

**REPORT
OF THE
COMMITTEE
ON THE ELIMINATION
OF DISCRIMINATION
AGAINST WOMEN**

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 45 (A/38/45)



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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

[25 March 1983]

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

25 March 1983

Dear Sir,

I have the honour to refer to article 21, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, according to which the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, established pursuant to the Convention, "shall, through the Economic and Social Council, report annually to the General Assembly of the United Nations on its activities".

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women held its first regular session from 18 to 22 October 1982 on organizational matters.

At its 9th meeting, held on 22 October 1982, the Committee unanimously adopted its rules of procedure and the attached report on its first session; it is submitted to you herewith for transmission to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Luvsandanzangyn IDER
Chairperson of the
Committee on the Elimination
of Discrimination Against Women

His Excellency
Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York

I. INTRODUCTION

A. States parties to the Convention

1. On 22 October 1982, the closing date of the first session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 1/ there were 45 States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 2/ which was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979 and opened for signature, ratification and accession in New York on 1 March 1980. The Convention entered into force on 3 September 1981 in accordance with the provisions of its article 27.

B. Session

2. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women held its first regular session from 18 to 22 October 1982 at the United Nations Office at Vienna; the Committee held nine meetings.

3. The first session of the Committee was opened by the Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Director of the Branch for the Advancement of Women, who also welcomed the members of the Committee on behalf of the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. The Representative of the Secretary-General in her statement pointed out that the establishment of the Committee marked a new chapter in the long struggle for equality and integration of women into the process of development.

4. She said that the World Conference on the International Women's Year, 3/ held at Mexico City, had contributed to raising consciousness of the status of women the world over; the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, 4/ held at Copenhagen, adopted the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women, which called for action at the national, regional and international levels. The Programme went into greater detail than the World Plan of Action of Mexico and set precise goals, which should be translated into reality.

5. The Representative of the Secretary-General stated that the two essential tasks of the Committee were to consider reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention, and to report annually to the General Assembly on its activities.

6. Prior to the adoption of the agenda the question was asked whether the Committee's meetings were to be private or public. In reply, the Representative of the Secretary-General expressed the view that the meetings were public unless it was decided otherwise by the Committee in the rules of procedure. One expert pointed out that there were no provisions in the Convention for holding closed meetings, and said that she felt the session should be widely publicized to arouse interest in the subject and particularly to encourage all countries to become parties to the Convention. Another expert said that, in accordance with the practice of United Nations organs, the meetings should be public unless decided otherwise by the Committee. That was generally agreed upon.

7. Regarding the organization of the session, the Representative of the Secretary-General informed the members of the Committee that there had been difficulties in arranging to have the session held in New York. She said that the practice of the United Nations organs was to meet where the substantive servicing secretariat was located, in that case, the Branch for the Advancement of Women at the Vienna International Centre. She said that Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/17, in which it was recommended that the work of the Committee should be started as soon as possible, had also been taken into account.

8. At the end of the 1st meeting, the Committee welcomed the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, and the Minister of State of the Government of Austria. They both made statements.

C. Membership

9. In a note dated 13 July 1982, the Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations informed the Secretary-General of the death of Ms. Shirley Field-Ridley, a member of the Committee since its election on 16 April 1982 at the first meeting of the States parties to the Convention (CEDAW/SP/4). The Secretary-General informed the members of the Committee of the death of Ms. Field-Ridley by telegram.

10. In accordance with article 17, paragraph 7, of the Convention, the Secretary-General, in a note dated 10 August 1982, invited the Government of Guyana to appoint another expert from among its nationals to serve as a member of the Committee for the remainder of Ms. Field-Ridley's term, subject to the approval of the Committee. In a note dated 13 September 1982, the Permanent Mission of Guyana to the United Nations informed the Secretary-General of the name of the expert, Ms. Desirée P. Bernard, designated for the remainder of the term of Ms. Field-Ridley.

11. The Committee, at its 1st meeting, held on 18 October 1982, unanimously approved the appointment of Ms. Bernard ^{5/} to serve as a member of the Committee for the remainder of Ms. Field-Ridley's term. A minute of silence was observed in memory of Ms. Field-Ridley.

D. Attendance

12. All members, except Ms. Mervat Tallaw, attended the first session. Ms. Tallaw had become a staff member of the United Nations and therefore was not eligible to be a member of the Committee. Ms. Ester Veliz Diaz de Villalvilla was unable to attend the 1st and 2nd meetings of the session.

E. Solemn declaration by members of the Committee

13. Upon assuming their duties as members of the Committee, and after having adopted rule 10 of the rules of procedure, all members of the Committee present at its 5th meeting, on 20 October 1982, made the solemn declaration provided for under that rule (see paras. 23, 24 and 54 below).

F. Election of the Chairperson

14. At the request of Ms. A. Pavlovna Biryukova (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), the meeting was suspended for 15 minutes for consultations on the election of the Chairperson. Afterwards, Ms. L. Ider (Mongolia) was proposed as Chairperson by Ms. N. Ngoc Dung (Viet Nam), seconded by Ms. Biryukova. Also nominated as Chairperson was Ms. I. R. Cortes (Philippines) by Ms. R. Surlien (Norway), seconded by Ms. Guan Mingian (China).

15. Since two candidates had been proposed for Chairperson, the Secretariat suggested that the election should proceed by secret ballot in accordance with rule 43 of the draft rules of procedure.

