

Problems of gender equality in Kazakhstan

Achievement of gender equality is one of main factors of sustainable human development. Questions of gender equality and extension of the rights and opportunities of women were included in the agenda of all most important conferences of the UN, including the Millennium Summit which took place in 2000 in New York. This event was the top-level representative assembly called for discussion of the issues of peace and development. The Millennium Declaration adopted by representatives of 191 countries including 147 heads of states, represents the most important of ever the made program documents concerning development.

Conventions of the UN “About the political rights of women”, “About nationality of the married woman”, six conventions of the International Labour Organization, including “About equal reward of men and women for work of equal value” are ratified. For the solution of problems of a family, women and children in 1995 the President of country created the Council on Family and Women’s Affairs and Demographic Policy under the President of Kazakhstan.

Concept of State policy on improvement of women’s position in Kazakhstan had been developed by Council and approved by the President of the country on March 5, 1997, No. 3395. In 1998 the Council was transformed into the National Commission for Women and Family Affairs under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

For the first time the National Plan of Action on advancement of women in the Republic of Kazakhstan, which was approved by resolution of the government of the Kazakhstan was developed in July 19, 1999, No. 999. By the decree of the President of the Kazakhstan on September 19, 2002, No. 947 was founded the position of the Commissioner for Human Rights. Special annual statistical compilation “Women and Men of Kazakhstan” is issued as evidence of gender relations. To protect interests of families, women and children at the legislative level in Parliament of Kazakhstan was created the deputy group “Otbasy” (“Family”).

The concept of a gender policy in Kazakhstan defines the basic principles, priorities and task of a gender policy in Kazakhstan. The basic principles of a gender policy set the equal rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan for women and men.

Tasks of Kazakhstan gender policy are following:

- Achievement of the balanced involvement of women and men in power structures;
- Support of equal opportunities for economic independence, development of the business and promotion;

- Creation of conditions for equal implementation of the rights and duties in a family;
- Freedom from gender-based violence.

The concept was developed on the basis of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Strategy of Development of Kazakhstan 2030, the National Plan of Action on advancement of women in Kazakhstan, the Convention of the United Nations on liquidation of all forms of discrimination against women, recommendations of the UN about its execution in Kazakhstan, other ratified international treaties and agreements. The concept of a gender policy in Kazakhstan is designed for the modern period of stabilization of socio-economic status of the population and sustainable growth of the economy (up to 2010), as well as long-term (up to 2030).

Although, the difference between men's and women's positions in the country is still exist. The equal rights guaranteed by the Constitution are not reinforced by the guaranteed opportunities. Lack of women at decision-making level, i.e. there are no women at high positions, there is a gender inequality in labor market.

Methods of achievement of gender equality differ depending on many social, economic, political and cultural factors, characteristic for this society. Feminists see the reason of a social inequality particularly in the subordinate position of women, in exploiter entity of capitalist or patriarchal systems, i.e. the gender is aspect of class stratification. They believe that only with liquidation of the system, there is a solution of the women's problem of unequal position.

The gender inequality hinders with formation of the full-fledged types of social activities considering experience of both men and women, so, limited involvement of women in political life, discharge of women from the power at any level will restrict efficiency of the state and its policy.

Women of Kazakhstan, at least, the active ones, found the high level of political consciousness and political culture, realizing importance of women's role in structures of the power. Kazakhstan scientists consider gender aspect as an important condition of political institutionalization of middle class.

The subject of gender equality in Kazakhstan became very topical after the President of Kazakhstan signed the Law "About the Equal Rights of Men and Women in Kazakhstan" on December 10, 2009. For generation of young Kazakhstan citizens the subjects of a gender is associated with women's issues. The international and domestic experts imply such status of society when men and women have approximately equal shares in the social power and equal access to public resources (material, financial, information, cultural, natural, etc.)

Experts believe that gender equality gives opportunity to open women's potential, allows seeing personal merits in other person more fully and removes dependence

and paternalism. Nowadays women are responsible for many social problems in our society.

There is discrimination of women in family, society and state. A real way of influence on a policy is broad involvement of women and youth in social and authoritative structures. It is necessary to realize those slogans which were empty promise in the conditions of the former regime. The woman is urged not only to deal with problems of a family, but also select sphere of the activities by herself.

Today, women are not fully participate in the decision making process of state issues. It is necessary to accept a state program of the solution of women problems. Women lead states, become ministers and leading politicians. In the program of the opportunities for women to participate in political life and to take the leading positions at all levels of society as in the state and private sectors.

Thus, to achieve gender equality it is necessary to provide official juridical equality in all spheres of life. Also, it is necessary to undertake measures directed to elimination of those historical and social conditions and factors which do not allow women and men “play” by the same rules. Equality is the final result, and it will be reached when legislatively affirmed equal rights are supported with special programs: for example, special training of business ladies combining with gender sensitive credit conditions is manifestation of gender equality. Implementation of programs of positive actions for correction of gender balance in government bodies or in the private sector promotes solidifying of gender equality and works for achievement of an ultimate goal – gender equality.

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