COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST

WOMEN (CEDAW)

Participation by National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs)

75th session (10 February-28 February 2020) and Pre-sessional Working Group for the 77th session (2-6 March 2020), Geneva, Palais des Nations, Room XVI

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

The Committee will consider the reports of the following States parties during its 75th session: **Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Eritrea, Kiribati, Latvia, Pakistan, Republic of Moldova and Zimbabwe.**

**II. Documentation**

The reports of the States parties to be considered at the 75th session, the provisional agenda (CEDAW/C/75/1) and other documents pertaining to the session are available online at <https://bit.ly/2P8Pes4>

**III. Venue**

The 75th session of the Committee will take place in Geneva at the Palais des Nations in Conference Room XVI. The pre-sessional working group for the 77th session will also take place at the Palais des Nations in **Conference Room XVI.**

**IV. NHRI participation**

The Committee has emphasized the importance it attaches to its cooperation with NHRIs in its statement on national human rights institutions adopted in 2008 (goo.gl/96eYm7). In 2019, it adopted a paper on the cooperation between the Committee and NHRIs (<https://bit.ly/2teZHtA>), which takes into account recent procedures and practices developed by other human rights treaty bodies. The Committee encourages the NHRIs concerned to provide country-specific information on issues relevant to the implementation of the Convention by the States parties scheduled for consideration at the 75th session. This can be done orally and/or in writing. Due to the volume of documentation received, written submissions should not exceed **3,300 words**. They must not follow any specific structure or template and may be organized thematically and/or on an article-by-article basis.

**V. Written submissions for the 75th session (10-28 February 2020)**

NHRIs 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; and
* Information highlighting priority concerns and suggesting country-specific recommendations to facilitate the work of the Committee.

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

* Indicate the full name of the NHRI;
* 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;
* Ensure that all witnesses and victims are referred to in the report by their initials only and that no photographs of witnesses, victims or alleged perpetrators are included, unless written agreement has been obtained from these persons; and
* Submit the written information not exceeding 3,300 words in Word format by e-mail.

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 **13 January 2020**. The written submission should be sent electronically in Word format to the following e-mail address: [cedaw@ohchr.org](mailto:cedaw@ohchr.org). Please indicate in the subject of the email: “submission” and the “name of the country” (e.g. “Submission Senegal”).

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

**VI. Written submissions for the Pre-Sessional Working Group (2-6 March 2020)**

The pre-sessional working group will convene in closed meeting and prepare lists of issues for the following States parties that are scheduled to be considered at the 77th session: **Azerbaijan, Nicaragua, Senegal, South Africa and Yemen.** In addition, it will prepare lists of issues prior to reporting for **Germany, Japan and Ukraine** under the simplified reporting procedure. The pre-sessional working group prepares lists of issues and questions for States parties scheduled to be reviewed two sessions later.

Receiving information from NHRIs at an early stage of the reporting process is of critical importance. NHRIs are therefore encouraged 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. NHRIs 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 NHRI submissions should not exceed 3,300 words and should be sent **by 3 February 2020** 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 one or two years.

The follow-up procedure allows for the consideration of information received from NHRIs. **NHRI submissions** shall be as concise as possible and must not exceed a maximum length of **3 500 words** and should be sent electronically in Word format to [cedaw@ohchr.org](mailto:cedaw@ohchr.org). The deadline for the submission of written information by NHRIs is one month 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. Meetings with NHRIs during the 75th session**

NHRIs have the possibility to brief the Committee as a whole in formal public meetings with interpretation into the working languages of the Committee (English, French and Spanish; exceptionally Arabic, Chinese and Russian), as well as in informal private meetings at the request of the NHRI and closely preceding the dialogue.

The Committee has set aside time at its 75th session for NHRIs to provide orally country-specific information in respect of the States parties that have been scheduled for consideration during the session.

These informal public meetings are scheduled on **Monday**, 10 February 2020 from 16:30 to 17:00, for the countries that will be considered during the first week (Latvia, Pakistan, Zimbabwe and Eritrea) and on **Monday**, 17 February 2020 from 17:00 to 17:30, for the countries that will be considered during the second week (Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Republic of Moldova and Kiribati) of the 75th session. The meetings will take place in Conference Room XVI at the Palais des Nations in Geneva and are open to the public. If sufficient sound quality can be ensured, NHRIs also have the possibility to request remote participation via videoconference (not via skype) in the informal public meeting.

