

# 平等機會婦女聯席

Hong Kong Women's Coalition on Equal Opportunities

## 要求政府全面落實《消除對婦女一切形式歧視公約》

《消除對婦女一切形式歧視公約》(CEDAW)自一九九六年十月十四日開始引入香港，並在去年八月在紐約第二次審議中國及香港的實施報告。平等機會婦女聯席亦有參與是次聽證會。委員會已於香港時間八月三十一日晚上公佈對香港特區政府第二份《消除對婦女一切形式歧視公約》報告的審議結論。

在審議結論中，委員會除了對香港多個婦女議題及社群——包括家庭暴力、海外傭工、丁屋政策、功能界別選舉、及難民婦女等——表示關注外，更就相關議題向特區政府提出具體建議，敦促當局落實《公約》對婦女平權的保障。對於委員會普遍採納香港民間團體的觀點，並針對具體問題作出提問及建議，我們大致上表示歡迎，並希望香港政府落實執行。以下為委員會針對香港出現的問題作出建議的簡要並對香港政府之回應：

### 一) 在打擊婦女暴力方面

委員會提出 5 方面的關注及建議:

- a) 特別關注偏低的家暴案件檢控率
- b) 促請政府加強協助家暴婦女受害人尋求法律保障
- c) 改善司法、法律、醫護人員以及社工在處理家暴問題上的性別意識的訓練
- d) 政府需調撥足夠的資源來打擊對婦女的暴力，包括家庭暴力，並在下次報告內提供關於預算案的分配細節
- e) 委員會直言鼓勵政府重新成立完全保密、受害人可得到專門的關注及輔導的「強暴危機中心」

在打擊針對婦女暴力方面，委員會已發現在司法系統上出現問題而致出現偏低的家暴案件檢控率。我們的家庭暴力條例廿年來沒有重大修改，而政府現時提出之修訂方案，其概念仍在過時的法例上小修小補，大大落後於現時社會形勢。

在審議期間政府已表示用了 13.3 億於打擊家暴，但這數字為社署家庭及兒童福利的總數，當中包括育嬰院、綜合家庭服務中心等與家庭暴力無關之開支，故聯合國委員會特意要求下次報告內提供關於預算案的分配細節，列出處理家暴的實際開支，惜到現在政府仍含混的提交此數字，實混淆視聽、欺瞞立法會議員之嫌。

另聯合國委員會已明確鼓勵政府重新成立完全保密、受害人可得到專門的關注及輔導的「強暴危機中心」(即風雨蘭)但政府卻沒有理會此提議

至於中央機制上，現時政府仍不肯成立一個更高層次之中央機制以處理針對不同組群女性的暴力，引致性暴力，針對外傭及性工作者的暴力均沒有系統的統計、分析及介入，這正反映政府處理婦女暴力情況漫不經心。

## 二) 在外傭方面

香港外地傭工面對雙重歧視問題，如種族及就業方面，尤其規定外傭結束合約後限制兩星期留港的政策，障礙了外傭婦女在勞工糾紛個案追討權益的權利。

## 三) 委員會建議香港政府引入《難民公約》

我們歡迎委員會建議香港政府引入《難民公約》，以確保尋求政治庇護及擁有難民身份的婦女，在留港期間，得到包括人身安全、基本的生活以至平等的法律保障。

有關外傭及的引入《難民公約》的審議結論，政府未正面回應。

## 四) 功能組別的選舉制度對女性造成歧視

我們歡迎委員會繼續批評功能組別的選舉制度對女性造成歧視。我們要求當局盡快廢除功能組別，以一人一票選出所有立法會議員，讓女性得到公平參與選舉的權利。政府硬說功能組別，即以專業(男性)為主的選舉方法沒有歧視婦女，這正反映政府官員的性別意識薄弱，未能與世界水平接軌。

## 五) 歧視女性的丁屋政策對

在結論意見中，委員會對丁屋政策只容許男性原居民在新界興建丁屋表示關注，並要求特區政府廢除丁屋政策中的歧視條文，讓新界女性原居民可享有與男性原居民同等的權利。政府承認布歧視的存在，但態度卻是拖延及回避問題，聯席對政府拖延的做法表示失望。

