

**CHAPTER IX. OVERVIEW OF THE METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

476. An overview of the methods of work of the Committee was included in its report to the fifty-first session of the General Assembly.<sup>17</sup> It highlighted changes introduced in recent years and was designed to make the Committee's procedures more transparent and accessible to both States parties and the public. The reader is invited to consult the overview contained in that previous report to the General Assembly.

477. The Committee reviewed several aspects of its working methods at its fifty-eighth session. Most significantly, on the question of the periodicity of reporting obligations under article 9, at the Committee's request the Rapporteur of the Committee, Mr. Bossuyt, developed a proposal in the following terms (see CERD/C/SR.1446 and CERD/C/SR.1454):

“In a case where the period between the date of the examination of the last periodic report and the scheduled date for the submission of the next periodic report is less than two years, the Committee may suggest in its concluding observations that the State party concerned, if it so wishes, submit the latter report jointly with the periodic report to be submitted at the following date fixed in accordance with article 9 of the Convention.”

478. The Committee implemented this initiative in its concluding observations at both its fifty-eighth [March 2001] and fifty-ninth [August 2001] sessions, and declared its intention to review and, if necessary, revise the practice in the light of further experience.

479. The Committee at its fifty-eighth session [March 2001] also discussed its practices concerning the adoption of concluding observations in meetings that are open to the public, and on the role of information from non-official sources (including information from NGOs) in the Committee's work. As to the first issue, the Committee by consensus reaffirmed its position that in the interest of transparency the adoption of concluding observations in public meetings should continue, subject to immediate notification to States parties once the concluding observations in a given case are finalized, as is the current practice. As to the second issue, the Committee by consensus reaffirmed the importance of maintaining members' access as independent experts to all relevant sources of information.

480. At its fifty-ninth session [August 2001] the Committee decided to introduce the item “working methods” on the agenda of its sixtieth session in March 2002. Moreover in the case of the concluding observations for Liberia (see chap. III) the Committee considerably strengthened its review procedures for States parties whose reports are more than five years overdue, considered to be justified on the basis of the seriousness of the violations of the Convention's provisions in that country and the fact that no report had ever been submitted under article 9.

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<sup>17</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 18 (A/51/18), paras. 587-627.