women.

265. Various Ministry of Labour projects have been implemented, including those outlined below.

Jobs for girls from disadvantaged areas

266. This project is designed to provide jobs for girls, in recognition of the difficulty and risks associated with leaving their rural communities in search of work in cities and industrialized areas. The project has been functioning successfully since 2003, finding jobs for village girls in qualified industrial zones with safe, healthy working conditions that conform to national and international standards. The Ministry of Labour provides the workers with transport and three meals a day, and it also ensures their social security coverage for six months following the date of employment.

Transferring investments to remote areas—production branch plants

267. The objective of this project is the creation of decent jobs for unemployed women in rural areas. It targets the unskilled labour force, providing in-house training. Branch plants that have been opened to date include the following, with an indication of the accommodation capacity of each: Dalilat al-Hamaida (Madaba Governorate), 750 girls, of whom 210 had jobs as of April 2009; Central Shuna (Irbid Governorate), 600 girls, of whom 210 had jobs as of June 2009; Kura, 400 girls; Fuqu' (Karak Governorate), 700 girls; Tafila, 400 girls; Wastiya (Irbid Governorate), 450 girls. In 2008, the Shobak branch plant provided jobs for 70 girls, and it has since been enlarged to accommodate 70 more. When construction work on the Central Shuna branch plant is completed, it will employ 600 girls. The Ministry of Labour provides the building required for installation of the branch plant at no cost for five years; after that time, it charges a rental equivalent to 75 per cent of the current market rate. It also provides training free of charge for those who sign up to work in the branch plant, with support, training and employment for 18 months providing 30 per cent of employees' wages after they have completed their training, in addition to their social security contributions and the cost of their transport. Four production branch plants have now been built in remote areas, employing approximately 750 men and women, and construction of the remaining branch plants is expected to be completed by the end of 2009. Under the project in its current form, seven branch plants are to be built in various parts of the country to provide training and jobs for 3,500 male and female workers in rural areas in southern, central and northern Jordan, while three more branch plants are to be built in 2010.

Support for the National Women's Agricultural Employment Corporation

268. The objective of this initiative is long-term jobs in the agriculture sector for 1,000 girls. The Ministry of Labour places the building at the Corporation's disposal and pays social security and health insurance contributions for five years. It also pays the Corporation JD 20 per month for each woman worker in lieu of transportation costs for a period of 27 months. In addition, the Corporation is exempted from sales tax. In mid-October 2009, the Corporation announced that it had begun to register applicants.

269. Many civil society organizations are playing a role in development, working within five main themes: environmental, political, economic, educational and legislative. They implement a wide variety of activities, programmes and projects in their respective areas of interest in every governorate in the country, in rural areas, urban areas and semi-desert areas, particularly in remote regions. The Hashemite Fund has executed a project entitled "Dignity" in an effort to combat violence in a number of parts of Jordan by monitoring the application of the human-rights-based curriculum at the local level. To that end, it gathers information on cases of violence and encourages and supports collective action aimed at helping rural local communities and women, especially in cases involving domestic violence.

Article 14 (2) (a)

270. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation is currently pursuing the initiatives outlined in the paragraphs below:

- Expansion of rural community programmes and services in remote areas by creating an economic nexus in a cluster of regions with similar socio-economic conditions and development needs. Over and above its economic impacts, this process is contributing to local community capacity-building by enlisting local people in the successive stages of development planning. Projects executed in this connection emphasize justice in resource distribution, decentralized decision-making, the empowerment of target groups, and the enlistment of low-income groups in priority-setting and decision-making;
- Implementation of a “capacities programme” designed to build the capacities of local community organizations, especially those directed by women, through a strategy of enlisting the private sector, NGOs and civil society organizations in job creation and local community development. The “capacities programme” reflects the Government’s commitment to overcoming the problems of poverty and unemployment and providing jobs through productive projects. Phase 1 of the programme had been completed by the end of 2006, and the implementation of phase 2 is currently under way, with 85 productive projects in prospect. A total of 34 projects of relevance for the status of women have been or are being executed, and a project aimed at enhancing productivity has been executed with funding from the Ministry of Planning and international cooperation. Funding has been secured for 17 projects to date;
- As we have seen, women contributed to the preparation of the White Paper on agriculture referred to in paragraph 263 above.

271. Under the “Healthy villages” programme, which is being implemented by the Ministry of Health, an effort is being made to secure participation by women in the development process through development councils in villages. Women account for 65 per cent of the membership of those councils and committees established by them, and it is particularly noteworthy that in four such healthy villages, the development council is chaired by a woman and 100 per cent of the council’s members are also women. Women have played their role in communicating with governmental and non-governmental organizations concerning income-producing projects. Furthermore, 80 per cent of the participants in these workshops have been women.