16. Ms Biryukova asked the reason for a secret ballot. Mr. J. Nordenfelt (Sweden) observed that in the absence of the rules of procedure the election should be made in accordance with the general rules applied at United Nations meetings. Ms. Biryukova observed that the Committee should make the decision itself. Mr. Nordenfelt raised a point of order since it concerned a substantive question rather than a procedural one.

17. Ms. A. González Martínez (Mexico), seconded by Ms. D. P. Bernard (Guyana) and Ms. L. Patino de Martínez (Panama), was of the opinion that the general rules of procedure of the General Assembly should apply since the rules of procedure of the Committee had not then been adopted.

18. The Representative of the Secretary-General, as acting Chairperson, referred to rules 92 and 93 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and after an exchange of views between four experts in favour of the secret ballot, proposed proceeding with the vote.

19. The results of the secret ballot were as follows:

Present and voting: 21 members of the Committee
21 valid ballot papers were cast
11 votes were in favour of Ms. Ider
10 votes were in favour of Ms. Cortes

Ms. Ider, having obtained a simple majority and the greatest number of votes, was elected Chairperson of the Committee to serve for two years.

G. Election of other officers of the Committee

20. The other officers, also elected for a term of two years, were the following:

Vice-Chairpersons: Ms. M. Caron (Canada)
Ms. Z. Ilić (Yugoslavia)
Ms. L. Mukayiranga (Rwanda)

Rapporteur: Ms. D. P. Bernard (Guyana)

H. Agenda

21. After some discussions, the order of the provisional agenda was changed (CEDAW/C/1) and the agenda was adopted as follows:

1. Opening of the session by the Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.
2. Approval of the filling of a vacancy on the Committee caused by the death of one of its members.
3. Election of the Chairperson.
4. Election of other officers of the Committee.
5. Adoption of the agenda.
6. Selection by lot by the Chairperson of the 11 members of the Committee whose terms are due to expire at the end of two years.
7. Examination and adoption of the rules of procedure.
8. Solemn declaration by all members of the Committee.
9. Sessions of the Committee in 1983 and 1984.
10. Guidelines for reports by States parties.
11. Report of the Committee to the General Assembly.

I. Selection of members of the Committee whose terms were due to expire in two years

22. In accordance with article 17, paragraphs 5 and 6, of the Convention, the Chairperson selected by lot 11 experts of the Committee, whose terms were due to expire in 1984, from the following countries (in the order in which they were drawn):

Viet Nam

Portugal

Canada

Mexico

Panama

Guyana

Sweden

Hungary

Cuba

Ecuador

German Democratic Republic

II. EXAMINATION AND ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

A. Solemn declaration

23. Some experts suggested adopting separately the contents of rule 10 of the draft rules of procedure, concerning the solemn declaration, and later adopting it formally together with all the rules of procedure.

24. Others opposed that view and called the attention of the Committee to the connection between rules 10 and 8 of the draft rules of procedure. It was finally recognized that the separate adoption of rule 10 could later cause some legal difficulties because of the interdependency of different rules of procedure. It was decided to proceed systematically with the adoption of the draft rules of procedure.

B. Examination and adoption of the rules of procedure

25. At its 2nd meeting, the Committee began the discussion and adoption of the draft rules of procedure. It considered draft rules 1, 2, 3 and 4.

26. Some experts objected to the formulation of rule 1, which was based on article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, that the Committee "shall normally hold one session annually, for a period of not more than two weeks", finding it too restrictive. In their opinion more sessions or longer sessions should be held, if necessary, and it should be up to the Committee to decide on the matter.

27. Some experts opposed such an interpretation and pointed out that rule 1 referred to sessions that "normally" would be held annually, and that exceptions were possible. The option of changing, if necessary, the frequency or duration of meetings, should be left open, and it was suggested that rule 1 be changed to allow for that. The question was raised as to the practice of other United Nations organs, e.g. Human Rights Committee and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in that respect. The Representative of the Secretary-General explained that each United Nations body was required to observe the guidelines decided upon by the competent bodies of the General Assembly, with respect to the financing of the meetings.

28. The General Assembly, at its thirty-sixth session, in 1981, decided upon the programme budget for the Committee and provided finance for one two-week session in 1982 and one in 1983. If the Committee came to the conclusion that it required to meet more often than once a year, it would be up to the Committee to submit its proposal in that regard to the Economic and Social Council and then to the General Assembly for final approval.

29. It was pointed out that the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination held biannual sessions according to their respective conventions.

