



**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 63rd MEETING MEETING

Held at the Vienna International Centre, Vienna,
on Friday, 1 February 1985, at 2.30 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. CORTES
later: Ms. BERNARD

CONTENTS

Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fourth session (continued)

Other matters

Closure of the session

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS FOURTH SESSION (continued)
(CEDAW/C/1985/L.1 and Add.1-10)

Document CEDAW/C/1985/L.1/Add.2 (continued)

1. The CHAIRPERSON recalled that one or two points had been deferred from the previous meeting.

Paragraph 9

2. Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) said that there had been some concern that paragraph 9 was too long. Ms. Regent-Lechowicz had drafted the following new version:

"Many experts commented on measures that gave high priority to the protection of motherhood. Some experts wondered whether these measures related to social services, child-care facilities, employment contracts for home work while on leave and length of maternity were not over-protective. Other experts welcomed those measures and the privileged position of women because women were given the same opportunities as men to cope with duties related to family and society. Questions were asked about the meaning of motherhood in relation to maternity and whether women were free to choose between work and motherhood, whether maternity leave was obligatory, what percentage of highly-qualified women had taken such leaves and how many returned to their posts afterwards. Some experts wondered whether women were being encouraged to be mothers and housewives and whether that meant a return to old stereotypes. It was asked whether the country wanted to increase its population or to maintain it at the current level, what the average family size was and whether family planning was practised."

3. Thus amended, paragraph 9 was adopted.

Proposed new paragraph after paragraph 8

4. Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) recalled that Ms. Laiou-Antoniou had proposed a new paragraph to read: "Some experts stressed the close link between social liberation and women's liberation."
5. Ms. IDER proposed continuing the sentence by adding "and the truth of this was demonstrated by the improvement in the status of women in Bulgaria." That phrase was based on the relevant summary record (CEDAW/C/SR.49, para. 36).
6. Ms. Bernard took the chair.
7. Ms. LAIOU-ANTONIOU said that she did not agree with the proposed addition; in actual fact, paragraph 36 of the summary record did not exactly reflect her view. She considered that social change was necessary, but that the representative of Bulgaria had not shown that social liberation had led to the achievement of women's liberation and that women still suffered from prejudices in Bulgaria.
8. Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) suggested that the amendments proposed by Ms. Laiou-Antoniou and Ms. Ider should form separate sentences, one

(Ms. Oeser, Rapporteur)

beginning with "One expert stressed ..." and the second with "Another expert believed ..."

9. It was so agreed.

10. The new paragraph was adopted, as amended.

Document CEDAW/C/1985/L.1/Add.5

Paragraphs 1-6

11. Paragraphs 1-6 were adopted.

New paragraph after paragraph 6

12. Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) said that Ms. Wadstein had proposed adding a new paragraph as follows:

"The representative of Yugoslavia also stated that it was considered that such matters as certain bans on night-work for women had to be carefully reviewed with a view to applying that kind of prohibition when necessary and when it could be determined that its application would not represent a form of discrimination against women".

13. The new paragraph was adopted.

Paragraph 7

14. Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) said that Ms. Wadstein had proposed a new text to replace that in the document. It read as follows:

"With regard to retirement, the representative of Yugoslavia stated that a previous law, found to be unconstitutional, had recently been amended to allow women to retire on pension after 35 years of work, as before, but with the right to work a full 40 years, in the same way as men".

15. Paragraph 7 was adopted, as amended.

Paragraphs 8-10

16. Paragraphs 8-10 were adopted.

New paragraph

17. Ms. MUKAYIRANGA proposed that a new paragraph be added between paragraphs 9 and 10, to read: "One expert asked why it was deemed unnecessary to have any institutions or party mechanisms for the promotion of women's rights."

18. The new paragraph was adopted.

Paragraph 11

19. Ms. EVATT proposed that a further sentence should be added reading: "Another expert commended this statement."

20. It was so decided.

21. Paragraph 11, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraph 12

22. Paragraph 12 was adopted.

Paragraph 13

23. The CHAIRPERSON said that the words "members of the Committee" should in all cases be replaced by the word "experts".

24. It was so agreed.

25. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD said that the second sentence in the paragraph was incorrect, as data had been provided. The words "more information" should replace the word "data".

26. The CHAIRPERSON agreed that data had been supplied. Perhaps it would be better to leave the sentence as it stood and to add at the end the phrase "which was later supplied by the representative from Yugoslavia".

