

COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

42nd session (20 October to 7 November 2008)

Pre-session for 44th session (10 to 14 November 2008)

Geneva, Switzerland

States parties

The Committee will examine the reports of the following 13 States parties during its 42nd session, as follows: Bahrain, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Ecuador, El Salvador, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Mongolia, Myanmar, Portugal, Slovenia and Uruguay.

CEDAW concluding observations

During its sessions the CEDAW Committee considers reports of States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Following such consideration, the Committee formulates concluding observations that assist the State under review in the further implementation of the Convention. These concluding observations outline positive aspects, principal subjects of concern and the Committee's recommendations on how to address challenges faced by the State party. The reports of States parties, the concluding observations (once adopted), and other documentation for the sessions is publically available here: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/sessions.htm>

CEDAW Committee members

The CEDAW Committee consists of 23 members, serving in their personal capacity. In 2008 the members of the Committee are from Algeria, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Croatia, Cuba, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Slovenia,

South Africa and Thailand. For details, see: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/membership.htm>

Documentation

The reports of the thirteen States parties to be considered at the 42nd session as well as the provisional agenda (CEDAW/C/2008/III/1) and other documents pertaining to the session are available online at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws42.htm>

Sessions open to the public are noted as “public” in the provisional agenda. The plenary meeting will be held in conference room XVI and VII at Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland.

NGOs have access to a room for briefing sessions and must contact the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to arrange separate briefing time: cedaw@ohchr.org

NGO participation/attending as observers:

Please note that OHCHR will not send letters of invitation to NGOs to attend CEDAW sessions and that OHCHR is unable to assist with travel or accommodation costs relating to the participation.

Decisions of the Committee

For additional information about CEDAW and its sessions, please refer to the website of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/sessions.htm>

Since its early sessions, the Committee has invited NGOs to follow its work. In order to ensure that it is as well informed as possible, the Committee and the pre-session working group welcome representatives of national and international NGOs to provide country-specific information on States parties whose reports are before it. This can be done orally or in writing. The Committee encourages international NGOs and United Nations organizations, funds and programmes to facilitate attendance at Committee sessions by representatives of national NGOs.

NGO reports/information for the Committee at its sessions

The Committee welcomes country-specific information from NGOs. Once received, OHCHR will post these documents on its website (under the relevant session) unless specifically requested not to do so. NGOs can submit their reports to the Committee prior to the session - by email to cedaw@ohchr.org (in pdf format) - or at the session itself. NGO representatives attending the session should bring at least 40 copies to the session itself, so that they can be distributed during the meeting of the Committee with NGOs. NGOs not attending the session should send 40 copies to OHCHR, so they arrive at least one week prior to the beginning of the session to: CEDAW secretariat, UNOG-OHCHR, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. OHCHR makes available reports/information received from NGOs to Committee experts at the beginning of the session/pre-session working group. However, due to high volume of information received from NGOs and others, OHCHR does not make photocopy of reports/information received from NGOs or distribute such information in advance of Committee sessions or those of the pre-session working group. NGOs not attending a session/pre-session working group are urged to ensure that the requisite number of hard copies of their reports/information reach OHCHR in time

for the respective session, i.e. at least one week in advance. NGOs are welcome to email their reports to OHCHR at cedaw@ohchr.org clearly marking the name of the NGO and the country to which the information is relevant to (in pdf format). Reports received electronically are made available to experts in a reference file only. NGOs can also email their reports to IWRAW Asia Pacific, an NGO that has made arrangements with the Committee to distribute NGO shadow/alternative reports electronically and/or in hard copy directly to experts in advance of the session. Please contact IWRAW Asia-Pacific for further details: 80-B, Jalan Bangsar, 59200 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: + 60322822255, fax: +60322832552, email: iwraw-ap@iwraw-ap.org; iwraw_ap@yahoo.com

NGO reports/information for the pre-session working group

NGOs are encouraged to submit their reports or other country specific information to the pre-session working group that prepares the list of issues and questions for each reporting State scheduled to be considered two sessions ahead e.g. the pre-session which takes place immediately after the 42nd session (from 10 to 14 November 2008) will prepare the list of issues and questions for the 44th session. NGO representatives attending the pre-session working group should bring at least 15 copies for distribution at the meeting of the pre-session working group with the NGOs. NGOs not attending the pre-session working group in November 2008, should send at least 15 copies of their information to CEDAW secretariat, UNOG-OHCHR, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, at least one week prior to the beginning of pre-session working group. NGOs can also avail themselves of the support of IWRAW Asia Pacific for advance dissemination, either electronically or as hard copies, of their alternative/shadow reports to the members of the pre-session working group. For details

and deadlines, please contact IWRAW Asia-Pacific.

NGO attendance at the Committee's 42nd session or pre-session working group

The Committee has set aside time at its 42nd session on both Mondays in public session to enable NGOs to provide oral information in respect of countries being dealt with in the forthcoming week, as follows:

Monday 20 October at 3 to 4.15 pm: Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Ecuador, Uruguay, Kyrgyzstan, Slovenia and Mongolia.

Monday 27 October at 3 to 4.15 pm: Bahrain, El Salvador, Madagascar, Myanmar and Portugal.

In the light of time constraints, oral interventions by NGOs must be concise. On average, not more than 10 minutes overall are allocated for all NGOs wishing to intervene on one particular State party. Efforts to share out the available time amongst the NGOs wishing to speak on a country is encouraged and appreciated. NGOs making oral interventions should ensure that they have a written copy of their statements for interpretation purposes. There is no need to send the oral statement in advance.

The pre-session working group also provides an opportunity for NGOs to address it on Monday 10 November 2008 for all the countries to be taken up at the 44th session in July 2009.

NGO representatives interested in addressing the Committee or pre-session working group are requested to submit the full title of their NGO, the names of their representatives, and the proposed dates of attendance to the OHCHR at cedaw@ohchr.org no later than a week prior to the beginning of the session or working group so that arrangements can be made for the issuance of United Nations ground passes to enter United Nations premises. To

receive the ground pass, all applicants are required to bring a valid national passport or government issued photo ID such as driver's license or state non-driver's ID bearing a photograph, and appear in person at the Pass and Identification Unit, Security and Safety Section, Pregny Gate, United Nations Office at Geneva, 8-14 Avenue de la Paix. The office hours are 8.00 am to 5.00 pm. Monday to Friday. Prior to this NGOs must contact OHCHR to be placed on the list of accredited by the Secretariat. This should be done by email to cedaw@ohchr.org

Future sessions and pre-sessions

43rd session

The 43rd session will meet from 19 January to 6 February 2009 in Geneva and is scheduled to consider reports from the following States parties: Armenia, Bhutan, Dominica, Germany, Guatemala, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Libya Jamahiriya and Rwanda.

44th session

The 44th session will meet in July 2009 in New York to consider reports from the following States parties: Argentina, Denmark, Egypt, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Japan, Spain, Switzerland, Timor Leste, and Tuvalu. The pre-session working group for the 44th session tasked with preparing the lists of issues and questions for these 9 States parties will meet from 10 to 14 November 2008 in Geneva.

For more information, please see OHCHR's website or email the Secretariat at cedaw@ohchr.org