

**Statement on activities undertaken
between the 65th and 66th sessions of the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against
Women**

Ms. Yoko Hayashi, Chairperson

Sixty-sixth session
13 February 2017

**Dear colleagues,
Distinguished representatives,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I would like to join Mr. Nowosad in welcoming you and, in particular, the newly elected members to the 66th session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

Unfortunately, Ms. Hofmeister will not be able to attend this session, for medical reasons. Ms. Acar will be absent during part of this week and Ms. Jahan will join us next Monday.

I note that since our last session, the number of States parties having ratified or acceded to the Convention and the Optional Protocol has remained at 189 and 106, respectively. Similarly, the number of States parties having accepted the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the Committee's meeting time has remained at 71. A total of 126 States parties to the Convention are currently required to accept the amendment in order to bring it into force, in accordance with its provisions.

I am pleased to inform you that four States parties have submitted their periodic reports since the beginning of our last session, namely Chile, Turkmenistan, Australia and Mexico.

After our sixty-fifth session, Ms. Gbedemah and I attended the World Assembly for Women hosted by the Japanese Government in Tokyo on 14 and 15 December 2016. We both participated in the session on conflict and peace-building, where we briefed participants on the work of the Committee, in particular on General Recommendation No. 30 (2013) on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations.

On 2 and 3 February 2017, together with Ms. Acar, Ms. Gabr, Ms. Haidar and Ms. Leinarte, I participated in the second Expert Group Meeting hosted by the London School of Economics, Centre for Women, Peace and Security, to finalize the discussion of the CEDAW Working Group in charge of updating General Recommendation No. 19 (1992) on violence against women on the draft update, integrating draft amendments based on the submissions received from numerous stakeholders 2016 and draw on the expertise of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Dubravka Simonovic, as well as external experts who were also present.

On 6 February, I participated in a lunch-time lecture organized by Professor Christine Chinkin, Director of the Centre for Women, Peace and Security at the London School of Economics, where I made a presentation on CEDAW and the treaty body strengthening process.

The Standing Committee on the Status of Women of the Canadian Parliament invited me to a hearing on the ways and means of economic empowerment of Canadian women in light of the concluding observations on Canada that we adopted at our last session. Due to competing commitments, I requested the Standing Committee to postpone my hearing to end-February or early March and make arrangements for remote participation via video conference.

Dear colleagues,

As you are aware, we will shortly be formally inducting new members to the Committee and in this regard, on behalf of the entire Committee, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to Mr. Gunnar Bergby, Ms. Marion Bethel, Ms. Rosario Manalo (our former colleague and good friend to whom I extend a warm welcome back), Ms. Bandana Rana, Ms. Wenyan Song, and Ms. Aicha Vall Verges.

Following the induction of the new members, we will also elect a new Chairperson of the Committee as well as three Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur.

I therefore take the opportunity to once again thank you all for your support and that of the Secretariat during my tenure. It has been a great privilege and most rewarding experience for me to serve as the Committee's Chair for the past two years. During this period, the World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction took place in Sendai, Japan, where Ms. Haidar and I participated, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for the Sustainable Development were adopted. I have been very proud that the Committee and its individual members have played active roles as experts on women's rights and gender equality in these emerging processes. My participation in the Commission on the Status of Women, the Third Committee of the General Assembly and the Chairpersons meeting was an empowering experience from which have learned a lot. I am convinced that the new Chair will ably represent the Committee's values and positions as an expert body on women's rights and gender equality; and hopefully I will be able to draw on the knowledge and experience that I was able to obtain as a Chair to contribute to the work of the Committee over the coming two years.

I know that several other members have been involved in CEDAW-related activities since our last session, such as conferences, workshops and seminars. I would now be delighted to hear from Committee members who have participated in meetings and events of relevance to the promotion and protection of women's rights. I would also kindly ask those Committee members who participated in such events to please fill in the table on inter-sessional activities that will be distributed by the Secretariat.

Lastly, I would like to announce that all our public meetings will be webcast on the UN website <http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/>. I therefore take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all those who will be online observers during this session.

In concluding, I wish all of us success for our work during this session.

Thank you for your attention.
