



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

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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Fourth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 59th MEETING

Held at the Vienna International Centre, Vienna,
on Wednesday, 30 January 1985, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. BERNARD

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

CONTRIBUTION OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE 1985 WORLD CONFERENCE TO REVIEW AND APPRAISE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE (continued) (CEDAW/C/1985/CRP.1/Add.1/Rev.1 and Amend.1-4)

Paragraph 1 (CEDAW/C/1985/CRP.1/Add.1/Rev.1/Amend.3)

1. The CHAIRPERSON invited the Committee to continue its consideration of the draft revised text of the Compendium.
2. Ms. CREYDT (Secretary of the Committee) read out the definitive text - which the Committee had adopted at its 58th meeting - of paragraph 1 of the introduction to the revised Compendium:

"The convening of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace will be an event of the greatest importance because it will be a further step in the advancement of women. The promotion of peace and the achievement of a stable global development and also the new, just international economic order are inseparable objectives of the international community. In those conditions, it will be possible to fully attain the objectives of the Decade for Women."

3. Ms. REGENT-LECHOWICZ pointed out that in the French version of the text, the original phrase "le début d'une nouvelle étape" had remained unchanged in the first sentence.
4. Ms. PEYTCHEVA said that the same phrase had also remained unchanged in the Russian version.
5. The CHAIRPERSON said that the French and Russian texts would be brought into line with the version which had been adopted by the Committee.

Paragraph 12

6. The CHAIRPERSON said she understood that groups of experts would be proposing amendments to paragraphs 5 to 11 of the Working Group's draft introduction contained in document CEDAW/C/1985/CRP.1/Add.1/Rev.1. She therefore proposed that consideration of those paragraphs should be deferred and that the Committee should proceed to discuss paragraph 12 of the draft introduction and the amendment thereto in document CEDAW/C/1985/CRP.1/Add.1/Rev.1/Amend.4.
7. Ms. PEYTCHEVA said that she could not support the amendment. The Committee had been established specifically to consider how the Convention was being implemented in the fields which it covered. The phrase "on the subject of the status of women" covered a wider spectrum of issues. She preferred the original wording submitted by the Working Group.
8. Paragraph 12 was adopted without amendment.

Paragraph 13

9. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD said that the amendment to paragraph 13 proposed by the Spanish-speaking experts (CEDAW/C/1985/CRP.1/Add.1/Rev.1/Amend.4) was a drafting change affecting only the Spanish text.

10. Ms. SINEGIORGIS said that the paragraph should properly identify the resolution actually adopted by the General Assembly. Furthermore, she felt that the subject matter of paragraph 13 was out of place in a description of the Committee's work. She suggested that it should be removed to paragraph 22.

11. Ms. CREYDT (Secretary of the Committee) said that the General Assembly resolution would be identified by its correct number.

12. The CHAIRPERSON said that, in the absence of comment, she took it that the Committee wished to adopt the proposal of Ms. Sinegiorgis and insert paragraph 13 after paragraph 22, without any modification of the text.

13. It was so agreed.

Paragraph 14

14. Ms. SINEGIORGIS pointed out that, in the second line, the words "submit reports of" should be replaced by "submit reports to". In her view, the proper place for the final sentence was in paragraph 24. She proposed that a final sentence should be added to that paragraph reading: "The Committee appeals to those States parties whose reports are now due to submit them as soon as possible."

15. Ms. de REGO da COSTA SALEMA considered that the final sentence of paragraph 14 followed naturally on the preceding sentence. Paragraph 24 was concerned with States parties which had submitted their reports.

16. Ms. SMITH agreed with Ms. de Rego da Costa Salema.

17. Ms. WADSTEIN explained that the Working Group's intention had been to stress the desirability of States parties submitting not only their initial reports but their subsequent reports in due time.

18. Ms. SINEGIORGIS withdrew her proposal.

19. Paragraph 14 was adopted.

Paragraph 15

20. Ms. de REGO da COSTA SALEMA noted that the draft introduction made no reference to the reports submitted by the Committee pursuant to article 21 of the Convention. Such a reference could be made in paragraph 15 or perhaps elsewhere.

