In the 1970s the United Nations passed the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). It has been ratified by nearly all of the world’s independent states. While CEDAW represents a great step forward in the name of gender equality, it—as the name itself would imply—is only half of the story. The time has therefore long come for a male equivalent: a Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Men (CEDAM).

 I have therefore, on my own initiative decided to create a Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Men, to be modeled on the equivalent for women. What follows is a copy of my initiative.

 There are a couple of points which I wish to emphasize from the outset. First of all, I am by no means trying to diminish the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. On the contrary, the first clause of the preamble is to reaffirm the goals set out in CEDAW: “Reaffirming the goals set out in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women”. Indeed, many of the points mentioned in CEDAW, if full implemented, would benefit men as well. Case in point, article 11 (especially section e) states:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

(e) The right to social security, particularly in cases of retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;

What is noteworthy about this is that it calls for men and women to have equal access to retirement. If only this were the case. Up until recently, the majority of European states (among others) had higher retirements ages for men than for women. Any moves towards equal access—which is thankfully occurring more and more—would actually benefit men, since it is men and not women who face discrimination in this area. However, if the unofficial definition of equality is “the absence of discrimination against women”—which it should never be!—then I suppose that higher retirement ages for men would not violate this clause of CEDAW. I have reiterated this point in CEDAM in article 11:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that all age requirements, in both the public and private spheres, apply equally to men as well as women, including but not limited to retirement ages, minimum ages for withdrawing from pension funds, minimum ages for collecting state benefits for the elderly, minimum ages for marriage, and minimum ages for entrance into business establishments.

 The other point I wish to establish is that this initiative is not merely for the want of having a male equivalent to CEDAW “just to have one”. Instead, there is a real need for a Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Men. After all, all of the 28 articles mention an actual present-day example of discrimination or violence faced by men and boys somewhere in the world; there are no purely hypotheticals in CEDAM. If several of these points were the only examples of discrimination or violence against men or boys in the world today, then perhaps a CEDAM would not be necessary. After all, it would probably be enough to simply fight against those few examples on their own.

 However, there is an even greater need for a CEDAM than the 28 individual points raised in it. That need is addressed in the thirteen clauses of the preamble. First and foremost, the basis upon which the equality debate rests seems to be that only women faced discrimination whereas men were privileged. The truth is that both men and women were forced into gender roles, like it or not. In essence, there were two gender “packages”; the package which each individual “received” was determined at birth. Each package came with its own share of advantages and disadvantages.

 As to which package was the better of the two largely depended on one’s personal preferences. For example, if for a man who had no interest in politics, didn’t want to do military service (in the times and places when it was required), and would have rather stayed home with the children than going out and having a career, being a man really would not have seemed like much of a privilege. By contrast, for a woman who also had no interest in politics, was glad that she did not have to do military service and enjoyed staying home with the children with no interest in a career, being a woman, if anything, would have seemed like a privilege, especially when one considers the chivalrous ways in which men (at least in Western countries) were supposed to treat women. There is no doubt that such men and women have existed throughout history. It is therefore highly simplified at best to claim that men were privileged.

 Instead, as I have just stated, the reality was that both sexes have had their share of privileges and discrimination. This means that there never was a “patriarchy”, and if there ever was one there certainly isn’t one now. Moreover, if there ever was a patriarchy, a huge part of it was the belief that women’s lives are more valuable than men’s. Instead, the reality was that both sexes faced discrimination, just in different ways. If I accomplish nothing else with this CEDAM initiative, I hope to at least finally establish this as society’s view of the history of gender roles, instead of the current one-sided view. Indeed, if society would just finally realize that truth, most if not all of the 28 points in CEDAM would immediately or at least shortly be accomplished.

