

[INFORMAL DOCUMENT]

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

Seventy-first session

(22 October – 9 November 2018)

Annex II

**Report of the Working Group on Inquiries under the Optional Protocol
to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women on its eleventh session**

1. The Working Group on Inquiries under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women held its eleventh session from 18 to 19 October 2018 in Geneva. Five members attended the session (Hilary Gbedemah-Chair, Marion Bethel, Gunnar Bergby, Nahla Haidar and Dalia Leinarte).

2. At the beginning of the session, the Working Group adopted its agenda.

3. The Working Group was briefed by the Chief of the Groups in Focus Section, Human Rights Treaties Branch, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on various issues relating to inquiries including on resources to undertake inquiry visits. The Working Group reiterated its concern at the lack of resources to fully undertake its mandate under the inquiry procedure.

4. The Working Group was informed that:

(a) In relation to inquiry Nos. 2014/3; 2014/2; and 2017/3 following the Committee's decisions to designate members to conduct these inquiries, the States parties have not responded to the Committee's requests to a visit to their territories;

(b) In relation to inquiry Nos. 2016/1, 2013/1 and 2011/4 following the Committee's decisions to designate members to conduct these inquiries, the States parties consent to the Committee's requests to a visit to its territories;

(c) In relation to inquiry No. 2011/2, concerning the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Committee shall review the State party's eighth periodic report during its seventy-second session in February 2019; and

(d) In relation to inquiry No. 2010/1, concerning the Philippines, the State party submitted information on the status of implementation of the Committee's recommendations under the follow up procedure to inquiries.

5. The Working Group continued to revise the standard operating procedures for inquiries in order to adapt them to the mandate of the Working Group and reflect the recent practice of the Committee in examining information received under article 8 of the Optional Protocol. In particular, the Working Group discussed the following:

(a) The need for the Secretariat to emphasise the confidentiality of the inquiry process in its communication with various entities when seeking information at the stage of preliminary assessment of inquiry submissions; and

(b) The need for the Secretariat to, in addition, ensure that its engagement with national human rights institutions is in line with the Paris Principles.

Action taken at the eleventh session

6. The Working Group decided:

(a) To refer for adoption to the Committee all proposed amendments to the standard operating procedures;

(b) To defer to its twelfth session in February 2019, the elaboration of procedures on follow up to the Committee's recommendations under the inquiry procedure;

(c) In relation to inquiry Nos. 2014/1 and 2011/2 concerning Kyrgyzstan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, to defer to its twelfth session in February 2019 the decision to invite Kyrgyzstan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to submit information under follow up to the Committee's recommendations contained in respective inquiry reports;

(d) In relation to inquiry No. 2010/1 concerning the Philippines, to defer to its twelfth session in February 2019 the assessment of information submitted by the State party under the follow up procedure to inquiries; and

(e) In relation to inquiry No. 2011/1 concerning Canada, to request the Secretariat to transmit a reminder to the State party to submit its interim report under the follow up procedure to inquiries.

7. The Working Group will hold its twelfth session from 14 to 15 February 2019 in Geneva.
