

COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

Participation by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

**53rd session (1 to 19 October 2012) and
Pre-session for the 55th session (22 to 25 October 2012)
Geneva, Palais des Nations, Room XVI**

I. Consideration of Reports by States Parties

The Committee will examine the reports of the following six States parties during its 53rd session: **Chile, Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Serbia, Togo and Turkmenistan** with respect to the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (the Convention).

II. Documentation

The reports of the six States parties to be considered at the 53rd session, the provisional agenda (CEDAW/C/53/1) and other documents pertaining to the session are available online at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws53.htm>.

III. Venue

The 53rd session of the Committee will take place in Geneva at the Palais des Nations in conference room XVI. The pre-session working group for the 55th session will also take place at the Palais des Nations in Geneva in room XVI.

IV. NGO Reports

In order to ensure that it is as best informed as possible, the Committee and the pre-session working group welcome representatives of national and international NGOs to provide country-specific information on issues relevant to the implementation of the Convention by the State parties under consideration. This can be done orally and/or in writing. The Committee encourages international NGOs and United Nations agencies, funds, programmes, and specialized agencies to facilitate attendance at Committee and pre-session working group sessions by representatives of national NGOs.

V. Reports for the Session (1 to 19 October 2012)

NGOs wishing to submit reports to the Committee are required to:

- Identify the full name of the NGO;
- Indicate the country to which the information relates;
- Indicate whether or not the submission can be posted on the CEDAW website for public information purposes; and

- Submit the report in Word and pdf format by e-mail and thereafter submit **35 copies** in hard copy format.

All submissions should arrive two weeks prior to the beginning of the session to the Secretariat of the Committee, i.e., **no later than 15 September 2012**. The Word and pdf versions of the report should be sent to the following e-mail address: cedaw@ohchr.org. Hard copy submissions should be mailed to:

CEDAW Secretariat
OHCHR - Palais Wilson
52, rue des Pâquis
CH-1201 Geneva 10
Switzerland

Due to the volume of submissions, such reports should not exceed ten pages and should also highlight priority concerns and suggest possible country-specific recommendations to facilitate the work of the Committee. NGOs are additionally urged to ensure that the requisite number of hard copies of their reports/information reach OHCHR in time for the respective session. Due to the large volume of information received from NGOs and other stakeholders, OHCHR does not photocopy reports received from NGOs.

NGOs can also avail themselves of the support of IWRAP Asia Pacific to submit their alternative reports or information, electronically and/or in hard copy, to the Secretariat. For details and deadlines, please contact IWRAP Asia Pacific:

10-2, Jalan Bangsar Utama 9
Bangsar Utama
59000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tel: +60 322 822 255
Fax: +60 322 832 552
Email: iwraw-ap@iwraw-ap.org or
iwraw_ap@yahoo.com

In regard to the above, it is noted that the Committee has the prerogative to take into account all information submitted to it until the consideration of a report by a State party has been concluded.

VI. Reports for the Pre-Session Working Group (22 to 25 October 2012)

The Pre-Session Working Group will prepare list of issues for the following States parties that are scheduled to be considered at the 55th session: **Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic and the United Kingdom**. NGOs wishing to submit reports to the pre-session working group should follow the same requirements for submission of reports for the session as indicated above. NGOs should send **10 copies** of their reports by **15**

September 2012. (The pre-session working group prepares lists of issues and questions for the States scheduled to be reviewed two sessions subsequent to the current session.) The Word and pdf versions of the report should be sent to the following e-mail address: cedaw@ohchr.org. Hard copy submissions should be mailed to:

CEDAW Secretariat
OHCHR - Palais Wilson
52, rue des Pâquis
CH-1201 Geneva
Switzerland.

VII. Meetings with NGOs

The Committee has set aside time at its 53rd session for NGOs to provide oral information in respect of countries being considered during the session. These meetings are scheduled on 1 October 2012 from 3:00 to 4:30 pm for countries that will be considered the first week (**Chile, Serbia, Togo and Equatorial Guinea**), and on 8 October 2012 from 3:00 to 4:00 pm for countries that will be considered the second week (**Comoros and Turkmenistan**). The meetings will take place in conference room XVI and are open to the public. For the schedule of considerations of State parties' reports, please contact the Secretariat.