27. It was so decided.

28. Paragraph 13, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraphs 14-17

29. Paragraphs 14-17 were adopted.

Paragraph 18

30. Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) said that Ms. Wadstein wished to add, at the end of the second sentence, the phrase "and requested statistical breakdown of wages and salary earnings by sex and by sector of industry."

31. It was so agreed.

32. Paragraph 18, as amended, was adopted.

New paragraph after paragraph 18

33. Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) said that Ms. Wadstein wished to insert a new paragraph to read as follows:

"It was noted with satisfaction that Yugoslavia had adopted a new approach towards protective legislation, such as prohibition of night-work only for women, and that there had been changes in legislation in order to close the gap with regard to retirement ages for women and men".

34. That new paragraph was adopted.

Paragraphs 19-25

35. Paragraphs 19-25 were adopted.

Document CEDAW/C/1985/L.1/Add.9

Paragraphs 1-7

36. Paragraphs 1-7 were adopted.

Paragraph 8

37. Ms. ILIĆ said that, in the fifth line, the word "Counsellors" should be replaced by the word "Consuls".

38. It was so agreed.

39. Paragraph 8, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraph 9

40. Ms. ILIĆ said that, in the seventh line, the figure "11.7" should be replaced by "14.7". In the last line, the figure "60" should be replaced by "40".

41. It was so agreed.

42. Paragraph 9, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraphs 10-22

43. Paragraphs 10-22 were adopted.

Document CEDAW/C/1985/L.1/Add.6

Paragraph 1

44. The CHAIRPERSON suggested that, after the word "discuss", the word "informally" should be added.

45. Paragraph 1, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraphs 2-10

46. A number of amendments were made to paragraphs 2-10.

Paragraph 11

47. Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) said that Ms. Biryukova had proposed an amendment, based on the summary of her statement in the relevant summary record (CEDAW/C/SR.53), criticizing the report submitted by the International Labour Organisation.

48. After a discussion of the proposed amendment and the value of reports from the specialized agencies, the CHAIRPERSON reminded the Committee that the whole

(The Chairperson)

discussion reflected in the part of the report under discussion had been informal. She suggested that paragraph 11 should be deleted.

49. It was so agreed.

Paragraphs 12-14

50. Ms. PEYTCHEVA, supported by Ms. BIRYUKOVA and Ms. IDER, proposed that paragraphs 12-14 should also be deleted. Clear decisions concerning the Committee's relations with specialized agencies had been adopted at its second and third sessions. With regard to the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), one of its purposes was of course to help women's institutions and Governments to improve the status of women, but it would be incorrect for the Committee to be used as an intermediary. All States were sovereign and could go direct to the Institute for assistance if they so desired.

51. Ms. ILIC explained that, during the informal discussion, she had merely suggested that at some future date the Committee might wish to ask some other body to look into its work in its entirety, in order to help ensure comparability of data. If the present text raised difficulties, the whole document (CEDAW/C/1985/L.1/Add.6) could be redrafted and the subjects mentioned in the informal discussion merely be listed. Further details could be obtained from the summary record.

52. Ms. SINEGIORGIS said that many least developed countries would welcome assistance from any body in preparing their reports.

53. After some further discussion, Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) suggested that, notwithstanding the Committee's earlier decisions on paragraphs 2-10 of document CEDAW/C/1985/L.1/Add.6, paragraph 1 of that document should be maintained and everything else deleted and replaced by: "These questions concerned the time between the receipt of a report by the Secretariat and its transmittal to all experts; the need to reconsider the general guidelines regarding the form and content of the reports received from States parties; how to expedite the work of the Committee; how to handle a situation in which a State party did not send a representative to present its report; and co-operation with international organizations and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)."

54. Ms. SINEGIORGIS and Ms. EL-FETOUH expressed reservations on the deletion of paragraph 13.

55. Ms. REGENT-LECHOWICZ suggested that, as paragraph 13 was important for developing countries, it should be maintained. With regard to the other paragraphs, she supported the Rapporteur's proposal.

56. The CHAIRPERSON said she took it that there was agreement that the Rapporteur's suggestion should be adopted subject to the retention of paragraph 13, the wording of which might need to be adapted somewhat.