30. Finally, agreement was reached and rule 1 was adopted as set out in the draft rules of procedure.

31. Rule 2 was adopted by consensus after deletion of the words "or in the site of a session determined under rule 4" in the last paragraph as proposed by some experts. It was agreed that the site of the session be discussed under rule 4.
32. It was decided that rule 4 of the draft rules of procedure (site) should be discussed after rule 2 and become rule 3. Rule 3 (notification) became rule 4.
33. According to some experts, the formulation of draft rule 4 should be retained. Others expressed the opinion that it should be replaced by the wording of article 20, paragraph 2, of the Convention which, in their opinion, indicated that meetings of the Committee should normally be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York. If the site of the Committee were in New York, it would be easier for the experts to discuss matters with the States parties. The contradiction between the draft rules of procedure (rule 4) and the formulation of article 20, paragraph 2, of the Convention was pointed out by some experts. It was suggested that draft rule 4 be changed to conform with article 20, paragraph 2, of the Convention.
34. The Secretariat and one expert suggested having the site of the sessions of the Committee in Vienna. They referred to the text of the Convention in accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 31/140. In that connection, Vienna could obviously be seen as "a convenient place" as the Branch for the Advancement of Women of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, the servicing secretariat for the Committee, was located there and the infrastructure for Committee meetings was already available.
35. The question of additional costs of having Committee sessions at different places, either at Headquarters or at the United Nations Offices at Geneva or Vienna, was raised by some experts. It was stated by the United Nations Secretariat that it was up to the experts to decide upon the site of the Committee, but any change of venue would involve further financial implications. If the sessions were held in New York or at Vienna the costs were covered by the United Nations. If they were held in other countries, additional costs would have to be covered by the host countries. In that connection reference was made to the twenty-second report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. 6/
36. Some experts called the attention of the Committee to the fact that the United Nations was already subject to criticism because of increasing expenditures on meetings, travelling, etc. For that reason proper utilization of facilities at Vienna should be seriously considered.
37. It was stressed by some experts that article 20, paragraph 2, of the Convention should be used as a guide and be observed by the Committee, and the rules of procedure should be adopted in conformity with that article.
38. Legal advice was requested by the Chairperson in regard to article 20, paragraph 2, of the Convention, and the meeting was adjourned until the next day when the Legal Officer could be present.
39. At its 3rd meeting, on 19 October 1982, the Committee considered rules 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. The Legal Officer clarified the content of draft rule 4. In his opinion, Vienna was also the headquarters of the United Nations for offices located there, and Vienna was in that respect on the same level as Headquarters in

New York. Therefore, in relation to rule 4, headquarters meant not only New York but also Vienna. For any meeting that related to a matter that was substantive to the Branch located at Vienna, the venue of the meeting would be Vienna as the headquarters of that Branch and also as headquarters of the United Nations. He recommended the adoption of rule 4 as stated in the draft rules of procedure.

40. Some experts questioned the interpretation of headquarters given by the Legal Officer. They referred to interpretations given to them previously by the Legal Office in New York that headquarters meant the New York offices only. Information was given by the Secretariat that the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs was in the process of transferring to Vienna while the Convention was being adopted.

41. Some experts suggested that rule 4 be drafted with two paragraphs: (a) the sessions of the Committee should normally be held at United Nations Headquarters, and (b) the Committee might also determine to hold sessions at the United Nations Office at Vienna. Legal advice was given that if such a formulation were adopted, each time the Committee wanted to meet in Vienna a new decision would have to be taken. After consultations, consensus was achieved and rule 4 was unanimously adopted as rule 3 with amendments.

42. The Committee then returned to rule 3, which was unanimously adopted as rule 4 as formulated in the draft rules of procedure.

43. One expert raised the point that rule 5 (b) as formulated in the draft rules of procedure ought to be modified in a way that would give priority to the items placed on the agenda by the Committee. It was suggested that the provisional agenda for each session should be considered and adopted by the Committee, in conformity with the provisions of the Convention, and any changes should be considered by the Committee, otherwise changes could be introduced by other parties, especially the United Nations Secretariat. The opinion was expressed that the role of the United Nations Secretariat was limited to the preparation of the agenda; it should not be able to choose priorities. The current formulation of rule 5 in connection with rule 7 fully guaranteed that the agenda would be decided by the Committee.

44. There were different views as to whether the agenda should be approved by the Committee at the beginning of each session or at the end of the previous session.

45. In considering rule 5 it was suggested that attention be paid to the relevant parts of the rules of procedure of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It was finally decided to proceed to rule 6 leaving the final decision concerning rule 5 to be taken after consultation between the experts.

46. Some experts observed that rule 6 should be amended in order to make it obligatory for the Secretary-General to transmit documents to members of the Committee at least six weeks prior to the opening date of the session in order to enable experts to prepare themselves properly for the meeting.

47. Some experts stressed the necessity of transmitting documents in all working languages of the Committee; they pointed out that the question of languages was considered in chapter VI of the draft rules of procedure and it would be appropriate for the Committee to discuss that in connection with rule 21.

48. Rule 6, as amended, was unanimously adopted.
49. Consideration of rule 7 was postponed as it was thought to be closely connected with rule 5, which had not then been adopted.
50. The Committee then proceeded to rule 8. Some experts expressed the opinion that rule 8 should be considered jointly with rule 14. Others inquired whether the terms of office of the members of the Committee really began on 16 April 1982, the date of their election. It was suggested that it would be more appropriate if the term of office began at the first session of the Committee, especially in view of rule 10 that the work of the elected experts did not commence before the first session of the Committee. Also involved was the question of the two-year term of office of the officers elected at the first session of the Committee. Observations were made that rule 8 should be interpreted on the basis of article 17 of the Convention, especially paragraphs 5 and 6. Some experts stated that article 17, paragraphs 5 and 6, defined the length but not the starting of the mandate.
51. Some experts suggested amending rule 8 to separate the data of the election of members from the beginning of their terms of office. The Representative of the Secretary-General said that the decision on the beginning of the term of office was taken by the States parties to the Convention (CEDAW/SP/4) and that it was up to the States parties to consider the matter at their next meeting. Some experts agreed that the decision should be left to the States parties.
52. At its 4th meeting, on 19 October 1982, the Committee considered rules 8, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14. Several points were raised in connection with the adoption of rule 8. One of the experts explained that when States parties enacted the Convention the intention was that elections of new members of the Committee should take place every second year so that there would be an election each year of half of the members in order to ensure continuity of the work of the Committee. Some experts expressed concern that their term of office began on the same date as their election to the Committee because they had not begun their functions at that time.
53. In considering rules 5, 6 and 7, a proposal for an amendment was discussed. One of the experts wished rule 7 to be deleted after adopting rule 5. It was suggested drafting a new rule with the heading "adoption of the agenda". That rule was adopted as rule 7, paragraph 1. Draft rule 7 became paragraph 2 of rule 7. The Committee adopted rule 5 with amendments and rule 7 with an amendment.
54. The Committee, after some discussion, adopted rule 9 with an amendment and rules 10 and 11 as drafted by the Secretariat. However, the expert from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics informed the Committee that she would like to reserve her opinion with respect to rule 11, and she requested that her reservation be reflected in the report of the Committee in case that rule were adopted.
55. Several matters concerning advisers to the members of the Committee were raised in connection with rule 12. Many experts expressed concern as to the role of the advisers and whether they were personal or provided by the United Nations. Different views were expressed by several experts. The Secretary of the Committee explained that members of the Committee might wish to be assisted by personal advisers when the Committee decided to hold closed meetings. It was decided that rule 12 be postponed and considered together with rule 22.