 At this point, I will explain the rest of the points in the CEDAM initiative. However, I do not intend to explain them all, as I want CEDAM to largely speak for itself. First of all, I want to explain the preamble. As I have already mentioned, the most important part of the preamble is establishing the fact that there never was a patriarchy; instead, both men and women faced discrimination, only in different ways and that discrimination against men both exists and is just as wrong as discrimination against women. After all, the first point made in the preamble is to reaffirm the goals set out in the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. Again, it needs to be emphasized that CEDAM is not designed to counter CEDAW. Instead, it is designed to complement it. Furthermore, while feminism may be to blame for some of these points, it is not to be blamed for all of them.

Another important point I wanted make in the preamble is that most men are honorable, decent citizens and are not rapists, pedophiles, or abusive in general. Sadly, there has been so much male bashing that these seemingly obvious points need to be made. Likewise, there is a clause emphasizing the importance of healthy human sexuality, as that has also been sadly bashed by feminists as well. The other points raised in the preamble include the fact that societies need both men and women and that there will never be sexual equality in general without equality for men as well.

The body of CEDAM comprises 28 articles. First of all, I wish to again state that none of these 28 points are hypotheticals; all of these injustices are presently occurring in at least one country. These 28 articles are grouped into 5 different parts. Generally speaking, the more important parts are listed first. That does not mean, however, that the articles towards the end are of little importance.

The first part deals with matters of life and death. The exception to that is the first article, which is about International Men’s Day. While the establishment of International Men’s Day is hardly the most important article in CEDAM, it is a logical place to start. CEDAM only calls for the adoption of International Men’s Day in the states which recognize International Women’s Day. After all, the point is equality and balance. Furthermore, article 1 makes it clear that a veterans’ day, though laudable, is not the same as a men’s day. The reason that that was included is because in the former Soviet Union and in some of its former republics, like Russia, there was/is a veterans’ day which is seen as an unofficial men’s day. Indeed, it is often referred to as “men’s day”. While a day for veterans is great, it should not be seen as a men’s day, since it is based on conscription, which is truly one of the greatest examples of a sexist injustice.

The rest of part I deals with issues of life and death, bodily integrity, and health. Generally speaking, men—far from being privileged—have been seen as being the “disposable sex”. Two major examples of this include conscription and the idea that women should be evacuated from dangerous situations before men, assuming men are even evacuated at all.

 Another major issue in part I is that of genital integrity. Many feminists can’t stand seeing male circumcision compared to female genital mutilation. It is important to remember several facts regarding this. First of all, lumping two or more things into the same category does not imply that they are at the same level. After all, calling both armed robbery and murder “felonies” should not be seen as an insult to the victims of murder just because the two are in the same category, even though murder is clearly worse than armed robbery.

Likewise, there are a number of different types of female genital mutilation, as not all involve stitching the labia together. Some variants involve removing all or even just some of the clitoral hood. It is hard to argue that that is at the same level as male circumcision, let alone worse. However, opponents of female genital mutilation rightly condemn all forms, even a substitute pinprick of the labia. They see no need to excuse the lesser forms for the want of condemning the more severe forms. The law in the US and other states against female genital mutilation bans all forms. In short, all children, both male and female, are entitled to intact genitals and therefore all forms of genital cutting of minors should be lumped into the same category as “genital mutilation” and should be illegal. It is sexist *not* to compare male circumcision to female genital mutilation.

Also included in the article on genital integrity is a clause against all other forms of “painful rite of passage ceremonies, especially those involving the cutting of the body”. In addition, part I also includes an article about men’s health, and an article about the blood feuds of northern Albania.

The second part is about legal requirements for men, beyond those involving military service. The biggest example of this is higher tax rates for men, which fortunately does not occur in many states but is found in some. The most common examples of separate legal requirements for men (outside of military-related issues) are higher minimum ages for men. The most common higher minimum ages for men are with regards to retirement ages and minimum ages for marriage. Also mentioned in part II is the separate and completely useless additional visa application form which the United States began to require of men between the ages of 16 and 45 following the attacks of September 11.