Oral interventions by NGOs must be concise. On average, not more than 10 minutes are allocated for all NGOs wishing to intervene on one particular country. The available time is divided amongst the NGOs wishing to speak on a country, with time reserved for questions from Committee members. In view of the normally tight time constraints, the consolidation of presentations by subject is encouraged and appreciated. NGOs making oral interventions should ensure that they bring **35 copies of their oral statements** at least 15 minutes prior to the meeting for circulation to the Committee and for interpretation purposes in addition to any reports. Prior to the presentation, NGOs are requested to send an electronic version of their statements in Word and pdf format to: cedaw@ohchr.org.

The pre-session working group also provides an opportunity for NGOs to address the Committee concerning all countries that will be taken up at the 55th session, namely **Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic and the United Kingdom**. This meeting will take place on 22 October 2012 from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm in room XVI and is open to the public. The paragraph above relating to the oral interventions by NGOs is applicable to the pre-session working group as well, except that NGOs need only bring **15 copies of their oral statement** prior to the meeting for circulation to the Committee and for interpretation purposes in addition to any reports. Prior to the presentation, NGOs are requested to send an electronic version of their statements in Word and pdf format to: cedaw@ohchr.org.

VIII. Registration

NGO representatives who wish to attend any sessions of the Committee or pre-session working group are required to be duly registered. **All NGO representatives must complete the online registration form for the 53rd session by 15 September 2012 by accessing the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs' (DESA) CSO Net website.**

How to pre-Register your NGO's participation

Step 1. Prepare – Organizational Profile

- Before you start, make sure your organization has an organizational profile in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs' (DESA) CSO Net database, with a corresponding login and password.
- Generally, NGOs that have participated in UN meetings in the past already have such a profile.
- If your organization does not, please visit the following link to create a profile: <http://goo.gl/8k9bL>.
- In this process, select “Special Event”/Apply for ECOSOC Status” when asked for your organization’s objective. This will speed up your application.
- Approval of this profile can take up to 48 hours. You will receive an email with your login and password details.
- You can only complete the steps below with your organization’s own login and password.

Step 2. The Session

- Visit the CSO Net meeting page of the session: <http://goo.gl/WvnH5>
- In the left-hand column, click “Conference Registration”.

Step 3. Login

- Type in your login information. See step 1 above.

Step 4. Designate Representatives

- Please provide details of your proposed representative(s) to the event.

- You will receive a confirmation email with instructions for obtaining a ground pass.

IX. Ground Pass

Upon arrival at Palais des Nations, representatives of NGOs are advised to enter through Pregny Gate, United Nations Office at Geneva, Avenue de la Paix 8-14, Geneva, Switzerland, and proceed to the registration desk. Hours of operation are from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm.

In order to be properly registered and to receive a ground pass to enter the UN complex, you must present:

- The confirmation e-mail from the CSO Net database;
- The completed Conference Registration Form (available from the CSO Net database); and
- A valid passport.

All participants are responsible for making their own arrangements relating to travel and accommodations as well as visas to enter Switzerland.

The Secretariat of CEDAW does not provide assistance in this regard and is not in a position to provide letters to the authorities of Switzerland for purposes of obtaining a visa.

Representatives requiring a visa to enter Switzerland are advised to apply as early as possible in case any time is needed for special clearance by the Swiss authorities, and ensure that the visa is received in time for travel. Past practice shows that when applying for a Swiss visa, it is recommended that you bring copies of this confirmation email, as well as a letter prepared by your NGO at the time of your appointment with the relevant Swiss Consulate or Embassy.

X. Informal briefings

NGOs have access to a separate room for one hour briefing for the Committee during lunch on country-specific information relating to the session. NGOs wishing to participate in such briefings should contact IWRAW Asia Pacific to coordinate. NGOs wishing to organize a side event must contact the Secretariat well in advance of the session. The secretariat will inform you if it is possible to accommodate your request in light of all requests received as well as the availability of Committee members.

XI. Additional Information

For further information about the treaty bodies in general, specific information on CEDAW and on the participation and role of civil society with respect to human rights instruments, please consult the following links:

- <http://www2.ohchr.org>; and
- <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/Pages/CivilSociety.aspx>