

The National Union of Eritrean Women presents its compliments has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the advanced unedited version of the concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee on the review of the State of Eritrea forwarded brought for consideration within forty-eight hours for any factual errors. The National Union therefore, presents the following factual inaccuracies for serious considerations:-

1. We have observed that issues sufficiently addressed in the Reports, the written response to the list of issues and finally in the deliberations (introductory remarks of the President and the oral response by the delegation on 26th February 2015) are either not taken into consideration or inadequately recognized. Some significant examples are:-

- Birth registration is not a prerequisite to acquire nationality in Eritrea. Hence, anybody can ascertain his/her nationality even in the absence of registration at birth upon presenting a proof from the village of origin. This was addressed in our report and as such, we fail to see the importance of such recommendations in that respect.
- The delegation gave a detailed response on the reason for the elongation of the duration of national service. However, neither the continued occupation of sovereign Eritrean territories by Ethiopia nor the ongoing plan of the Government to progressively gear the National Service back to the 18 months was addressed. In actual fact is a national obligation proclaimed by National Law and should not be construed otherwise. In this connection, the use of expressions like forced labour and other offensive language is not appropriate with responsibility and integrity with a UN body and should thus be omitted.

2. The Committee relied on unreliable statistical data that led to erroneous recommendations. The data on health could be cited as a typical example in this respect. In paragraph 34 (c) the committee claims that the Government allocates a budget lower than the regional average. This was sufficiently

addressed by concrete evidence in the oral response. The Government subsidizes health services and by enlarge is also free to those who cannot afford.

3. In total misrepresentation of facts the committee expressed concern on alleged school sexual violence of girls in para.28 (e). As was addressed in the deliberations, this is simply false that does not exist in the Eritrean reality. There are indeed rare incidents and occurrences, but do not warrant such attention and generalization. The committee also raises its deep concern on the alleged obstacles of access to justice. Courts are, however, open and accessible equally to both men and women. We fail to see the importance of such a blatant accusation without any relevance to gender equality. Furthermore, the question of political affiliation raised as a requirement for participation in is unfounded and is not practiced in real life.
4. Disregarding the submitted official records and facts: the Committee in para. 34(a) claims that marital and maternal mortality rate stands high despite the government's declaration of achieving MDG goals 4 and 5. This observation wrongly negates the reality on the ground. The maternal mortality rate has in Eritrea decreased to only 4 in 1000.
5. The Eritrean Proclamation 118/2001 guarantees equal pay for equal work as described in the report and the given responses in the proceeding. The issue has been properly addressed in relation to the Conventions to which Eritrea is a party to.
6. No mention was given on the achievements accomplished to mainstream the gender issues in the policies and strategies of the Government and reflected in the National Gender Plan of Action of the NUEW.
7. As described in paragraph 42 of the recommendations, marriage and inheritance of Muslim Communities is a matter of faith and religion is the right of the individual. This question was sufficiently addressed in the oral responses and there is the separation of State and religion in this connection.

8. The National Union has executive power and in accordance to Article two of the Constitution of the National Union of Eritrean Women. NUEW is the official representative of the Government and women's issue.

In conclusion, the recommendations forwarded do not reflect the written reports and the deliberations. Indeed the exemplary achievements and experiences of the Eritrean Women and the Eritrean Government's role merit proper recognition. In this regards, a side event in New York was held alongside the 69th Session of the General Assembly. A similar side event is also scheduled for 26 April 2015.

The Eritrean delegation has noted that some recommendations are well beyond the scope of the Convention and assumed political nature. Hence, the Committee is requested to reconsider them. It also believes that the recommendations should be a reflection of the written submissions and oral response and most importantly the prevailing reality of the society. Thus, they should not in any way undermine the efforts of the Government and the National Union of Eritrean Women and indeed the brilliant history and participation of women in the society.

Finally, the National Union of Eritrean Women would like to avail itself of this opportunity to renew to the Committee on CEDAW the assurances of its highest consideration.