Article 14 (2) (b)

272. Ministries and Government agencies have played their role in this connection. A list of the ministries concerned and their respective initiatives will be found in the paragraphs below.

Ministry of Health

273. The Ministry of Health is implementing the “Healthy villages” programme, which is aimed at local community development in Jordan’s poorest and most disadvantaged regions. The Ministry, working in cooperation with the World Health Organization and non-governmental institutions and organizations, is seeking to enhance the quality of life for individuals at all levels. As of the end of 2009, the programme had been introduced in 42 rural villages in all parts of Jordan, bringing 100 per cent maternal and child health service coverage. Moreover, 80 per cent of the villages included in the programme now have a qualified midwife, while 100 per cent of the women have been trained in home nursing.

274. The Ministry has also initiated a programme entitled “The Arab woman speaks”, which is aimed at empowering women and enhancing their role in the home and consequently in her village. The programme is being implemented by the “Healthy villages” programme and Johns Hopkins University. It features training for both women and men in six areas of relevance for families’ well-being, namely breast cancer, family income, domestic violence, diabetes and hypertension, exercise, and family planning.

Ministry of Social Development

275. The Health Insurance Section within the Family Affairs Directorate is responsible for overseeing research on the economic situation of low-income families. An indigent family is given a health insurance card or exempted from payment for treatment. The Section performs its tasks in this connection in coordination with the Ministry of Health.

Ministry of Agriculture

276. Twenty-one information courses for rural women have been organized, dealing with reproductive health and family planning, breast cancer, the menopause and osteoporosis, family and child health, infectious hepatitis, swine influenza and bird influenza.

Hashemite Fund for Development of Jordan Badia

277. The Fund has executed a project on maternal and child health aimed at improving the health status of women and children, and women’s reproductive health in particular, in remote rural areas, and assessing health care needs in the various target areas, with particular focus on women and children. Primary health care services are also delivered under the project, including detection, treatment, and transport to a hospital if necessary.

High Council on Population

278. The Council has begun work on a project to integrate women’s health and the empowerment of women in the southern region (2006-2011). Local community activities are organized with the aim of improving women’s reproductive health and promoting their empowerment through the creation of a supportive environment for the development of governmental policies on reproductive health in Jordan. In addition, the project includes a health programme featuring a network of health centres administered by the Ministry of Health, and awareness and information campaigns on reproductive health and family planning, aimed at men, women and young people.

279. We may note at this point that not-for-profit volunteer social institutions and associations throughout Jordan play a significant role in this connection. One of these is the Jordan Association for Family Planning and Protection, which delivers outstanding reproductive and sexual health programmes and services for women and families in the firm belief that access to these services is a human right. The Association focuses on heightening women’s awareness of the importance of exercising their right to choose the spacing and number of children they desire to have, and it has succeeded in lowering the birth rate, the infant mortality rate and the fertility rate. It has developed a number of awareness and information programmes directed at various groups in society, including men, women and young people, on health issues with a bearing on reproductive health.

Article 14 (2) (c)

280. Article 3 of the Social Security Act provides that all workers subject to the Labour Code currently in force shall be covered by insurance against work injuries, occupational diseases, old age, disability and death. Accordingly, following the enactment of amendments to the Code in 2008 and expansion of the scope of its application to include agricultural workers, the numbers of social insurance beneficiaries in that category are expected to increase in the coming years. In 2006, workers in the agriculture sector accounted for a mere 1.4 per cent of social insurance contributors, while the corresponding figure for 2007 was 1.2 per cent, with 6,987 insured men and 1,426 insured women. In 2006, only 127 enterprises were covered by social insurance, and 139 in 2007, representing a mere 1 per cent of all enterprises in Jordan.

Article 14 (2) (d)

281. The Ministry of Education has adopted effective non-formal education policies paralleling the formal education system, and has formulated a strategy to that end targeting various groups. The Ministry has also developed appropriate compensatory education programmes designed to meet the needs of students who have dropped out of school, including a programme aimed at reinforcing the culture of school dropouts between 13 and 18 years of age in the case of boys, and between 13 and 20 years of age in the case of girls. Upon completing the programme, these students receive a document making them eligible to enrol at a vocational training institution at the “skilled worker” level. As of the end of the 2007-2008 school year, there were 31 of these cultural reinforcement centres, attended by no fewer than 1,500 students of both sexes. The Ministry also runs a literacy programme aimed at eradicating all forms of illiteracy (basic illiteracy, functional illiteracy, innumeracy and technical illiteracy) in the 15-and-over age group, including both boys and girls on a footing of equality. The aims of this programme are to reduce the illiteracy rate, improve women’s life skills, and eliminate the problem of unemployment; the Ministry began to implement it in the 2008-2009 school year. Yet another programme is aimed at eradicating child labour. In that connection, the Ministry has devised a plan within the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, concerned as it is about children who are at risk of dropping out of school.

