

[INFORMAL DOCUMENT]

CEDAW/C/2013/I/CRP

**Report of the Committee on the
Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Fifty-fourth session
(11 February – 1 March 2013)**

Chapter I

Matters brought to the attention of States parties

Decisions

Decision 54/1

Election of the Chair

On 11 February 2013, the Committee elected Ms. Nicole Ameline as the Chair of the Committee. Nominations were also put forward for officers of the Committee.

Decision 54/2

Election of Vice-Chairs and Rapporteur

On 11 February, the Committee elected the remaining officers of the Committee as follows: Ms. Ismat Jahan, Vice Chair; Ms. Violeta Neubauer, Vice Chair; Ms. Pramila Patten, Vice-Chair; and Ms. Barbara Bailey, Rapporteur.

Decision 54/3

Working Group on Communications

The Committee confirmed the members of the working group on communications, i.e., Ms. Olinda Bareiro-Bobadilla, Mr. Niklas Bruun, Ms. Yoko Hayashi, Ms. Pramila Patten, and Ms. Dubravka Simonovic.

Decision 54/4

Pre-Session Working Group

The Committee also confirmed the members of the pre-session working group for the fifty-sixth session, i.e., Ms. Barbara Bailey, Ms. Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani, Ms. Violeta Neubauer, Ms. Maria-Helena Pires, and Ms. Patricia Schulz.

Decision 54/5

General Recommendation on the economic consequences of marriage, family relations and their dissolution

On 26 February, the Committee adopted the General Recommendation on the economic consequences of marriage, family relations and their dissolution. (Annex I)

Decision 54/6

Revision of standard paragraphs

The Committee decided to shorten and merge several standard paragraphs contained in its concluding observations.

Decision 54/7

Public webcasting of dialogues with States parties

The Committee decided to allow for public webcasting of its dialogues with States parties during a trial period covering its 55th and 56th sessions in July and October 2013, respectively, and to make an internal assessment at the end of the 56th session in order to determine whether or not to continue the webcasting beyond the trial period. It decided to amend its rules of procedure accordingly by deleting Rule 28, paragraph 3, second

sentence, which reads: “The Committee shall, if necessary, and before giving such permission, seek the consent of any State party reporting to the Committee under article 18 of the Convention to the filming or other recording of the proceedings in which it is engaged.”

Decision 54/8

Adoption of Addis Ababa guidelines

The Committee decided to incorporate the Guidelines on the independence and impartiality of members of the human rights treaty bodies (“the Addis Ababa guidelines”) adopted by the twenty-fourth meeting of the Chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies in its rules of procedure. (Annex II)

Decision 54/9

Follow-up methodology and information

The Committee amended its methodology of the follow-up procedure (Annex III) and adopted a document containing information for States parties and other stakeholders on the submission of reports under the follow-up procedure (Annex IV).

Decision 54/10

Standard operating procedures for the conduct of inquiries

The Committee approved an internal document containing standard operating procedures for the conduct of inquiries under article 8 of the Optional Protocol.

Decision 54/11

Additional resources for the Working Group on Communications

The Committee adopted a decision to request the General Assembly to provide the necessary resources for the Working Group on Communications (to be renamed Working Group on the Optional Protocol) to meet for five additional days per year starting from 2014 and to extend its membership from five to seven members during the requested five additional days of annual meeting time in order to enable the Working Group to examine information received under article 8 of the Optional Protocol. (Annex V)

Decision 54/12

Request for additional resources to enable the Committee to hold one of its annual sessions at United Nations Headquarters in New York starting from 2014

The Committee adopted a decision to request the General Assembly to provide the necessary resources to enable the Committee to hold one of its annual sessions at United Nations Headquarters in New York starting from 2014, and to ensure that the Committee is provided with adequate substantive support from its secretariat during those sessions. (Annex VI)

Decision 54/13

Meeting venue of one annual session at United Nations Headquarters

In accordance with article 20, paragraph 2, of the Convention, the Committee decided that one of its annual sessions from 2014 onwards shall be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Decision 54/14

Statement on the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the strengthening of the United Nations human rights treaty bodies

The Committee adopted a statement on the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the strengthening of the United Nations human rights treaty bodies. (Annex VII)

Decision 54/15

General discussion on rural women

The Committee decided to hold a half day general discussion on rural women at its 56th session.

Decision 54/16

Publication of session reports on the website of the Committee

The Committee decided to make public the reports on its sessions by posting the report on its website after each session starting from the 54th session.