56. The Committee adopted rule 13 without discussion. Different proposals were submitted to the Committee by some experts who were of the opinion that the term of 11 members of the Committee was two years in accordance with article 17, paragraphs 5 and 6, of the Convention, and two years for the officers of the Committee under rule 14. After a long discussion rule 14 was adopted with amendments.
57. At its 5th meeting, on 20 October 1982, the Chairperson proposed that the Committee examine draft rules 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25 and 26, 40, 41 and 42.
58. Several points were raised in connection with the adoption of draft rules 15, 16 and 17. A text including various suggestions was adopted for rule 15. Rules 16, 17 and 18 were adopted without amendments.
59. The Committee adopted draft rules 19 and 20 without amendments and draft rule 21 with an amendment.
60. The Committee discussed draft rule 22. Several proposals were submitted as to whether meetings of the Committee should be closed or open. Some experts felt that the meetings should be closed until the report was finalized, after which they could be open. One expert supported open meetings unless otherwise decided. Discussion on that rule was deferred until later in the meeting.
61. The Committee examined draft rule 24 and, after a preliminary discussion, final consideration was postponed. Rules 25 and 26 were adopted without discussion.
62. Concerning rules 27 and 28, the members of the Committee agreed on a text that contained suggestions and comments from several experts. Rules 27 and 28 were adopted with amendments and rules 29, 30 and 31 were adopted without discussion.
63. After some observations, rules 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36 were adopted as drafted.
64. After having discussed rules 37, 38, and 39, the Committee decided to consider those rules jointly with other rules relating to voting.
65. Preliminary consideration was given to draft rules 40, 41 and 42 before the Committee decided to postpone its consideration of those rules as other draft rules, such as 24 and 37, that were closely connected with them had not yet been adopted.
66. At its 6th meeting, on 20 October 1982, the Committee considered rules 23, 37, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54 and 8. The Committee, after a preliminary discussion of rules 23 and 37, decided to postpone their adoption until all proposed amendments concerning them had been translated into all the official languages.
67. Regarding draft rule 50, some experts expressed the view that as a regular practice the Committee should establish a subsidiary body. Explanation was given by one of the experts that article 21 of the Convention determined the working methods of the Committee. After discussion, rule 50 was adopted with amendments.
68. Rule 51 was adopted as drafted. During the consideration of rule 52, several points were made, and the rule was adopted with amendments. Rules 53 and 54 were adopted without changes.

69. At its 7th meeting, on 21 October 1982, the Committee continued its consideration of draft rule 8 on the beginning of the term of office. It discussed rules 12, 22, 23, 24 and 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47 and 48. Regarding rule 8, the Secretary of the Committee read a cable from the Office of Legal Affairs, New York. After detailed discussion, rule 8 was adopted as drafted.
70. The Committee continued with the consideration of draft rule 12 on advisers. After hearing comments in favour and against, rule 12 was adopted with an amendment.
71. The Committee adopted rules 22, 23 and 24 with amendments.
72. In regard to draft rule 37, the Committee had before it some proposals on consensus. The Committee agreed with the view expressed by one expert that all decisions taken by the Committee should be reached by consensus in order to ensure the strengthening of co-operation. After extensive discussion the Committee adopted that rule with amendments.
73. The Committee adopted rules 38, 39, 40, 41, 42 and 43 without discussion.
74. The Committee held preliminary discussions on draft rule 44. The Representative of the Secretary-General and the Secretary of the Committee made statements on the financial implications of having summary records, pointing out the relevant documents. The Committee adopted rule 44 with an amendment that included the provision of summary records for the Committee.
75. After discussion, the Committee adopted rules 45 and 47 as drafted, rule 46 with an amendment, and rule 48 with amendments.
76. The Committee at its 8th meeting, on 21 October 1982, adopted rule 49 with amendments.
77. A new rule 53 on the distribution of documents, based on rule 64, paragraphs 1 and 3, of the rules of procedure of the Human Rights Committee, was adopted after extensive discussion and amendment as a new section XII entitled "Distribution of documents".

III. SESSIONS OF THE COMMITTEE IN 1983

78. In considering the term of office of its members, the Committee also discussed the length of its sessions, since it was felt that the time allotted to the current session had been inadequate.