For the schedule of consideration of States parties’ reports, please consult the Committee’s website for the 75th session at <https://bit.ly/2P8Pes4>

Oral interventions by NHRIs must be concise. A maximum of 10 minutes is allocated for NHRIs per country. NHRIs making oral interventions should ensure that they bring 25 copies of their oral statement at least **1 hour** in advance of the meeting for circulation to the Committee and for interpretation purposes. Prior to the presentation, NHRIs are requested to send an electronic version of their statement in Word format to [cedaw@ohchr.org](mailto:cedaw@ohchr.org)

**IX. Contributions during the constructive dialogue**

Moreover, the Committee will offer NHRIs that have been accredited with A-status by the Coordinating Committee of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), at their request, an opportunity to present for a defined duration an opening statement during the Committee’s dialogue with the State party concerned.

**Please note that all public meetings of the Committee, including the informal public NHRI briefings on Mondays 10 and 17 February 2020, will be** **publicly webcast on the following website:** [**http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/**](http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/)

**X. Meetings with NHRIs during the Pre-sessional Working Group**

The pre-sessional working group also invites NHRIs to make oral interventions to provide country-specific information on the States parties scheduled for consideration at the 77th session. This informal private meeting will take place on **Monday,** 2 March 2020, from 12:30 to 13:00, in Conference Room XVI at the Palais des Nations. The paragraph above relating to the oral interventions by NHRIs is applicable to the pre-sessional working group as well, except that that the meeting is closed and that NHRIs need to bring only 7 copies of their oral statement prior to the meeting for circulation to the working group and for interpretation purposes. Prior to the presentation, NHRIs are requested to send an electronic version of their statements in **Word format** to [cedaw@ohchr.org](mailto:cedaw@ohchr.org)

**XI. Representatives of other national institutions**

National institutions other than NHRIs, which have a **specific mandate** to promote and protect women’s rights and gender equality, such as Equal Opportunities Commissions or Ombudspersons for women, are also invited to provide the Committee with written information and to address the Committee as a whole directly following the informal public meeting with NHRIs. The information contained in relation to written submissions and informal public meetings applies to such institutions a well, with the difference that their written submissions are labelled “information from other stakeholders”, that their **oral interventions are limited to 5 minutes** and that they **cannot participate remotely** via videoconference due to limited human, technical and financial resources. National institutions other than NHRIs **cannot present an opening statement during the formal dialogue** of the Committee with the State party concerned.

**XII. Registration**

NHRI representatives who wish to attend any sessions of the Committee or its pre-sessional working groups **must** **register online** by using the following links:

* For the 75th plenary session: <https://indico.un.org/event/20187/>
* For the pre-sessional working group for the 77th session: <https://indico.un.org/event/20157/>

Please note that **OHCHR will not provide** **letters of invitation** to NHRIs to attend CEDAW sessions for purposes of obtaining visas. However, upon request, the Secretariat can provide a general “to whom it may concern” letter specifying that a representative has requested and obtained accreditation to a meeting. Please note that OHCHR is unable to assist with travel and/or accommodation costs. All participants are responsible for making their own arrangements relating to travel and accommodation as well as visas to enter Switzerland. The Secretariat of the Committee will not provide any assistance in this regard and is not in a position to issue letters to the Swiss authorities on visa matters.

Representatives requiring a visa are requested to apply as soon as possible, in case of long delays in obtaining authorization from the Swiss authorities, and to ensure that the visa is received in time for travel. For visa procedures, it is recommended to bring copies of the registration confirmation, as well as a letter of support from the NHRI concerned.

**XIII. Ground pass**

In order to receive a ground pass, all applicants must bring the confirmation of registration which will be sent to you by email upon successful registration online, a valid national passport or government issued ID bearing a photograph, and appear in person at the United Nations Pass and Identification Unit, Prégny Gate, United Nations Office at Geneva, Avenue de la Paix 8-14, Geneva, Switzerland. The office hours are 8:00 to 17:00, Monday through Friday. Please note that NHRI representatives must bring their passport (or government issued photo ID) as well as their ground pass every time they wish to enter the UN premises.

**XIV. Additional Information**

For further information about the treaty bodies in general, specific information on CEDAW and on the participation and role of national human rights institutions in the reporting procedure, please consult the following links:

* https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT/CEDAW/BAP/8997&Lang=en
* <http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cedaw/pages/cedawindex.aspx>;
* <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/NHRI/Pages/NHRIMain.aspx>;
* https://nhri.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/default.aspx