282. With respect to non-traditional study areas, technical education has been added as a subject under Ministry of Education curricula for all educational levels, one that is taken by students of both sexes. It comprises a variety of study units designed to develop students’ technical capacities in agriculture, industry, trade and services. The Ministry has put in place a new structure for vocational education and reorganized the several vocational branches. In addition, worker training in the field of technical education is now available. The Ministry has focused on improving the outcomes of vocational education in step with students’ academic development. All technical education students and teachers have life insurance coverage. The aim of the programme is to develop human resources with a high degree of expertise and competence.

Article 14 (2) (e) and (f)

283. The numbers of cooperative associations in Jordan increased markedly from 1,098 in 2006 to 1,143 in 2007. Their aggregate membership also increased from 103,941 in 2005 to 117,094 in 2007. There are 2,500 charitable organizations, including 1,500 functioning under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Development. We may note here that various non-governmental associations and international organizations working in the field of development make loans available to women for the purpose of creating economic opportunities. The Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development has executed income-generating projects aimed at creating jobs and income for families. Most of these

projects have focused on jobs for women. Some of them have featured new technologies and have provided training in technical skills.

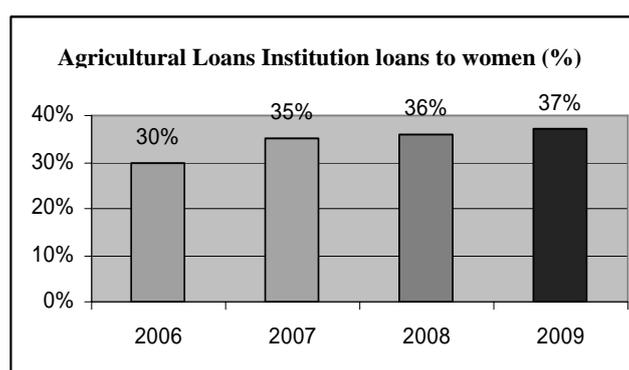
284. The University of Jordan, for its part, has demonstrated its interest in local community development by executing an agricultural training project in Ma'an Governorate which constituted a quantum shift in the effort to strengthen rural women's role in community development. The project featured home gardens as a supplementary source of family income and a step toward solutions to the problems of poverty and unemployment. In addition, the university has organized an information course for 75 women to teach them about public health, nutrition, food processing, gardens, forage cultivation and livestock resources; participants' expenses are paid for them. The project has yielded positive results, and in an effort to attract more women from the region, increased financial support has been made available.

285. The Ministry of Health and the High Council on Youth are constantly in contact in the forefront of the task of preparing tomorrow's leaders through the Healthy Villages programme. Rural women are invited to sign up for many courses, including courses on political empowerment and domestic violence issues, and they attend seasonal festivals and charity bazaars to sell their products. Another project features environmental protection as a community activity aimed at creating an environment-friendly village through home gardens, tree-planting, drinking water supply and sewage disposal, refuse disposal, greater community participation in development, including both men and women, and practical application of the principle of self-reliance. Other aspects are the construction of cultural centres, sports facilities and social centres.

Article 14 (2) (g)

Agricultural Loans Institution

286. The Agricultural Loans Institution was founded to support, develop and encourage agriculture by making farm credit available. The Institution plays a prominent role in activating participation by women, especially in rural and semi-desert regions, inasmuch as it does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its lending policy. The graph below shows percentage growth in the Institution's loans to women compared to its total loan volume. As will be seen, those loans accounted for 30 per cent, 35 per cent, 36 per cent and 37 per cent of all loans in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 respectively.



287. The Institution's programmes and plans include funding for a variety of loans earmarked expressly for women with a view to combating rural poverty, as outlined in the paragraphs below:

- Agricultural resource management project, Phase 2, in the southern governorates. This project is aimed at activating and stimulating the role of women in diversifying

sources of family income. Loans to women account for 82 per cent of all loans approved under this project;

- Agricultural resource management project, Yarmuk River basin, northern region. This project is aimed at providing funding for small farmers and rural families in an effort to improve and upgrade their standard of living. Loans to women account for 55 per cent of all loans approved under this project;
- Small loans aimed at eliminating the problems of poverty and unemployment. Early in 2004, the Institution adopted this project as a national programme on the implementation of small income-producing family businesses. In 2008, it was extended for a further five years. It features actions designed to facilitate participation by women in agricultural operations, especially women who do not have land at their disposal. Loans to women have accounted for 54 per cent of all loans approved under this project;
- The Healthy Villages project, which has played a role in the economic empowerment of rural women by making loans available, including in particular loans to women who are heads of families and responsible for their welfare. The purpose of the loans is to enable the beneficiaries to start small income-producing businesses. Loans to women have accounted for 56 per cent of all loans approved under this project;
- The Unemployed Agricultural Engineers Funding project. The objective of this project is to provide suitable employment, a higher standard of living and better nutrition for agricultural engineers, both men and women, by funding useful non-traditional business enterprises.

