COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION

AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

Participation by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

81st session (7-25 February 2022) and Pre-sessional Working Group for the 83rd session (28 February-4 March 2022), Geneva, Palais des Nations, Room XXIII

**I. Consideration of reports by States parties**

The Committee will consider the reports of the following States parties during its 81st session: **Dominican Republic, Gabon, Lebanon, Panama, Peru, Senegal, Uganda and Uzbekistan**.

The **Pre-sessional Working Group for the 83rd session** will adopt lists of issues in relation to the periodic reports of the following States parties: **Albania, Costa Rica, France, The Gambia, Malawi, Sao Tome and Principe, and Timor Leste**. In addition, the Pre-sessional Working Group will adopt a list of issues prior to reporting on **Belarus.**

**II. Documentation**

The reports of the States parties to be considered at the 81st session, the provisional agenda (CEDAW/C/81/1) and other documents pertaining to the session are available online at: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=2530&Lang=en

**III. Venue**

The 81st session of the Committee will take place in Geneva at the Palais des Nations in Conference Room XXIII. The Pre-sessional Working Group (PSWG) for the 83rd session will also take place in Geneva at the Palais des Nations in Conference Room XXIII. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, sanitary regulations, limitations on the number of meeting participants and possible travel restrictions, **NGOs are requested to participate remotely via Zoom** in relevant meetings of the Committee and its PSWG and to follow the Committee’s public dialogues with the aforementioned States parties via the **live webcast on UN Web TV: http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/**

**IV. NGO participation**

The Committee has emphasized the importance it attaches to its cooperation with NGOs in its statement on its relationship with non-governmental organizations, which was adopted in 2010 (goo.gl/Ye2KnB). It invites representatives of national and international NGOs to provide country-specific information on issues relevant to the implementation of the Convention by the States parties scheduled for consideration at the 81st session and 83rd Pre-sessional Working Group. This can be done orally and/or in writing. Due to the volume of documentation received, written submissions should not exceed 3,300 words (6,600 words for submissions by NGO coalitions). They must be submitted in one of the working languages of the Committee (**English, French or Spanish).** They must not follow and specific structure or template and may be organized thematically and/or on an article-by-article basis.

NGOs can avail themselves of the support of **IWRAW-Asia Pacific** to submit their written information electronically (in **Word** format) to the Secretariat. IWRAW-Asia Pacific also provides advice to local NGOs seeking to engage with the Committee. For details, please contact IWRAW-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](mailto:iwraw-ap@iwraw-ap.org)

The Committee encourages international NGOs and United Nations agencies, funds, programmes, and specialized agencies to facilitate written and oral submissions by representatives of national NGOs to the Committee’s plenary and pre-sessional working group sessions.

As for the time being, **NGOs are advised to participate remotely via Zoom** in relevant meetings of the Committee and to follow the Committee’s public dialogues with the aforementioned States parties via the **live webcast**, there is **no need for NGO representatives to travel to Geneva**.

**V. Written submissions for the 81st session (7-25 February 2022)**

NGOs are encouraged to make written submissions that contain:

* Information on the implementation of some or all of the substantives articles (articles 1 to 16) of the Convention;
* Comments on the report of the State party and its written replies to the list of issues;
* Information on the implementation by the State party of previous concluding observations of the Committee;
* Information highlighting priority concerns and suggesting country-specific recommendations to facilitate the work of the Committee; and
* **Information on the impact of measures taken by the States parties concerned in relation to the COVID-19 crisis on women's rights and gender equality and the integration of a gender perspective in COVID-19 recovery plans.**

NGOs wishing to make written submissions to the Committee are requested to:

* Indicate the full name of the NGO;
* Indicate the State party scheduled for consideration to which the information relates;
* Indicate whether or not the submission can be posted on the CEDAW website for public information purposes;
* Ensure that any alleged victims, witnesses and perpetrators are referred to in the report by their **initials only** and that **no photographs** of alleged victims, witnesses or perpetrators are included;
* Submit the written information not exceeding 3,300 words (6,600 words in case of NGO coalitions) in Word format by e-mail; and
* Submit the written information in one of the working languages of the Committee **(English, French or Spanish)**.

