

**Comments by the Republic of Cyprus on the Concluding
Observations on the eighth Periodic Report of Cyprus by the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women**

The Government of the Republic of Cyprus having studied the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW/C/CYP/CO/8) wishes to provide the following comments:

Meaningful participation of women in the peace negotiation efforts

Women are participating in all tracks of the peace process and are an indispensable part of it. Also, it is noted that the UN Secretary General positively points out in his reports the concrete steps undertaken to foster the participation of women in the negotiations, considering the increase in the number of women who are directly involved in the talks, either as members of the negotiating teams or as members of the working groups of experts, often in leading positions. More specifically, in his latest Report (S/2018/610) the UN Secretary General mentions that “During the most recent round of negotiations, women, including my Deputy Special Adviser and the staff of my good offices mission, were generally well represented in both negotiating teams and contributed substantively to the talks. That inclusivity is commendable [...]”.

It is further noted that in track I (substantive negotiations) of the peace process, women participate in the core negotiating teams of both sides, while out of 4 Working Groups which deal with thematic chapters of the negotiations, 3 are chaired by women on the Greek-Cypriot side and 2 of them are chaired by women on the Turkish-Cypriot side. Approximately half of the members of these Working Groups are women. In track II of the process, there is also a significant presence of women. Many of the 12 bi-communal Technical Committees in operation are headed by women, both on the Greek-Cypriot and the Turkish-Cypriot side, while out of a total 75 members participating, 26 are women. In addition one of the Technical Committees is dedicated to gender, both in terms of promoting equality notwithstanding the de facto divide, as well as producing recommendations on gender equality to be included in a future peace agreement, bearing in mind UNSCR 1325. Also in track II women’s groups have full and direct access to the Chief Negotiators and all suggestions by them are welcome, as is the case with all civil society organizations.

As stated, all civil society organizations including women’s groups have full and direct access to the Chief Negotiators and all suggestions by them are welcome. This brings them as close as possible to being active participants in the peace process, by allowing them to channel concrete recommendations for inclusion in a future peace agreement. While these organizations could not themselves participate in the negotiation, as non-parties to the peace process, they may suggest provisions for inclusion in the settlement agreement directly to track I negotiations, along with supporting arguments, for consideration by the negotiating parties.