The third part is about crime and safety. There are articles discussing perversions to the criminal justice system that have occurred as a result of radical feminism. Such examples include false accusations of rape, pedophilia, and domestic violence, along with ignoring male victims of domestic violence, and the treating of all men as potential rapists and pedophiles. Likewise, part III also addresses some of the abuses with things such as sex offender registries and the prosecution of minors for sexual acts between each other. In addition, part III also deals with the harsher way in which the criminal justice system treats men. Finally, part III addresses safety policies which are tantamount to discrimination against men. Such examples include women-only compartments in trains and subways, women only establishments (like taxis and hotels), and taxis offering women discounts at night.

Part IV deals with dating, marriage, fatherhood, and sexuality. In this part, the importance of marriage and fatherhood are addressed, along with the plight of divorced men and non-custodial fathers. In addition, this part covers the attacks on sexuality including feminist attacks on things such as pornography, strip clubs, and prostitution. Also mentioned is society’s sexist expectations placed on men with regards the dating process and the over-reaction to sexual harassment.

Part V is about education, employment, and business practices. In this part issues such as affirmative action, boys falling behind girls in school, and businesses either banning men or charging men more (whatever justification these businesses use for such practices).

This CEDAM proposal was designed to cover nearly all forms of discrimination and/or violence against men and boys, no matter where in the world they occur. However, this list is not completely exhausted. For one thing, it did not even mention the word “chivalry”, though some of the points such as evacuating women first are clearly forms of chivalry. There were also a few other points which CEDAM did not address, such as clothing differences, and special occasions. Moreover, CEDAW established a committee to oversee its implementation. Perhaps a similar committee should be established for the implementation of CEDAM.

It is also important to note that this is obviously just a rough draft. After all, if and when a member state of the United Nations agrees to sponsor this, there is a strong chance that this will be revised. Likewise, perhaps there are things which should be added to it.

Right now, I am attempting to find a member state of the United Nations to introduce CEDAM. I have written separate letters to all 193 member states of the United Nations. When possible, I wrote in the language of the member state in question. I have not received many responses, but I will continue to press for a sponsor. I am willing to visit any of these 193 states in order to present this plan.

 There are several thoughts with which I want to leave you: “The biggest example of sexism in the world today is the ridiculous notion that only one sex has ever been the victim of it”, and “The unofficial definition of gender equality must never be allowed to be ‘the absence of discrimination against women”.

|  |
| --- |
| **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Men** |
| ***The States Parties to the present Convention,***  |

Reaffirming the goals set out in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women,

Re-noting that the Charter of the United Nations reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women,

Re-noting that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms the principle of the inadmissibility of discrimination and proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, including distinction based on sex,

Noting that both men and women have faced sex discrimination throughout history, only in different ways,

Further noting that like women, men have also been the victims of harmful stereotypes,

Realizing that there will never be equality between men and women unless equality for men is also established,

Emphasizing that discrimination against men persists,

Recognizing that national governments and national courts, along with international courts such as the European Court of Justice have recognized that examples of discrimination against men exist,

Further emphasizing that discrimination against men is just as wrong as discrimination against women,

Understanding that societies need both men and women and that men and women need each other,

Further understanding that most men are honest, decent citizens and are not criminals, rapists, pedophiles, or violent in general,

Underscoring that consenting sexuality between adults is a normal and healthy part of human existence that is to be celebrated and that attacking it is counter-productive to bringing about equality between men and women,

Determined to bring about equality for men as well as women and, in doing so, create a better world for everyone,

Have agreed on the following:

 **Part I**

***Article 1***

1. States Parties which recognize the 8th of March as International Women’s Day are requested to recognize the 19th of November as International Men’s Day.
2. States Parties which recognize an official Mothers’ Day are requested to either recognize a Fathers’ Day or to convert Mothers’ Day into Parents’ Day.
3. The existence of a Veterans’ Day, though laudable, shall not be considered as an equivalent to a Men’s Day.

