



Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women

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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Eighth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 150th MEETING

Held at the Vienna International Centre, Vienna,
on Friday, 3 March 1989, at 2 30 p m

Chairperson Ms EVATT

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Closure of the session

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The meeting was called to order at 2 45 p m

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS EIGHTH SESSION (continued)
(CEDAW/C/L 5 and Add 1-8, Add 8/Amend 1, Add 9-13, Add 13/Amend 1, Add 14-16)

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 1

1 The CHAIRPERSON said that, after a discussion of the way in which the initial report of Gabon should be dealt with, a consensus had emerged that the questions put to the representative of Gabon should be included in the Committee's report despite the absence of any answers Ms Forde had suggested a number of revisions, which the Rapporteur had accepted

2 Ms OESER considered that the last sentence of the document should be amended to reflect Ms Bernard's proposal that the Committee should express the hope that the replies would be given before the ninth session

3 Ms SINEGIORGIS said that the final phrase, "as that report had already become due", should be deleted

4 The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the last sentence of the document should read "They expressed the hope that the replies would be given either in the very near future or included and presented in the second periodic report before the ninth session"

5 It was so agreed

-6 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 1, as revised and amended, was adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 2

7 The CHAIRPERSON drew attention to a revision proposed by the Rapporteur and eight revisions proposed by Ms Bernard, which the Rapporteur had accepted

8 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 2, as revised, was adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 3

9 The CHAIRPERSON said that Ms Bernard and Ms Forde had suggested a number of revisions, all of which had been accepted by the Rapporteur

10 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 3, as revised, was adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 4

11 The CHAIRPERSON said that Ms Pilataxi de Arenas and Ms Alfonsin de Fasan had proposed amendments to the Spanish version The first was a matter of translation, but the proposal to delete the word "cantinas" in Spanish applied also to the other language versions Accordingly, she suggested that the last sentence on page 4 of the English version should read "A member of the Committee inquired whether special day-care services, refuges and health services were available to protect children and communities from the deleterious effects of the war and to improve the health of the family"

12 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 4, as amended, was adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 5

13 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 5 was adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 6

14 Ms UKEJE (Rapporteur) accepted the revisions proposed by Ms Forde

15 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 6, as revised, was adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 7

16 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 7 was adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 9

17 The CHAIRPERSON announced that the Rapporteur had proposed three editorial changes

18 Ms BERNARD noted that Ms Ilić had not been a Vice-Chairperson of the Committee when she had represented the Committee at the meeting of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies. The second sentence should therefore begin with the words "A member of the Committee"

19 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 9, as revised, was adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 10, Add 11, Add 12 and Add 13

20 Documents CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 10, Add 11, Add 12 and Add 13 were adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 13/Amend 1

21 Ms UKEJE (Rapporteur) said that the words "Georgian SSR" should be deleted from the first line of paragraph 14. In paragraph 15, the words "education was" in the second sentence should be replaced by "social and economic programmes have been"

22 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 13/Amend 1, as revised, was adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 14

23 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 14 was adopted

The meeting was suspended at 3 10 p m and resumed at 3 25 p m

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 15 and Add 16

24 Documents CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 15 and Add 16 were adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 8

25 The CHAIRPERSON invited the Committee to consider document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 8 paragraph by paragraph

Paragraphs 1 and 2

26 There were no comments

Paragraph 3

27 The CHAIRPERSON pointed out that the names of Ms Schopp-Schilling, Ms Fenger-Moller and Ms Alfonsin de Fasan should be added to the membership of Working Group II

Paragraph 4

28 There were no comments

Paragraph 5

29 The CHAIRPERSON suggested that in subparagraph 5(e), the first word, "An", should be changed to "The"

30 It was so agreed

Paragraph 6

31 Ms TALLAWY, Ms OESER and Ms BERNARD suggested that paragraph 6 should be harmonized with paragraph 5 by amending it to read "Working Group II held closed meetings "

