



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of
Discrimination against Women**

Pre-session working group

Forty-fourth session

20 July-7 August 2009

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

Report of the pre-session working group

1. At its ninth session, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women decided to convene a pre-session working group for five days before each session of the Committee to prepare lists of issues and questions relating to the periodic reports that would be considered by the Committee at its next session.
2. At its thirty-first session, the Committee decided that the pre-session working group would also prepare lists of issues and questions relating to initial reports. The Committee also decided that each list would contain not more than a total of 30 clear questions. In preparing the lists and questions relating to periodic reports, particular attention would be paid to States parties' follow-up to previous concluding comments, and its previous report would be taken into consideration. The practice of clustering questions under priority topics rather than addressing specific articles would continue with respect to periodic reports. At its forty-first session, the Committee decided to introduce subject headings in its concluding observations and lists of issues and questions. This practice was followed for lists of issues and questions with respect to initial and periodic reports.
3. The pre-session working group notes that, as initial reports will be considered on an article-by-article basis, with the exception of articles 1, 2, 7, 8, 15 and 16, the lists of issues and questions relating to initial reports will follow the same approach.
4. At its fortieth session, the Committee decided that the pre-session working group for the Committee's forty-fourth session would meet from 10 to 14 November 2008 in the light of authorization by the General Assembly, in its resolution 62/218, to extend the meeting time of the Committee in 2008 and 2009.



5. At its forty-first session, the Committee decided that the members of the pre-session working group for the forty-fourth session would be:

Ferdous Ara Begum
Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani
Pramila Patten
Glenda Simms
Dubravka Šimonović
Anamah Tan

6. The pre-session working group elected Ms. Patten as its Chairperson.

7. In accordance with the list of States parties selected by the Committee to present reports at its forty-fourth session, the pre-session working group prepared lists of issues and questions with respect to the reports of the following eight States parties: Argentina, Denmark, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Spain, Switzerland, Timor-Leste and Tuvalu. The working group agreed to prepare intersessionally one outstanding list of issues and questions relating to the report of Azerbaijan.

8. To assist in the preparation of the lists of issues and questions, the pre-session working group had before it the reports of the eight States parties listed above, the core documents, if available, submitted by States parties, background information and draft list of issues and questions prepared by the Secretariat (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights), based on an analytical comparison of current reports of States parties with previous reports, and the Committee's discussion thereon, and other relevant information, including concluding observations of the Committee and other treaty bodies.

9. The pre-session working group also benefited from the written and oral information provided by non-governmental organizations with regard to three of the States parties under consideration.

10. The pre-session working group notes that the Committee will be advised of the rationale for the choices regarding the prioritization of issues raised with regard to periodic reports in briefings to the Committee by the country rapporteurs.

11. The lists of issues and questions drawn up by the pre-session working group, which were transmitted to the eight States parties concerned, are contained in the following documents:

(a) List of issues and questions with regard to the sixth periodic report of Argentina (CEDAW/C/ARG/Q/6);

(b) List of issues and questions with regard to the seventh periodic report of Denmark (CEDAW/C/DEN/Q/7);

(c) List of issues and questions with regard to the sixth periodic report of Japan (CEDAW/C/JPN/Q/6);

(d) List of issues and questions with regard to the combined sixth and seventh periodic report of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (CEDAW/C/LAO/Q/7);

(e) List of issues and questions with regard to the sixth periodic report of Spain (CEDAW/C/ESP/Q/6);

(f) List of issues and questions with regard to the third periodic report of Switzerland (CEDAW/C/CHE/Q/3);

(g) List of issues and questions with regard to the initial report of Timor-Leste (CEDAW/C/TLS/Q/1);

(h) List of issues and questions with regard to the combined initial and second periodic report of Tuvalu (CEDAW/C/TUV/Q/2).

12. In accordance with Committee decisions 22/V, 25/II and 31/III, the lists of issues and questions focused on themes addressed by the Convention. The themes included the constitutional and legislative framework and national machinery for the advancement of women; participation of women in decision-making; education and training; gender stereotypes; poverty and employment, violence against women, including domestic violence, trafficking in women and exploitation of prostitution; health, including sexual reproductive health; the situation of vulnerable groups of women, such as older women, rural women, women belonging to ethnic minorities and refugees and migrants; equality before the law; and marriage, family relations and the economic consequences of divorce.