Decision 54/17

Working Group on Harmful Practices

The working group on harmful practices was expanded to include Ms. Noor Al-Jehani, Ms. Dalia Leinarte and Ms. Theodora Nwankwo, in addition to the existing members Ms. Feride Acar, Ms. Barbara Bailey, Ms. Naela Gabr, Ms. Violeta Neubauer (Chair), Ms. Dubravka Simonovic and Ms. Xiaoqiao Zou.

Decision 54/18

Working Group on Women in Conflict Prevention, Conflict and Post Conflict Situations

The working group on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post conflict situations was expanded to include Ms. Nahla Haidar, Ms. Theodora Nwankwo and Ms. Biancamaria Pomeranzi, in addition to the existing members Ms. Nicole Ameline, Ms. Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani, Mr. Niklas Bruun, Ms. Ismat Jahan, Ms. Pramila Patten (Chair) and Ms. Maria-Helena Pires.

Decision 54/19

Working Group on Access to Justice

The working group on access to justice was expanded to include Ms. Hilary Gbedemah, in addition to the existing members Ms. Feride Acar, Ms. Barbara Bailey, Ms. Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani, Ms. Olinda Bareiro-Bobadilla, Ms. Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, Ms. Pramila Patten, Ms. Silvia Pimentel (Chair), Ms. Patricia Schulz, Ms. Dubravka Simonovic and Ms. Xiaoqiao Zou.

Decision 54/20

Working Group on Working Methods

The working group on working methods was expanded to include Ms. Nahla Haidar, Ms. Dalia Leinarte and Ms. Biancamaria Pomeranzi, in addition to the existing members Ms. Barbara Bailey, Ms. Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, Ms. Violeta Neubauer, Ms. Maria-Helena Pires, Ms. Patricia Schulz (Chair) and Ms. Xiaoqiao Zou.

Decision 54/21

Working Group on Gender Equality in the Context of Climate Change and Natural Disasters

The working group on the gender related dimensions of refugee status, asylum and statelessness working methods was expanded to include Ms. Noor Al-Jehani and Ms.

Nahla Haidar, in addition to the existing members Ms. Yoko Hayashi (Chair), Ms. Ismat Jahan and Ms. Xiaoqiao Zou.

Decision 54/22

Working Group on the Right to Education

The working group on the right to education was expanded to include Ms. Noor Al-Jehani and Ms. Hilary Gbedemah, in addition to the existing members Ms. Barbara Bailey (Chair), Ms. Naela Gabr, Ms. Maria Helena Pires and Ms. Xiaoqiao Zou.

Decision 54/23

Task Force on Inquiries

The task force on inquiries was expanded to include Ms. Nahla Haidar, in addition to the existing members Ms. Olinda Bareiro-Bobadilla, Mr. Niklas Bruun, Ms. Barbara Bailey, Ms. Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, Ms. Violeta Neubauer, Ms. Pramila Patten, Ms. Patricia Schulz, and Ms. Dubravka Simonovic.

Decision 54/24

Gender and HIV/AIDS Focal Point

Ms. Theodora Nwankwo was appointed gender and HIV/AIDS focal point.

Chapter II

Organizational and other matters

A. States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and to the Optional Protocol

On 1 March 2013, the closing date of the fifty-fourth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, there were 187 States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/180 and opened for signature, ratification and accession in New York on 1 March 1980. In accordance with its article 27, the Convention entered into force on 3 September 1981. In addition, 68 Contracting States had accepted the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, concerning the Committee's meeting time. A total of 125 States parties to the Convention are currently required to accept the amendment in order to bring it into force, in accordance with its provisions.

As at the same date, there were 104 States parties to the Optional Protocol to the Convention, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/4 and opened for signature, ratification and accession in New York on 10 December 1999. In accordance with its article 16, the Optional Protocol entered into force on 22 December 2000.

The updated status of the Convention, the Amendment to the Convention and its Optional Protocol, including lists of States signatories and parties as well as the texts of declarations, reservations, objections and other relevant information can be found in the United Nations Treaty Collection on the Internet at <http://treaties.un.org>, maintained by the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs, which discharges the depositary functions of the Secretary-General.

B. Opening of the session

The Committee held its fifty-fourth session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 11 February to 1 March 2013. The Committee held 21 plenary meetings, and also held

21 meetings to discuss agenda items 5, 6, 7 and 8. A list of the documents before the Committee is contained in annex I to the present report.