## 六) 敦促中國政府儘速採納“任擇議定書”

委員會敦促中國政府儘速採納“任擇議定書”(Optional protocol)的機制，令個別個案，如天水圍事件，可運用聯合國投訴機制以防止歧視婦女的情況。

## 七) 加強與婦女非政府組織的合作

對於中國及香港政府在撰寫報告時，沒有全面的邀請婦女非政府組織參與，結果令到婦女的處境不能得到充分的反映，委員會呼籲中國及香港政府應加強與婦女非政府組織的合作令到公約得以充份執行。同時，我們六強烈要求政府在下次審議香港報告前，邀請 CEDAW 委員會成員來港，接見民間婦女團體，好讓 CEDAW 委員會更能了解本地婦女的狀況。

平等機會婦女聯席  
2006年6月9日

**Shadow Report on Women and Poverty**  
From: Hong Kong Women Coalition on Equal Opportunities

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**Recommendation:**

- 14 The Government should put feminization of poverty on agenda, and tackle the structural factors that push female to such vulnerable situation. The Commission on Poverty should adopt the gender-mainstreaming checklist suggested by the Women's Commission and adopt a gender sensitive approach to poverty alleviation. (Para C1-9)
- 15 The Government should legislate a universal minimum wage to ensure a decent living for low-income workers, and to narrow the wage discrepancies between female and male workers. (Para C10-17)
- 16 The Government should legislate rest breaks and limited working hours. There are still a significant number of workers being deprived of the right to rest days. (Para C17, C19, C26)
- 17 The Government should review and revise the "4.18" definition of employment relation in Employment Ordinance in order to provide employment protection for women in casual employment. (Para C18-21)
- 18 The Government should have legislations to prohibit discrimination on the basis of age as recommended by the CEDAW Committee. (Para C22-24)
- 19 The Government should abolish the New Conditions of Stay or two-week rule for Foreign

Domestic Helpers and bring the minimum allowable wage at least back to US\$470.5.  
(Para C25-27)

- 20 The Government should establish an employment quota system for people with disabilities to ensure equal opportunity of participation in productive and gainful employment for disabled women. (Para C28-31)
- 21 The Government should establish a universal retirement protection system for all citizens, particularly for the low-income women, homemakers and women who are not employed due to various reasons. (Para C32-36)
- 22 The Government should review and revise the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) system with a gender-sensitive perspective. The Government is urged to cancel the seven years' residency requirement, which is a violation of equal rights to social security of the new arrival women. (Para C37-40)
- 23 The Government should abolish the New Dawn Project under the CSSA system, which discriminates against the caring role of single parents and child carers on CSSA, whose youngest child aged 12 to 14. (Para C41-44)
- 24 The Government should set up a Maintenance Board immediately. (Para C44)

### **Women and Poverty**

**(Article 11 & 13: Equality in Employment and Labour Rights & Women in Economic, Social and Cultural Life)**

#### ***Gender inequality in the labor market***

- C1 The Concluding Comments of the CEDAW Committee expressed concern of “the highly disproportionate number of women in the lowest wage, especially given the absence of minimum wages law. The Committee is also concerned that the contraction of the manufacturing sector affects particularly low-skilled women.” (Paragraph 331, Concluding Comments, 1999)
- C2 According to government statistics, the median monthly earning in 2001 and 2005 were US\$1,282 and US\$1,256 respectively. In 2001, women earned less at US\$1,090 while men earned US\$1,539. In 2005, women earned less at US\$1,000 while men earned US\$1,410, representing a 29% difference in the median monthly earnings.

- C3 There continues to be occupational segregation among managers and administrators. The figure for male and female were 74.3% against 25.7% in 2002, and were 72.9% against 27.1% in the 4th Quarter (Q4) 2005. For elementary occupations such as clerks, 74.2% were female in 2002 and 73.0% in Q4 2005.
- C4 Amongst those employed persons with monthly earning below US\$384.6, 64.9% were female workers in 2002 and 69.4% in Q4 2005. 68.5% of those monthly earning over US\$3,846 were male workers in 2002 and 67.5% in Q4 2005. Amongst the unskilled manual labor, the median wage of male workers is US\$961 while that of female workers is US\$500.

