



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

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

Thirty-sixth session

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

7-25 August 2006

**Ways and means of expediting the work of the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

Note by the Secretariat

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* CEDAW/C/2006/III/1.

I. Introduction

1. The present report contains information that is relevant to the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Section II provides information on developments in the United Nations, especially the human rights treaty bodies. Section III presents information on Secretariat activities in support of the implementation of the Convention. Other issues are covered in section IV. Due to the short time span between the closure of the thirty-fifth session of the Committee, held from 15 May to 2 June 2006, and the date of finalization of the present report, oral updates will be provided on relevant issues. The Committee's attention is also drawn to the previous report on the ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which was completed in April 2006.¹

II. Developments in the United Nations, especially in the human rights regime

A. Human rights treaty bodies

2. The Human Rights Committee, at its eighty-sixth session, held from 13 to 31 March 2006, continued its discussion on the proposals for harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties. The Committee also established a mandate for a rapporteur to liaise with United Nations specialized agencies and programmes.

3. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, at its sixty-eighth session, held from 20 February to 10 March 2006, adopted guidelines for follow-up on concluding observations and recommendations. These are addressed to States parties and are intended to assist them in their efforts to implement and follow up on the concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee. The guidelines will be sent to each State party together with the Committee's concluding observations. During the same session, the coordinator of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on follow-up to concluding observations and recommendations presented his first report to the Committee.

4. In addition, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination discussed the first progress report prepared by the Secretariat in regard to the follow-up procedure to individual opinions that the Committee had established at its sixty-seventh session in August 2005. In the past, the Committee monitored informally whether, how or to what extent States parties implemented the Committee's recommendations in instances where the Committee had found violations of the Convention under the communications procedure of article 14 of the Convention. The follow-up progress report reflects all cases in which the Committee had found violations of the Convention or provided suggestions or recommendations in cases of no violation. It includes all information received from either the petitioner or the State party on the issue of follow-up to the Committee's opinions.

5. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, at its forty-first session, held from 9 to 27 January 2006, worked for the first time in parallel chambers. Based on its preliminary assessment, the Committee considered the experience to have been

positive. The Committee will undertake an assessment and report to the General Assembly on its work after two sessions in parallel chambers.

6. The Committee on Migrant Workers, at its third session, held from 12 to 16 December 2005, held a day of general discussion on the topic "Protecting the rights of all migrant workers as a tool to enhance development". At its fourth session, held from 24 to 28 April 2006, the Committee adopted a written contribution on this subject in reference to the General Assembly's high-level dialogue on international migration and development to be held in New York in September 2006. The Committee decided that at future sessions, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations and United Nations agencies will be given an opportunity, in public meeting, to provide information on the States parties whose reports were before the Committee for consideration. The national human rights institution of the State party would be given an opportunity to make a statement during the consideration of reports by that State party. Also at its fourth session, the Committee considered its first initial report (from Mali), in public meetings.

7. The Committee on Economic and Social Rights, at its thirty-fifth session, held from 7 to 25 November 2005, adopted general comment 17, on article 15.1 (c) of the Covenant on the right to benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author, and general comment 18, on article 6 of the Covenant, on the right to work. At its thirty-sixth session, held from 1 to 19 May 2006, the Committee held a day of general discussion on the right to social security (article 9 of the Covenant), with the aim of preparing a general comment on that article. Work is continuing on a general comment on article 2, paragraph 2, of the Covenant, on non-discrimination. The Committee will hold a day of general discussion on non-discrimination at its thirty-seventh session, which is to be held from 6 to 24 November 2006.

8. At its thirty-sixth session, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights decided on a procedure for sending reminders to States parties with overdue reports. In this regard, the Committee adopted a three-tier system: (a) a first letter (note verbale) will be sent to all States parties with overdue reports to remind them of the due date, which could be coordinated with reminders under other treaties; (b) a second letter will be sent inviting unresponsive States parties to submit their overdue reports by a specified deadline in order to allow for the consideration of the report(s) at a specific future session (letter to be sent one year ahead of the deadline); and (c) if no reply is received to the second letter, a final letter will be sent confirming that States parties will be scheduled for consideration in the absence of a report at that session.

9. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights considered a proposal submitted by a State party on the contents of its periodic report. Instead of reporting on all rights, article by article, the State party proposes to focus on the previous concluding observations of the Committee and to add information on issues the State party identifies as relevant with respect to implementation of the Covenant. This proposal would depart from the comprehensive approach reflected in the Committee's reporting guidelines, and would allow for more focused reporting. The Committee decided to accept the proposal on a pilot basis and on the understanding that, should the issues covered in the report not coincide with the issues the Committee considers to be most important, the Committee would be free

to raise those through the list of issues and questions. Finally, the Committee agreed to accept consolidation of up to two reports into a single document from States parties with long overdue reports. The Committee continued its practice of specifying in its concluding observations the due date for the State party's next periodic report. In several instances, the Committee has requested a State party to consolidate two reports into a single document by the date on which the latter report would normally be due, in order to bring the State party up to date with its reporting obligations.

B. Human Rights Council

10. The inaugural session of the Human Rights Council will convene on 19 June 2006. The Committee will be briefed orally on the outcome of the session.

C. Follow-up to the fifth inter-Committee meeting and the 17th meeting of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies

11. The Committee will be represented by its chairperson and two experts, and will be briefed by them on the outcome and follow-up required. All relevant documentation will be made available to the Committee.

12. The Committee will be briefed on the outcome of the meeting on reservations, scheduled to take place on 8 and 9 June 2006 in Geneva, of representatives of the treaty bodies, and on any follow-up action required from the Committee.

D. Follow-up to the fiftieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women

13. At its thirty-fifth session, the Committee held a preliminary discussion on the invitation of the Commission on the Status of Women in relation to the Commission's working methods and the advisability of establishing a mandate for a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women. The Committee designated two experts to prepare preliminary proposals for discussion by the Committee based on the views expressed at the thirty-fifth session.

E. United Nations reform process

14. The Committee will continue to exchange views on the ongoing reform discussion, based on oral briefings and updates to be provided by Secretariat officials.

III. Secretariat activities in support of the implementation of the Convention

15. The Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women continued their efforts to encourage universal ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms

of Discrimination against Women, acceptance of the Optional Protocol to the Convention and amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention. Those aspects are regularly addressed by the Special Adviser, the Director and the staff of the Division in meetings with, and briefings for, representatives of Member States, entities of the United Nations system and civil society organizations in training workshops and other outreach activities. Cooperation and collaboration has remained an important element in the joint workplan of the Division and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.²

16. Based on voluntary contributions received from the Governments of Ireland and Norway to support countries emerging from conflict in their efforts to implement the Convention, the Division will conduct a high-level consultation on the implementation of the Convention in Monrovia, Liberia, from 12 to 15 June 2006. The consultation will be attended by Government officials as well as representatives from entities of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations. One current and one former Committee expert will participate in the consultation. The Division will also implement a training workshop on reporting and implementation of the Convention for Government officials in Freetown, Sierra Leone from 20 to 22 June 2006. The workshop will be based on an initial draft report prepared by the State party. Two Committee experts will serve as facilitators of the workshop.

IV. Other issues: in-depth study on all forms of violence against women

17. The Division continued preparation of the Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women, requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 58/185, to be submitted to its sixty-first session. The Division convened the second meeting of the advisory committee for the study on 11 and 12 May 2006. On 12 May, a briefing with participation of advisers was held for Member States and other stakeholders.

18. The Division co-sponsored a panel discussion with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on the role of the criminal justice system in addressing violence against women as a side event during the fifteenth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The Division also participated in a panel discussion in conjunction with the fifth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, on 23 May 2006. The latter provided an opportunity to highlight the manner in which non-governmental organizations can contribute to the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

Notes

¹ CEDAW/C/2006/11/4.

² E/CN.4/2006/59-E/CN.6/2006/9.

Annex I

States that have not ratified or acceded to the Convention

Africa

Somalia

Sudan

Asia and the Pacific

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Nauru

Palau

Qatar

Tonga

Western Europe and other

Holy See

United States of America

Annex II

States parties whose reports have been submitted but not yet considered by the Committee as of 1 June 2006*

Initial reports

<i>State party</i>	<i>Date due</i>	<i>Date received</i>
Cape Verde (1-6)	September 1982	June 2005
Mauritania (1)	June 2002	May 2005
Mozambique (1-2)	May 1998	January 2005
Niger (1-2)	November 2000	July 2005
Pakistan (1-3)	April 1997	July 2005
Serbia and Montenegro (1)	April 2002	May 2006
Syrian Arab Republic (1)	April 2004	August 2005
Tajikistan (1-3)	October 1994	May 2005
Vanuatu (1-3)	October 1996	March 2005