The session was opened by the outgoing Chairperson of the Committee, Ms. Silvia Pimentel on 11 February 2013 at its 1099th meeting.

C. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

The Committee adopted the provisional agenda (CEDAW/C/54/1) at its 1099th meeting.

D. Report of the pre-session working group

The report of the pre-session working group (CEDAW/PSWG/54/1), which met from 30 July to 3 August 2012, was introduced by Ms. Yoko Hayashi at the 1099th meeting.

E. Organization of work

On 11 February, the Committee elected Ms. Nicole Ameline as Chair of the Committee, pursuant to the Rules of Procedure of the Committee. The following members were also elected as officers of the Committee: Ms. Ismat Jahan, Vice-Chair; Ms. Violeta Neubauer, Vice-Chair; Ms. Pramila Patten, Vice-Chair; and Ms. Barbara Bailey, Rapporteur.

The following newly elected members of the Committee assumed their duties and took the solemn declaration as provided for in Rule 15 of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee on 11 February: Ms. Noor Al-Jehani, Ms. Hilary Gbedemah, Ms. Nahla Haidar, Ms. Dalia Leinarte, Ms. Theodora Nwankwo and Ms. Biancamaria Pomeranzi.

On 11 February 2013, the Committee held a closed meeting with representatives of specialized agencies and United Nations funds and programmes, as well as other intergovernmental organizations, during which country-specific information was provided, as well as information on the efforts made by those bodies to support the implementation of the Convention.

On 11 and 18 February 2013, the Committee held informal public meetings with representatives of non-governmental organizations who provided information on the implementation of the Convention in the States parties reporting to the Committee at its fifty-fourth session.

On 22 February 2013, the Committee held a meeting with Ms. Magdalena Sepulveda Carmona, United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, who briefed the Committee on the guiding principles on extreme poverty and human rights (see A/HRC/21/39).

F. Membership of the Committee

All members attended the fifty-fourth session. Ms. Feride Acar and Ms. Barbara Bailey were not able to attend the first day of the session. A list of members of the Committee, indicating the duration of their terms of office, is annexed to the present report.

Chapter III

Report of the Chairperson on activities undertaken between the fifty-second and fifty-third sessions of the Committee

At the 1099th meeting, the outgoing Chairperson, Ms. Silvia Pimentel, presented her report on the activities she had undertaken since the fifty-third session of the Committee.

Chapter IV

A. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

At its fifty-fourth session, the Committee considered the reports of seven States parties submitted under article 18 of the Convention: the sixth periodic report of Angola; the combined seventh to eighth periodic report of Austria; the combined sixth and seventh periodic report of Cyprus; the seventh periodic report of Greece; the combined seventh and eighth periodic report of Hungary; the fourth periodic report of Pakistan; and the combined fourth and fifth periodic report of The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The Committee prepared concluding observations on each of the reports considered. Those observations are available through the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org/>) under the symbol numbers indicated below:

Angola (CEDAW/C/AGO/CO/6)

Austria (CEDAW/C/AUT/CO/7-8)

Cyprus (CEDAW/C/CYP/CO/6-7)

Greece (CEDAW/C/GRC/CO/7)

Hungary (CEDAW/C/HUN/CO/7-8)

Pakistan (CEDAW/C/PAK/CO/4)

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (CEDAW/C/MKD/CO/4-5)

It is noted that the consideration of the Solomon Islands in the absence of a report was also scheduled for the 54th session. Solomon Islands submitted its combined initial to third periodic report prior to the 54th session and the consideration was subsequently postponed to the 59th session to allow for the translation of the report as well as the establishment of the list of issues at the pre-session working group.

B. Follow-up procedures relating to concluding observations

The Committee considered the follow-up reports from the following States parties:

- 1) Botswana (CEDAW/C/BOT/CO/3/Add.1)
- 2) Nigeria (CEDAW/C/NGA/CO/6/Add.1)
- 3) Russia (CEDAW/C/RUS/CO/7/Add.1)
- 4) Switzerland (CEDAW/C/CHE/CO/3/Add.1)
- 5) Tanzania (CEDAW/C/TZA/CO/6/Add.1)
- 6) Timor-Leste (CEDAW/C/TSL/CO/1/Add.1)
- 7) Turkey (CEDAW/C/TUR/CO/6/Add.1)
- 8) Ukraine (CEDAW/C/UKR/CO/7/Add.1)

The Committee also sent second reminders to the following States parties whose follow-up reports were overdue:

- 1) Egypt
- 2) Haiti
- 3) Malawi
- 4) Panama
- 5) United Arab Emirates

The Committee sent further invitations to meet with representatives of Bhutan and Nigeria. Neither of them had submitted their follow-up report despite two reminders sent by the Committee, nor replied to a letter sent at the 53rd session to schedule a meeting with representatives of both States parties. During the 54th session, the Follow-up rapporteur met with a representative of Bhutan.

