

CLOSING REMARKS

by

Ms. Yoko Hayashi

***Sixty-third session of the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women***

Dear Colleagues,

As we are coming to the end of the sixty-third session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, it is customary for the Committee's Chairperson to sum up the work completed.

Let me start from the beginning of this session and assess our results. We considered the reports of eight States parties and managed to accommodate the request of one State party to postpone its dialogue to the last week of the session. In that regard, I wish to acknowledge the efforts made by Ms. Pimentel to produce a quality draft within such short time.

We held informal meetings with and also attended several lunchtime briefings organized by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Committee was pleased by the high level of attendance of local NGOs, many of them supported by the global to local programme of IWRAW-Asia Pacific, which once again made significant contributions to the work of the Committee.

The Committee is also thankful to those UN entities and other inter-governmental bodies which provided us with detailed information, including the Inter-Agency Group on CEDAW Reporting (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, FAO and UN Women) which coordinates the submission of country-specific information by UN country teams, as well as IPU. I am pleased to note that UN Country Teams have contributed their reports through the Inter-Agency Group and that several UNCTs sent representatives to attend the session.

I am satisfied with the progress we have achieved in implementing General Assembly resolution 68/268 on treaty body strengthening, in particular our decisions to further enhance the structure of the constructive dialogues and streamline concluding observations. In that regard, I would like to thank the

working group on working methods and its chair, Ms. Schulz, for the progress made.

One of the highlights of this session was the half day of general discussion on gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction and climate change, organized by OHCHR in collaboration with UNISDR and the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation. I wish to thank the latter for their generous contribution in bringing keynote speakers with such strong expertise to Geneva, and especially Ms. Haidar as chair of the working group for her able leadership in this process.

Another highlight of this session was yesterday's adoption of our General Recommendation No. 34 on rural women thanks to the hard and able work of Ms. Gabr with support from her working group. The GR represents a milestone in the promotion and protection of the rights of this very large and disadvantaged group of women and comes at a time where CEDAW needs to ensure that its recommendations feed directly into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 8th March statement we adopted today and the related media statement will further increase the visibility of the GR.

I also wish to acknowledge the good progress we have made by adopting three decisions on individual communications, based on the quality drafts from the Working Group on Communications. Thanks to the preparatory work of the Working Group on Inquiries, which met for the third time prior to this session, we were able to make progress on a number of pending inquiry proceedings.

Special thanks go to Xiaoqiao Zou and Hilary Gbedemah for their diligent work as Rapporteur and alternate Rapporteur on follow-up which enabled us to adopt seven follow-up assessments at this session.

Good progress was also made by the working group on gender-based violence against women, which discussed a first draft of the update of GR 19, and by the CEDAW-UN Women/SDG working group in engaging with UN Women on the gender dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals.

During this session, we again had interesting exchanges at the reception by the Permanent Representative of France, our meeting with the women Ambassadors in Geneva hosted by the Permanent Mission of Japan, and at the private expert consultation on prostitution with Ms. Honeyball and Mr. Eba, generously hosted by Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.

Dear Colleagues,

Before I conclude, please allow me to sincerely thank all experts for the hard work accomplished during the past three weeks, including the country rapporteurs who guided our dialogues with the representatives of the States parties and drafted the concluding observations on sometimes very complex legal issues, as well as the adoption of our second ever LOIPR on Ireland. I also wish to acknowledge the active participation of country task force members in the constructive dialogues with States parties, which again were represented by high-level delegations with relevant expertise.

I would like to thank all of you for your support and my colleagues on the Bureau for their invaluable advice during this session.

Lastly, I thank our colleagues from the Secretariat who again provided excellent support to us. Special thanks and recovery wishes go to Irene for having prepared the session logistics. We are also grateful to Isabelle, James and Robert for having taken over from her so competently. Lastly, I wish to thank the interpreters, précis writers, press officers, translators, conference room officers, technicians and all others who made this session successful.

I wish you a safe journey and look forward to seeing you in Geneva in July for our sixty-fourth session.

.
