

CLOSING REMARKS

by

Ms. Nicole Ameline

***Fifty-sixth session of the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women***

Dear Colleagues,

As we are coming to the end of the fifty-sixth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, it is customary for the Committee's Chairperson to sum up the work completed.

Let me start from the beginning of this session and assess our results. We considered the reports of seven States parties. We held informal meetings with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and also attended several lunchtime briefings organized by non-governmental organizations. The Committee was pleased by the high level of attendance of NGOs, both international and national, which once again made significant contributions to the work of the Committee.

The Committee is also thankful to those UN entities and other inter-governmental bodies which provided us with detailed information, and I encourage both the UN entities and NGOs to continue to deepen their advocacy for the promotion and protection of women's human rights and the implementation of the Convention.

I would also like to highlight our meeting with the IPU delegation of Parliamentarians on 7 October, which I consider the first of a series of meetings aiming at closer cooperation with national Parliamentarians, including women Parliamentarians, in promoting the implementation of our Convention and concluding observations at the national level.

I am delighted that our colleague Barbara Bailey has accepted to serve for another year as Rapporteur on follow-up in order to ensure continuity as well as an orderly handover to Ms. Zou, whom I thank for having accepted to serve as alternate rapporteur until 31 December 2014. At the same time, I would like to thank Ms. Hayashi for her excellent work as alternate rapporteur on follow-up over the past two years.

In addition to considering the reports of States parties and adopting concluding observations thereon, the Committee also reviewed information received from States parties on priority recommendations as part of its follow-up procedure. It also continued to discharge its mandate under articles 2 and 8 of the Optional Protocol with regard to individual communications and inquiries, respectively. The Committee considered and adopted inadmissibility decisions on two individual communications. Furthermore, the Committee analyzed and discussed information under article 8 of the Optional Protocol in relation to inquiries.

On 18 October, the Committee adopted its general recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations, by consensus. I would like to thank our colleague Pramila Patten for her excellent work on this milestone general recommendation which is an important contribution to the UN's women, peace and security architecture.

The Committee also discussed the draft general recommendation on gender related dimensions of refugee status, asylum and statelessness and I am confident that with the able guidance of Ms. Simonovic, we will be able to hold our first reading of the draft general recommendation at our next session in February 2014.

Great progress was made on our joint CEDAW/CRC general recommendation/comment on harmful practices, thanks to the efforts of Violeta Neubauer and the other members of our Working Group on the joint GR/GC who met with their CRC colleagues for one full Sunday to finalize the draft.

At this point, I also wish to congratulate our colleague Naela Gabr on the very successful half day of general discussion on rural women we held on 7 October. The many contributions from experts, UN bodies, States parties and NGOs that we have received will no doubt form a solid basis for embarking on the preparation of a draft general recommendation on the topic. I would like to thank OHCHR, FAO, WFP, IFAD and UN Women for their generous support for this event.

Similarly, I wish to thank the Center for Reproductive Rights for having hosted our important meeting with the Human Rights Committee, during which we were able to jointly reflect on both Committees' jurisprudence on reproductive rights, including the complex issue of abortion.

Our meeting with the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants was equally fruitful, as it reminded us once more of the importance of focusing on the

difficult situation of many migrant women and girls in all parts of the world, who often face discrimination and rights abuses.

On a more pleasant note, our private visit of the Musée de la Croix Rouge and the reception by the City of Geneva were memorable and I know that I speak on behalf of all of you when I thank the City of Geneva for its generosity and continued hospitality.

On behalf of the Committee, I presented our General Assembly report on the 52nd, 53rd and 54th sessions to the Third Committee on 11 October, and seized the opportunity to lobby for our requests for additional resources for our Working Group on Communications and for relocating one of our annual sessions to New York. I am very hopeful that both requests will eventually be approved by the General Assembly.

Dear Colleagues,

May I take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to the States parties that engaged in the excellent constructive dialogues with the Committee, many of which were represented at a very high level.

Before I conclude, please allow me to sincerely thank all experts for the hard work accomplished during the past three weeks, especially the country rapporteurs who have greatly contributed to our discussions during the dialogues with the representatives of the States parties. I am also grateful to my colleagues in the Bureau for their advice on the many issues that we have discussed.

I would like to extend the Committee's appreciation to our Secretariat for their dedication, efficiency and hard work. Of course, I also would like to thank the interpreters, précis writers, translators, conference room officers, technicians, press officers and all the others who made this session successful.

Lastly, I am saddened to announce that Régine's current contract will come to an end in February next year, at the very beginning of our 57th session. I wholeheartedly thank Régine for her excellent services and her enthusiasm for the advancement of women's rights. Régine has become a true pillar of the CEDAW Secretariat in the past two years. We will miss her fine legal skills but also her smiles. In thanking Régine on behalf of the Committee, I wish to add: "Ce n'est qu'un au revoir."

I wish you all a safe journey home, happy holidays and I look forward to seeing you in Geneva in February next year for our fifty-seventh session.

Thank you very much.
