

## **UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN TO MEET IN GENEVA FROM 8 TO 26 JULY**

Committee to Consider Reports Presented by Cuba, Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Cape Verde, United Kingdom, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

4 July 2013

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will hold its fifty-fifth session at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 8 to 26 July, during which it will review reports presented by Cuba, Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Cape Verde, United Kingdom, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina on how they implement the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

States parties to the Convention commit themselves to ending all political, economic, social, cultural, civil or other forms of discrimination against women. The Committee, a 23-person expert body, monitors compliance with the treaty. It assesses to what extent each State is meeting its obligations, and makes recommendations for the implementation of the Convention.

At the opening meeting on Monday, 8 July, the Committee will be addressed by a representative of the Secretary-General and adopt its agenda. The Chairperson of the Committee, Nicole Ameline, will brief the Committee on activities and events occurring since the previous session that had a bearing on the work of the Committee.

In addition to considering the reports of eight States parties, the Committee will hold public informal meetings with non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions to discuss the situation in the countries whose reports will be considered. It will also consider individual complaints as well as inquiries under the Optional Protocol to the Convention, in closed meeting. The Committee will discuss matters relating to follow-up to concluding observations and its methods of work.

Cuba is presenting its seventh and eighth periodic report [CEDAW/C/CUB/7-8](#). The Committee's concluding observations and recommendations on the sixth periodic report of Cuba, which was considered in 2006, can be found in [CEDAW/C/CUB/CO/6](#). Afghanistan is presenting its combined initial and second periodic report [CEDAW/C/AFG/1-2](#). The Democratic Republic of the Congo is presenting its combined sixth and seventh periodic report [CEDAW/C/COD/6-7](#). The Committee's concluding observations and recommendations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic report of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which was considered in 2006, can be found in [CEDAW/C/COD/CO/5](#).

The Dominican Republic is presenting its combined sixth and seventh periodic report [CEDAW/C/DOM/6-7](#). The Committee's concluding observations and recommendations on the fifth periodic report of the Dominican Republic, which was considered in 2004, can be found [here](#). Cape Verde is presenting its combined seventh and eighth periodic report [CEDAW/C/CPV/7-8](#). The Committee's concluding observations and

recommendations on the combined initial to sixth periodic report, considered in 2006, can be found [here](#). The United Kingdom is presenting its seventh periodic report [CEDAW/C/GBR/7](#), [CEDAW/C/GBR/7/Add.1](#) and [CEDAW/C/GBR/7/Add.2](#). The Committee's concluding observations and recommendations on the combined fifth and sixth periodic report, considered in 2008, can be found [here](#).

Serbia is presenting its combined second and third periodic report [CEDAW/C/SRB/2-3](#). The Committee's concluding observations and recommendations to the initial report of Serbia, considered in 2007, can be found in [CEDAW/C/SCG/CO/1](#). Bosnia and Herzegovina is presenting its combined fourth and fifth periodic report [CEDAW/C/BIH/4-5](#). The Committee's concluding observations and recommendations on the initial to third periodic report of Bosnia and Herzegovina, considered in 2006, can be found in [CEDAW/C/BIH/CO/3](#).

The reports that the Committee will review during the session as well as other documentation can be found on the [webpage](#) of the Committee.

### **Panel Discussion on Women and HIV/AIDS**

On 25 July 2013, in the morning (11:30 to 13:00), the Committee will host a high-level discussion on Women and HIV/AIDS organized by a UN Women/UNAIDS/UNDP Task Force on HIV/AIDS. This event, with the participation of the UNAIDS Executive Director, Michel Sidibé, will be publicly webcast. It aims at deepening the knowledge and understanding of how efforts to address HIV/AIDS amongst women and girls can be strengthened through working with CEDAW.

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

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 1979, and entered into force on 3 September 1981. Often described as an international bill of rights for women, the Convention both defines discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. Since its entry into force, the Convention has achieved near-universal acceptance, with 187 States parties.

The Convention defines discrimination against women as "... any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field".

