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## ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

### Status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

#### Report of the Secretary-General

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\* A/43/150.

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, by its resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979, adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and opened it for signature, ratification or accession. Since 1980, the Assembly has annually adopted resolutions in which it invited or urged all States that had not yet done so to sign, ratify or accede to the Convention (resolutions 35/140, 36/131, 37/64, 38/109, 40/39, 41/108 and 42/60). In accordance with those resolutions, the Secretary-General has annually submitted reports on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women since the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly in 1980 (A/35/428, A/36/295 and Add.1, A/37/349 and Add.1, A/38/378, A/39/486, A/40/623, A/41/608 and Add.1 and A/42/627). Since the inception of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Assembly has also regularly considered the Committee's reports on its activities, 1/ submitted in accordance with article 21 of the Convention.

2. In its resolutions 39/130 of 14 December 1984, 40/39 of 29 November 1985, 41/108 of 4 December 1986 and 42/60 of 24 February 1988, the General Assembly emphasized the importance of the strictest compliance by States parties with their obligations under the Convention. By resolutions 40/39, 41/108 and 42/60, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to transmit the Committee's reports to the Commission on the Status of Women, for information.

3. The General Assembly, by its resolution 42/60, welcomed the ratification of or accession to the Convention by an increasing number of Member States. The Assembly urged States parties to make all possible efforts to submit their initial reports on the implementation of the Convention in accordance with article 18 and with the guidelines of the Committee. The Assembly decided that no action would be taken on decision 4 adopted by the Committee requesting the United Nations to promote or undertake studies on the status of women under Islamic laws and customs. The Committee was requested to review that decision, taking into account the views expressed by delegations at the first regular session of 1987 of the Economic and Social Council and in the Third Committee of the General Assembly at its forty-second session.

4. The Assembly further welcomed the efforts made by the Committee to rationalize its procedures and expedite the consideration of periodic reports, and encouraged it to continue its endeavours. The Assembly also decided, on an exceptional basis, that the Committee may hold no more than eight additional meetings during its sessions in 1988 in order to advance consideration of reports already submitted. It invited the Committee and the States parties to consider holding future sessions of the Committee at Vienna and requested the Secretary-General to make every effort to ensure adequate servicing, within existing resources, for the effective functioning of the Committee.

5. The attention of the General Assembly is drawn to Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/26 of 26 May 1988, which was adopted on the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Council, noting the decisions of the fourth

meeting 2/ of States parties to the Convention, took note of the articles of the Convention that provided the mandate of the Committee, recalled the role of the Committee pursuant to article 21, paragraph 1, of the Convention and recognized the special relevance of periodic reports of States parties to the Convention to the efforts of the Commission to review and appraise the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women in those countries.

6. By resolution 1988/48 of 27 May 1988, the Economic and Social Council, having considered the report of the Committee on its seventh session, reiterated the decision of the General Assembly, in paragraph 9 of resolution 42/60, that no action be taken on decision 4 adopted by the Committee at its sixth session and requested the Secretary-General to transmit the report of the Committee to the Commission on the Status of Women, for information.

7. On the dissemination of information, the General Assembly, in its resolution 42/60, requested the Secretary-General, within existing resources, to provide, facilitate and encourage public information activities relating to the Committee and the Convention in the official languages of the United Nations. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1988/48, reiterated that request in the same words, and in resolution 1988/26, it emphasized the request for dissemination of information once more with a view to promoting further ratifications or accessions to the Convention.

8. The Council, in resolution 1988/48, noted with deep concern the problems encountered by the Committee as a result of the lack of resources, including technical and substantive support, and the backlog of reports awaiting examination. It requested the Secretary-General, in preparing the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991, to take due account of article 17, paragraph 9, of the Convention by providing the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee in order to enable it to carry out its mandate as efficiently as other human rights treaty bodies. In resolution 1988/26, the Council also noted the problems with considerable concern. It reaffirmed that resources of the Branch for the Advancement of Women of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs should be reinforced through various means, including redeployment, to enable it to keep pace with its increased work-load and to guarantee proper servicing of all bodies concerned with the advancement of the status of women.