Chapter V

Activities carried out under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Article 12 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women provides that the Committee shall include in its annual report under article 21 of the Convention a summary of its activities under the Optional Protocol.

A. Action taken by the Committee in respect of issues arising from article 2 of the Optional Protocol

No action was taken at the 54th session.

B. Follow-up to views of the Committee on individual communications

No action was taken at the 54th session.

C. Action taken by the Committee in respect of issues arising from article 8 of the Optional Protocol

The Committee discussed and approved an internal document provided by the Secretariat containing standard operating procedures for the conduct of inquiries.

The Committee was briefed on the country visit undertaken for inquiry No. 2010/1.

On 27 February 2013, the members designated by the Committee for Inquiry No. 2011/1 held a meeting with representatives of the State party concerned to reiterate their request to conduct a visit to the territory of that State party.

One additional submission was received, but was not discussed by the Committee.

Chapter VI

A. Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee

The Committee continued to discuss the proposals contained in the report of the High Commissioner on treaty body strengthening. It adopted a statement welcoming the efforts of the High Commissioner to overcome the difficulties that the treaty body system is facing. It also decided to incorporate in its rules of procedure the Addis Ababa guidelines on the independence and impartiality of treaty body members into its Rules of Procedure.

The Committee discussed webcasting of its dialogues with States parties and decided to allow for such webcasting during a trial period covering its 55th and 56th sessions, after which the Committee will undertake an evaluation to determine whether or not to continue webcasting beyond this period.

The Committee discussed the need to adopt a media strategy to increase the visibility of its work.

B. Action taken by the Committee under agenda item 7

Dates of future sessions of the Committee

In accordance with the calendar of conferences, the following dates are confirmed for the Committee's fifty-fifth and fifty-sixth sessions:

Fifty-Fifth Session (Geneva)

Twenty-sixth session of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol: (4 to 5 July 2013))

Fifty-fifth session: (8 to 26 July 2013)

Pre-session working group for the fifty-seventh session: (29 July to 2 August 2013)

Fifty-Sixth Session (Geneva)

Twenty-seventh session of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol: (23 to 27 September 2013)

Fifty-sixth session: (30 September to 18 October 2013)

Pre-session working group for the fifty-eighth session: (21 to 24 October 2013)

Reports to be considered at future sessions of the Committee

The Committee confirmed that it will consider the reports of the following States parties at its fifty-fifth and fifty-sixth sessions:

Fifty-fifth session:

- 1) Afghanistan
- 2) Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 3) Cape Verde
- 4) Cuba
- 5) Democratic Republic of the Congo
- 6) Dominican Republic
- 7) Serbia
- 8) United Kingdom

Fifty-sixth session:

- 1) Andorra
- 2) Benin
- 3) Cambodia
- 4) Colombia
- 5) Republic of Moldova
- 6) St. Vincent and the Grenadines (in absence of report)
- 7) Seychelles
- 8) Tajikistan

Chapter VII

Implementation of article 21 of the Convention

A. Action taken by the Committee under agenda item 6

Working Group on the economic consequences of marriage, family relations and their dissolution

The Committee adopted General Recommendation No 29 on the economic consequences of marriage, family relations and its dissolution.

Joint CEDAW/CRC Working Group on harmful practices

The joint CEDAW/CRC Working Group held a telephone conference during the 54th session to discuss pending issues as well as comments received from United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations on the draft general recommendation/comment.

The Working Group met during the session.

Working Group on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations

The Chair of the Working Group, Ms. Patten, presented the draft general recommendation in plenary and invited comments from the members of the Committee.

Working Group on women and access to justice

The Working Group on access to justice met during the session.

