

COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

Information note for the Committee's

43rd session (19 January - 6 February 2009) and

Pre-session for 45th session (9 – 13 February 2009)

States parties

The Committee will examine the reports of the following eight States parties during its 43rd session: **Armenia, Cameroon, Dominica, Germany, Guatemala, Haiti, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Rwanda.**

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 lists of issues and questions, the concluding observations (once adopted), and other documentation for the sessions can be found at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws43.htm>

CEDAW Committee members

The CEDAW Committee consists of 23 members, serving in their personal capacity. For details about all CEDAW members, see: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/membership.htm>

Documentation

The reports of the eight States parties to be considered at the 43rd session as well as the

provisional agenda (CEDAW/C/2009/I/1) and other documents pertaining to the session are available online at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws43.htm>

Sessions open to the public are noted as "public" in the provisional agenda in conference room XVI at Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland.

NGOs have access to a separate room for briefing sessions and must contact the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to arrange separate briefing time or arrange side events: 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

Since its early sessions, the Committee has invited NGOs to follow its work and this is reflected in its rules of procedure. In order to ensure that it is as well informed as possible, the Committee and its pre-session working group, which prepares lists of issues and questions for replies to be considered at future sessions 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 for the Committee at its sessions

The Committee welcomes reports including country-specific information from NGOs. OHCHR posts these documents on its website, under the relevant CEDAW session.

Submissions should be sent to the secretariat of the Committee *two weeks prior* to the session either by email (in pdf format) and by post (40 copies of each submission). All submissions should arrive two weeks prior to the beginning of the session to the secretariat of the Committee.

- **Email of secretariat:** cedaw@ohchr.org

- **Postal address of secretariat:** CEDAW secretariat, UNOG-OHCHR, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland.

OHCHR makes available reports received from NGOs to Committee members at the beginning of the session/pre-session working group. However, due to the high volume of information received from NGOs and others, OHCHR does not photocopy reports received from NGOs but makes them available on a CD rom for members. 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 two weeks in advance.

All submissions to CEDAW should:

1. Identity the full name of the NGO;
2. Indicate the country to which the information relates; and
3. Be sent electronically in pdf form (not word) and thereafter in 40 copies by post.

Reports received electronically are made available to CEDAW members through a

CD rom and placed in a reference file during the session. NGOs can also email their reports to IWRAW Asia Pacific, an NGO that has made arrangements with the Committee to distribute NGO shadow reports electronically and/or in hard copy directly to CEDAW members 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 in *two sessions* e.g. the pre-session which takes place immediately after the 43rd session will prepare the list of issues and questions for the 45th session. The pre-session for the 45th session takes place 9 to 13 February 2009, in Geneva. 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, should send 15 copies of their submissions to the CEDAW secretariat two weeks 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 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 43rd session or pre-session working group

The Committee has set aside time on both Mondays at its 43rd session for NGOs to provide **oral** information in respect of countries being considered in the week ahead, as follows:

Monday 19 January at 3 to 4.15 pm: Dominica and Armenia.

Monday 26 January at 3 to 4.15 pm: Cameroon, Guatemala, Germany, Haiti, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Rwanda.

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 country. Efforts to share the available time amongst the NGOs wishing to speak on a country are encouraged and appreciated. NGOs making oral interventions should ensure that they have a written copy of their statements for interpretation purposes, which should be sent by email to cedaw@ohchr.org on the morning of the presentation.

The pre-session working group also provides an opportunity for NGOs to address it on Monday 9 February 2009 for all the countries to be taken up at the 45th session.

NGO representatives who wish to address the Committee or its 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 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 a 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

44th session

The 44th session will meet from 20 July – 7 August 2009 in New York and is scheduled to consider reports from the following 12 States parties: **Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Denmark, Guinea Bissau, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Spain, Switzerland, Timor Leste, and Tuvalu.**

45th session

The 45th session will meet in January-February 2010 in Geneva to consider reports of the following eight States parties: **Botswana, Egypt, Malawi, Netherlands, Panama, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and Uzbekistan.** The pre-session working group for the 45th session tasked with preparing the lists of issues and questions for these 8 States parties will meet from 9 to 13 February 2009 in Geneva (see above).

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

Side events

NGOs can organize side events during the session of CEDAW for members of the Committee. Kindly contact the secretariat on cedaw@ohchr.org at least two weeks in advance of the session indicating the focus of the side event. The secretariat will inform you if it is possible to accommodate the requests in light of all requests received and availability of Committee members.