57. It was so agreed.

Document CEDAW/C/1985/L.1 (continued)

Paragraph 33

58. Paragraph 33 was adopted.

Paragraph 34

59. The CHAIRPERSON suggested that everything after "World Conference" in the second line should be deleted.

60. It was so agreed.

61. Paragraph 34, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraph 35

62. Ms. EVATT proposed the deletion of that paragraph.

63. Paragraph 35 was deleted.

Paragraph 36

64. The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the word "explained" should be substituted for "asserted" in the first line.

65. It was so agreed.

66. Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) informed the Committee that Ms. Ilic had proposed the deletion of the words "i.e. groupings into developed, developing and least developed countries" in the last two lines.

67. It was so agreed.

68. Ms. SINEGIORGIS proposed that, at the beginning of the paragraph, the words "As result of clarifications regarding the economic classification of countries" should be added.

69. It was so agreed.

70. Paragraph 36, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraphs 37 and 38

71. Ms. EVATT proposed that paragraph 37 should be deleted.

72. Ms. BIRYUKOVA suggested that the second sentence of paragraph 37, reading "They all agreed that the document should be consistent throughout", should be included in paragraph 38.

73. Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) agreed that that sentence should be incorporated in paragraph 38, towards the end.

74. It was so agreed.

75. The remainder of paragraph 37 was deleted.

76. The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the words "of not more than five to ten pages" at the beginning of the fourth line of paragraph 38 should be deleted.

77. It was so agreed.

78. Paragraph 38, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraphs 39-41

79. Paragraphs 39-41 were adopted.

Document CEDAW/C/1985/L.1/Add.10

Paragraph 1

80. Paragraph 1 was adopted with a drafting change.

Paragraph 2

81. Ms. BIRYUKOVA proposed that paragraph 2, subparagraph 11, should be amended to read: "A consistent approach and a sense of proportion should be maintained in assessing the contribution of countries to the implementation of the provisions of the Convention."

82. It was so decided.

83. Paragraph 2, as amended, was adopted.

Paragraph 3

84. Paragraph 3 was adopted.

85. The draft report (CEDAW/C/1985/L.1 and Add.1-10), as a whole, as amended, was adopted.

OTHER MATTERS

86. The CHAIRPERSON said that there remained the question of finalizing the recommendation from the Committee concerning the presentation of its report to the World Conference at Nairobi by the Chairperson. Ms. Sinegiorgis had prepared a draft decision.

87. Ms. SINEGIORGIS said that she had taken advice on the procedural and financial implications, and had prepared the draft decision accordingly. The draft would read:

"The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/8 and after having examined its report on the achievements of and obstacles experienced by States parties in the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, contained in document ..., decided to

(Ms. Sinegiorgis)

recommend to the Economic and Social Council, at its first regular session of 1985, that the above-mentioned report should be presented by its Chairperson at the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, to be held in Nairobi from 15 to 26 July 1985.

"It also decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council to invite the Chairperson of CEDAW to participate at the Conference in order to present the report as a contribution of CEDAW to the 1985 World Conference.

"The Committee further decided to request the Secretary-General to take all the necessary measures so as to facilitate the attendance of the Chairperson at the Conference."

88. Ms. CREYDT (Secretary of the Committee) said that United Nations Headquarters had informed the Committee secretariat that the Chairperson's travel to the Nairobi World Conference had been approved and that the United Nations would bear the cost of five days' attendance plus two days' travel.

89. The draft decision read out by Ms. Sinegiorgis was adopted.

90. Ms. PEYTCHEVA said she wished to draw attention to an inaccuracy in document CRP.1/Add.1/Rev.2, paragraph 15 (c). During the discussion of that part of the introduction to the report to the World Conference, she had proposed an amendment mentioning positive achievements in education and health indicated in some reports from States parties. She suggested that the Secretariat be asked to listen to the recordings of the meeting in question and correct the text.

91. The CHAIRPERSON asked Ms Peytcheva to put her request in writing to assist the Secretariat.

92. After a lengthy discussion concerning the possibility of having the Committee's report included in the agenda for the Nairobi Conference, in which Ms. BIRYUKOVA, Ms. EL-FETOUH, Ms. EVATT, Ms. ILIC, Ms. OESER, Ms. PEYTCHEVA, Ms. REGENT-LECHOWICZ and Ms. SINEGIORGIS took part, Mrs. SHAHANI (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) explained that the agenda had already been adopted by the Preparatory Body. The agenda was divided into two sections: (1) review and appraisal; (2) forward strategies. The work of the Committee would fall under the section on review and appraisal. At its session in March 1985, the Preparatory Body could make a recommendation to the Conference that the Committee's report be presented under the heading "Review and appraisal".