***Article 2***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against men with regards to military service obligations and ensuring that all military service obligations apply equally to women as well as men, in particular:

(a) Either repealing or rewriting to equally include women all military service laws which apply exclusively to men or even mainly to men, including laws whose implementation have been officially suspended;

(b) Either repealing or rewriting to equally including women all constitutional references to conscription which apply exclusively to men or even mostly to men, including such references which are not currently being enforced by law;

(c) Either repealing or expanding to equally include women any registration obligations regarding a potential future draft should such registration requirements apply exclusively or even mainly to men;

(d) Officially pardoning all men who failed to perform military service obligations, including registration failures, if such obligations applied at the time exclusively or even mainly to men;

(e) Passing legislation making it illegal to discriminate against men who failed to perform military service obligations (including registration obligations) which applied exclusively or even mainly to men in all areas, including but not limited to employment (both public and private sector), holding elected office, receiving grants and other scholarships, and receiving any other form of public assistance and/or benefits.

***Article 3***

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the lives of men are considered equally as valuable as the lives of women.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that men have just as much right to be evacuated from war zones as women have (an exception can be made in cases of pregnant women and nursing mothers).
3. While reserving priority space on lifeboats for children over adults would still be permissible, men must be given equal priority as women with regards to being evacuated from ships (an exception can be made in cases of pregnant women and nursing mothers).
4. Men shall be evacuated from all other dangerous situations with equal priority as women (an exception can be made in cases of pregnant women and nursing mothers).

***Article 4***

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that men’s health is given equal priority to women’s health, including in such areas as state funding for medical research. An exception can be made in instances in which a State Party wishes to spend more research money on behalf of the sex with a lower life expectancy.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that all social welfare services treat men equally with women and are just as available to men as they are to women.

***Article 5***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that blood feuds, especially those which apply to all male members of the family or any other group rather than merely towards the alleged culprit of the perceived injustice, be fully eradicated by fully prosecuting all of those responsible for perpetrating blood feuds.

***Article 6***

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the genital integrity of minor boys is respected equally to that of minor girls and that no form of genital cutting should occur on anyone, male or female, under the age of 18, or on any adult without the complete and total consent of that adult absent pressure from others.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that any painful rite of passage ceremonies, especially those involving the cutting of the body, be eliminated.

 **Part II**

***Article 7***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that men and women are charged the same rates of taxation, as there is no justification whatsoever for charging one sex more taxes than the other.

***Article 8***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that all age requirements, in both the public and private spheres, apply equally to men as well as women, including but not limited to retirement ages, minimum ages for withdrawing from pension funds, minimum ages for collecting state benefits for the elderly, minimum ages for marriage, and minimum ages for entrance into business establishments.

 ***Article 9***

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that immigration policies apply equally to women as well as to men.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that all visa policies apply equally to women as well as to men in all respects, including visa application forms.
3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that fathers have the same rights of conferring citizenship on their children as mothers have.

 **Part III**

 ***Article 10***

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that society never loses sight of due process and that the rights of the accused, no matter how horrendous the accusations, are respected in all manners, including for such crimes as rape, pedophilia, and domestic violence.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that perpetrators of false accusations of all crimes, including rape, pedophilia, and domestic violence, are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

 ***Article 11***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that male victims of domestic violence are acknowledged by the state in that:

1. All the same resources available to female victims of domestic violence be equally available to male victims;
2. The perpetrators of domestic violence against men, be they male or female, be prosecuted just as vigorously as the perpetrators of domestic violence against women are prosecuted.

***Article 12***

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the law is enforced equally towards both female perpetrators as well as towards male perpetrators and that male perpetrators are not treated any more harshly than female perpetrators.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that incarcerated men receive the same privileges granted to incarcerated women, included visitation rights with regards to the prisoners’ children.

 ***Article 13***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that policies, in both the public and private spheres (including but not limited to seating polices on airplanes), are neither written nor enforced in a manner that views all men as potential batters, pedophiles, or rapists.

 ***Article 14***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that pedophilia laws designed to protect minors are not used to prosecute them, in particular:

1. For taking and sending lewd pictures of themselves;
2. For engaging in sexual acts with each other provided that both minors are close enough in age to each other.

 ***Article 15***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that sex offender registries only include the names of perpetrators, both male and female, who are genuine threats to the community for such crimes as rape and pedophilia, and exclude the names of those convicted of crimes that are not a genuine threat to the safety of the community.

