



**Convention on the Elimination  
of all Forms of Discrimination  
Against Women**

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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Third session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 28th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 27 March 1984, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. IDER

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE  
(CEDAW/C/CRP.1)

1. The CHAIRPERSON reminded members that the Committee had already adopted sections I, II and III of its draft report, and paragraphs 35 to 87 in section IV. She suggested that the Committee should resume its consideration of the revised draft report with the parts relating to the report of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.
2. Ms. SALEMA observed that the list in annex I to the draft report included the names of countries which had ratified or acceded to the Convention after the close of the second session. Annex II likewise listed reports submitted after the end of the second session. In her view, the report should reflect the situation obtaining at the time of the second session.
3. Ms. CREYDT (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Secretariat would make the necessary corrections in the draft report.
4. Ms. BIRYUKOVA said that, while the revised draft report before the Committee was an improvement over the version considered at the end of the second session, there were still some inaccuracies and omissions which needed to be rectified. She had consulted the representative of the Soviet Union who had introduced the report at the Committee's preceding session, and in the light of the Soviet representative's account of the proceedings, she wished to propose amendments to a number of paragraphs in order to ensure better balance in the draft report. She would make the proposed amendments available to the Secretary in writing.
5. Ms. BERNARD, Rapporteur, agreed that it would be helpful for members to have Ms. Biryukova's amendments in writing.
6. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD said that, because she had received the revised draft report in Spanish only the day before, she had been unable to compare it with the summary records of the relevant meetings. While there seemed to be no major errors in the draft report, she noted a number of omissions, some inaccuracies and examples of unclear language, at least in the Spanish version. She hoped that the Secretariat would spare no effort in future to ensure the timely distribution of documentation in all languages.
7. Ms. EL-FETOUH said that she had received the draft report in Arabic only that morning. She therefore shared the views expressed by Ms. Macedo De Sheppard.
8. Ms. GONZALEZ MARTINEZ pointed out that there had been some confusion in the summary records in identifying her and the Panamanian expert, Ms. Patiño de Martinez. She hoped that such confusion would be avoided in future.
9. Like Ms. Macedo De Sheppard, she regretted that the draft report had been made available so late in Spanish. She noted that there were a number of obscure passages and distortions in the Spanish version.

(Ms. Gonzalez Martinez)

10. With regard to the amendments which Ms. Biryukova wished to see made in the draft report, she recalled that the Committee had decided at its preceding session that Governments should submit their own summaries of the statements made by their representatives when introducing their reports in the Committee and of any replies given to questions asked by members. The Committee had also given States parties an indication of the length of summaries which would be acceptable. It was to be hoped that States parties would not seek to lengthen unduly the parts of the Committee's report relating to the consideration of their country reports, since that might upset the overall balance that was sought in the treatment of the reports of all countries.

11. Ms. CREYDT (Secretary of the Committee) said that, in revising the draft report which had appeared originally in document CEDAW/C/8/Add.1-16, the Secretariat had scrupulously followed the recommendations agreed upon by the Committee at its preceding session, as reflected in the summary records of the 25th and 26th meetings. The Secretariat had also endeavoured to give the Spanish-speaking members of the Committee as much time as possible to peruse the revised draft report by circulating the Spanish version as soon as it had become available. In accordance with the Committee's decision, Governments had been requested to provide a short summary of the statements made by their representatives when introducing their reports and of replies given to the questions of members, and such summaries had been received from all seven States parties whose reports had been considered at the preceding session. Some of the summaries provided, however, had exceeded the recommended length and had had to be shortened somewhat. Furthermore, the Secretariat had had to compare the summaries submitted by Governments with the summary records of the relevant meetings in order to ensure that the replies given in writing had actually been made in meetings of the Committee. Every effort had been made to provide an objective account of the Committee's consideration of the report of every State party.

12. Ms. ILIĆ emphasized the importance of adopting the draft report as speedily as possible. The normal practice was for experts to read out any amendments they wished to propose so that a decision could be taken on the spot.

13. Ms. PATIÑO DE MARTINEZ said that in order to avoid confusion in the summary records between her and Ms. Gonzalez Martinez, she could be identified in future summary records as Ms. Patiño.

14. She shared the views of others concerning the late issue of the Spanish version of the draft report. She had been able to make only a cursory study of it, but the summary of the Committee's consideration of the report of the Soviet Union accorded for the most part with her recollection of the proceedings. However, she wished to draw attention to paragraph 27 of the summary record of the 19th meeting (CEDAW/C/SR.19), which had her saying that she would contact the representative of the Soviet Union privately concerning certain questions that had been raised in the Committee. She had never said any such thing. On the contrary, it was her firm belief that the Committee's discussion of the reports of States parties should be open and conducted in public. She hoped that the error would be rectified.