21. The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the reference might be placed in paragraph 23.

22. Ms. GONZALEZ and Ms. PEYTCHEVA supported that suggestion.

23. Ms. CORTES proposed that the reference should be made at the end of paragraph 15 by removing the full stop and continuing: "and, in accordance with article 21, it has submitted annual reports on its activities to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council."

24. The proposal of Ms. Cortes was adopted.

25. Ms. MONTENEGRO DE FLETCHER asked whether reference should not be made in the introduction to the reports submitted to the Committee by the specialized agencies.

26. Ms. PEYTCHEVA, supported by Ms. BIRYUKOVA, said that that was unnecessary, since all the specialized agencies would themselves be presenting reports to the Conference as their contributions. The document the Committee was preparing should deal with its own work.

27. The CHAIRPERSON suggested that it might be appropriate to add to paragraph 15 the names of the 18 States parties whose initial reports had been considered, instead of listing them in paragraph 23. The final sentence in paragraph 15 would be the one proposed by Ms. Cortes concerning the Committee's reports.

28. Ms. BIRYUKOVA supported that suggestion.

29. Ms. de REGO da COSTA SALEMA said that if the list of countries was transferred, then paragraph 24 should be transferred as well and should immediately follow the revised paragraph 15.

30. Ms. GONZALEZ said that she did not agree with that proposal, but she could accept the Chairperson's suggestion. The Working Group had intended paragraph 23 as the foundation for paragraphs 24 and 25. If one of those paragraphs was relocated, the other would also have to be relocated and the introduction would then be left without a logical conclusion.

31. Ms. EVATT said that paragraphs 23 and 24 properly belonged immediately after paragraph 15.

32. Ms. JAYASINGHE and Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD concurred.

33. Ms. SINEGIORGIS said that she also agreed with Ms. Evatt. She noted that paragraph 14 referred to 26 States parties having submitted their initial reports by the end of December 1984, whereas paragraph 23 indicated that 21 reports had been received by 1 July 1984. In her view it was preferable to refer to the number received by the end of the year.

34. Ms. CORTES, speaking as Chairperson of the Working Group, said that the Working Group had arranged paragraphs 23, 24 and 25 in that order so that the conclusion of the introduction linked up with the subject matter of the Compendium, namely the information provided by 18 States parties in their initial reports and during the sessions of the Committee.

35. Ms. EL-FETOUH said that the proposals which had been made would make paragraph 15 rather long. It might be desirable to divide it into two parts.

36. Ms. PEYTCHEVA, summing up the various suggestions which had been made, proposed that the last line of the present text of paragraph 15 should read: "considered the initial reports of 18 States parties, namely," those words being followed by the list of States parties which appeared in paragraph 23. The last sentence of paragraph 15 should contain a reference to the Committee's reports. Paragraph 24 should be placed immediately after paragraph 15, as paragraph 16. The first sentence of paragraph 23 should be deleted, since the information it contained already appeared in paragraph 14. The second sentence of paragraph 23, reworded as necessary, should become the first sentence of paragraph 15.

37. Ms. WADSTEIN supported those amendments.

38. The amendments proposed by Ms. Peytcheva were adopted.

39. Ms. EL-FETOUH said that Egypt should be referred to as the Arab Republic of Egypt in the text and the alphabetical order in which the countries were listed should be changed accordingly.

40. Ms. PEYTCHEVA said that Bulgaria and Hungary were not properly identified. The official names of all States parties should appear in the list.

41. Paragraph 15, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraph 16

42. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD said that the amendment submitted by the Spanish-speaking experts in document CEDAW/C/1985/CRP.1/Add.1/Rev.1/Amend.4 did not involve any change in substance.

43. Ms. SMITH said that, in her view, the addition of the words "and considering", proposed by the Spanish-speaking experts, amounted to more than a purely formal change.

44. Ms. SINEGIORGIS proposed the deletion of the second sentence, which was superfluous.

45. Ms. IDER agreed that the second sentence should be deleted. She asked the Secretariat to bring the designation of the market economy countries into line with the classification system already adopted by the Committee.

46. Ms. PEYTCHEVA endorsed that request.

47. Ms. CREYDT (Secretary of the Committee) said that the last sentence would be corrected to make it refer to "developed countries with market economies".