On 18 February 2013, the Committee held a general discussion on women and access to justice, as the first phase in the elaboration of a general recommendation on the subject. The discussion was opened by the Chair of the Committee, Ms. Nicole Ameline, followed by opening addresses by representatives of the Joint OHCHR, UN Women and UNDP Programme on Access to Justice, which had sponsored the event, Ms. Mona Rishmawi (OHCHR), Ms. Lee Waldorf (UN Women) and Mr. Ismalebbe Zanofer (UNDP). The envisaged general recommendation on women and access to justice was introduced by the Chair of the Working Group on women and access to justice, Ms. Silvia Pimentel. Seven key note speakers explored the legal, procedural and institutional barriers faced by women in accessing justice, women's social, economic and practical challenges in accessing justice, and the challenges faced by disadvantaged groups of women in accessing justice: Ms. Frances Raday, Vice-Chair of the UN Working Group on discrimination against women in law and practice; Ms. Sara Hossain, Honorary Director of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, Mr. Wilder Tayler, Secretary-General of the International Commission of Jurists; Ms. Simone Cusack, Lawyer, Senior Policy/Research Officer at the Australian Human Rights Commission; Ms. Magdalena Sepulveda Carmona, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights; Ms. Shaheen Sardar Ali, Vice-Chair of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Professor of Law at the University of Warwick. One of the speakers was Ms. Karen Vertido, the author of a communication submitted under article 2 of the Optional Protocol, in relation to which the Committee had found violations of articles 2 (c), 2 (f) and 5, in conjunction with article 1, of the Convention. After the interventions of the key note speakers, oral statements were made by the following State parties: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden (joint statement), Argentina, Switzerland, Australia, Sri Lanka, Kingdom of Bahrain, Slovenia and Brazil. Further statements were made by UNHCR and ILO, and by 13 civil society organizations (IWRAP Asia Pacific, Widows for Peace, International Disability Alliance, REDRESS and Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa, Amnesty, Avocats Sans Frontières, Center for Reproductive Rights, International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, Global

Action to Prevent War and Armed Conflict, Ban Ying, FIAN, Harm Reduction International, CLADEM), as well as by Ms Lilian Hofmeister, Judge at the Austrian Constitutional Court.

Working Group on gender related dimensions of refugee status, asylum and statelessness

The Chair of the Working Group, Ms. Simonovic, presented the draft general recommendation in plenary and invited comments from the members of the Committee.

Working Group on rural women

A half day of general discussion is scheduled for the 56th session. The working group will continue to work intersessionally with Ms. Sharon Brennen-Haylock, Senior Liaison Officer, FAO, to prepare the half day of general discussion.

Working Group on gender equality in the context of climate change and natural disasters

The Working Group did not meet during the session.

Working Group on the right to education

The Working Group met during the session.

Working Group on working methods

The Working Group met during the session.

Chapter VIII

Provisional agenda for the fifty-fifth session

The Committee considered the draft provisional agenda for its fifty-fifth session on 1 March 2013 and approved the following provisional agenda for that session:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Report of the Chairperson on activities undertaken between the fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions of the Committee.
4. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
5. Follow-up to concluding observations of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
6. Implementation of articles 21 and 22 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
7. Activities of the Committee under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
8. Provisional agenda for the fifty-sixth session of the Committee.
9. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-fifth session.

Chapter IX

A. Adoption of the report

The Committee considered the draft report on its fifty-fourth session and addenda on 1 March 2013 and adopted it as orally revised during the discussion.

[Annexes will be added to the final version of the text]

B. Composition of the working groups of the Committee

[To be added to the final version of the report]

Annex I

Please refer to <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/comments.htm>

Annex II

Independence and impartiality of members

(New) Rule 15bis

The Guidelines on the independence and impartiality of members of the human rights treaty bodies (“the Addis Ababa guidelines”) adopted by the twenty-fourth meeting of the Chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies (A/67/22, Annex I) shall form integral part of the present rules of procedure.

Annex III

Methodology of the follow-up procedure

Reporting on the Committee’s follow-up procedure

1. The Rapporteur on follow-up (the Rapporteur) will brief the Committee on the actions taken or proposed at each session of the Committee. This briefing and the content of letters for transmission to States parties will be discussed in a closed meeting of the Committee.
2. The Committee will provide a report on its follow-up activities in its report to the General Assembly on an annual basis.