 ***Article 16***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against men regarding safety policies, including in particular but not limited to:

1. Taxis shall not offer any discounts to women;
2. Subways and trains shall not have women only sections;
3. Institutions shall not be permitted to offer transportation to women only;
4. Women shall not have the right to carry any weapons or any other forms of protection if men are not also permitted to carry such weapons.
5. Parking spaces shall not be reserved for women only (an exception can be made in cases of pregnant women).

 ***Part IV***

 ***Article 17***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate all stereotypes and one-sided expectations regarding courtship and dating.

 ***Article 18***

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that sexual harassment policies do not create an even more hostile environment, and that openness with sexuality is goal that society should have and that that should not be seen as an example of sexual harassment.
2. The label of sexual harassment is to be reserved exclusively for truly egregious behavior in which the perpetrator intended to create an uncomfortable atmosphere and was fully aware that his or her actions were doing so.
3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against men, both in the public and private sphere, regarding mandatory sexual harassment training seminars which are only required of men, as such a requirement constitutes discrimination against men.
4. Establishments, both public and private, which wish to eliminate their sexual harassment polices altogether shall not be discouraged from doing so.

 ***Article 19***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that sex workers are treated with the full dignity and respect which they deserve, including

1. A complete legalization and regulation of the sex trade amongst adults;
2. Recognizing that consenting adults are entitled to engage in acts of sexuality with each other, even if consent was only granted for the want of money;
3. Ensuring that the sex trade does not lead to human trafficking.

 ***Article 20***

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the sanctity of marriage and that no policies be adopted to either discourage marriage or encourage divorce.
2. The existence of alimony payments is to be discouraged and kept to an absolute minimum.

 ***Article 21***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to recognize the important role that fathers play in the upbringing of children, and that no policies are adopted which discourage fatherhood.

 ***Article 22***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against divorced men and non-custodial fathers, in particular:

1. Claims made by fathers to child custody must be fully respected;
2. Visitations granted to non-custodial fathers must be fully respected and mothers who disregard them must be held accountable and should perhaps have their custody revoked;
3. Child support payments are to be for the exclusive benefit of the children in question and not the custodial parent
4. Child support payments must never be set at unreasonable levels and adjustments must be made for fathers who lose their jobs or who have taken a pay cut;
5. Single fathers, including minors, should not be required to complete any parenting courses prior to gaining custody if the mother has no such requirement.
6. A man who have been found not to be the father of a child shall be allowed to terminate all custodial obligations, including financial ones, if he so chooses.

 **Part V**

 ***Article 23***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against men with regards to education, in particular, the awarding of scholarships or other grants for study.

 ***Article 24***

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that any affirmative action programs, both in the public and private spheres and in both education and employment, be ended as soon as they are no longer needed.
2. States Parties which have minimum quotas for women in any given field, both public and private, must have the same minimum quotas in place for men.
3. States Parties which do not wish to bring about equality through affirmative action shall not be required to do so.

 ***Article 25***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that men are freely permitted to hold jobs that have traditionally been viewed as female, and that such men are fully accepted by society.

 ***Article 26***

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate any harmful stereotypes against men who are stay-at-home-fathers and househusbands.
2. States Parties shall recognize that within the family, it is the children who are of paramount importance and that it is better for children to have one parent, either the father or mother, at home rather than being in a daycare center.
3. State Parties shall encourage employers to offer fathers more flexibility with regards to working hours and leave of absences from work
4. State Parties shall encourage employers to be equally accepting of fathers who leave the workforce for a number of years as they are of such mothers.

 ***Article 27***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against men by prohibiting business establishments from refusing to serve men, such establishments include but are not limited to hotels, restaurants, gymnasiums, and taxis.

 ***Article 28***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against men with regards to the prices charged by business establishments in that men must always, including even in cases of special promotions, be charged the same prices as women in all sectors of the economy, including but not limited to, insurance, food and drink, admission fees, and airplane tickets.