32 It was so agreed

33 Ms TALLAWY pointed out that in the interests of accuracy the second sentence should state that it was owing to lack of time that the four general recommendations ~~had not been considered~~ at the seventh session, not because the Committee had regarded them as having no priority

34 Ms OESER recalled that another reason had been that the Committee had felt such consideration to be premature

35 The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the sentence should read "It considered the draft general recommendations including four that had been submitted to the seventh session"

36 It was so agreed

37 Ms SCHÖPP-SCHILLING pointed out that the words "equal pay for equal work" in the final sentence should be replaced by "equal remuneration for work of equal value"

38 It was so agreed

Paragraph 7

39. Ms CORTI proposed that the word "extensive" should be deleted

40 It was so agreed

Paragraph 8

41 There were no comments

Paragraph 9

42 The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the second sentence should be amended to read "Starting with the ninth session, the Committee would have more second periodic reports than initial reports"

43 It was so agreed

Paragraph 10

44 The CHAIRPERSON considered that the fourth sentence should be redrafted to state that members of the Committee would be given time to amend the questionnaire

45 Ms SINEGIORGIS pointed out that members might also wish to supplement the questionnaire

46 The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the sentence read "The members of the Committee would then be given time to amend or supplement the questionnaire prepared by the Working Group"

47 It was so agreed

Paragraphs 11 and 12

48 Ms TALLAWY, supported by Ms SINEGIORGIS, considered that paragraph 12, as worded, might provide ECOSOC with grounds for refusing to recommend the necessary funds for the pre-session working group

49 The CHAIRPERSON suggested that paragraph 12 be deleted and that the following sentence be added to the end of paragraph 11 "The statement was considered by the Committee"

50 It was so agreed

Paragraph 13

51 Following comments by Ms SINEGIORGIS and Ms TALLAWY, the CHAIRPERSON suggested that the second sentence of the introductory part should read "The Committee expressed views on the following recommendations "

52 It was so agreed

Paragraphs 14-19

53 There were no comments

Paragraphs 20 and 21

54 Ms GONZALEZ MARTINEZ expressed doubts about the wisdom of committing the ninth session to considering so many reports

55 The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the asterisks should be removed from the lists of States parties in paragraph 20 and that paragraph 21 should be amended to read "On the assumption that the establishment of a pre-session working group would be approved by the General Assembly, the Committee agreed that not more than eight initial reports and four second periodic reports should be considered"

56 It was so agreed

Paragraph 22

57 Ms SCHOPP-SCHILLING proposed the deletion of the last sentence

58 It was so agreed

Paragraph 23

59 The CHAIRPERSON suggested that paragraph 23 would reflect the Committee's views more accurately if amended to read "The Committee wished to do its work effectively, but for this it would need the co-operation of States parties in presenting reports to the Committee It was proposed that States parties be informed that the Committee wished, so far as possible, to have replies to its questions "

60 It was so agreed

61 The CHAIRPERSON considered that a sentence should be added to the end of the paragraph to the effect that the work of the Committee had been delayed at the present session by the absence of two States parties - Honduras and Romania

62 Ms GONZALEZ MARTINEZ asked whether the two States parties in question had confirmed in writing their intention to attend the session If no written statement could be produced, it would be incorrect to refer to those countries by name

63 Ms CREYDT (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Division had received written confirmation from Romania, including the names of its representatives It was not until the opening day of the session that notice of cancellation had arrived In the case of Honduras, it had proved difficult to obtain confirmation

64 Mr MATHIASON (Deputy Director, Division for the Advancement of Women) said that, as a matter of course, the Division had sought confirmation through the permanent mission in New York that representatives of Honduras would attend the session The only written confirmation had been to the effect that the Government of Honduras had not yet decided who would present its report In a telephone call to the permanent mission he had been informed that Honduras would attend the session and had naturally accepted that assurance It had never, however, been confirmed in writing The Committee might therefore wish to insist, in future, on a formal confirmation