48. Ms. SINEGIORGIS referring to Ms. Smith's comment, suggested that the difficulty might be overcome by using the phrase "... when scheduling reports for consideration ...".

49. Ms. EL-FETOUH said that she would prefer to see no change in the first sentence.

50. Ms. PEYTCHEVA pointed out that, in accordance with article 17, paragraph 1, of the Convention, the Committee had been established for the purpose of considering the progress made in the implementation of the Convention.

51. The CHAIRPERSON said she understood that the Committee wished to delete the second sentence of the paragraph and to bring the designation of the market economy countries into line with the guidelines already adopted.

52. It was so agreed.

Paragraph 17

53. Ms. IDER proposed that in the last sentence the word "important" should be replaced by "additional".

54. Ms. GONZALEZ said that she appreciated the reason for that proposal but felt that the present wording should be retained, since the Committee wished to stress the importance of the information given to supplement that provided in the reports.

55. Ms. SINEGIORGIS said that the additional nature of the information was already conveyed by the use of the verb "to supplement".
56. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD said that she favoured deletion of the word "important". She drew attention to the editorial change suggested in the amendments of the Spanish-speaking experts (CEDAW/C/1985/CRP.1/Add.1/Rev.1/Amend.4).
57. Ms. IDER withdrew her proposal.
58. Ms. de REGO da COSTA SALEMA suggested that the penultimate sentence should be amended to indicate that members of the Committee made comments on the reports, in addition to asking questions and receiving replies.
59. Ms. EL-FETOUH suggested that the words: "In accordance with the Convention, ...", should be added at the beginning of the third sentence.
60. Ms. BIRYUKOVA agreed that the comments of the experts should be mentioned and suggested that the penultimate sentence should read: "The members of the Committee express their opinions on the substance of the reports, ask questions and receive replies ...".
61. Ms. IDER also saw a need to refer to the comments made by members of the Committee.
62. Ms. SINEGIORGIS endorsed the suggestion made by Ms. de Rego da Costa Salema. She proposed that the third sentence should begin with the words: "With a view to fully implementing the provisions of the Convention, ...".
63. The CHAIRPERSON said she understood that the Committee wished to approve paragraph 17, as amended by Ms. Sinigiorgis in the third sentence and by Ms. Biryukova in the penultimate sentence, and with the editorial change proposed by the Spanish-speaking experts.
64. It was so agreed.

Paragraph 18

65. Ms. SMITH suggested that the second sentence should end as follows: "... consider this practice valuable and that it should be continued."
66. Ms. REGENT-LECHOWICZ suggested that the word "valuable" should be replaced by "fruitful" or "encouraging".
67. Ms. IDER suggested that the words "these actions" in the same sentence should be replaced by "this dialogue".
68. Ms. CARON said that the word "intéressant", used in the French version, was not an appropriate translation of the word "valuable". In her view, paragraphs 17 and 18 duplicated one another.
69. Ms. REGENT-LECHOWICZ agreed with the previous speaker and proposed that the first sentence of paragraph 18 should be deleted and the second sentence added to paragraph 17, with the words "these actions" replaced by "this procedure".
70. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD supported Ms. Lechowicz's proposal.

71. The CHAIRPERSON said she took it that the Committee wished to delete the first sentence of paragraph 18, and to amend the second sentence to read "... consider this procedure valuable and hope that it will be continued", and append it to paragraph 17.

72. It was so agreed.

Paragraph 19

73. Ms. IDER proposed that in subparagraph (a) the words "Each State party has adopted ..." should be replaced by "Many States parties have adopted ...".

74. Ms. SMITH suggested that subparagraph (c) should be moved to paragraph 21, subparagraph (a).

75. Ms. EL-FETOUH said that the Committee seemed always to place undue emphasis on legal measures. She suggested that in subparagraph (a) the words "legal and other measures" should be replaced by "appropriate means", which was the expression used in article 2 of the Convention.

76. Ms. de REGO da COSTA SALEMA said that she would prefer the words "legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures" which were used in article 18 of the Convention.