79. In reply to a number of experts, the Secretariat explained that the Committee's schedule provided for a two-week session in 1982 and for further two-week sessions in 1983. As the current session was of one week, it would be possible for the Committee to hold a three-week session in 1983, which the Committee considered to be desirable. However, several experts pointed out that it would be advisable for the week left over from 1982 to be used in 1983 solely for the purpose of studying the guidelines for the reports of Governments, leaving the two weeks of the regular 1983 session for the consideration of reports of Governments.

80. The Committee took the view that the one-week session could be held before the April session of the Economic and Social Council, preferably in New York.

81. The two-week session could be held in June, July or August, depending on the Secretariat's ability to provide premises and services.

82. The Committee requested the Representative of the Secretary-General to submit those proposals to the competent officials at Headquarters.

IV. GUIDELINES FOR REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES

83. The Committee had before it the draft guidelines (CEDAW/C/3) prepared by the Secretariat on the form and content of the reports to be submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention, as well as a draft questionnaire submitted by the Government of Mexico to review the implementation of the articles of the Convention. The Committee, owing to lack of time, decided to postpone the discussion of those guidelines to its next session.

V. ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE AND OF THE REPORT
OF THE COMMITTEE

84. At its 9th meeting, on 22 October 1982, the Committee adopted unanimously its rules of procedure as a whole (see annex III) and the report of its first session.

85. The Committee, after considering the draft of its first annual report, decided to delete the amendments of the rules, the names of experts (except in paragraphs 14-19) and the footnotes in its rules of procedure that refer to other rules of procedure. The Committee decided to keep footnotes and references to articles in the Convention, but not to spell out the content of the particular rule

Notes

1/ For the membership of the Committee, see annex II of the present report.

2/ For States parties to the Convention, see annex I of the present report.

3/ For the report, see Report of the World Conference on the International Women's Year, Mexico City, 19 June-2 July 1975 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.1).

4/ For the report, see Report of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Copenhagen, 14-30 July 1980 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.80.IV.3 and corrigendum).

5/ The curriculum vitae of Ms. Bernard was distributed in all official languages during the session.

6/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 7A (A/37/7A), document A/36/7/Add.21, paras. 5 and 7.

ANNEX I

States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of
Discrimination Against Women as at 22 October 1982

<u>State party</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>	<u>Date of entry into force</u>
Austria	31 March 1982	29 April 1982
Barbados	16 October 1980	3 September 1981
Bhutan	31 August 1981	30 September 1981
Bulgaria	8 February 1982	10 March 1982
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	4 February 1981	3 September 1981
Canada	10 December 1981	9 January 1982
Cape Verde	5 December 1980 a/	3 September 1981
China	4 November 1980	3 September 1981
Colombia	19 January 1982	18 February 1982
Congo	26 July 1982	25 August 1982
Cuba	17 July 1980	3 September 1981
Czechoslovakia	16 February 1982	18 March 1982
Dominica	15 September 1980	3 September 1981
Dominican Republic	2 September 1982	1 October 1982
Ecuador	9 November 1981	9 December 1981
Egypt	18 September 1981	18 October 1981
El Salvador	19 August 1981	18 September 1981
Ethiopia	10 September 1981	10 October 1981
German Democratic Republic	9 July 1980	3 September 1981
Guatemala	12 August 1982	11 September 1982

<u>State party</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>	<u>Date of entry into force</u>
Guinea	9 August 1982	8 September 1982
Guyana	17 July 1980	3 September 1981
Haiti	20 July 1981	3 September 1981
Hungary	22 December 1980	3 September 1981
Lao People's Democratic Republic	14 August 1981	13 September 1981
Mexico	23 March 1981	3 September 1981
Mongolia	20 July 1981	3 September 1981
Nicaragua	27 October 1981	26 November 1981
Norway	21 May 1981	3 September 1981
Panama	29 October 1981	28 November 1981
Peru	12 September 1982	13 October 1982
Philippines	August 1981	4 September 1981
Poland	30 July 1980	3 September 1981
Portugal	30 July 1980	3 September 1981
Romania	7 January 1982	6 February 1982
Rwanda	2 March 1981	3 September 1981
Saint Lucia	8 October 1982 <u>a/</u>	7 November 1982
Sri Lanka	5 October 1981	4 November 1981
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	4 August 1981 <u>a/</u>	3 September 1981
Sweden	2 July 1980	3 September 1981
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	12 March 1981	3 September 1981
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	23 January 1981	3 September 1981

<u>State Party</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>	<u>Date of entry into force</u>
Uruguay	9 October 1981	8 November 1981
Viet Nam	17 February 1982	19 March 1982
Yugoslavia	26 February 1982	28 March 1982

a/ Accession.