Action taken in response to States parties replies

3. The Rapporteur will assess, in cooperation with the respective country rapporteur or other members of the Committee, the responses received to determine whether the issues designated by the Committee for follow-up have been adequately addressed by the State party concerned and whether further information is required based on the following categories:

(a) “Implemented” indicates that the State party has fully implemented or has made significant progress in implementing the recommendation made by the Committee; in this case, no additional information is requested from the State party;

(b) “Partially Implemented” indicates that the State party took some steps towards the implementation of the recommendation but needs to take further actions; in this case, the Rapporteur requests additional information on further steps taken by the State party to implement the recommendation, within a specific time frame or in the next periodic report;

(c) “Not Implemented” indicates that the State party has taken no action to implement the recommendation or the action taken has not directly addressed the situation; in this case, the Rapporteur requests information on steps taken to implement the recommendation within a specific time frame or in the next periodic report;

(d) “Lack of sufficient information to make an assessment”; in this case, the Rapporteur requests information on the measures taken to implement the recommendation.

4. Based on recommendations made by the Rapporteur, the Committee will discuss the progress made by States parties on the implementation of the follow-up recommendations and decide what action may be appropriate.

5. The Rapporteur will transmit the Committee's findings by letter to the Permanent Mission of the State party concerned, which will be made public on the Committee's website after being transmitted to the Permanent Mission. The Committee will note in the communications to the State party whether the responses have been received in a timely or untimely manner. The Committee will, in the communications with the State party, select one or more of the actions to take from the following non-exhaustive list of options:

- (a) "No further information or action will be necessary";
- (b) "Requests further information on implementation within a specific time frame or in the next periodic report";
- (c) "Requests further clarification" concerning the issues raised in the follow-up response; or
- (d) "Recommends technical assistance" to be provided by specific United Nations entities.

Reminders

6. The Rapporteur will transmit reminders to States parties after two months of the information being overdue, and again after four months if the information remains overdue. If information is not received within six months of being overdue, the Committee will hold meetings with the respective Permanent Missions in order to sustain dialogue on the issues raised in the follow-up paragraphs. Reminders will be made public. The sending of reminders may be suspended for State parties that are faced with natural disaster, war or such situation that would possibly preclude follow-up activities.

Subsequent periodic report

7. Once the next periodic report of a State party is considered by the Committee, a new cycle for follow-up will commence. It is important that the follow-up from the previous reporting round is systematically integrated as an essential part of the reporting process and that all the information under the procedure is made available in the respective country files. Any outstanding recommendations relating to the follow-up procedure will be addressed during the subsequent constructive dialogue and reflected in the subsequent Concluding Observations.

Role of the Secretariat

9. The Committee Secretariat will assist the Committee and the Rapporteur by undertaking the following tasks:

- (a) Reception of soft copy of State party responses; processing the States parties' replies for editing and translation with relevant symbol numbers immediately after receipt, and, posting follow-up States parties' replies as well as letters by the Rapporteur on the OHCHR/Committee's follow-up website;
- (b) Drafting letters for the Rapporteur;
- (c) Considering ways — together with the Committee and the Rapporteur — to engage with the stakeholders.

Engagement with stakeholders

10. The Committee may engage with stakeholders with regard to the follow-up procedure by inviting national human rights institutions, United Nations country teams, United Nations entities in particular UN Women and NGOs to provide information to the Committee in relation to its follow-up procedure. The Committee, with the assistance of OHCHR, may also engage with United Nations entities on the ground to maximize the implementation of the Concluding Observations through the follow-up mechanism.

11. Information provided by national human rights institutions, United Nations country teams and/or entities and NGOs will be made public following the same rules on submissions provided for the consideration of State party reports and list of issues and questions, that is, United Nations country team and United Nations submissions will always be considered confidential while information from other sources will be considered public or confidential, depending on the will of the organization which makes the submission.

Annex IV

Information on the follow-up procedure

Introduction

The follow-up procedure aims at providing assistance to the State parties in the implementation of the Convention. Under this procedure the State party is requested to follow-up on recommendations as indicated in two of the Concluding Observations adopted by the Committee. However, it should be noted that the Concluding Observations ultimately prevail over recommendations made by the Rapporteur on Follow-up because of the absence, in the follow-up procedure, of any interaction between the Committee and the State party, such as the issuance of a List of Issues and the holding of a constructive dialogue.

Criteria for the selection of follow-up recommendations

The Committee selects two recommendations from the Concluding Observations requiring follow-up information within one or two years. The selection of these two recommendations is based on the following criteria: the issues selected for short-term action constitute a major obstacle to women's enjoyment of their human rights and would therefore constitute a major obstacle for the implementation of the Convention as a whole.