/...

(Ms. Patiño De Martinez)

15. Two of the questions she had asked concerning the report of the Soviet Union had not been answered. She had sought information on the average area of a housing unit in the Soviet Union, since the report had referred to ambitious projects to provide housing for the Soviet people. She had also requested clarification with regard to the reference in the report to the participation of women in the national inspection authorities.

16. She agreed with Ms. Ilić that the Committee should proceed speedily to adopt its report. The frustration which had prevailed at the preceding session must not be repeated.

17. Ms. BERNARD, Rapporteur, suggested that the Committee should proceed paragraph by paragraph.

18. Ms. ILIĆ said that the Committee had elected the Rapporteur as an impartial officer; accordingly, it should leave the final wording of any drafting changes which it agreed upon up to her.

Paragraph 88

19. Paragraph 88 was adopted.

Paragraph 89

20. Ms. BIRYUKOVA proposed that the words "political, economic" should be inserted between "social" and "and cultural".

21. Paragraph 89, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraph 90

22. Ms. BIRYUKOVA said that the word "economic" should be inserted between "administrative" and "and other".

23. Paragraph 90, as amended, was adopted.

24. Ms. CORTES pointed out that the report was a summary of the Committee's deliberations. Members should understand that all their questions and all the replies by representatives of Governments could not be included in it.

25. Ms. SMITH reminded members that they served in a personal capacity and not as representatives of any Government. If they abused the opportunity they had to present the views of the States of which they were nationals, the Committee's impartiality would suffer.

26. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD said she doubted that Ms. Biryukova was speaking in her personal capacity and that that was unfair to States of which Committee members were not nationals.

27. Ms. BIRYUKOVA said that she was speaking in her personal capacity, but that she had consulted with the Soviet mission and was merely transmitting to the Committee its requests for the correction of omissions and errors.

28. Ms. CARON said she had no objection to the corrections proposed so far, as they accorded with the Committee's discussion as reflected in document CEDAW/C/SR.14.

29. Ms. VELIZ DE VILLAVILLA said that she was certain that when reports of State parties of which no Committee member was a national were considered, all members would make an extra effort to ensure that the report accurately reflected the discussion and that no omissions or errors were introduced.

#### Paragraph 91

30. Ms. BIRYUKOVA proposed that the paragraph should be amplified by including in it a number of sentences from document CEDAW/C/5/Add.12, which she read out.

31. Ms. ESCUDERO-MOSCOSO said that if the proposal was adopted, the report would no longer be a summary but rather an in extenso account of the Committee's discussion.

32. Ms. CORTES endorsed Ms. Escudero-Moscoso's remark and asked whether there was a limit on the length of the Committee's report.

33. Ms. CREYDT (Secretary of the Committee) said that the reports of United Nations bodies were normally limited to 32 pages, but that exceptions could be made for bodies established under treaties.

34. Ms. CARON said that she could not accept Ms. Biryukova's proposal because it did not correspond to the discussion as reflected in the summary record of the 14th meeting.

35. Ms. ILIĆ, supported by Ms. CARON, proposed that the Rapporteur should prepare a new version of paragraph 91, incorporating some of the sentences proposed by Ms. Biryukova and giving references to the relevant documents for the others, and that the Committee should adopt the paragraph at a later meeting.

36. It was so decided.

#### Paragraph 92

37. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD said that the Committee should adopt a standard formula for thanking representatives of States parties for their introductions to reports. Such a formula should be worded as concisely as possible and should avoid any subjective appraisals of the report in question. The wording of paragraph 124 of the draft report might be considered as a model in that regard and could thus be used in place of the current paragraph 92.

38. Ms. CORTES said that the inclusion in the Committee's report of expressions of gratitude to the representatives of States parties when they appeared before the Committee was unnecessary, in which case paragraphs such as paragraph 92 might be omitted altogether.

39. Ms. GONZALEZ MARTINEZ noted that the Committee, in expressing its opinion of the various reports, had commented on different aspects of different reports. It was, therefore, important that the report of the Committee should reflect the exact comments which had been made with regard to each country's report.

40. Ms. OESER, supported by Ms. JAYASINGHE, endorsed the view expressed by Ms. Gonzalez Martinez; the deletion of the Committee's assessment of individual reports of States parties would be a loss to the Committee.

