

Annex II

Statement by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its relationship with national human rights institutions

1. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and independent national human rights institutions share the common goals of protecting, promoting and fulfilling the human rights of women and girls. The Committee considers that close cooperation between the two is critical. It is accordingly exploring ways to create further interaction and links with national human rights institutions.

2. The Committee emphasizes that national human rights institutions should be established in compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (The “Paris Principles”) adopted by the General Assembly (resolution 48/134, annex) in 1993 and duly accredited by the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions. The Paris Principles provide guidance on the establishment, competence, responsibilities, composition, including pluralism, independence and methods of operation, and quasi-judicial activities of such national bodies.

3. The Committee considers national human rights institutions as playing an important role in the promotion of the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women at the national level, the protection of women’s human rights as well as the enhancement of public awareness of such rights. In this regard, the Committee refers to national human rights institutions and their role in its monitoring activities.

4. The Committee expects national human rights institutions to ensure that their work concerning, inter alia, the consideration of individual complaints and the elaboration of recommendations on laws, policies and their activities in human rights education, is based on the principle of formal and substantive equality between women and men and non-discrimination, as contained in the Convention, and that women have easy access to all services for the protection of their rights provided by national human rights institutions. The Committee also expects that the composition of members and staff of national human rights institutions is gender balanced at all levels.

5. The Committee encourages national human rights institutions to publicize and disseminate the Convention and its Optional Protocol, its concluding observations, general recommendations and decisions and views on individual communications and inquiries conducted under the Optional Protocol, as well as to monitor the State party’s implementation of the Convention and its Optional Protocol.

6. The Committee recognizes that national human rights institutions may contribute in various ways to the work of the Committee under the monitoring procedures of the Convention and its Optional Protocol. National human rights institutions may provide comments and suggestions on a State party's reports in any way they see fit. National human rights institutions may also provide assistance to alleged victims of human rights violations under the Convention to submit individual communications to the Committee or, when the situation arises, provide reliable information in relation to the mandate of the Committee to conduct an inquiry.

7. The Committee welcomes the provision by national human rights institutions of country-specific information on States parties' reports that are before the pre-session working group or the Committee. Such information may be submitted in writing prior to or at the relevant pre-session working group meeting or the relevant session of the Committee. National human rights institutions may also physically attend and provide information orally in the meetings allocated to them in the pre-session working groups and sessions of the Committee. The Committee will include such a time allocation for national human rights institutions' contribution in the provisional agenda of the relevant working group meeting or session in order to enhance the visibility of input from national human rights institutions.