77. Ms. REGENT-LECHOWICZ agreed that subparagraph (c) should be transferred to paragraph 21. In her view, the words "Each State party" should be replaced by "A large number of States parties".

78. Ms. CARON said that the expression "Each State party" should be retained, since every country had taken some measures to comply with the objectives of the Convention. If it was stated in the introduction that "some" or "certain" States parties had adopted such measures, it would imply that others had not made the same effort. It might be preferable to state that each State party had adopted "certain" measures.

79. Ms. BIRYUKOVA supported the proposal to replace "Each State party" by "Many States parties". She also wished to propose the inclusion in the paragraph of a new sentence reading: "In a number of countries the provisions of the Convention were being implemented before the adoption of the Convention, and it was not necessary to introduce changes in existing legislation."

80. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD suggested, in order to cover all situations, that subparagraph (a) should read: "Each State party has adopted legal and other measures in accordance with the provisions of the Convention."

81. Ms. EVATT said that the word "each" should be retained in order to emphasize that every State party had taken some steps.

82. Ms. EVATT suggested that the new sentence proposed by Ms Biryukova should be considered under paragraph 20, subparagraph (b).

83. The CHAIRPERSON said she understood that the Committee approved Ms Evatt's suggestion and also wished subparagraph (a) to read: "Each State party has adopted measures to comply with the goals and the contents of the Convention."

84. Paragraph 19, as thus amended, was approved.

Paragraph 20

85. Ms. GUAN MINQIAN suggested that the traditional prejudice against women and the situation of inequality between men and women should be referred to either in paragraph 20 or in paragraph 21. It might be preferable to refer to all the achievements in one of the paragraphs and to the shortcomings and problems in the other.

86. Ms. PEYTCHEVA proposed that the matter referred to by Ms. Guan Minqian should be incorporated in paragraph 21, subparagraph (c).

87. It was so decided.

88. Ms. PEYTCHEVA proposed that the sentence: "In a number of countries the provisions of the Convention were being implemented before the adoption of the Convention, and it was not necessary to introduce changes in existing legislation", which had been proposed by Ms. Biryukova in connection with paragraph 19, should appear after subparagraph (a) of paragraph 20.

89. Ms. SMITH proposed that the word "all" before "the conditions necessary" in subparagraph (a) should be deleted.

90. It was so decided.

91. Ms. LAIOU-ANTONIOU, supported by Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD, proposed that the word "considerable" before "efforts" in subparagraph (a) should be deleted.

92. It was so decided.

93. Ms. LIAOU-ANTONIOU proposed that the words "within their limits" in subparagraph (a) should also be deleted.

94. Ms. PEYTCHEVA opposed that proposal. She said that the Working Group had wished to emphasize that countries had adopted different measures in the light of their capacity and according to their state of development.

95. Ms. EVATT said that subparagraph (a) still presented too glowing a picture when in fact, despite good intentions, women were very far from achieving good results in some countries. She therefore proposed that the word "unequivocally" in subparagraph (a) should be deleted and that the sentence proposed by Ms. Biryukova under paragraph 19 should be placed at the start of subparagraph (b).

96. It was so decided.

97. After a brief discussion, the CHAIRPERSON said she took it that the Committee wished subparagraphs (a) and (b) to read as follows:

"(a) The States parties under review have recognized the importance of the contribution of women in the development process of their countries and have aligned their actions accordingly. It is noteworthy that all States have made efforts within their limits to create the conditions necessary to comply with the requirements of international standards and ideals for which the Convention stands.

(The Chairperson)

(b) In a number of countries, the provisions of the Convention were implemented before its ratification and it was not necessary to introduce changes in existing legislation. For all States parties the Convention has had varying positive impact, i.e. almost all have embodied the principle of equality in their constitutions or other basic laws, new legislation has been enacted and existing legislation has been improved. Measures towards eliminating de facto discrimination against women have also been adopted."

98. It was so decided.

99. Ms. IDER said that in a number of countries women still suffered from some form of discrimination both de jure and de facto, and, in order to draw that fact to the attention of governments, it should be highlighted in the Compendium. She therefore proposed that subparagraph (c) should read as follows:

"(c) Unfortunately in many countries, women still encounter various forms of discrimination de jure and de facto."