All submissions should be received four weeks prior to the beginning of the session by the Secretariat of the Committee, i.e., no later than 10 January 2022.

The written submissions should be sent electronically in Word format to the following e-mail address: ohchr-[cedaw@un.org](mailto:cedaw@un.org). Please indicate in the subject of the email: “submission” and the “name of the country” (e.g. “Submission Peru”).

In line with the UN greening policy, hard copies of submissions are no longer necessary.

**VI. Written submissions for the Pre-Sessional Working Group (28 February-4 March** **2022)**

The pre-sessional working group will be held in closed meeting. It will prepare lists of issues for the following States parties that are scheduled to be considered at future sessions of the Committee: **Albania, Costa Rica, France, The Gambia, Malawi, Sao Tome and Principe, and Timor Leste**. In addition, it will prepare **a list of issues prior to reporting for Belarus** under the simplified reporting procedure. The pre-sessional working group prepares lists of issues and questions for States parties that normally are scheduled to be reviewed two sessions later (does not apply to lists of issues prior to reporting), except that this sequence has been delayed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Receiving information from NGOs at an early stage of the reporting process is of critical importance. NGOs are therefore invited to submit written contributions for the development of the lists of issues and lists of issues prior to reporting by the pre-sessional working group. NGOs wishing to submit written information to the pre-sessional working group should follow the same procedure as for the submission of written information for the session (see above). Written NGO submissions must be **in one of the working languages of the Committee (English, French or Spanish),** **must** not exceed 3,300 words (6,600 words for submissions by NGO coalitions) and should be sent **by 31 January** 2022 at the latest electronically in Word format to the following e-mail address: [cedaw@ohchr.org](mailto:cedaw@ohchr.org).

**VII. Written submissions under the follow-up to concluding observations procedure**

In its concluding observations adopted at the end of the consideration of a State party report, the Committee identifies up to four sub-paragraphs, requiring the State party concerned to submit **follow-up information** in relation to these sub-paragraphs within two years or, exceptionally, within one year.

The follow-up procedure allows for the consideration of information received from NGOs. **NGO submissions** shall be in one of the working languages of the Committee (English, French or Spanish), as concise as possible, must not exceed a maximum length of **3 500 words** and should be sent electronically in Word format to ohchr-[cedaw@un.org](mailto:cedaw@un.org). The deadline for the submission of written information by NGOs is four weeks before the beginning of the session at which the State party’s follow-up report is scheduled to be assessed.

For more information on the follow-up to concluding observations procedure see: <https://bit.ly/34og440>

**VIII. Informal remote public meetings with NGOs during the 81st session**

The Committee has set aside time at its 81st session for NGOs to provide orally country-specific information in respect of the States parties that have been scheduled for consideration during the session. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, sanitary regulations, limitations on the number of meeting participants and possible travel restrictions, these informal public meetings **will be held remotely** on **Monday**, 7 February 2022 from 16:00 to 17:00, for the countries that will be considered during the first week (Gabon, Panama, Senegal and Uganda) and on **Monday**, 14 February 2022 from 16:00 to 17:00, for the countries that will be considered during the second week (Uzbekistan, Peru, Lebanon and Dominican Republic) of the 81st session. The meetings will be held on an online meeting platform (Zoom) and will be publicly webcast on UN Web TV: **http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/**

All NGOs that wish to intervene should contact the CEDAW secretariat at ohchr-[cedaw@un.org](mailto:cedaw@un.org) **by 24 January 2022** so that the meeting link can be sent to them.

**Oral interventions by NGOs must be concise.** On average, a maximum of **10 minutes** will be available **per country to be shared by all NGOs** wishing to make an intervention on that country. Additional time will be reserved for questions from Committee members. In view of the possible time constraints, **NGOs are requested to provide their answers** to the questions posed by Committee members not during the informal remote public meeting but rather **during the remote private lunchtime briefing** that takes place prior to the Committee’s dialogue with the State party concerned, except when the remote private lunchtime briefing takes place on a Monday and thus precedes the informal remote public briefing. In addition, any duplication of information should be avoided in the interventions made by NGOs during the informal public meeting.