41. Paragraph 92 was adopted.

Paragraphs 93 to 95

42. Paragraphs 93 to 95 were adopted.

Paragraph 96

43. Ms. BIRYUKOVA proposed that the word "only" should be deleted from the third sentence.

44. Ms. BERNARD, Rapporteur, pointed out that the draft report had been based on the summary records of the meetings held during the second session, which reflected what had actually been said at that time.

45. Ms. CARON, supported by Ms. SMITH, pointed out that paragraph 34 of the summary record of the 14th meeting contained the sentence "She also wished further clarification as to why women constituted only 27 per cent of all Communists". Furthermore, that sentence appeared in the context of questions put to the representative of the Soviet Union. Since the word "only" was used in the same context in paragraph 96 of the Committee's draft report, it ought not to be deleted.

46. Ms. BERNARD, Rapporteur, urged the Committee to adopt the paragraph as it stood.

47. Paragraph 96 was adopted.

Paragraph 97

48. Ms. BIRYUKOVA, drawing attention to the reference in paragraph 97 to the Permanent Committee of Deputies, said that there were actually two separate bodies; the reference should therefore be changed to read "Permanent Committees of Deputies".

49. Paragraph 97, as amended, was adopted.



Paragraphs 98 to 106

50. Paragraphs 98 to 106 were adopted.

Paragraph 107

51. Ms. BIRYUKOVA suggested that only the first sentence of paragraph 107 should be retained, if at all, since the rest of the paragraph reflected a global trend and in no way applied to the report of the Soviet Union or the statistics it had supplied.

52. Ms. CARON read out paragraph 36 of the summary record of the 14th meeting of the Committee, at which it had clearly discussed the principle of equal pay for equal work in relation to the Soviet report. She observed that paragraph 107 of the draft report faithfully reflected not only the comments and questions of the Committee concerning the situation in the Soviet Union, but also the Soviet Union's subsequent reply at the 19th meeting. The paragraph must therefore be retained as it stood.

53. Ms. BERNARD, Rapporteur, said that she agreed with Ms. Caron. The paragraph could not be deleted, especially since its last sentence referred to a further specific request by the Committee for information from the Soviet Union.

54. Ms. BIRYUKOVA proposed that, in that case, the first sentence of paragraph 107 should be amended by replacing the words "it was noted by several experts that such a right was seldom implemented in practice" with the words "several experts inquired whether that right was implemented in practice".

55. Ms. PEYTCHEVA proposed that the second sentence should be deleted since it reflected the trend in certain countries but not in the Soviet Union.

56. Ms. SMITH said that she thought the second sentence was important as background for the question that followed, and should be retained. She would not, however, press the point.

57. Paragraph 107, as amended by Ms. Biryukova and Ms. Peytcheva, was adopted.

Paragraphs 108 to 110

58. Paragraphs 108 to 110 were adopted.

Paragraph 111

59. Ms. BIRYUKOVA proposed the deletion of the beginning of paragraph 111 down to the word "that" in the second sentence, which should begin instead with the words "Replying to the questions of the members of the Committee, she convincingly demonstrated that".

60. She further proposed the addition of a new sentence at the end of paragraph 111, to read: "Soviet legislation directly relating to women is comprehensive and at the same time specific."

(Ms. Biryukova)

61. She noted, lastly, that in the penultimate line of the paragraph, one of the laws mentioned had been incorrectly rendered as the "Law on Soviet Citizenship" and should read the "Law on Citizenship".

62. Ms. CARON said that she could not agree to the amendments just proposed. She strongly objected to the words "convincingly demonstrated" because they implied a value judgement which was not necessarily shared by any other member of the Committee. She objected as well to the proposed new sentence, which also conveyed a value judgement that had not been recorded in the relevant summary record.

63. Ms. SMITH, supported by Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD, Ms. CORTES and Ms. PATIÑO DE MARTINEZ, said that she agreed with Ms. Caron that the first amendment suggested was unacceptable. She preferred the paragraph as it stood. However, if the new sentence proposed by Ms. Biryukova was to be added, it should be preceded by the words "She assured the Committee that".

64. Ms. BERNARD, Rapporteur, said that paragraph 111 as drafted reflected the proceedings accurately, but that if it were to be amended along the lines suggested by Ms. Biryukova, the word "informed" could be used instead of the words "convincingly demonstrated". The Secretariat would rectify any incorrect references to specific Soviet laws.

65. Paragraph 111, as amended by Ms. Biryukova and Ms. Bernard, was adopted.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.