Fund for Women

288. The Fund for Women makes funding available for small business start-ups, growth and expansion. It also provides seasonal funding through 19 branch offices located in all parts of Jordan.

Jordanian Women's Union

289. The Jordanian Women's Union also makes small loans available to low-income women who are the sole support of their families. A total of 640 women received such loans in 2008.

Coordination Commission for Social Solidarity

290. The Coordination Commission for Social Solidarity, working in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, is conducting a study on the impact of trade agreements on poverty and employment. This project is being executed in four Arab States, one of which is Jordan, over the 2009-2013 period. The Commission is in the process of preparing a guide to institutions working in the field of social solidarity, describing their functions and objectives, working strategies, future plans, programmes, and target groups for their services. Following this, it will prepare specialized studies on various aspects of efforts to combat poverty and strengthen social solidarity. Among these are to be groundbreaking studies on various issues relating to poverty in Jordan from a gender standpoint, women's issues, and economic empowerment.

Article 14 (2) (h)

291. The King Abdullah II Low-income Family Housing Project was implemented in 2005. Under Phase I of the project, 600 homes were built and turned over to low-income

people. Under Phase II, 1,400 units were built, followed by 150 more units in 2009. From two to four building sites will be selected in every governorate. In addition, the Ministry of Social Development has made 350 to 400 housing units available for families headed by women, who constitute between 35 and 40 per cent of all beneficiaries.

292. Jordan suffers from scant natural resources, primarily clean water; it is classified among the ten most water-poor countries in the world. Despite this situation, it has achieved significant progress on many indicators, as outlined below:

- Most of the population (98.1 per cent) live in a home connected to a drinking water supply system;
- In 2007, 65 per cent of all homes in the country were connected to a waste water disposal system;
- Forested land area has doubled;
- Virtually the entire population has electric power, including 99.7 per cent of all urban homes and 98.7 per cent of homes in rural areas.

293. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation has executed investment-supporting infrastructure projects, including rural roads and electric power grid connections, under investment development and service projects, with target communities having priority. It has also supported the water and agriculture sectors, with water supply systems having been renovated and upgraded or new ones installed in all governorates. In addition, exploration for new sources of water has been pursued, and the irrigation system in the northern Jordan Valley region has been upgraded. The country's infrastructure has been supported, with new main roads, development corridors, secondary roads, village roads and farm roads in all governorates, and also in camps, by agreement with the Department of Palestinian Affairs. Services in the camps have been upgraded under Phase 2 of the project, with rehabilitation of poor families' homes; this work has been done under the supervision of the Department of Palestinian Affairs.

Part IV

Article 15

Article 15 (1) and (2)

294. The various courts perform their judicial functions in accordance with the provisions of law in force in Jordan, which are binding upon all, with no gender-based discrimination, marriage having no effect on people's rights in that connection and placing no restrictions on legal competence. As stated in the previous report, women may litigate in the same way as men and may apply to the courts to enforce respect for their rights, without discrimination.

295. The independence of both spouses' financial responsibility is enshrined in Jordanian legislation; that is, each spouse possesses his or her assets independently of the other spouse. The law places no restrictions on a woman's legal competence when she marries, and consequently, every woman who has reached her majority, provided there is no impediment to her competence, is free to engage in legal and administrative transactions relating to her property. Indeed, any restrictions on legal competence are deemed null and void under article 47 of the Civil Code, which states, "No one may renounce his or her personal freedom or legal competence or alter the rules governing them. Persons who are not competent to exercise their civil rights are minors and those who are mentally deficient or insane." Under the Jordanian Commercial Code, the rules governing commercial

competence are subsumed under the provisions of law governing legal competence in general, and consequently a wife does not need her husband as her guardian or trustee in order to manage her property and engage in legal transactions. Indeed, the husband has no power to grant or withhold his permission in such matters. A woman who engages in trade is a bona fide merchant, and her transactions are legally valid under the general provisions of law governing legal competence, no less than those of her male counterparts. A woman may appoint another person to act as her agent, and she in turn may act as agent for her husband or another person.