Periodic reports

<i>State party</i>	<i>Date due</i>	<i>Date received</i>	<i>Previously considered</i>	<i>Previous report</i>
Austria (6)	April 2003	October 2004	2000, 23rd session	3-4, 5
Azerbaijan (2-3)	August 2000	January 2005	1998, 18th session	1
Belize (3-4)	June 1999	August 2005	1999, 21st session	1-2
Bolivia (2-4)	July 1995	December 2005	1995, 14th session	1
Brazil (6)	March 2005	August 2005	2003, 29th session	1-5
Chile (4)	January 2003	May 2004	1999, 21st session	3
China (5-6)	September 1998	February 2004	1999, 20th session	3-4
Colombia (5-6)	February 1999	January 2005	1999, 20th session	4, Add.1
Cuba (5-6)	September 1998	January 2005	2000, 23rd session	1, 2-3 and Add.1, 4
Czech Republic (3)	March 2001	August 2004	2002, EXE session	2

* The list includes States parties' reports to be considered by the Committee at its thirty-sixth session.

<i>State party</i>	<i>Date due</i>	<i>Date received</i>	<i>Previously considered</i>	<i>Previous report</i>
Democratic Republic of the Congo (4-5)	November 1999	August 2004	2000, 22nd session	1, 2 and Add.1, 3
Denmark (6)	May 2004	July 2004	2002, 27th session	4, 5 and Add.1
Estonia (4)	November 2004	October 2005	2002, 26th session	1-3
Finland (5)	October 2003	February 2004	2001, 24th session	4
Georgia (2-3)	November 1999	April 2004	1999, 21st session	1
France (6)	January 2005	March 2006	2003, 29th session	5
Ghana (3-5)	February 1995	February 2005	1992, 11th session	1-2
Greece (6)	July 2004	June 2005	2002, EXE session	4-5
Guinea (4-6)	September 1995	July 2005	2001, 25th session	1-3
Honduras (4-6)	April 1996	January 2006	1992, 11th session	1, 2, 3
Hungary (6)	September 2002	May 2006	2002, EXE session	4-5
Iceland (5)	July 2002	November 2003	2002, 26th session	3-4
India (2-3)	August 1998	October 2005	2000, 22nd session	1
Indonesia (4-5)	October 1997	June 2005	1998, 18th session	2-3
Israel (4)	November 2004	June 2005	2005, 33rd session	3
Jamaica (5)	November 2001	February 2004	2001, 24th session	2-4
Jordan (3-4)	July 2001	December 2005	2000, 22nd session	1, 2
Kazakhstan (2)	September 2003	March 2005	2001, 23rd session	1
Kenya (6)	April 2001	March 2006	2003, 28th session	3-4
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (2)	June 1994	December 1998	1994, 13th session	1
Liechtenstein (2)	January 2001	February 2001	1999, 20th session	1
Lithuania (3)	February 2003	May 2005	2000, 23rd session	2
Luxembourg (5)	March 2006	February 2006	2003, 28th session	4
Maldives (2-3)	July 2002	May 2005	2001, 23rd session	1
Mauritius (3-5)	August 1993	November 2004	1995, 14th session	1-2
Mexico (6)	September 2002	January 2005	2002, EXE session	5
Namibia (2-3)	December 1997	March 2005	1997, 17th session	1

<i>State party</i>	<i>Date due</i>	<i>Date received</i>	<i>Previously considered</i>	<i>Previous report</i>
Netherlands (4)	August 2004	January 2005	2001, 25th session	1 and Add.1-3, 2
Netherlands/Aruba (4/Add.1)	August 2004	May 2005	2001, 25th session	and Add.1-2, 3 and Add.1-2
New Zealand (6)	February 2006	April 2006	2003, 29th session	5
Nicaragua (6)	November 2002	June 2005	2001, 25th session	4 and 5
Peru (6)	October 2003	February 2004	2002, EXE session	5
Philippines (5-6)	September 1998	July 2004	1997, 16th session	3, 4
Poland (4-5) and (6)	September 1994	November 2004	1991, 10th session	2 and 3
Portugal (6)	September 2002	May 2006	2002, 26th session	4, 5
Republic of Korea (5)	January 2002	July 2003	1998, 19th session	3,4
Republic of Moldova (2-3)	July 1999	October 2004	2000, 23rd session	1
Singapore (3)	November 2004	November 2004	2001, 25th session	1-2
Suriname (3)	March 2002	April 2005	2002, 26th session	1-2
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (5, Add.1 and 2)	May 2003	August 2003	1999, 21st session	3, 4
Uzbekistan (2-3)	August 2000	October 2004	2001, 24th session	1
Viet Nam (5-6)	March 1999	June 2005	2001, 24th session	2 and 3-4