ANNEX II

Membership of the Committee on the Elimination of
Discrimination Against Women

<u>Name of member</u>	<u>Country of nationality</u>
Ms. Desirée P. BERNARD*	Guyana
Ms. Aleksandra Pavlovna BIRYUKOVA**	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Ms. Marie CARON*	Canada
Ms. Irene R. CORTES**	Philippines
Ms. Graciela ESCUDERO-MOSCOSO*	Ecuador
Ms. Shirley FIELD-RIDLEY**	Guyana
Ms. Aida GONZALEZ MARTINEZ*	Mexico
Ms. Luvsandanzangyn IDER**	Mongolia
Ms. Zagorka ILIC**	Yugoslavia
Ms. Vinitha JAYASINGHE**	Sri Lanka
Ms. Vanda LAMM*	Hungary
Ms. Raquel MACEDO DE SHEPPARD**	Uruguay
Ms. Lia PATIÑO DE MARTINEZ*	Panama
Ms. Guan MINQIAN**	China
Ms. Maria Margarida DE REGO DA COSTA SALEMA MOURA RIBEIRO*	Portugal
Ms. Landrada MUKAYIRANGA**	Rwanda
Ms. Nguyen NGOC DUNG*	Viet Nam
Mr. Johan NORDENFELT*	Sweden
Ms. Edith OESER*	German Democratic Republic
Ms. Vesselina PEYTCHEVA**	Bulgaria

Name of member

Country of nationality

Ms. Maria REGENT-LECHOWICZ **

Poland

Ms. Rakel Surlien**

Norway

Ms. Esther VELIZ DE VILLALVILLA*

Cuba

* Term of office expires in 1984.

** Term of office expires in 1986.

Rules of procedure of the Committee on the Elimination
of Discrimination Against Women

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Rules of Procedure of the Committee on the Elimination
of Discrimination Against Women

I. Sessions

Rule 1

Annual sessions

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (hereinafter the "Committee"), established under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (hereinafter the "Convention"), shall normally hold one session annually, for a period of not more than two weeks. a/

Rule 2

Dates

1. Sessions of the Committee shall be convened on dates decided by the Committee in consultation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations (hereinafter the "Secretary-General"), taking into account the calendar of conferences approved by the General Assembly.
2. The Chairperson, in consultation with the other officers of the Committee, may agree to any necessary changes required to be made in such schedule.

Rule 3

Site

1. The sessions of the Committee shall normally be held at United Nations Headquarters; the Committee can also determine to hold sessions at the United Nations Office at Vienna. b/, c/
2. Other sites for a session may be determined by the Committee in consultation with the Secretary-General, provided arrangements are made for the actual additional costs directly or indirectly incurred to be reimbursed to the United Nations.

Rule 4

Notification

The Secretary-General shall notify the members of the Committee of the date, duration and place of the session at least six weeks in advance of the opening date.

II. Agenda

Rule 5

Provisional agenda

1. The provisional agenda for each session shall be prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairperson, in conformity with the relevant provisions of articles 17 to 22 of the Convention, giving priority to any item the inclusion of which was decided at a previous session of the Committee.
2. The inclusion of additional items in the provisional agenda can be proposed by:
 - (a) The Chairperson or any other member of the Committee;
 - (b) A State party to the Convention;
 - (c) The Secretary-General relating to his functions under the Convention.

Rule 6

Transmission of provisional agenda

The provisional agenda and the basic documents relating to each item appearing thereon shall be transmitted in all United Nations working languages to the members of the Committee by the Secretary-General, who shall endeavor to do so at least six weeks prior to the opening date of the session.

Rule 7

Adoption of the agenda

1. The agenda shall be adopted by the Committee at the beginning of its meetings.
2. During a session, the Committee may add to the agenda only important items, which cannot be postponed.

III. Members of the Committee

Rule 8

Beginning of term of office

The term of office of the members of the Committee begins:

(a) On 16 April 1982 (the date of their election) for the members elected at the first election;

(b) No sooner than 16 April of the year of the election for members elected at subsequent elections;

(c) On the date of their approval by the Committee for members appointed to fill a casual vacancy.

Rule 9

Filling casual vacancies

The approval of a member appointed to fill a casual vacancy pursuant to article 17, paragraph 7, of the Convention, shall constitute the first item of business of the Committee after the appointment has been notified to it. Such a member shall hold office for the remainder of the term of the member whose seat on the Committee became vacant.

Rule 10

Solemn declaration

Upon assuming their duties, members of the Committee shall make the following solemn declaration in open Committee:

"I solemnly declare that I shall perform my duties and exercise powers as a member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women honourably, faithfully, impartially and conscientiously."

Rule 11

Inability to attend

1. Members of the Committee may not be represented by alternates.
2. A member unable to attend meetings of the Committee shall inform the Secretary-General as early as possible and, if this inability is likely to be extended, the member should resign. d/

Rule 12

Advisers

Members of the Committee may be accompanied by advisers of their choice, who may, however, not participate in the proceedings of the Committee.

IV. Officers

Rule 13

Election

The Committee shall elect from among its members a Chairperson, three Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur.

Rule 14

Term of office

The officers of the Committee shall be elected for a term of two years e/ and be eligible for re-election, provided that the principle of rotation is upheld.

Rule 15

Absence of the Chairperson

1. If the Chairperson is absent from a meeting or any part thereof, a Vice-Chairperson designated by the Chairperson shall preside, with the same powers and duties as the latter.

2. If it is not possible for the Chairperson to designate a Vice-Chairperson as provided above, the Vice-Chairperson to preside shall be chosen according to the names of the Vice-Chairpersons as they appear in alphabetical order.

Rule 16

Replacement

If any officer of the Committee resigns or ceases to be a member of the Committee, a new officer shall be elected for the unexpired term.

V. Secretariat

Rule 17

Statements

The Secretary-General or his representatives may make either oral or written statements to the Committee concerning any question under consideration.

Rule 18

Financial implications

Before any proposal that may involve expenditures is approved by the Committee, the Secretary-General shall prepare and circulate a statement of the estimated administrative and financial implications. The Chairperson shall draw the attention of the Committee to this statement and invite discussion on it when the proposal is under consideration. f/

VI. Languages

Rule 19

Official and working languages

Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the official languages, and Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish the working languages of the Committee.