296. The Jordanian Commercial Code places restrictions on a wife's property if her husband becomes bankrupt. In that event, all real property and chattels that she can prove belonged to her before her marriage revert to her as her personal assets, as does any property that has accrued to her for no consideration during the marriage. Real property that she has purchased during the marriage with financial resources that have accrued to her in the above-mentioned manner may also revert to her as her personal asset, provided the contract of sale states explicitly that those financial resources are being used for the purchase, and provided the wife can prove their provenance. Assets that the wife has acquired for consideration and has purchased using her husband's money during the marriage must be included in the assets in bankruptcy proceedings, unless the wife can show cause why they should not be so included.

297. The Owners and Tenants Act protects the wife and her children in the event of termination of the marriage. The right to continue occupying the rented premises for use as a dwelling is transferred to the divorced wife with her children where they are found to be original tenants, after a competent court has issued a final ruling of arbitrary divorce or canonical separation where the husband has left the rented premises. However, the law prohibits the wife from renting out the premises for use as anything other than a dwelling in the event of her remarriage after having been widowed. Under the Personal Status Act, a wife has the right to work subject to certain conditions: that the work is lawful, that the husband consents (the husband may not withdraw his consent once he has given it), and that the husband continues to be legally responsible for the wife's maintenance even though she is employed; however, a wife who takes a job without her husband's consent forfeits her right to maintenance.

298. Women are a growing presence in the ranks of the Jordanian judiciary; as yet, however, they have not served as judges in Shari'a courts or ecclesiastical courts, despite the fact that there are no legal impediments to their doing so. Jordanian legislation governing the exercise of the legal profession contains no discriminatory provisions, and as of August 2009, a total of 1,815 practising women lawyers were listed with the Bar Association, constituting 26.6 per cent of all the country's qualified lawyers, while women lawyers in training accounted for 46.5 per cent of all lawyers in training. There are also 2,500 women Shari'a lawyers as well. In addition, there are many women legal experts who work for governmental or community institutions as legal advisors, but it is difficult to determine exactly how many, as Bar Association records list only practising lawyers.

Article 15 (3) and (4)

299. The legal capacity of women remains unchanged; it is not subject to any restrictions under the law, as explained above.

300. On 31 March 2009, the Council of Ministers issued its decree No. 4,476 approving "the withdrawal of Jordan's reservation to article 15, paragraph 4 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, under which States Parties shall accord to men and women the same rights relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile." The Jordanian Constitution guarantees personal freedom to Jordanians in matters relating to the movement of persons and the right

to travel. It provides that no Jordanian may be expelled from Jordanian territory, that no Jordanian may be prohibited from living in any district or compelled to reside in a specified place, except as otherwise provided by law, and that personal freedom is guaranteed. The interim Passports Act of 2003 does not contain any gender-based restrictions or discrimination. It should be noted that this act is still an interim act, and in due course will be considered by both houses of the National Assembly, the Chamber of Representatives and the Chamber of Notables, for adoption as a definitive act.

Article 16

Article 16 (1) (a) and (b)

301. Under Jordanian legislation, in order for a marriage contract to be valid, binding and effective, it must be concluded freely and with the full and valid consent of both parties, unaffected by any form of influence upon either the woman or the man. Under the Jordanian Personal Status Act, the woman is responsible for concluding her own marriage contract. The agent is the woman's representative; he concludes the contract by proxy, not on his own behalf, and he is not a party to it. He is appointed with the woman's full and free consent. However, the agent has the right to object if the husband is not of equal birth. The agent also has the right to cancel the contract in two cases: one is pregnancy, and the other is in the event of a lawsuit where the husband is the woman's equal by birth. The wife may have any conditions included in the contract that ensure its validity, provided they are not contrary to the purposes of marriage. Under Jordanian legislation, in order to be official, a marriage must be registered before the Shari'a courts in the case of Muslims, and take place in a church in the case of Christians. The purpose of this is to preserve and protect the rights of both parties and the children in respect of financial and personal obligations, such as inheritance, which is contingent on marriage and descent, and the wife's right to a nuptial gift and maintenance. The provisions of law governing marriage, such as the conditions for the validity of the marriage, the conclusion of the contract, and under what circumstances it may be cancelled or annulled, are as set forth in the religious laws of Muslims and Christians respectively.