100. Ms. ILIĆ approved the wording proposed by Ms. Ider. However, she felt that instead of disappearing altogether, the second sentence of the existing subparagraph (c) should be retained in the following form:

"However, the measures taken to rectify the situation, including the machinery that has been set up, show the awareness of obstacles and the efforts to remedy them."

101. Ms. PEYTCHEVA supported Ms. Ider's proposal.

102. Ms. EL-FETOUH also supported Ms. Ider's proposal, but favoured retention of the second sentence, amended as proposed by Ms. Ilić.

103. Ms. IDER said that she could accept the second sentence as rephrased by Ms. Ilić.

104. Ms. SMITH suggested that a more realistic picture might be presented if the words "de jure" were omitted, so that more emphasis was automatically placed on "de facto".

105. The CHAIRPERSON suggested that in the sentence proposed by Ms. Ilić the word "efforts" should be replaced by "remedies".

106. It was so decided.

107. After a brief discussion, the CHAIRPERSON said she took it that the Committee wished subparagraph (c) to read as follows:

"(c) Unfortunately in many countries, women still encounter various forms of discrimination de jure and de facto. However, the measures taken to rectify the situation, including the machinery that has been set up, show the awareness of obstacles and the remedies to rectify them."

108. It was so decided.

Paragraph 21

109. Ms. ILIĆ suggested that, since the interests of women were identical with those of society as a whole, the phrase "to promote their interests" in subparagraph (a) should be replaced by a formula which would refer to improvement of the status of women.

110. Ms. VELIZ DE VILLALVILLA supported that suggestion. She considered that the participation of women in efforts to achieve peace and détente should also be reflected somewhere in paragraph 21.

111. Ms. SINEGIORGIS supported Ms. Ilić's suggestions. She proposed, in addition, that the first sentence of subparagraph (a) should be amended to read: "Although women are still under-represented at the higher level in many countries, women's participation in political and social life has increased."

112. It was so decided.

113. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD supported the suggestions made by Ms. Ilić and by Ms. Veliz de Villalvilla.

114. Ms. IDER, supporting the suggestion made by Ms. Ilić, proposed that the following phrase should be used: "to promote their participation in national life". The point mentioned by Ms. Veliz de Villalvilla might be reflected in an additional subparagraph.

115. Ms. LAIOU-ANTONIOU said that the second sentence of subparagraph (a) should be more positive. She therefore proposed that the end of that sentence should read: "... to promote their participation with equal rights and obligations in social, economic and political life".

116. Ms. GONZALEZ suggested that subparagraph (a) be subdivided into two, one part referring to women in political and social life, and the other referring to their efforts and those of women's organizations. Ms. Veliz de Villalvilla's point relating to women's participation in the promotion of peace and international détente could be included in the first part, and the last sentence of the original subparagraph (b) could be incorporated in the second.

117. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD said that the idea of access to equal opportunities in employment should be emphasized in subparagraph (b).

118. Ms. EVATT proposed that the words "and lower earnings" be inserted in subparagraph (b) after "lower level positions".

119. Ms. JAYASINGHE proposed that an additional subparagraph should be added reading as follows:

"In many countries women still encounter obstacles in gaining access, in particular, to education and health, due to economic and socio-political factors."

120. Ms. PEYTCHIEVA supported that proposal. She suggested that the new subparagraph should become subparagraph (c). The existing subparagraph (c) would then become subparagraph (d).

121. The proposals of Ms. Jayasinghe and Ms. Peytcheva were adopted.

122. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD suggested that the new subparagraph (c) should also refer to employment.

123. Ms. IDER supported that suggestion. The word "employment" might appropriately be inserted before "education".

124. Following a brief discussion, it was decided that the new subparagraph (c) should contain no reference to employment.

125. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD proposed the deletion of the last phrase in the new subparagraph (d).

126. Ms. LAIOU-ANTONIOU proposed that the words "In many countries" at the beginning of the new subparagraph (d) should be deleted and replaced by the following: "Women still face social prejudices, which prescribe different social rules for the two sexes, and continue to carry the double burden ...". That would take account of the suggestion made earlier by Ms. Guan Minqian.

127. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.