Rule 20

Interpretation

1. Speeches made in any official language shall be interpreted into the other official languages.
2. Any speaker addressing the Committee in a language other than one of the official languages shall provide for interpretation into one of the official languages.

Rule 21

Languages of documents

All formal decisions of the Committee shall be made available in the official languages. All other official documents of the Committee shall be issued in the working languages and any of them shall, if the Committee so decides, also be issued in the other official languages.

VII. Conduct of business

Rule 22

Public and closed meetings

The meetings of the Committee shall be held in public, unless the Committee decides that a meeting or a part of a meeting should be closed.

Rule 23

Quorum

Twelve members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. The presence of two thirds of the members of the Committee is, however, required for a decision to be taken.

Rule 24

General powers of the Chairperson

1. The Chairperson shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the Committee, direct the discussions, ensure observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. The Chairperson, subject to these rules, shall have control over the proceedings of the Committee and over the maintenance of order at its meetings. The Chairperson may propose to the Committee the limitation of the time to be allowed to speakers, the limitation of the number of times each speaker may speak on any question, the closure of the list of speakers, the adjournment or closure of the debate and the suspension of adjournment of a meeting. Debate shall be confined to the question before the Committee. The Chairperson may call to order a speaker whose remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.
2. In the exercise of these functions, the Chairperson remains under the authority of the Committee.

Rule 25

Points of order

During the discussion of any matter, a member may at any time raise a point of order, which shall be immediately decided by the Chairperson in accordance with these rules. Any appeal against the ruling of the Chairperson shall be immediately put to the vote, and the ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the members present. A member may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Rule 26

Time-limit on speakers

The Committee may limit the time allowed to each speaker on any question. When debate is limited and a speaker exceeds the allotted time, the Chairperson shall call the speaker to order without delay.

Rule 27

Closing list of speakers and right of reply

In the course of a debate, the Chairperson may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Committee, declare the list closed. The Chairperson may, however, accord the right of reply to any speaker participating in the proceedings of the Committee as provided by the present rules if a speech delivered after the list was declared closed makes this desirable. Such a right of reply shall be exercised at the end of the same meeting or at the latest at the end of the day. When the debate on an item is concluded because there are no more speakers, the Chairperson shall declare the debate closed; such closure shall have the same effect as closure by the consent of the Committee.

Rule 28

Closure of debate

During the discussion of any matter, a member may move the closure of the debate on the item under discussion, whether or not any other speaker has signified a wish to speak. Permission to speak on the closure of the debate shall be accorded only to two members opposing the closure, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote.

Rule 29

Adjournment of debate

During the discussion of any matter, a member may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, one member may speak in favour of and one against the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote.

Rule 30

Suspension or adjournment of meeting

During the discussion of any matter, a member may move the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting. No discussion on such motions shall be permitted, and they shall be immediately put to the vote.

Rule 31

Order of motions

The following motions shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or motions before the meeting:

- (a) To suspend the meeting;
- (b) To adjourn the meeting;
- (c) To adjourn the debate on the item under discussion;
- (d) To close the debate on the item under discussion.

Rule 32

Submission of proposals

Unless otherwise decided by the Committee, proposals and substantive amendments shall be introduced in writing and handed to the Secretary of the Committee, and their consideration shall, if so requested by any member, be deferred until the following day.

Rule 33

Decisions on competence

Any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the Committee to adopt a proposal submitted to it shall be put to the vote immediately before a vote is taken on the proposal in question.

Rule 34

Withdrawal of proposals and motions

A proposal or motion may be withdrawn by the member who proposed it at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that it has not been amended. A proposal or motion thus withdrawn may be reintroduced by any member.

Rule 35

Reconsideration

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered at the same session unless the Committee, by a two-thirds majority of its members present and voting, so decides. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to two speakers in favour of the motion and to two speakers opposed, after which it shall be immediately put to the vote.

VIII. Voting

Rule 36

Voting rights

Each member of the Committee shall have one vote.

Rule 37

Adoption of decisions

1. The Committee shall endeavor to reach its decisions by consensus.
2. If and when all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted, except as otherwise provided in these rules, decisions of the Committee shall be taken by a majority of the members present and voting.
3. For the purpose of these rules, "members present and voting" means members casting an affirmative or negative vote; members who abstain from voting are considered as not voting.
4. If a vote is equally divided on a matter other than an election, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.

Rule 38

Method of voting

1. Subject to rule 43, the Committee shall normally vote by show of hands, except that any member may request a roll-call, which shall then be taken in the alphabetical order of the names of the members, beginning with the one whose name is drawn by lot by the Chairperson.
2. The vote of each member participating in a roll-call shall be inserted in any report referring to the vote.

Rule 39

Conduct during voting and explanation of votes

After voting has commenced, it shall not be interrupted unless a member raises a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. Members may make brief statements consisting solely of explanations of their votes before the voting has commenced or after the voting has been completed.

Rule 40

Division of proposals

Parts of a proposal shall be voted on separately if a member requests that the proposal be divided. Those parts of the proposal which have been approved shall then be put to the vote as a whole; if all the operative parts of a proposal have been rejected, the proposal shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

Rule 41

Order of voting on amendments

1. When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments to a proposal are moved, the Committee shall first vote on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom and so on until all the amendments have been put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon.
2. A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal.