***Women displaced from manufacturing sector in vulnerable position and hidden unemployment***

- C5 Many middle-aged women workers being displaced from manufacturing industries now constitute a large percentage of reserve labor for the growing service sectors. The number of working women in the manufacturing sector dropped from 431,752 in 1986 to 104,576 in 1999, and 72,408 in 2004<sup>1</sup>. These 359,434 women workers displaced from manufacturing sector are middle-aged and low skilled. Government statistics of unemployment rate of middle-aged women in 1999 was 6.2%. However, a research<sup>2</sup> revealed a much higher unemployment rate, up to 25.8%, which included “hidden unemployment” that was not revealed in official statistics. The hidden unemployed women become “discouraged workers”<sup>3</sup> and being classified as “housewives” in official statistics, thus become invisible. Many female workers end up as manual workers in public housing estates, offices, restaurants, fast-food chain shops, in other word, in the lower strata of the service sectors<sup>4</sup>. These kinds of job are mostly part-time, temporary or even on subcontract basis, consequently further marginalize women workers.

***Government’s lack of gender sensitivity on feminization of poverty***

- C6 Despite the rise of female employment in 2002, women continue to make up the largest proportion in every sector of the poor population. About 80% of working poor are female

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<sup>1</sup> Census and Statistics Department (2005) Hong Kong Annual Digest of Statistics, P.23.

<sup>2</sup> Chan, Kam Wah & Leung, Lai Ching (1999) *Women in and out of work: a research report*. Hong Kong: Department of Applied Social Studies, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Young Women’s Christian Association.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Service sector is composed of following industries: retail and wholesale, import and export trade, catering, transportation, communication, financial, real estate, commercial, social and personal services.

workers and over 80% single parents receiving government financial assistance are single mothers and most ageing population receiving government financial assistance are female.

- C7 The Women's Commission (WoC) and the Commission on Poverty (CoP) only emphasize building up individual capacity and increasing own competitive power in the labor market as the strategy of poverty alleviation. They have not considered tackling the structural factors that push women to such vulnerable situation and into poverty.
- C8 The closed-door appointed Commission on Poverty (CoP), set up in 2004, admitted that "among the low-income employees in mid 2005, relatively most of them were female workers, persons aged 40-59". The CoP has not defined a poverty line. Furthermore, the CoP set their priorities on "Inter-generational Poverty" and "Elderly in Poverty" and formed two Task Forces on "Children and Youth" and "District-based Approach". Definitely, women's poverty is not on the Government's agenda.
- C9 WoC shared a gender-mainstreaming checklist to CoP<sup>5</sup>. However, it is clear that the CoP has not made any effort on tackling feminization of poverty as revealed by their lack of a Task Force on women's poverty. In other words, CoP did not respond to the WoC's gender-mainstreaming "checklist" which is not mandatory. CoP has failed to adopt a women's perspective in defining the poor population and in analyzing the structural causes of poverty, thus no gender sensitive policy is suggested to address the problem of feminization of poverty.

### ***Low wages and long working hours***

- C10 The CEDAW Committee expressed concern on "*the highly disproportionate number of women in the lowest wage, especially given the absence of minimum wages law.*" (paragraph 331, Concluding Comments, 1999). To date, a statutory comprehensive Minimum Wage System is still absent. The Government only took small steps in setting up "Instruction on Wage Standard" for the tenderers of Government's direct contracts. Low-income workers, mostly female, do not benefit from the 'Instruction'.
- C11 Due to low wages, many workers have to work long hours or many jobs in order to earn a living or support the family. A tragic incident<sup>6</sup> happened in March 2006 revealed this long-standing problem.

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<sup>5</sup> Revealed in a paper submitted by the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau to the Legislative Council's Subcommittee to Study the Subject of Combating Poverty in March 2006 (LC Paper No. CB(2) 1706/05-06 (2)).

<sup>6</sup> A female cleaner died at the garbage room after working for over 16 hours. The 49-year old woman was a single parent of 5. Two of her daughters were working, yet the income could not cover the living costs. The woman, working 12 hours for one full-time and one half-time cleaning jobs, collected papers for sale after work in order to earn