65 After a discussion in which Ms GONZALEZ MARTINEZ, Ms OESER, Ms PILATAXI de ARENAS, Ms CORTI and Ms UKEJE (Rapporteur) took part, the CHAIRPERSON suggested that the following sentences be added to the end of the paragraph "The work of the Committee at the eighth session was delayed by the absence of two States parties The Committee asked the Secretariat to ensure that States parties which intended to present reports at the ninth session confirm in writing before being placed on the agenda"

Paragraph 24

66 The CHAIRPERSON pointed out that the dates of the ninth session were 22 January to 3 February 1990

General recommendations Nos 9 and 10

67 There were no comments

General recommendation No 11

68 The CHAIRPERSON pointed out that in the second preambular paragraph the correct figures were 60 initial and 19 second periodic reports. The number of ratifications of the Convention would be updated if necessary.

General recommendation No 12

69 There were no comments

70 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 8, as amended, was adopted

CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 8/Amend 1Paragraph 1

71 The CHAIRPERSON pointed out that the headings "Members/Alternates" should be aligned with the appropriate columns.

Paragraph 2

72 Ms SINEGIORGIS proposed that the words "the Secretariat," be deleted.

73 It was so agreed

74 Ms SINEGIORGIS, supported by Ms SCHÖPP-SCHILLING, proposed the deletion of the phrase "as well as information on the reasons therefor".

75 It was so agreed

76 Following a discussion involving Ms TALLAWY, Ms BERNARD, Ms OESER and Ms SINEGIORGIS on the layout of the report and how to display the decisions of the Committee, the CHAIRPERSON said it might be appropriate at the end of each section to repeat the decisions which had been taken, but that it was a matter for the Rapporteur.

Paragraphs 3 and 4

77 The CHAIRPERSON suggested that paragraph 3 read as follows: "At its 148th and 149th meetings, held on 2 and 3 March 1989, the Committee considered the draft general recommendations presented by Working Group II and discussed them. The Committee agreed on general recommendations 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 at its eighth session", and that paragraph 4 be deleted.

78 It was so agreed

Paragraph 5

79 The CHAIRPERSON drew attention to some revisions: the second and third sentences should read as follows: "affecting the health of mothers and children. At its eighth session, members agreed that it was an important issue", while the final sentence should read: "The Committee requested that the report and other relevant material be circulated to its members and to defer

further consideration of the matter to the ninth session" The penultimate sentence should begin as follows "While some members wished the Committee to make a recommendation at this session, the Committee decided to consider the report "

80 Ms OESER expressed doubts about the wisdom of referring to a recommendation that had not yet been adopted and suggested that it might be preferable to omit the second sentence and amend the paragraph to read as follows "The Committee expressed its continuing concern about traditional practices affecting the health of mothers and children and considered it to be a specific priority matter under article 12 The Committee, however, was aware that the Commission on Human Rights had The Committee requested that the report and other relevant material be circulated to its members and decided to defer further consideration of the matter to the ninth session "

81 Ms BERNARD recalled that one member had requested that her reservations on the subject should be noted The paragraph should therefore be redrafted accordingly

82 The CHAIRPERSON said that the point could be covered by inserting the phrase "While some members wished to proceed with the matter," at the beginning of the penultimate sentence

83 Ms GONZALEZ MARTINEZ proposed that the last two sentences be replaced by the following "The Committee decided, therefore, to consider the report of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and requested that the report and other relevant material be circulated to its members and decided to defer further consideration of the matter to the ninth session" Only one member had asked that her reservations be noted, but she wondered if others also had reservations

84 Ms SINEGIORGIS recalled that while one member had officially reserved her position, another had yielded to the decision of the majority She opposed the inclusion of the phrase "While some members wished to proceed with the matter," and suggested that a separate paragraph be added, stating that one member had reserved her position

85 Ms CORTI said that a report should reflect the decision that had been taken, without going into the conflicting views that had been expressed