Rule 42

Order of voting on proposals

1. If two or more proposals relate to the same question, the Committee shall, unless it decides otherwise, vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been submitted.

2. The Committee may, after each vote on a proposal, decide whether to vote on the next proposal.

3. A motion requiring that no decision be taken on a proposal shall have priority over that proposal.

Rule 43

Election of officers

1. Elections shall be held by secret ballot, unless the Committee decides otherwise in an election for which the number of candidates does not exceed the number of places to be filled.

2. A single ballot shall be taken in respect of all places to be filled at one time under the same conditions. Those candidates obtaining a simple majority and the greatest number of votes, in a number not exceeding the number of places to be filled, shall be elected. If not all places are filled on the first ballot, additional ballots shall be held, in which, by the elimination of the candidates having received the lowest number of votes on the previous ballot, the number of candidates shall not exceed twice the number of places to be filled. If a tie vote between two or more candidates persists for two successive ballots, a decision shall be taken between them by lot, drawn by the Chairperson.

IX. Records and reports

Rule 44

Records

1. The Committee shall have summary records. g/

2. Sound recordings of meetings of the Committee shall be made and kept in accordance with the usual practice of the United Nations.

Rule 45

Annual reports

The Committee shall report annually on its activities, through the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly of the United Nations, and may make suggestions and general recommendations based on the examination of reports and information received from the States parties. Such suggestions and general recommendations shall be included in the report of the Committee together with any comments from States parties. h/

X. Reports from States parties under article 18 of the Convention

Rule 46

Form of reports

1. The Committee may formulate suggestions and general recommendations as to the form, contents and dates of the periodic reports that the States parties are required to submit under article 18 of the Convention.
2. Such suggestions and general recommendations shall take into account the integrated reporting system on the status of women endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1980/38. i/

Rule 47

Non-receipt of reports

1. At each session the Secretary-General shall notify the Committee of the non-receipt of any report required from a State party under article 18 of the Convention.
2. The Committee may, through the Secretary-General, transmit to the States concerned reminders of any overdue reports.
3. If even after a reminder has been transmitted pursuant to paragraph 2 a State concerned does not submit the report required under the Convention, the Committee shall include a reference to this effect in its annual report to the General Assembly.

Rule 48

Suggestions and general recommendations

1. In case the Committee finds that substantial improvement of its work is likely to be brought about by additional information on the part of a State party, concerning its report, the Committee may invite the State concerned to provide it with such additional information.
2. Suggestions and general recommendations made by the Committee based on the examination of the reports received from States parties under article 18 of the Convention shall be communicated by the Committee, through the Secretary-General, to the States parties for their comments. j/
3. The Committee may, where necessary, indicate a time-limit within which comments are to be received.

Rule 49

Attendance by States parties

1. Representatives of States parties shall be present at meetings of the

Committee when the State's report is being examined and shall participate in discussions and answer questions concerning the said report.

2. The Committee shall, through the Secretary-General, notify the States parties at least six weeks in advance of the opening date, duration and place of the session at which their respective reports will be examined.

Rule 50

Working methods for examining reports

The Committee may elaborate working methods to assist it in performing most efficiently its task of examining the reports of States parties and to consider the progress made since the entry into force of the Convention for them and since the submission of any previous reports.

XI. Participation of specialized agencies

Rule 51

Reports

The Committee may invite the specialized agencies to submit reports on the implementations of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities. k/

Rule 52

Attendance by specialized agencies

1. The specialized agencies shall be entitled to be represented at meetings of the Committee when the implementation of such provisions of the Convention as fall within the scope of the activities of that agency is being considered. l/

2. The Secretary-General shall notify each specialized agency as early as possible of the opening date, duration, place and agenda of each session of the Committee.

XII. Distribution of documents

Rule 53

Without prejudice to rule 22 of these rules of procedure, reports, formal decisions and all other official documents of the Committee shall be documents of general distribution unless the Committee decides otherwise. m/

XIII. Rules of procedure

Rule 54

Amendment

These rules may be amended by a decision of the Committee taken by a

two-thirds majority of the members present and voting and at least 24 hours after the proposal for the amendment has been circulated, provided that the amendment is not inconsistent with the Convention.

Rule 55

Suspension

Any of these rules may be suspended by a decision of the Committee taken by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, provided such suspension is not inconsistent with the Convention and is restricted to the circumstances of the particular situation requiring the suspension.

Notes

a/ Based on article 20(1) of the Convention.

b/ Based on article 20(2) of the Convention.

c/ When determining the venue of meetings the Committee should take into account General Assembly resolution 31/140.

d/ A resignation creates a casual vacancy, which is to be filled in accordance with article 17, paragraph 17, of the Convention.

e/ Based on article 19, paragraph 2, of the Convention.

f/ Based on United Nations Financial Regulation 13.1 (See document A/INF/37/1, para. 45).

g/ See A/INF/37/1, section II.B and G. It should be noted that the statement of financial implications considered by the General Assembly on the entry into force of the Convention did not include any provision for verbatim or summary records (A/C.5/36/90 and Corr.1; A/36/7/Add.21).

h/ Based on article 21, paragraph 1, of the Convention.

i/ The integration of the reporting system had been decided on by the General Assembly in its resolution 33/186 on the rationalization of the reporting system on the status of women.

j/ Based on article 21, paragraph 1, of the Convention.

k/ Based on article 22 of the Convention.

l/ Based on article 22 of the Convention.

m/ The official documents of the Committee shall include the reports and other documents from States parties.

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