

**Statement on activities undertaken
between the 53rd and 54th sessions of the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against
Women**

**by
Ms. Silvia Pimentel
Chairperson**

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**Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentleman,**

I would like to join Mr. Salama in wishing everyone a happy and healthy new year.

It has been a little more than three months since our last session ended and since our 30th anniversary event and informal retreat in Istanbul in early November. I want to again thank the Turkish Government for their extraordinary generosity and hospitality and, in particular, Ms. Feride Acar for making this very special event possible.

I wish to update you on the status of the Convention and Optional Protocol, and also highlight some of the activities that I have engaged in as Chairperson of the CEDAW Committee and other issues that may be of interest to the Committee.

Turning to the Convention, I would like to report that the number of States parties remains at 187. The amendment to the Convention currently has 68 Contracting States. The Republic of Moldova and Greece deposited instruments of acceptance with the Secretary-General on 21 December 2012 and 8 January 2013, respectively. The amendment requires 125 acceptances to enter into force. Moreover, the number of States parties to the Optional Protocol remains at 104.

Since our fifty-third session, ten States parties have submitted their initial and/or periodic reports, namely the Gambia, Belgium, Eritrea, Tuvalu, Poland, Ecuador, Maldives, Kyrgyzstan, Vietnam and most recently, Solomon Islands.

Following the fifty-third session and our informal retreat in Istanbul, I again organized the annual Simulated Session of the CEDAW Committee at the Pontifical Catholic University of Sao Paulo, which has been very successful in introducing law students to the United Nations treaty body system, and international human rights law, and in particular the CEDAW Convention.

In my capacity as Chairperson of CEDAW, I was interviewed by Brazil's premier women's magazine "Claudia" which focused on CEDAW. This was also a wonderful opportunity to raise awareness of the Convention and the work of the Committee.

I would also like to mention that the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Policies for Women are discussing the possibility of a meeting in Brasilia regarding the general recommendation on access to justice, and I will keep the Committee apprised of developments in this regard.

In her capacity as Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Améline has substituted me during the 67th session of the General Assembly, where she delivered a statement on the activities of our Committee and engaged in an interactive dialogue with the Third Committee on 15 October 2012.

The new Chair will be addressing the Commission on the Status of Women on 4 March 2013, where she will report on the main outcomes of the fifty-first to fifty-third sessions.

Distinguished colleagues

Committee Members have also been involved in CEDAW-related activities as well as other panel discussions and seminars relating to women's issues in both their capacity as members of the CEDAW Committee and in their personal capacities.

I would kindly ask those Committee members who participated in panel discussions, seminars and in expert meetings during these past few months to please provide copies of their statements to the Secretariat so that they can be circulated to the Committee during the session.

Distinguished Colleagues,

As you are aware, we will shortly be formally inducting new members to the Committee and in this regard, on behalf of the entire Committee, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to Ms. Noor Al-Malki Al-Jehani, Ms. Hilary Gbedemah, Ms. Nahla Haidar, Ms. Dalia Leinarte, Ms. Theodora Oby Nwankwo and Ms. Bianca Pomeranzi.

Following the induction of new members, we will also elect a new Chairperson of the Committee as well as three Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur. The election of the Chairperson will be my last official act as Chairperson.

It is therefore time for me to take stock of the achievements that our Committee was able to make over the past two years. In addition to the many State reports considered, the Committee adopted several landmark decisions on individual complaints under article 2 of the Optional Protocol. These cases dealt with discrimination in employment and housing, domestic violence and reproductive health and rights. The Views of the Committee are increasingly influential in the creation of an international women's human rights jurisprudence. The Committee also received an increasing number of requests for inquiries under article 8 of the Optional Protocol indicating grave or systematic violations by a State party of the rights set forth in the Convention.

Moreover, the Committee has embarked on the elaboration of a series of general recommendations, created different working groups for that purpose and held a general discussion on women in situations of armed conflict and post-conflict in July 2012 in New York, which was attended by some 600 participants.

Lastly, I would like to recall that 2012 marked the 30th anniversary of our Committee. Through the three commemorative events organized in New York, Geneva and Istanbul with support from our partners, which were attended by hundreds of Government representatives, UN officials and experts, representatives of other international organizations, as well as civil society, we were able to highlight the work of the Committee and raise awareness of women's human rights issues.

Colleagues and friends,

At this juncture, I want to thank you all for your support during my tenure.

I would also be delighted to hear from Committee members who have represented the Committee at official meetings or undertaken work related to the activities of the Committee.

Thank you very much for your attention.