- C12 The Government should set up a statutory minimum wage system to ensure a decent living for low-income workers. The current policy on minimum wage is only applicable to Foreign Domestic Helpers (FDH).
- C13 According to the research “Situation of Hong Kong Marginal Workers in Recent Years”,<sup>7</sup> there were 322,800 working poor<sup>8</sup> in 1999 and 487,000 in 2005, with the working female accounting for high proportion of about 80%.
- C14 One out of every seven working female is surviving below the poverty line.<sup>9</sup> The median monthly earning in 2001 and 2005 remained the same at US\$1,282. Women with monthly earning less than US\$641 increased from 156,900 in 2001 to 224,500 in 2005<sup>10</sup>, a 30% increase.
- C15 Working female below one-third of the median monthly earning (i.e. US\$384) raised by 38% from 62,500 in 2001 to 101,700 in 2005, constituting 7% of the working female population.
- C16 Working hours have been longer since 2001. The number of women working 40 hours or above per week has increased significantly by 15.9% from 1,102,000 in Q4 2001 to 1,277,400 in Q4 2005. Those who worked 50 hours or more increased by 24%. There is no upper limit on the number of working hours under the Employment Ordinance.
- C17 Besides the increase in working hours, there is no guarantee for rest breaks during the day. Both acts do not violate the present Employment Ordinance. A significant number of workers are even being deprived of the right to rest days. Setting upper limits for working hours are important in some particular services such as private aged home services, catering services, cleaning and housing security, of which 12 hours of work are common. These services employ a significant number of female workers.

### ***Inadequate protection of Employment Ordinance for casual women workers***

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more income. She worked 7 days a week, and over 16 hours a day, because her wage was too low and not enough for a living. Her death was a protest to the lack of minimum wage in Hong Kong.

<sup>7</sup> Oxfam Hong Kong (2000) *Situation of Marginal Workers in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Oxfam Hong Kong.

<sup>8</sup> Working poor refer to those among the one-tenth of the working force (excluding under-employed workers) who have the lowest income. Their earnings are less than half of the median income of Hong Kong’s working population, coinciding with the internationally-accepted poverty-line.

<sup>9</sup> We have followed the internationally accepted definition of poverty line, which means half of the median income of working population.

<sup>10</sup> Census and Statistics Department (2001 & 2005) *Annual Digest of Statistics*.

- C18 The employment conditions for women have continued to deteriorate. There is a trend of longer working hours and suppressed wages in full-time employment and casualization is another trendy mode of employment. Casual workers are excluded from any labor protection under existing employment laws.
- C19 The existing Employment Ordinance provides labor protection and benefit entitlement for employees working at least 18 hours a week for a continuous period of four weeks (“4.18”). Benefits include paid maternity leave, sick leave, holidays, rest day, redundancy compensation etc. However, as those workers who do not work according to the definition of employment relation (“4.18”) are not entitled to any protection laid down by the Employment Ordinance, this “4.18” labor regulation has also caused a lot of exploitations of part-time workers. In many cases, terms of employment explicitly stipulate 17.5 hours of work every four weeks, or termination for one week after working for 3.5 weeks, resulting in many new casual work patterns and serious exploitation.
- C20 As a result of casualization, more women are falling out from employment benefits protection. The number of part-time workers was increased by 32%, from 82,000 in 1997 to 182,000 in 2004. The percentage of part-time workers against the whole working force increased from 2.8% to 5.5%, many of whom are middle-aged women workers displaced from manufacturing sector.
- C21 The Government should review and revise the “4.18” definition of continuous employment under the Employment Ordinance, in order to provide employment protection for women in casual employment.

### ***Age discrimination***

- C22 Age discrimination is a threat in job opportunities and employment conditions, especially for middle-aged women. This is particularly so for jobs mostly done by women. The flight attendants’ population in Hong Kong, predominantly women (more than 80%), is required to retire at the age of 35 or 45 years! Some transnational airline companies do not apply the same retirement age for workers employed in their countries of origin, but impose retirement age of 45 only for those employed in Hong Kong. There is no such law provision to prohibit age discrimination.
- C23 Many middle-aged women workers displaced from manufacturing sector, with low skill and low education are being discriminated on the basis of age in the job seeking process.
- C24 The Government failed to have legislation to prohibit discrimination on the basis of age as recommended by the CEDAW Committee. The Government has not provided a timetable

on how to provide legal protection for persons who are being discriminated on the basis of age.

### ***The New Conditions of Stay for Foreign Domestic Helper (FDH)***

- C25 Under the New Conditions of Stay (NCS) or two-week rule, Foreign Domestic Helpers (FDH) are allowed to stay for further two weeks as soon as an employment contract has expired or terminated. The chance to get new employment within a two-week period is slim thus forcing FDH to tolerate unreasonable employment conditions.
- C26 Some common violations of contract terms include underpay (Indonesian reported 42% underpay, Indonesian Migrant Workers Union: 2005), no rest days, no paid statutory holidays, no sick leave and medical treatment.