Terminology for determining the status of implementation of the recommendations

- "Implemented" indicates that the State party has fully implemented or has provided evidence of significant action taken towards the implementation of the recommendation made by the Committee; in this case, the follow-up rapporteur requests no additional information from the State party;
- "Partially Implemented" indicates that the State party took some steps towards the implementation of the recommendation but needs to take further actions; in this case, the follow-up rapporteur requests additional information, within a specific time frame or in the next periodic report, on further steps taken by the State party to implement the recommendation;
- "Not Implemented" indicates that the State party has taken no action to implement the recommendation or the action taken has not directly addressed the situation; in this case, the follow-up rapporteur requests information, within a specific time frame or in the next periodic report, on steps taken to implement the recommendation;
- "Lack of sufficient information to make an assessment"; in this case, the follow-up rapporteur requests information on the measures taken to implement the recommendation within a specific time frame or in the next periodic report.

Guidelines on the drafting of follow-up reports by States parties

- The follow-up report shall be concise and focused on the recommendations identified by the Committee in the framework of the follow-up procedure;

- The follow-up report on the selected recommendations shall not exceed a maximum length of 3500 words;
- The State party is requested to provide information on all the measures taken subsequent to the issuance of the Concluding Observations on the respective recommendations, specifying their dates of adoption and status of implementation;
- The follow-up report shall be submitted within the deadline stipulated in the Concluding Observations;
- The State party is requested to submit the follow-up report in one of the official UN languages;
- The State party shall send an electronic version of its report in Word to the following email address: cedaw@ohchr.org
- When considering the follow-up report, if the Committee considers that further information is necessary, it will request the State party to provide additional information within a new deadline to be established by the Committee or to include the additional information in the next periodic report.

Guidelines on the submission of follow-up reports by NGOs, National Human Rights Institutions and other organizations

- NGOs, National Human Rights Institutions or other organizations can submit alternative follow-up reports; these reports shall be as concise as possible and not exceed a maximum length of 3500 words;
- The suggested deadline for the NGOs, National Human Rights Institutions or organizations to submit their alternative reports is one month after the State party's follow-up report is made public;
- Reports from NGOs, National Human Rights Institutions and other organizations shall be transmitted to the Secretariat in electronic format (in Word) at the following email address: cedaw@ohchr.org and four hard copies of the reports shall be sent to the following address:
- OHCHR, CEDAW Secretariat, Palais Wilson, 52 rue des Pâquis, CH-1201 Genève, Switzerland

Annex V

Decision of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women,

Taking note of the increasing number of submissions received under article 8 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women which contain information that may indicate grave or systematic violations by a State party of rights set forth in the Convention;

Recalling that the Working Group on Communications (to be re-named Working Group on the Optional Protocol) currently meets for ten days per year distributed over three annual sessions, to consider and adopt recommendations on individual communications under article 2 of the Optional Protocol, while no official meeting time is allocated to the examination of information received under article 8 of the Optional Protocol (inquiry procedure);

Bearing in mind the importance of the inquiry procedure under article 8 of the Optional Protocol, which enables the Committee to establish an inquiry in cases of grave or systematic violations of rights set forth in the Convention;

Taking note that several submissions have been received under article 8 and are currently still pending before the Committee;

Taking note of the additional resources required to enable the envisaged Working Group on the Optional Protocol to examine information received under article 8 of the Optional Protocol during its official meeting time;

Decides, without prejudice to the intergovernmental process of the General Assembly on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system, to request the General Assembly to provide the necessary resources for the Working Group on the Optional Protocol to meet for five additional days per year starting from 2014 and to extend its membership from five to seven members during the requested five additional days of annual meeting time in order to enable the Working Group to examine information received under article 8 of the Optional Protocol.

Annex VI

Decision of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning the meeting venue of its annual sessions

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women,

Noting that, in accordance with Article 20, paragraph 2, of the Convention, the meetings of the Committee shall normally be held at United Nations Headquarters or at any other convenient place as determined by the Committee;

Recalling that in 2007 the Committee requested (decision 39/1) to hold three annual sessions of three weeks, one of which taking place at United Nations Headquarters in New York, so as to facilitate and encourage ongoing cooperation between the Committee and United Nations entities working on women's human rights;

Recalling that in resolution 62/218 (2007), the General Assembly decided to authorize the Committee to meet on an exceptional and temporary basis in the biennium 2008–2009 in a total of five sessions, of which two shall be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York;