Article 16 (1) (c)

302. Despite demands from many women's organizations, Jordan maintains its reservation to this paragraph because it is incompatible with the provisions of Islamic law, the Shari'a, as was explained in paragraph 247 of the previous report. Over and above this legal reason for maintaining the reservation, we may add the fact that husband and wife have different responsibilities in the framework of a single family. The husband is financially responsible at the time the contract is concluded, while it is in effect, and when it is terminated, whereas the wife is not responsible from that standpoint. Another reason why the reservation has been maintained is the matter of the right to cancel the contract and other associated rights, namely the financial rights resulting from cancellation: the husband is required to meet certain obligations, such as payment of the deferred part of the nuptial gift and compensation in the event of divorce, where the divorce is arbitrary. Both husband and wife have the right to cancel the contract, but under different circumstances: under the law the husband has the right of cancellation in five situations, while the wife has that right more than fifteen situations having to do with material, moral and physical harm. Where the wife requests a divorce, the reasons need not be stated.

303. With reference to the Committee's recommendation in paragraph 175 of its final observations issued in 2000, concerning a need to reconsider polygamy, the previous report noted the enactment of amendments to the Personal Status Act restricting polygamy. As that report also pointed out, all authorities have always agreed that polygamy is lawful in

Islam. This does not imply unrestricted licence to practise it; it is subject to a number of conditions, of which the most important is complete equality among the wives, in terms of treatment and living conditions. Each wife is fully entitled to her right to maintenance and lodging. However, some authorities on the law have held that the issue may be regulated, and that position is the basis of article 6 of the Personal Status Act. Data published by the Department of Statistics indicate that the incidence of polygamy has declined: in 2008, there was only one wife in 91.7 per cent of Jordanian families, while no more than 7 per cent were characterized by the presence of more than one. It should be noted that this figure denotes the number of marriage contracts entered into by a single individual; in practical terms, many of the individuals concerned are actually living with only one wife, having quarrelled with and separated from another, even though the first marriage contract is still formally in effect. A women's organization is leading a nation-wide campaign, within a regional alliance, calling for amendments to the Personal Status Act on the basis of the most enlightened provisions of Islamic law, including an amendment further restricting multiple marriage. It is noteworthy that the amended Personal Status Act of 2001 is still an interim statute.

304. A draft Maintenance Fund Act has been prepared with a view to expediting the payment of maintenance to women and children where the husband has been ordered to pay maintenance but is unable or unwilling to comply. There is also a draft act to amend the Personal Status Act, containing a reformulation of the concept of *khul'*, i.e. divorce at the instance of the woman, who renounces her rights. The amended text makes it easier to prove discord and dispute by expanding the concept and facilitates divorce procedures, while providing that the wife shall retain a part of her financial rights in the form of a fraction of her nuptial gift commensurate with her responsibility for the dispute, to be determined by the court.

Article 16 (1) (d)

305. Jordan maintains its reservation to this subparagraph. The provisions of Islamic law, the Shari'a, contain a positive discrimination in favour of the woman, even in the case of an illegitimate child: affiliation to the mother is proved by birth, and consequently she and the child are entitled to all their rights, including inheritance and maintenance, and she can put the child into foster care to ensure that it is looked after, even where an adulterous union is confirmed. The reality is that under the legislation in force, the woman and child enjoy a better situation. With respect to maintenance for the feeding and upbringing of the child, Islamic law unequivocally provides that the maintenance of the wife is an obligation upon the husband during marriage or during the waiting period in the event of divorce, even where the woman is wealthy and wants for nothing. The maintenance of children is an obligation upon their father where they have no property of their own that can be used for that purpose. In the exceptional circumstance that the mother is required to provide for their maintenance, the father's responsibility remains none the less, to the mother's advantage. Under the draft Personal Status Act, a pregnant woman's entitlement to maintenance because of her pregnancy is retained: the husband is required to maintain her during her pregnancy, even if she is disobedient, in the best interests of the children, which is a prominent feature of the Convention. Another issue has to do with the custody of children. Under the Personal Status Act, in the matter of the custody of children, both boys and girls, the right of the woman, whether she is the children's mother, maternal grandmother or mother's sister, regardless of whether she is married or divorced, takes precedence over that of the man, provided she is competent to exercise such custody. Custody continues until the children reach puberty or are 15 years of age. The father continues to be their legal guardian and is responsible for their maintenance. Under the draft amended Personal Status Act, custody of a child may be prolonged until the child is 18 where necessary in his or her best interests. The Fatwa Council's decision No. 10/2009 provides that, "In matters wherein the

woman excels, the law gives her precedence over the man, as in the matter of the right of custody where the spouses have separated, inasmuch as the woman is better fitted by nature for the upbringing of children.”

306. The Personal Status Act regulates the right of visitation by the person who does not have custody, whether the father or the mother. Both parties are given the right to agree on a place and time for visitation, consistent with the family’s circumstances, and if they cannot reach agreement, the judge has discretionary power to rule in the matter, having regard to the best interests of the children in respect of visitation and custody; the father continues to be their legal guardian and is responsible for their maintenance. We may note at this point that the draft amended Personal Status Act contains provisions designed to enable the parties to legal proceedings to see, visit, spend time with and communicate with the custodial child by all modern means of communication where the interests of the child and those of the parties to the proceedings would thereby be served.