NGOs wishing to make oral interventions are invited to contact IWRAW-Asia Pacific (see contact details above) to coordinate. NGOs making oral interventions are requested to send an electronic version of their statement in Word format to ohchr-[cedaw@un.org](mailto:cedaw@un.org) in advance of the informal remote public briefing.

**IX. Informal remote private briefings by NGOs during the Pre-sessional Working Group**

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the **informal private briefing** by NGOs during the Pre-sessional Working Group for the 83rd session **will be held online in closed meeting** on Monday, 28 February 2022 from 15h00 to 16h30 (Geneva time). As no physical meeting will take place, there is no need for NGO representatives to travel to Geneva to brief the Pre-sessional Working Group.

At the **remote** **informal private meeting**, the pre-sessional working group invites NGOs to make oral interventions to provide country-specific information on the States parties scheduled for consideration at the 83rd pre-sessional working group. The meeting will be held on an online meeting platform (Zoom) **with interpretation** services. All NGOs that wish to intervene should contact the CEDAW secretariat at ohchr-[cedaw@un.org](mailto:cedaw@un.org) **by 14 February 2022** so that the meeting link can be sent to them. Prior to the presentation, NGOs are requested to send an electronic version of their statement in Word format to ohchr-[cedaw@un.org](mailto:cedaw@un.org), in one of the working languages of the Committee (English, French or Spanish).

**Oral interventions by NGOs must be concise.** A maximum of 10 minutes will be available **per country to be shared by all NGOs** wishing to make an intervention on that country. In view of the possible time constraints, NGOs should be prepared to provide their **answers** to the questions posed by Committee members **in writing within 24 hours following the** remote informal private **meeting** rather than orally during the meeting. In addition, any duplication of information should be avoided in the interventions made by NGOs during the meeting.

**X. Unauthorized filming, recording, dissemination of audio-visual materials and webcasting**

The unauthorized filming, recording and dissemination of audio-visual materials during the 81st session and the Pre-sessional Working Group for the 83rd session are prohibited.

**Please note that the opening and closing of the 81st session, the informal public meetings of the Committee with NGOs and NHRIs and its dialogues with the States parties scheduled for consideration during the 81st session will be publicly webcast on the following website:** [**http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/**](http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/)

In this regard, NGOs are invited to consult the **provisional programme of work for the 81st session** on the following website:

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=2530&Lang=en

**XI. Allegations of intimidation or reprisals**

NGO representatives have the right of unhindered access to and to communicate with the Committee and its members for the effective implementation of the Committee’s mandate. Individuals or groups of individuals facing **intimidation or reprisals** for seking to cooperate or cooperating with the Committee, or their representatives, can inform the Rapporteur on reprisals and alternate Rapporteur on reprisals appointed by the Committee of any alleged incident of intimidation or reprisals. Such **complaints should be sent** electronically to ohchr-[cedaw@un.org](mailto:cedaw@un.org), copy to [reprisals@ohchr.org](mailto:reprisals@ohchr.org)

**XII. Registration**

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, sanitary regulations, limitations on the number of meeting participants and possible travel restrictions, all observers are advised to **participate remotely via Zoom** in relevant meetings of the Committee and its Pre-sessional Working Group and to follow the Committee’s public dialogues with the States parties scheduled for consideration via the **live webcast on UN Web TV:** [**http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/**](http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/)

Accordingly, there is **no need for observers to be accredited** for the 81st session.

**XIII. Ground Pass**

For the same reason, **no ground passes will be issued** to observers for purposes of attending the 81st session.

**XIV. Remote private lunchtime briefings**

All NGOs wishing to provide country-specific information can participate in remote private lunchtime briefings. In this regard, NGOs should contact IWRAW-Asia Pacific (see contact details above) to coordinate.

**XV. Thematic briefings and side events**

NGOs wishing to organize a thematic briefing or side event are advised to consult with the CEDAW Secretariat. The Secretariat will advise if it is possible to accommodate requests in light of all requests received as well as other circumstances.

**XVI. Additional Information**

For further information about the treaty bodies in general, specific information on CEDAW and COVID-19 and on the participation and role of civil society in the reporting procedure, please consult the following links:

* <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/Pages/TreatyBodies.aspx>
* <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25818&LangID=E>
* http://www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/Pages/CivilSociety.aspx