



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

Distr.: General  
21 July 2010

Original: English

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women**  
Forty-sixth session

**Summary record of the 925th meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 12 July 2010, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson:* Ms. Gabr

**Contents**

Opening of the session

Adoption of the agenda

Report of the Chair on activities undertaken between the forty-fifth and forty-sixth sessions of the Committee

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

### Opening of the session

1. **Ms. Kang** Kyung-wha (Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights), opening the forty-sixth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, drew attention to a number of important developments which had taken place since the previous session.

2. The annual full-day discussion on women's human rights had been held during the fourteenth session of the Human Rights Council, with a focus on empowering women through education. The Council had also explored how violence against women, including in the educational environment, could have a strong impact on women's right to education, and how knowledge and learning could combat discrimination against women, as well as the causes and consequences of violence. It had also held panel discussions on the victims and survivors of trafficking and on maternal mortality and morbidity. The Council had presented a joint cross-regional statement on maternal mortality and morbidity, supported by a record number of States, which had noted that Millennium Development Goal 5 on maternal mortality was the furthest from being realized. The Special Rapporteur on violence against women had presented a thematic report on the topic of reparations to women victims of violence in the context of post-conflict situations. The Council had adopted resolutions on prevention of violence against women and on trafficking in women and girls as well. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review had also met.

3. In October 2010 the international community would celebrate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, and the Office of the High Commissioner was actively involved in the preparations.

4. On 2 July 2010, Member States had made history by adopting unanimously the resolution establishing the new United Nations gender entity, to be known as UN WOMEN. The entity had been created to champion women and girls and provide them with a powerful voice at the global, regional and local levels. The new entity would consolidate the mandates of the four existing agencies working on gender equality and women's empowerment. An Under-Secretary-General

would soon be appointed to head it; it was expected to be fully operational by 1 January 2011.

5. Although there had been encouraging developments, there were also considerable challenges facing the treaty body system as it continued to expand. While each treaty body was an independent legal mechanism, none worked in isolation. It was critical to uphold a clear vision of a coherent treaty body system by further improving and harmonizing working methods. At the recent Inter-Committee meeting, discussions had focused on the optional procedure of lists of issues prior to reporting, taking into account the application of the common core document and the treaty-specific reporting guidelines. The Secretariat had also been requested to ensure that page limits were applied in practice to State reports.

6. The twenty-second meeting of Chairpersons of treaty bodies had recently been held in Brussels, and plans were under way to hold subsequent meetings in other regions. Convening meetings in the regions would strengthen the visibility of treaty bodies.

7. Lastly, she noted that in order to prepare for current and future requirements, the Office of the High Commissioner had engaged a consultant to map out treaty-body-related workflows and processes and produce concrete recommendations on how to integrate treaty reporting and implementation with the overall mandate of the Office.

8. **Ms. Chutikul** said that the Committee would be interested to see the terms of reference and guidelines for the work of the consultant, and asked about the time frame for the report.

9. **Ms. Kang** Kyung-wha (Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that the work of the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner was expanding without additional resources. The task of the consultant was to map out the requirements needed to cope with the expanded workload. The report was internal to the Office, but would be shared when it was finalized.

10. **The Chairperson** said that interaction with States parties and expert members of treaty bodies would help to enhance the credibility of the report.

11. **Ms. Arocha Dominguez** stressed that it was important to provide States parties and experts with frequent updates and to make the final report available to them. Decisions taken at inter-committee meetings

were not binding on States parties, who needed to be kept more fully informed of the obstacles faced by treaty bodies in fulfilling their mandates.

12. **Ms. Kang** Kyung-wha (Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that the consultancy was technical in nature, consisting in a detailed review of the amount of time and staff necessary to meet the requirements. As no additional resources were forthcoming from the Fifth Committee, the Office might consider using extrabudgetary resources if necessary.

13. **The Chairperson** commended the excellent efforts of the Committee secretariat to meet the needs of experts and urged the Office to provide it with more resources.

14. **Ms. Belmihoub-Zerdani** asked if the principle of equitable geographical distribution had been observed in the selection of a consultant and if consideration had been given to former members of the various treaty bodies.