93. Ms. OESER (Rapporteur) thought that the Committee could include in its report on its session a recommendation to the Preparatory Body to the effect that its report to the Conference should be placed on the agenda and introduced by the Chairperson.

94. Ms. SINEGIORGIS said that, as she understood it, the Committee's report would have to be discussed under the heading "Review and appraisal". She hoped that it would be considered in the plenary.

95. Ms. GONZALEZ agreed that the Committee's report should be presented in the plenary.

96. Mrs. SHAHANI (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that the structure of the Conference was not yet decided, but there was a proposal from the Secretary-General that the plenary should take care of review and appraisal and the consideration of national reports, and that two committees would discuss forward-looking strategies, one at national level and the other at the regional and international levels. She would bring the question of the Committee's report to the attention of the Preparatory Body in her opening statement.

97. The CHAIRPERSON said she thought that that cleared up the question of the presentation of the Committee's report to the Conference.

98. Regarding the content of the report, she wondered whether the Committee could leave it to the Secretariat to finalize the report in accordance with the guidelines adopted.

99. It was so agreed.

100. Ms. CREYDT (Secretary of the Committee) said that the report for the Conference could be ready in two weeks for dispatch to members of the Committee for their comments, which should be returned by 15 March 1985.

101. The CHAIRPERSON said that there were a few other matters which should be discussed.

102. The Bureau suggested that, to avoid the situation where a State party neglected to respond to an invitation to present a report, the Secretariat should ask the State party to indicate within six weeks of receipt of the invitation, which should be sent out three months before the session, whether or not it would attend.

103. In order to expedite the Committee's work, a time limit of 5 or 10 minutes could perhaps be imposed for each expert's presentation of questions. The States parties' representatives should be encouraged to limit their presentations to 30 minutes.

104. The agenda of the next session should perhaps include an item concerning suggestions and general recommendations.

105. The venue for future sessions should be considered at the next session.

106. Committee members were invited to present other ideas for improving the Committee's work.

107. Ms. GONZALEZ agreed with the Chairperson's suggestions. Members of the Committee should perhaps try to group their questions. Excessive expressions of approval of States parties' reports should be eliminated to save time. Members should consider and comment on reports in relation to their compliance with the Convention, avoiding judgements on the merits of particular systems of government and ways of life.

(Ms. Gonzalez)

108. On the question of travel arrangements for members of the Committee, she said that she and many of her colleagues were dissatisfied with the provision of economy-class air tickets.

109. Ms. BIRYUKOVA, Ms. CARON, Ms. EVATT and Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD supported the previous speaker's last remark.

110. Mrs. SHAHANI (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) and Mr. PICHLER (Head, Financial Service, UNIDO) said that under United Nations rules, experts travelled economy-class.

111. Ms. GONZALEZ expressed some dissatisfaction with the services provided by the Secretariat.

112. Ms. CREYDT (Secretary of the Committee) noted this with concern, and said the matter would be looked into and an effort made to improve the situation.

113. The CHAIRPERSON said it was important to give the Committee secretariat backing in obtaining the resources it required in order to service the Committee properly.

114. Ms. EVATT, Ms. GONZALEZ, Ms. SINEGIORGIS and Ms. SMITH supported that view.

115. Ms. SINEGIORGIS, referring to Economic and Social Council resolution E/1984/4 and General Assembly resolution 37/14/C, proposed that an item providing for a review of the format and content of the Committee's report to the General Assembly should be included in the agenda of the next session.

116. It was so agreed.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

117. Mrs. SHAHANI (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs) said that it had been a pleasure to have the Committee in Vienna. It was the first time she had had the opportunity to work closely with the Committee, and she assured the members that the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs gave the Committee's work high priority. The women's issue had passed from the stage of advocacy to that of implementation, and the Committee's work would be increasingly important in the future.

118. The CHAIRPERSON thanked the members of the Committee for their hard work and for their readiness to agree to compromises in order to achieve consensus. She also wished to thank the Assistant Secretary-General and the Secretariat for their efforts.

119. She declared the session closed.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.