### ***Wage hike***

- C27 Minimum wage policy is only applicable to FDH. The Minimum Allowable Wages are reviewed annually by the Government but without genuine respect to FDH. After 5% wage cut in 1998, another US\$51 wage cut was imposed in 2003 with a corresponding US\$51 levy charge towards their employers for the local workers' retraining fund. As a result, the wages of FDH has dropped to US\$419 per month. There was a pay rise of US\$6.4 and another US\$10.2 in 2005 and 2006 respectively when Hong Kong economy has started to recover. It is definitely a small step to return what FDH have been contributing to the Hong Kong economy.

### ***Women with disability***

- C28 Disabled women are more likely than non-disabled women to live in households below the poverty level. This is especially true for women with three or more functional limitations.
- C29 According to Special Topic Report No. 28 (2001) on people with disabilities and chronic diseases, the unemployment rate of disabled person is 12% which is 2.5 times of that of the general population. Barile (2003)<sup>11</sup> found that the unemployment rate, for disabled women was 16% compared to 13.2% of men with disabilities against 9.9% for women without any disabilities.
- C30 The most serious problem amongst women with disabilities is low economic status, which is associated with the lack of medical insurance and consequently, the loss of access to

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<sup>11</sup> Barile (2003) *Disablement and Feminization of Poverty*. Disabled Women's Network Ontario, via <http://dawn.thot.net/mbarile1.html> on 12/4/2006.

medical care and health services. Apart from income, the unemployed would easily lose self-confidence, social network and linkage with the society.

- C31 The Government should commit to promote employment for people with disabilities and to ensure that they have equal opportunity of participating in productive and gainful employment. The establishment of an employment quota system is essential to enhance employment opportunities of disabled women.

### ***Lack of universal retirement protection***

- C32 Among the cases who received Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) in Hong Kong in 2004, over half (50.7%) are elderly cases<sup>12</sup>. There were totally 199,085 elderly recipients of CSSA in 2004, while 52.6% were female recipients<sup>13</sup>. As the female elderly population aged 65 and over will increase from 438,900 in 2004 to 1,308,800 in 2033, and the proportion of female elderly of the same age group will increase from 53.6% in 2004 to 58.3% in 2033<sup>14</sup>, it is clear that the number and proportion of women elderly who are poor and have to depend on CSSA will be increasing. It follows that we have to concern about the retirement protection of elderly women.

- C33 The Government claims that the existing Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF), together with the citizens' individual savings and CSSA, are the three pillars of retirement protection as suggested by the World Bank. However, these pillars are inadequate in protecting the grassroots women, low-income women and the unpaid homemakers.

- C34 It is a myth for low-income women to rely on their own savings as their scanty incomes are mostly used for their daily living. As CSSA is a means-tested scheme, it is by nature, not a universal scheme that provides adequate retirement protection to all citizens.

- C35 MPF was introduced in 2000. The final benefits gained by MPF are totally dependent on the length and amount of contribution from both the employers and the employees. This scheme is not favorable to elderly workers, low-income workers and also those employees who have not had a continuous and long record of joining the scheme. As indicated, a great number of women are engaged in casual or part-time low-income employment and a significant number of them have broken employment records. Therefore, to these underprivileged women workers, the MPF will only provide a meager retirement protection.

- C36 MPF is a gender insensitive retirement scheme. Unpaid homemakers are predominantly

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<sup>12</sup> Census and Statistics Department (2005). *Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics Feature Article: Statistics on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme (1995-2004)*.

<sup>13</sup> Census and Statistics Department (2005) *Women and Men in Hong Kong Key Statistics*.

<sup>14</sup> Hong Kong Council of Social Service and Oxfam Hong Kong (2005) *Social Development Thematic Report on Women's Profile*.

women and women who are not engaged in employment due to disability, chronic illnesses etc are excluded from the scheme. In 2004, there were 647,500 women homemakers, occupying 98.2% of all homemakers. When these women grow old, they are not protected by any statutory retirement protection scheme, unless they are poor enough to become eligible for CSSA.