86 Ms TALLAWY proposed that the third sentence should read "Being aware that the Commission on Human Rights had requested the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to consider measures to be taken at national and international levels to eliminate such practices and to submit a report to the Commission at its forty-sixth session (1988/57), the Committee decided to defer consideration of the matter to the ninth session in order to consider the report of the Sub Commission and other relevant material before the adoption of its draft recommendation, although some members would have preferred to take action at the eighth session "

87 Ms PILATAXI de ARENAS said that the report should contain only a summary of the Committee's decisions, without mentioning the positions of individual members

88 Ms LAIOU ANTONIOU, replying to a question from Ms BERNARD, said that she would not insist on her reservation However, for the sake of the image of the Committee, the report should mention that some members had been in favour of taking up the matter at the eighth session

89 Ms OESER, recalling the Committee's past practice in similar situations, said that the controversial paragraph could be followed by a sentence such as "One member reserved her position on "

90 The CHAIRPERSON said that although that approach might be suitable in the case of recommendations adopted by the Committee, it could not apply to a decision to defer consideration of a matter. She therefore suggested that paragraph 5 be worded in such a way as to refer only to that decision, as proposed by the majority of members.

91 It was so decided

General recommendation No 13

92 There were no comments

93 Document CEDAW/C/L 5/Add 8/Amend 1, as amended, was adopted

94 The CHAIRPERSON drew attention to a draft suggestion she had prepared with a view to increasing support for the Committee's work within the United Nations system, reading as follows:

"The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women,

Recalling the significance of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in promoting the equality of women, and the importance of equality in the development of human resources,

Considering the important functions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in monitoring progress in the implementation of the Convention,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 43/100 and 43/115, and the conclusions and recommendations of the meetings of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies,

Suggests that the Secretary-General, in consultation with United Nations Member States, should accord higher priority, within existing resources, to the strengthening of the secretariat services of the Committee to ensure its effective operation "

95 Ms SINEGIORGIS fully supported the Chairperson's suggestion, but proposed the deletion of the words "within existing resources", since extrabudgetary resources should be sought if necessary.

96 The CHAIRPERSON said that the suggestion was specifically aimed at changing priorities in the allocation of existing resources, and that any attempt to secure additional funds would be bound to fail.

97 Ms TALLAWY considered that the recommendation would be of little use if the expression "within existing resources" was retained.

98 The CHAIRPERSON pointed out that, in view of the United Nations zero-growth budget, the Committee could only hope for a re-ordering of priorities, not additional resources. The point might be clearer if the words "within existing resources" were placed after the word "should" in the operative paragraph.

99 Ms GONZALEZ MARTINEZ said that, while fully agreeing with Ms Sinegiorgis and Ms Tallaway, she supported the suggestion as it stood, for it emphasized the need to accord higher priority to the advancement of women, as opposed to an increase in resources alone

100 Ms FENGER-MÖLLER agreed that it would be more realistic to retain the expression "within existing resources"

101 Ms TALLAWY said she could accept the present wording, as amended by the Chairperson herself. Since the budget proposals for the next biennium had already been made, it would be up to the Secretary-General to redeploy staff to support the Committee if possible

102 The suggestion, as amended by the Chairperson, was adopted

103 The draft report, as a whole, as amended, was adopted

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

104 The CHAIRPERSON, speaking on behalf of the Committee, expressed her gratitude to the Rapporteur and the staff

105 Ms TALLAWY proposed that the first meeting of the ninth session should be devoted to organizational matters and the assignment of specific tasks to the working groups, together with the recommendations that they were to prepare, in order to avoid the lengthy discussions that had slowed down progress during the current session

106 Ms GONZALEZ MARTINEZ fully supported Ms Tallaway's proposal, which should help to project a more favourable image of the Committee and ensure that its work was better understood

107 After an exchange of courtesies, the CHAIRPERSON declared the session closed

The meeting rose at 5 30 p m