307. Concerning the protection of motherhood, article 22 (b) of the Judgement Execution Act of 2007 provides that a creditor may have a debtor imprisoned without being required to prove that the latter is solvent in the event of refusal to turn over a minor child of whom custody has been awarded to the creditor, or refusal to comply with a visitation ruling; the term of imprisonment is automatically renewable until the person complies. Under the Penal Code, a child in his or her mother’s care is protected from the risk of abduction: every person who absconds with or abducts a minor under 15 years of age, even with the consent of the minor concerned, for the purpose of removing him or her from the power of his or her lawful guardian or custody holder commits a criminal offence, and heavier penalties are prescribed where the minor is under 12 years of age. Under the draft Penal Code of 2009, persons found guilty of these offences will be liable to heavier penalties in all cases.

Article 16 (1) (e)

308. The budget of the Ministry of Health includes a special section on family planning, as noted under paragraph 12 above. The former Chief Justice, in an opinion on the subject of family planning, stated, “The term ‘family planning’ means that the two spouses have, of their own choice and conviction, adopted methods that in their view are adequate to defer pregnancy or to prevent it for a specific period of time, having come to an agreement to that effect.” Both spouses have an equal right to use contraception. The husband does not have the right to withdraw, except with his wife’s permission, and the wife does not have the right to use contraception, except with her husband’s permission. The Islamic religion authorizes the use of modern family planning methods while prohibiting birth control.

309. The Ministry of Religious Endowments and the High Council on Population have joined forces to organize training courses for half the country’s male and female preachers. The courses are designed to teach participants how to handle reproductive health issues in their religious lessons and when talking with young people who are contemplating marriage. Training and information courses have also been held for facilitators working in local communities, with a view to familiarizing them with reproductive health concepts. In addition, many NGOs organize informational seminars and workshops and programmes throughout the country on possible family planning methods.

Article 16 (1) (f)

310. Under the Jordanian Civil Code, the legal guardian of a minor child is his or her father, followed by the father’s designated agent, the grandfather if in good health, the grandfather’s designated agent, and then the court or the person designated by the court. Under the Code, a woman may be the guardian of or person legally responsible for a minor, subject to the conditions and qualifications set forth in the law. The mother takes

precedence over other persons in respect of appointment as guardian. The judge has discretion to appoint the mother as guardian, and in cases where guardianship is optional, the mother takes precedence over the grandfather. The father may designate his wife as his children's guardian after his death, to the exclusion of the grandfather. The Civil Code protects the best interests of children by making the court the legal guardian in all matters relating to the property of minors.

311. *Kafalah*, roughly equivalent to adoption, is known to Jordanian legislation. There is no legal impediment to a woman's exercise of parental authority under *kafalah*. The Personal Status Act provides that the child does not bear the name of the person exercising that authority. In order to protect the child's welfare, the Penal Code provides that every parent, guardian or person with legal responsibility for a child under 12 years of age who wilfully or for no lawful reason abandons the child, leaving him or her with no means of support, is liable to criminal prosecution. This article is to be amended as part of the act to amend the Penal Code; the amended wording will provide heavier penalties and raise the age limit for a child's entitlement to care to 15 years.

312. It is essential for children of unknown parentage to be brought up in families that will provide the parental care that they have lost, and consequently the Ministry of Social Development has introduced a foster care programme under which couples are allowed to foster a child subject to specified conditions and guidelines. Since the inception of the programme, a total of approximately 757 children have found foster parents, while 77 families took in children during 2009. The Ministry allows families to foster children in cases where the mother is known but has abandoned her children to the Ministry. This had previously not been allowed, but numerous families with sons and daughters of their own have undertaken to foster these children, who are not newborns, but older. The Ministry is currently in the process of issuing written guidelines outlining the duties of foster parents, the rights of the children, and how to deal with a new child.

Article 16 (1) (g)

313. Jordan maintains its reservation to this subparagraph. The relationship between man and woman is governed by an array of legislation. As regards the choice of name, the law allows an individual to choose his children's first names only, the names of their father and grandfather remaining unaltered. Neither the husband nor the wife can change this system, inasmuch as to do so would be to falsify individuals' lineage, which underpins many of the rules of law, such as those governing inheritance and the lawfulness or prohibition of contracting marriage and fostering children. Women, like men, retain their given and family names upon marriage; they are entered unchanged in all official documents. Article 38 of the Jordanian Civil Code states, "Every individual has a given name and a family name, and the family name is given to his children." As regards gainful employment, every woman is entitled to work, but is not required to do so. Every woman may choose an occupation, provided the occupation in question is lawful.

