

**Statement on activities undertaken
between the 59th and 60th sessions of the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against
Women**

Ms. Nicole Ameline, Chairperson

Sixtieth session
16 February 2015

**Dear colleagues,
Distinguished representatives,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I would like to join James Heenan in welcoming you and, in particular, the newly elected members to the 60th session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

First of all, I wish to inform you that Ms. Nwankwo will unfortunately not be able to be with us during this session, for health reasons. Ms. Jahan will not be able to be with us this week due to professional commitments, while our new colleague Ms. Al-Dosari will not be able to stay with us for the second and third weeks of the session.

Since our last session, the ratification status of the Convention and the Optional Protocol has not changed and remains at 188 and 105, respectively. Similarly, the number of States parties having accepted the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the meeting time of the Committee remains at 69. I am pleased to inform you that twelve States parties have submitted their periodic reports since the beginning of our last session, namely Czech Republic, Haiti, Mongolia, Tanzania, the Netherlands, Albania, Turkey, Argentina, Micronesia, Myanmar, Uruguay and the Philippines. In addition, seven States parties submitted reports that

were returned to them because they exceeded the limit of 21200 words established by General Assembly resolution 68/268. These States parties (Ukraine, Estonia, Switzerland, Armenia, Mali, Bangladesh and Honduras) were requested to shorten and re-submit their reports within two months. The status of the report submitted by Trinidad and Tobago, which slightly exceeds the word limit, is currently being clarified. Also since our last session, seven States parties have requested to submit their next periodic reports under the new simplified reporting procedure. I trust that we will find time to examine their requests at this session.

Shortly after our fifty-ninth session, on 11 November 2014, I met with Ms. Véronique Bartolone, in charge of the advancement of women in the office of the President of the French National Assembly, who briefed me on the modalities for the launch of the campaign for CEDAW's candidature for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015. The campaign was launched at the National Assembly on 19 January 2015. Thereafter, the supporters of the campaign officially submitted the candidature.

On 25 November, I made the closing remarks at a colloquium on "Women at stake in violence" organized by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The colloquium discussed the use of sexual violence in armed conflict and international action to combat trafficking in persons.

On 26 November, I chaired a conference on "Women and sustainable development" organized by UNESCO in Paris, which was attended by many UNESCO Member States, including the 58 Members of UNESCO's Executive Council.

On 28 November, I handed over the Arborus awards at the National Assembly in my capacity as Chair of the Arborus Fund which promotes equality of women and men in the private sector by awarding gender equality standard labels to companies. On the same day, I delivered the closing remarks at a thematic debate of the French Parliamentary delegation on women's rights on "Prostitution – violence against women's bodies".

On 16 December, I gave a speech entitled "Reflections on gender equality policies" at an international colloquium in Paris on the theme "1975 to 2015: Still a long way to go towards gender equality?", organized by the

Gender and Development Platform of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the Gender in Action Network.

From 11 to 13 January 2015, I went to Cairo, Egypt, with the “Equality of girls and boys in education” campaign, where we distributed 100 iPads to pupils at the Mokattam School in the Ragpickers’ district (*quartier des chiffonniers*), one of the most disadvantaged districts of Cairo.

On 14 January, I gave an interview on the theme “Voices of Women” on Radio Orient Paris.

From 16 to 18 January, I participated in the informal meeting of Chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies, held at Wilton Park, United Kingdom. The Chairs took stock of progress made since the last Chairpersons' meeting and prepared the next meeting of Chairpersons which will take place in San José, Costa Rica, from 22 to 26 June 2015. They also adopted two joint statements, on the post-2015 development agenda and on human rights against violence.

On 23 January, I attended the screening of the film “Women and Men” (“Des hommes et des femmes”) of Frédérique Bedos, in the presence of several Ministers, in Paris. You will remember Ms. Bedos as the gifted young media artist who came to Geneva to record interviews with Committee members for this documentary.

On 3 February, I de-briefed the Humanitarian Affairs Committee of the National Assembly on my mission to Cairo speaking on the theme “Girls’ education: An example from Cairo”. On the same day, I met with representatives of Zonta International, a worldwide organization of executives in business and the professions working together to advance the status of women; and discussed the work of CEDAW with them.

On 5 February, I gave a speech on “The role of the CEDAW Committee and Convention in the new development framework” at a meeting of the Women Parliamentarians Association in Torino, Italy. On 12 February, I hosted a conference organized by the *Grande Loge Féminine de France* in Deauville on the theme “Women’s rights: Progress or regression”.

During our present session, I will have the honour to represent the Committee at a Beijing +20 conference in Chile from 27 February to 3

March, at the personal invitation of President Bachelet. On my way back, I will attend a UNESCO conference on Beijing +20 on 4 March in Paris, at the invitation of Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO.

Dear 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. Gladys Acosta Vargas, Ms. Bakhita Al-Dosari, Ms. Magalys Arocha Dominguez (our good friend to whom I extend a warm welcome back), Ms. Louiza Chalal, Ms. Lilian Hofmeister, and Ms. Lia Nadaraia.

Following the induction of the new members, we will also elect a new Chairperson of the Committee as well as three Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur.

I therefore take the opportunity to once again thank you all for your support during my tenure.

I know that many of you have been involved in CEDAW-related activities since our last session, such as conferences, workshops and seminars. I would kindly ask those Committee members who participated in such events to please fill in the table on inter-sessional activities that will be distributed by the Secretariat and to provide copies of their statements to the Secretariat so that they can be distributed to the Committee during the session.

I would now be delighted to hear from Committee members who have participated in meetings and events of relevance to the promotion and protection of women's rights.

Lastly, I would like to remind you that our public meetings will again be webcast live by the NGO Coalition on the website www.treatybodywebcast.org. I therefore take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all those who will be our online guests during this session.

Thank you for your attention.