Noting that, following the biennium 2008-2009, the Committee continued, as a practice, to hold one session per year in New York;

Noting that one of the key factors for the quality of the work of the Committee is its cooperation with other United Nations mechanisms and entities working on women's rights, in particular the Commission on the Status of Women and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), both of which are meeting or, respectively, are located at United Nations Headquarters in New York;

Reaffirming the need to further strengthen and institutionalize the cooperation of the Committee with such United Nations mechanisms and entities and to ensure the visibility and accessibility of the Committee and its work for all partners within the United Nations system, in particular those at United Nations Headquarters in New York;

Recalling that the location of one of its annual sessions at United Nations Headquarters would enable the Committee to entertain regular contacts with its partners and ensure its visibility in New York, especially if that session, if possible, is held directly before the annual session of the Commission on the Status of Women;

Recalling that the Committee, in accordance with Article 20, paragraph 2, of the Convention decided (decision 54/xxx) that one of its annual sessions from 2014 onwards should be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York;

Regretting that due to financial restraints, and outside the context of the treaty body strengthening process, it was decided to relocate the annual session of the Committee in 2013 from New York to Geneva;

Taking note of the additional resources required to ensure adequate support to the Committee from its secretariat during the holding of one of its annual sessions at United Nations Headquarters;

Decides, without prejudice to the intergovernmental process of the General Assembly on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system, to request the General Assembly to provide the necessary resources to enable the Committee to hold one of its annual sessions at United Nations Headquarters starting from 2014, including to ensure that the Committee is provided with adequate support from its secretariat during those sessions.

Annex VII

Statement of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination of Women on the Report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Strengthening of the United Nations Human Rights Treaty Bodies

1. The Committee has high expectations that the intergovernmental process of the General Assembly on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system will bring a significant improvement in strengthening the human rights treaty body system as an essential and efficient mechanism for the promotion and protection of human rights, including women's rights, based on the proposals made by the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

2. The Committee welcomes and takes note with interest of the proposals made by the High Commissioner for Human Rights in her report on the strengthening of the United Nations human rights treaty bodies of June 2012. It welcomes the efforts of the High Commissioner to address the difficulties that the treaty body system is facing, and the many proposals made to overcome them.

3. The Committee recalls its statement "Towards a harmonised and integrated human rights treaty bodies system" (2006) and emphasises the importance of developing effective cooperation between the Human Rights Council and the treaty bodies.

4. The Committee is concerned that the treaty body system has reached its limits with the present resources available, and that it may not be able to function on a sustainable basis. The backlog of State reports received, combined with the high number of overdue reports, is an alarming sign of this dysfunctional situation. The treaty body strengthening process can be successful only if it ensures that sufficient and sustained resources will enable the treaty bodies to fully discharge their various mandates, including for CEDAW, that is, not only the consideration of States parties' reports and follow-up procedures but also the examination of individual communications and the conduct of inquiries. The Committee regrets that the proposals of the High Commissioner did not address the issue of inquiries and the related financial implications.

5. The Committee has already implemented a number of the measures suggested in the report, including:

- Issuance of summary records only in English;
- Measures concerning the consideration of States parties' reports (e.g., limitation of the number of questions in lists of issues and of the number of recommendations in and the length of concluding observations, focussing questions during the dialogue on the most important human rights issues and on States parties' follow-up on the previous concluding observations, clustering of

questions, allocation of speaking time to the State party delegation and to Committee members and use of a speech timer, work in task forces, etc.);

- Simplification of follow-up procedures by reducing the number of selected recommendations and adopting clear guidelines ;
- Adoption of standard operating procedures for conducting inquiries ; and
- Full incorporation of the Addis Ababa guidelines on the independence and impartiality of treaty body members into the Committee's rules of procedure.

6. The Committee has embarked on a re-assessment of its rules of procedure and working methods, and is in the process of implementing some of the other proposals, such as:

- Further improving the “country-specificity” of concluding observations;
- Systematically requesting information on the national mechanisms and regulatory framework for the implementation of concluding observations;
- Institutionalizing the Committee's engagement with a larger number of UN agencies and national stakeholders, in particular national human rights institutions; and
- Public webcasting of the Committee's dialogues with States parties (which will initially be done on a trial basis).

7. The Committee has decided to await the outcome of the intergovernmental process of the General Assembly on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system before taking a final decision on some of the other proposals contained in the report, in particular the comprehensive reporting calendar in the light of its financial implications.
