

**Statement on activities undertaken
between the 60th and 61st sessions of the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against
Women**

Ms. Yoko Hayashi, Chairperson

Sixty-first session
6 July 2015

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

I would like to join Mr. Heenan in welcoming you to the 61st session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

First of all, I wholeheartedly congratulate Feride Acar on her election to the GREVIO and Dubravka Simonovic on her appointment as Special Rapporteur on VAW.

I also wish to inform you that Ms. Ameline, Ms. Bailey and Ms. Nwankwo will join us at the end of the week and next Monday, respectively. Ms. Al-Dosari will not be able to stay with us for the third week of the session.

I am pleased to note that since our last session, South Sudan has acceded to the Convention and the Optional Protocol, bringing the number of States parties to both instruments up to 189 and 106, respectively. The number of States parties having accepted the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the meeting time of the Committee remains at 69. I am pleased to inform you that six States parties have submitted their periodic reports since the beginning of our last session, namely Bhutan, Canada, Sri Lanka, Thailand, El Salvador and Jordan. In addition, three States parties (Armenia, Bangladesh and Mali) re-submitted

reports that had previously been returned to them because they exceeded the limit of 21,200 words established by General Assembly resolution 68/268. Also since our last session, four more States parties have requested to submit their next periodic reports under the simplified reporting procedure.

At the end of our sixtieth session, on 6 March 2015, I participated in a High-Level Thematic Panel of the President of the General Assembly on “Advancing gender equality and empowerment of women and girls for a transformative post-2015 development agenda” in New York, where I made a presentation on girls’ education.

Also in New York, on 9 March, I participated in the opening of the 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women in my capacity as CEDAW Chair and delivered the statement that we had discussed at our 60th session. In particular, I emphasized the importance of the CEDAW Convention as a legal framework for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as well as of the post-2015 development agenda.

Both the high-level thematic panel and the opening of the 59th session of the CSW can be downloaded from UN Web TV.

From 15 to 17 March, Ms. Haidar and I participated in the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, at the invitation of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), where we were able to acquire useful insights for the Committee’s future work on a draft general recommendation on gender equality in the context of disaster risk reduction and climate change.

On 19 March, Ms. Haidar and I participated in a panel on “The role of the CEDAW Convention and the recent activities of the CEDAW Committee”, organized by the Gender Equality Office of the Government of Japan in Tokyo, where both of us presented recent developments in the Committee’s work including those under the Optional Protocol and on general recommendations.

On 28 May, I spoke on “The role of Parliamentarians to eliminate violence against women” at the Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Tokyo.

From 22 to 26 June, I participated in the 27th annual meeting of Chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies, held in San José, Costa Rica. At the meeting, the Chairs adopted draft guidelines on reprisals (“San José guidelines”), agreed to align the consultation process for the elaboration of general comments, and endorsed a strong statement on the post-2015 agenda calling for a human rights-based approach to the Conference on Financing for Development and the definition of indicators. They also met with human rights institutions of the Inter-American system, government officials and other stakeholders from Latin/Central America. The Committee will be briefed in detail on the 27th meeting of Chairs later today.

Dear colleagues,

I know that many of you have been involved in CEDAW-related activities since our last session, such as conferences, workshops and seminars. Ms. Bailey, who is not with us today, participated as a panellist in the day of general discussion on the right to education for persons with disabilities organized by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 15 April and in a panel discussion on realizing the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl convened by the Human Rights Council on 16 June during its 29th session. She also spoke at a Human Rights Council side event on “Attacks against girls accessing education” on 17 June 2015. Our former colleague Ms. Violeta Neubauer was nominated by the Bureau to speak at a Council side event on the joint GR/GC No. 31 of CEDAW and No. 18 of the CRC on harmful practices organized by the Permanent Missions of Belgium, Ethiopia and Viet Nam on 16 June. However, she fell sick and her statement was read out by the Secretary Mr. Schneider.

I would now be delighted to hear from other 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 and to provide copies of their statements to the Secretariat so that they can be distributed to the Committee during the session.

Lastly, I would like to remind you that our dialogues with States parties will again be webcast live by the NGO Coalition on the website

www.treatybodywebcast.org. I therefore take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all those who will be online observers during this session.

Thank you for your attention.