### ***Discriminatory social security measures***

- C37 New residence requirements of CSSA and the New Dawn Project are examples of gender-insensitive social security measures.
- C38 Before 2004, to be eligible for CSSA, applicants must have resided in Hong Kong for at least one year. Effective 1 Jan 2004, residence requirements have changed as follows:
- (a) he/she must have been a Hong Kong resident for at least seven years; and
  - (b) he/she must have resided in Hong Kong continuously for at least one year immediately prior the date of application.
- C39 Hong Kong residents aged below 18 are exempted from the residence requirements in (a) and (b) above. It is obvious that even though a newly arrived woman is very poor, she is not entitled to CSSA support until she has resided in Hong Kong for seven years. On the contrary her children, disregarding of their period of residency, will be covered by the CSSA protection. The eligibility criterion (a), therefore, is definitely discriminative against the immigrant women but not their children.
- C40 Between December 2002 and December 2003, the number of CSSA cases with new arrival recipients having resided in Hong Kong for less than 7 years increased from 36,023 to 40,510 (an annual rise of 12.4%), while the increase rate of the same cases between December 2003 and December 2004 dropped sharply to 2.6% (from 40,510 to 41,571 cases)<sup>15</sup>. It demonstrates clearly that after the restriction on residency requirement was introduced on 1 Jan 2004, the number of new arrival CSSA cases dropped tremendously and a significant number of new arrival women had to live in poverty.
- C41 The New Dawn (ND) Project specifically designed by the Social Welfare Department is an 18-month trial employment assistance program implemented for period Apr 2006 to September 2007. Single parents and child carers on CSSA whose youngest child is aged 12 to 14 are required to join the ND Project to actively seek paid employment with working hours of not less than 32 per month. Project participants are required to sign a Job

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<sup>15</sup> Census and Statistics Department (2005) *Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics Feature Article: Statistics on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme (1995-2004)*.

Seeker's Undertaking to state that they are willing to make efforts to find and engage in paid jobs and fully understand their obligations to comply with all the requirements. Social Welfare Department claims that this project aims at assisting the target single parents and carers to enhance capacity for self-help; integrate into society and move towards self-reliance through engagement in work<sup>16</sup>. However, before introduction of ND project, these target CSSA recipients were not required to engage in paid jobs.

- C42 HK\$200 (US\$26) will be deducted from their monthly CSSA entitlements for those who refuse to sign the Job Seeker's Undertaking or fail to comply with any of the requirements under the ND Project without good reasons. It demonstrates clearly that these single parents and carers are punished for not following these new guidelines. This ND Project is criticized for compelling single parents and carers to involve into paid work in the disguise of building up self-reliance. It sounds that unpaid work made by these single parents (in the form of voluntary work, homemaking etc.) are of lesser value than paid work. In this regard, this social security measure is discriminating against the caring role of these CSSA recipients.
- C43 According to the data provided by the Social Welfare Department to the Legislative Council, 18,000 target participants were affected by this ND project as on 31 October 2005<sup>17</sup>. These target participants occupied about 45.8% of the total single parents CSSA cases which amounted to 39,307 cases in May 2006<sup>18</sup>.
- C44 Single parents occupy the second largest group of CSSA recipients. Amongst the 542,017 CSSA recipients, 102,623 are single parent families<sup>19</sup>, of which 81.7% were female, mostly in their thirties and forties with 61.6% being divorced or separated<sup>20</sup>. It is undeniable that most of these female single parents occupy a significant number of the poor women's population. A reason for their dependence on CSSA is the lack of maintenance or failure in getting maintenance. Women's rights NGOs have been urging the Government to set up of a Maintenance Board to facilitate the single parent family to obtain maintenance payments. In 1997 and 1999, Legislative Council passed the motion to urge the Government to set up a Maintenance Board. Even under such great pressure, the Government still refuses to set up a Maintenance Board.

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<sup>16</sup> Social Welfare Department [http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site\\_thematic/#58](http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_thematic/#58).

<sup>17</sup> Legislative Council

[http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/ws/ws\\_cssa/papers/ws\\_cssa1031cb2-175-1e.pdf](http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/ws/ws_cssa/papers/ws_cssa1031cb2-175-1e.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> Social Welfare Department (2006) *Statistics and Figures on Social Security*

[http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site\\_pubsvc/page\\_socsecu/sub\\_statistics/](http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_socsecu/sub_statistics/) (as in Jun 2006)

<sup>19</sup> Census and Statistics Department (2005) *Women and Men in Hong Kong Key Statistics*.

<sup>20</sup> Census and Statistics Department (2005) *Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics Feature Article: Statistics on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme (1995-2004)*.