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KNESSET SPEAKER Reuven Rivlin receives a copy of the latest edition of 'Women's Legislation in Israel' from one of its editors, Prof. Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, in the Knesset yesterday. (Knesset Speaker's Office)

## New volume documents the scope of pro-women legislation

• By REBECCA ANNA STOIL

A new compendium presented at the Knesset on Tuesday indicates that in the past decade, the Knesset has devoted time and effort to legislation to secure the status of women and improve equality between the sexes.

The book, *Women's Legislation in Israel*, was edited by Prof. Ruth Halperin-Kaddari and Atara Kenigsberg, and compiles all of the Knesset's legislation pertaining to women and their legal status.

The dozen female MKs who attended the presentation and the work's compilers lauded the fact that this second edition of the book was much larger than the first such compilation, published a decade ago.

"When comparing this collection to the previous one, it is plain to see that important

laws have been added and many others substantially amended over the last ten years," Halperin-Kaddari, the director of the Ruth and Emanuel Rackman Center for the Advancement of the Status of Women at Bar-Ilan University, wrote in the book's forward.

"The Israeli legislator was far from idle and actively pursued legislation aimed at advancing the status of women and gender equality in Israel."

Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin (Likud) complimented the efforts of the writers and of legislators alike.

"The status of women and their struggle for equality and respect are topics crucial to Israeli society," said Rivlin. "Women in Israel are still struggling for recognition of their abilities, their talents and their achievements and still suffer from a point of

weakness in terms of family disputes, workplaces, and other places."

Rivlin said that he hoped that the Knesset would continue to provide a working example of a woman-friendly workplace, and announced that despite the vehement opposition of a number of MKs, the parliament will soon hold a workshop to raise awareness regarding sexual harassment and ways to prevent it.

Both Halperin-Kaddari and a number of the MKs present noted that there was still much room for improvement, especially concerning civil marriage and divorce.

Similarly, MK Yulia Shamalov-Berkovich (Kadima) emphasized that women in the workplace still needed better arrangements for child care, including longer pre-school hours and lower fees.