9. In resolution 1988/48 the Council recommended that the General Assembly, at its forty-third session, consider the request made by the Committee for additional meetings, on an exceptional basis, in order to advance consideration of reports already submitted to the Committee.

10. At their fourth meeting, the States parties to the Convention requested the Secretary-General, inter alia, to bring to the attention of the General Assembly the relevant decisions taken at their meetings. The document CEDAW/SP/14 containing the decisions taken at the fourth meeting has been distributed to all Member States.

## II. STATUS OF THE CONVENTION

11. The Convention, opened for signature in New York on 1 March 1980, entered into force on 3 September 1981, the thirtieth day after the date of deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession. States that had ratified or acceded to the Convention after the deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession became parties to the Convention, in accordance with article 27, paragraph 2, on the thirtieth day after the date of the deposit of their own instrument of ratification or accession.

12. As at 31 August 1988, 94 countries had signed the Convention, 74 States had ratified it and 20 States had acceded to it, which brought the total number of ratifications and accessions to 94.

13. The list of States that have signed and ratified or acceded to the Convention, as well as the dates of their signatures and the dates of receipt of the instruments of ratification or accession, is contained in annex I to the present report. Since the last progress report, dated 7 September 1987, Burkina Faso has acceded to the Convention. Objections to reservations made upon ratification or accession are presented in annex II.

### Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 45 (A/38/45); *ibid.*, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 45 (A/39/45), vols. I and II; *ibid.*, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 45 (A/40/45); *ibid.*, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 45 (A/41/45 and Corr.1) and *ibid.*, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/42/38).

2/ CEDAW/SP/14.

## ANNEX I

List of States which have signed, ratified or acceded  
to the Convention as of 31 August 1988

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Angola		17 September 1986 a/
Afghanistan	14 August 1980	
Argentina	17 July 1980	15 July 1985
Australia	17 July 1980	28 July 1983
Austria	17 July 1980	31 March 1982
Bangladesh		6 November 1984 a/
Barbados	24 July 1980	16 October 1980
Belgium	17 July 1980	10 July 1985
Benin	11 November 1981	
Bhutan	17 July 1980	31 August 1981
Bolivia	30 May 1980	
Brazil	31 March 1981	1 February 1984
Bulgaria	17 July 1980	8 February 1982
Burkina Faso		14 October 1987 a/
Burundi	17 July 1980	
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	17 July 1980	4 February 1981
Cameroon	6 June 1983	
Canada	17 July 1980	10 December 1981
Cape Verde		5 December 1980 a/
Chile	17 July 1980	
China	17 July 1980	4 November 1980
Colombia	17 July 1980	19 January 1982
Congo	29 July 1980	26 July 1982
Costa Rica	17 July 1980	4 April 1986
Côte d'Ivoire	17 July 1980	
Cuba	6 March 1980	17 July 1980
Cyprus		23 July 1985 a/
Czechoslovakia	17 July 1980	16 February 1982
Democratic Kampuchea	17 October 1980	
Democratic Yemen		30 May 1984 a/
Denmark	17 July 1980	21 April 1983
Dominica	15 September 1980	15 September 1980
Dominican Republic	17 July 1980	2 September 1982
Ecuador	17 July 1980	9 November 1981
Egypt	16 July 1980	18 September 1981
El Salvador	14 November 1980	19 August 1981
Equatorial Guinea		23 October 1984 a/
Ethiopia	8 July 1980	20 September 1981

