



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

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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Thirteenth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SECOND PART (CLOSED)* OF THE 253rd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 1 February 1994, at 5.25 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. CORTI

CONTENTS

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

* The summary record of the first part (public) of the meeting appears
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consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the
session.

The meeting was called to order at 5.25 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION (continued)

1. Ms. TALLAWY said that in the case of the territory of the former Yugoslavia, the Committee had requested reports on an exceptional basis to obtain specific information regarding human rights violations of women and the incidence of rape. Consequently, the Committee could not consider those reports as it did normal reports, article by article, asking questions in various areas such as education and employment. She questioned whether the Bureau's decision that the Committee should make no recommendations regarding the special reports on the situation in the territory of the former Yugoslavia had been the correct one. The Committee should at least transmit the information it had received from all Governments submitting special reports, along with any comments it wished to make, to the proper forum.

2. Ms. SCHOPP-SCHILLING sought clarification as to how the Committee would consider the report of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which resembled a regular report. She agreed with Ms. Tallawy that since the Committee had requested reports on an exceptional basis, those reports should be treated in an exceptional manner.

3. The CHAIRPERSON said, with regard to treatment of special reports from the territory of the former Yugoslavia, that the Bureau had consulted with its legal adviser and come to the conclusion that, given the delicacy of the situation and in order not to set a dangerous precedent, the Committee should express its solidarity towards all women in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, but should remain outside any political involvement. The Bureau had decided to inform Committee members informally of its decision. Furthermore, it had decided that the Committee should hear the report of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and ask any questions it wished.

4. Ms. TALLAWY, speaking on a point of order, said that the Committee should be officially informed of any decision adopted by the Bureau. Furthermore, the Committee must determine a procedure for dealing with the three special reports from the territory of the former Yugoslavia. For the sake of consistency the Committee should concentrate its questions on the violation of human rights of women and rape. Finally, she proposed that, after considering the reports, the Committee should forward the information it had received to the Commission on Human Rights along with an expression of its deep concern at the flagrant human rights violations of women throughout the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

5. Ms. AOUIJ agreed that the Committee should be consistent and responsible in its treatment of the three reports, and concentrate its questions on human rights violations of women in those territories. The Committee should have the courage to draw conclusions after hearing those reports and make recommendations to be forwarded to the appropriate human rights committees.

6. Ms. GURDULICH de CORREA said that it would be inappropriate for the Committee not to make some comment once it had heard the special reports, since the human rights violations in question constituted a serious problem for women

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(Ms. Gurdulich de Correa)

and children in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Naturally, it should exercise the utmost political prudence when making its comments.

7. The CHAIRPERSON, in reply to a question from Ms. Forde, said that the legal adviser had informed the Bureau that under article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Committee could make general recommendations based on the examination of reports and information received from the States parties; under article 18 (b) of that same Convention, States parties undertook to submit reports whenever the Committee so requested.

8. The previous year, she had written to the chairpersons of the other treaty bodies to report on the Committee's meetings and had made a reference to the situation in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. She proposed the Committee should forward the summary records of its meetings to the chairpersons of the other treaty bodies dealing with human rights issues.

9. Since the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina had been allowed to speak freely, the representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should present that country's report, and the Committee should concentrate its questions on human rights violations of women and on the consequences of the embargo.

10. Ms. FORDE said that it would be more appropriate for the Committee to wait until it heard what issues were raised in the report before deciding on what areas to concentrate its questions.

11. Ms. BUSTELO, supported by Ms. SINEGIORGIS, said the special reports enabled the Committee to ask questions about the incidence of violence against women in the areas concerned. Unfortunately, the Committee would not have as complete a picture as it had desired since Croatia had not yet submitted its report, nevertheless, it would not be appropriate for the Committee not to take some form of follow-up action. Accordingly, she proposed that, after considering the report of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Committee should agree on what information it wished to include in its report to the Economic and Social Council and to the General Assembly. In addition, the Chairperson could draw the special attention of the chairpersons of the other human rights committees to that information.

12. Ms. TALLAWY, supported by Ms. GARCIA-PRINCE, endorsed Ms. Bustelo's proposal and stressed that since the Committee was dealing with an exceptional report, it should limit its questions to violence against women.

13. The CHAIRPERSON said that the Committee appeared to have agreed to concentrate its questions regarding the special reports on the situation of women in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. She took it that the Committee wished to do as Ms. Bustelo had proposed and listen first to the report of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia before deciding what recommendations or comments it would make concerning the special reports.

14. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.