Article 16 (1) (h)

314. Under the Jordanian Civil Code, the age of civil majority is coterminous with the age at which an individual may engage in commercial transactions. Article 43 of the Code states, "Every individual who has reached the age of majority, is in possession of his mental faculties and has not been declared legally incompetent is fully competent to exercise his civil rights." Article 116 states, "Every individual is competent to enter into contractual agreements, provided his competence has not been withdrawn or restricted by an order of law." A married woman is competent to manage her property and conclude contracts of all kinds in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Code. If a wife is compelled by physical violence to renounce any of her rights, or forcibly prevented from exercising them

by her family, for example, or if she is given a payment of money on condition that she does so and she complies, her action in the matter is of no effect. However, there are still cultural and family practices and obstacles that prevent most women from obtaining their lawful rights in matters of inheritance, and it is increasingly likely that the women will fall into economically disadvantaged strata of society, especially women whose work does not carry entitlement to retirement pension or social security benefits. Department of Statistics indicators for 2008 show a very slight improvement in the status of Jordanian women and their participation in development, with 15.1 per cent of them owning land and 19.4 owning flats. It is particularly noteworthy that 55.1 of individual recipients of bank loans were women. Furthermore, 42.9 per cent of Jordanian women owned shares representing 22.4 per cent of aggregate share value. In order to protect women from victimization in their vulnerable psychological and emotional state following the death of a family member from whom they stand to inherit, the Office of the Chief Justice has issued an order prohibiting any transactions involving a transfer of inheritance rights until three months after the death of the testator. At the present time, owing to the significant increase in the value of property transfers in recent years, and also owing to the fact that women now play a role in the task of defraying families' expenses, this measure has helped women realize that they do indeed have rights.

315. Marriage and descent confer eligibility for inheritance in Islamic law. An estate is distributed in accordance with a broad social outlook, the distribution being governed by detailed rules given in the Koran. It is not based on the sex of heirs, but on three criteria: (1) financial burden and responsibility for maintenance; (2) degree of relationship with the deceased person, having regard to the heir's position within the family and the number of inheritors: the closer the tie of kinship, the larger the share of the estate, regardless of whether the heir is male or female; and (3) the relative positions of the inheriting generation and the generation of the deceased: the younger the heir, and hence the greater his or her need for resources, the larger the share. Men and women inherit equally in specific situations: where the heirs are parents or grandparents, for example, each of the parents is entitled to a one-sixth share if they have children, but a one-third share otherwise. To give another example, a woman receives a larger share if the deceased person has no sons. An only daughter receives one half the estate, while two daughters receive two thirds. As a rule, however, female and male heirs do not inherit equally. Furthermore, a woman has their right to take her nuptial gift and pay all her debts from the estate preferentially, ahead of the other heirs, even where the debts consume the entire estate. In an effort to heighten women's awareness of their rights, the National Council for Family Affairs has issued a booklet on inheritance issues in Jordan. The booklet discusses the legal and religious effects of depriving any heir of his or her rightful share in an estate. Copies of it have been distributed to decision-makers and throughout all levels of society.

Article 16 (2)

316. With reference to the Committee's recommendation No. 36, concerning the elimination of one of the provisions of article 5 of the Personal Status Act, and its general recommendation No. 21, the Civil Service Act makes competence to contract marriage conditional upon both prospective parties' being at least 18 years of age. The exception to which the Committee's recommendations refer is contained in guidelines issued pursuant to the Personal Status Act. It exists for special situations requiring legal capacity for marriage to be recognized in the case of a woman who is under 18 years of age. The ultimate purpose of this exception is to ensure that the woman's rights are observed and protected. There are specific social circumstances and tacit reasons of which no one can pretend to be unaware, and the exception resolves a social problem. It contains rules and criteria that serve to restrict the incidence of marriage in that age group to a great extent: in 2008, the bride was under 18 years of age in no more than approximately 13.5 per cent of all marriages.

It should be noted that care is taken to ensure compliance with the restrictions and rules contained in the above-mentioned guidelines. A number of human rights associations submitted a memorandum to the National Assembly, requesting the removal of this exception, as was stated in the previous report. In response, the Personal Status Act has provided that both parties to a marriage contract must be legally competent to conclude it, and has set the minimum age for such legal competence at 18 years by the solar calendar. Furthermore, all marriages must be officially registered. Article 281 of the Penal Code provides that where a woman is divorced from her husband and does not apply to a judge within 15 days, the divorce shall be duly registered.

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