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Finland	17 July 1980	4 September 1986
France	17 July 1980	14 December 1983
Gabon	17 July 1980	21 January 1983
Gambia	29 July 1980	
German Democratic Republic	25 June 1980	9 June 1980
Germany, Federal Republic of	17 July 1980	10 July 1985
Ghana	17 July 1980	2 January 1986
Greece	2 March 1982	7 June 1983
Grenada	17 July 1980	
Guatemala	8 June 1981	12 August 1982
Guinea	17 July 1980	9 August 1982
Guinea-Bissau	17 July 1980	23 August 1985
Guyana	17 July 1980	17 July 1980
Haiti	17 July 1980	20 July 1981
Honduras	11 June 1980	3 March 1983
Hungary	6 June 1980	22 December 1980
Iceland	24 July 1980	18 June 1985
India	30 July 1980	
Indonesia	29 July 1980	13 September 1984
Iraq		13 August 1986 a/
Ireland		23 December 1985 a/
Israel	17 July 1980	
Italy	17 July 1980	10 June 1985
Jamaica	17 July 1980	19 October 1984
Japan	17 July 1980	25 June 1985
Jordan	3 December 1980	
Kenya		9 March 1984 a/
Lao People's Democratic Republic	17 July 1980	14 August 1981
Lesotho	17 July 1980	
Liberia		17 July 1984 a/
Luxembourg	17 July 1980	
Madagascar	17 July 1980	
Malawi		12 March 1987 a/
Mali	5 February 1985	10 September 1985
Mauritius		9 July 1984 a/
Mexico	17 July 1980	23 March 1981
Mongolia	17 July 1980	20 July 1981
Netherlands	17 July 1980	
New Zealand	17 July 1980	10 January 1985
Nicaragua	17 July 1980	27 October 1981
Nigeria	23 April 1984	13 June 1985
Norway	17 July 1980	21 May 1981
Panama	26 June 1980	29 October 1981
Paraguay		6 April 1987 a/
Peru	23 July 1981	13 September 1982

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Philippines	15 July 1980	5 August 1981
Poland	29 May 1980	30 July 1980
Portugal	24 April 1980	30 July 1980
Republic of Korea	25 May 1983	27 December 1984
Romania	4 September 1980	7 January 1982
Rwanda	1 May 1980	2 March 1981
Saint Kitts and Nevis		25 April 1985 a/
Saint Lucia		8 October 1982 a/
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines		4 August 1981 a/
Senegal	29 July 1980	5 February 1985
Spain	17 July 1980	5 January 1984
Sri Lanka	17 July 1980	5 October 1981
Sweden	7 March 1980	2 July 1980
Switzerland	23 January 1987	
Thailand		9 August 1985 a/
Togo		26 September 1983 a/
Trinidad and Tobago	27 June 1985	
Tunisia	24 July 1980	20 September 1985
Turkey		20 December 1985
Uganda	30 July 1980	22 July 1985
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	17 July 1980	12 March 1981
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	17 July 1980	23 January 1981
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	22 July 1981	7 April 1986
United Republic of Tanzania	17 July 1980	20 August 1985
United States of America	17 July 1980	
Uruguay	30 March 1981	9 October 1981
Venezuela	17 July 1980	2 May 1983
Viet Nam	29 July 1980	17 February 1982
Yugoslavia	17 July 1980	26 February 1982
Zaire	17 July 1980	17 October 1986
Zambia	17 July 1980	21 June 1985

\* Accession.

ANNEX II

Objections made from 1 September 1987 to 31 August 1988

[Original: English/French]

[7 April 1988]

Objection by the Federal Republic of Germany to a reservation  
by Malawi upon accession

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany rejects the reservation made by the Republic of Malawi with respect to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on the grounds that the reservation is not compatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (art. 28, para. 2).

In relation to the Federal Republic of Germany, this reservation may not be invoked in support of a legal practice that does not pay due regard to the legal status accorded to women and children in the Federal Republic of Germany in conformity with the provisions of the Convention.

This declaration is not to be interpreted as precluding the entry into force of the Convention between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Malawi.

[Original: English]

[15 April 1988]

Objection by Sweden to a reservation made by Malawi upon accession

The Government of Sweden has examined the first reservation made by the Republic of Malawi, and has come to the conclusion that it is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (art. 28, para. 2). The Government of Sweden therefore objects to this reservation.

By acceding to the Convention, a State commits itself to adopt the measures required for the elimination of discrimination against women in all its forms and manifestations. A reservation whereby a State party limits its responsibilities under the Convention by invoking traditional customs and practices may cast doubts on the commitments of the reserving State to the object and purpose of the Convention and, moreover, contribute to undermining the basis of international treaty law. It is in the common interest of States that treaties to which they have chosen to become parties are respected, as to object and purpose, by all parties.

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