15. **Ms. Kang** Kyung-wha (Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that the consultancy was really a management exercise to review the technical aspects of workload management rather than a substantive process. The Office respected geographical diversity in staff selection whenever possible.

16. **The Chairperson** inquired about the criteria for holding the meeting of chairpersons of treaty bodies at the regional level and whether there were any financial implications.

17. **Ms. Kang** Kyung-wha (Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that the Brussels meeting had provided an opportunity to engage with the European Union and raise the profile of the treaty bodies. Chairs of those bodies were welcome to suggest other venues; for example a suggestion had been received to hold a meeting in Bangkok in order to engage with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and other actors in that region.

#### **Adoption of the agenda (CEDAW/C/2010/46/1)**

18. *The agenda was adopted.*

#### **Report of the Chair on activities undertaken between the forty-fifth and forty-sixth sessions of the Committee**

19. **The Chairperson** said that she was pleased to report that, since the forty-fifth session, Morocco and Spain had accepted the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, concerning the Committee's meeting time, bringing the number of acceptances to 57. In addition, Iraq and Cambodia had informed the Secretariat of their intention to deposit their acceptance with the Secretary-General. Acceptance by two thirds of the membership, or 124 States parties was required for the entry into force of the amendment.

20. She had recently participated in the twenty-second Meeting of Chairpersons of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies in Brussels, at which she had highlighted that trafficking in and violence against women and girls were cross-cutting issues which merited particular attention by other human rights treaty bodies as well as regional mechanisms. The Meeting of Chairpersons had encouraged the European Union to align its development, trade and aid policies with international human rights law and encourage its member States to ratify all the core international human rights treaties and their related optional protocols. It had also encouraged cooperation between treaty bodies and the European Court for Human Rights.

21. Ms. Pimentel and Ms. Begum had represented the Committee at the eleventh Inter-Committee Meeting of Human Rights Treaty Bodies in Geneva. Among points of agreement, the Meeting had recommended that each treaty body should explore ways of reducing the length of its concluding observations to achieve greater efficiency and impact.

22. At the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2010, she had touched upon the Committee's working methods in relation to its follow-up procedure and the adoption in January 2010 of statements on strengthening its relationship with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and on its relationship with parliamentarians. She had also indicated that the Committee had taken full advantage of its presence in New York at the forty-fourth session to meet with representatives of the Division for the Advancement of Women and other gender entities. Such exchanges were of the utmost importance in the quest to strengthen existing linkages with the

Committee, and it would strive for effective interaction with the new gender entity as well. She had also referred to the establishment of a joint working group with the Committee on the Rights of the Child on a common approach to the elimination of harmful traditional practices.

23. In relation to the fifteen-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Committee had adopted a statement in which it had highlighted obstacles to the full equality of women and voiced concern at multiple aspects that discrimination against women encompassed, including age and disability, and that women at risk, such as women in armed conflicts, migrant and indigenous women, were particularly vulnerable.

24. Other activities had included participation by 13 Committee members in an informal meeting at the invitation of the French Government from 20 to 21 May 2010. They had been brought together with French parliamentarians, representatives of civil society and international organizations to discuss discriminatory laws and the role of parliaments, women and conflict and how to ensure their protection through the peacebuilding and reconstruction phase, and ways to improve women's access to health and social protection.

25. The tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security would be observed in 2010, and she encouraged members to mark the occasion by issuing a statement on the first Security Council resolution that had specifically addressed the impact of war on women and stressed women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote sustainable peace and security. A high-level plenary meeting would also be held at Headquarters in September 2010, at which States would be asked to make a renewed commitment to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Goal 3, promoting gender equality and empowering women, was vital for the achievement of every other Goal.

#### **Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention**

26. **Ms. Neubauer**, speaking as Chair of the pre-session working group, said that lists of issues and questions had been prepared with respect to the initial

report of Papua New Guinea and the periodic reports of Albania, Australia, Fiji, the Russian Federation and Turkey, paying particular attention to follow-up by States parties to the concluding observations on previous reports.

*The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.*