By accepting the Convention, States commit themselves to undertake a series of measures to end discrimination against women in all forms, including: incorporating the principle of equality of men and women in their legal system; abolishing all discriminatory laws and adopting appropriate ones prohibiting discrimination against women; establishing public institutions to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination; and ensuring elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organizations or enterprises.

## **Optional Protocol to the Convention**

On 22 December 2000, the Optional Protocol to the Convention entered into force, by which States parties recognize the competence of the Committee to receive and consider communications submitted by individuals or groups of individuals claiming to be victims of a violation of their rights under the Convention.

To date, 104 of the Convention's 187 States parties have accepted the Optional Protocol. Before the Committee will consider a complaint, it first must establish its admissibility under the terms of the Optional Protocol. The Optional Protocol also enables the Committee, upon the fulfilment of certain criteria, to undertake inquiries into possible grave or systematic violations of women's rights.

## **Membership**

The Committee is made up of 23 experts of high moral standing and recognized competence in the field of women's rights. Members are nominated and elected by the States parties and serve in their personal capacity.

The Committee Members are: Ayse Feride Acar (Turkey); Noor Al-Jehani (Qatar); Nicole Ameline (France); Barbara Evelyn Bailey (Jamaica); Olindia Bareiro-Bobadilla (Paraguay); Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani (Algeria); Niklas Bruun (Finland); Naela Mohamed Gabr (Egypt); Hilary Gbedemah (Ghana); Nahla Haidar (Lebanon); Ruth Halperin-Kaddari (Israel); Yoko Hayashi (Japan); Ismat Jahan (Bangladesh); Dalia Leinarte (Lithuania); Violeta Neubauer (Slovenia); Theodora Oby Nwankwo (Nigeria); Pramila Patten (Mauritius); Silvia Pimentel (Brazil); Maria Helena Lopes de Jesus Pires (Timor-Leste); Biancamaria Pomeranzi (Italy); Patricia Schulz (Switzerland); Dubravka Šimonović (Croatia) and Xiaoqiao Zou (China).

Ms. Ameline is the Chairperson. The Vice-Chairpersons are Ms. Jahan, Ms. Neubauer and Ms. Patten, and the Rapporteur is Ms. Bailey.

## **Proposed Programme of Work**

### **Monday, 8 July**

- 10 a.m. Opening of Session, adoption of agenda
- 3 p.m. Informal meeting with non-governmental organizations
- 4:30 p.m. Informal meeting with national human rights institutions

### **Tuesday, 9 July**

- 10 a.m. Cuba combined seventh and eighth periodic report (CEDAW/C/CUB/7-8)
- 3 p.m. Cuba (continued)

**Wednesday, 10 July**

10 a.m. Afghanistan combined initial and second periodic report (CEDAW/C/AFG/1-2)

3 p.m. Afghanistan (continued)

**Thursday, 11 July**

10 a.m. Democratic Republic of the Congo combined sixth and seventh periodic report (CEDAW/C/COD/6-7)

3 p.m. Democratic Republic of the Congo (continued)

**Friday, 12 July**

10 a.m. Dominican Republic combined sixth and seventh periodic report (CEDAW/C/DOM/6-7)

3 p.m. Dominican Republic (continued)

**Monday, 15 July**

10 a.m. Closed meeting

3 p.m. Informal meeting with non-governmental organizations

4:30 p.m. Informal meeting with national human rights institutions

**Tuesday, 16 July**

10 a.m. Cape Verde combined seventh and eighth periodic report (CEDAW/C/CPV/7-8)

3 p.m. Cape Verde (continued)

**Wednesday, 17 July**

10 a.m. United Kingdom seventh periodic report (CEDAW/C/GBR/7 and Add.1 and Add.2)

3 p.m. United Kingdom (continued)

**Thursday, 18 July**

10 a.m. Serbia combined second and third periodic report (CEDAW/C/SRB/2-3)

3 p.m. Serbia (continued)

### **Friday, 19 July**

10 a.m. Bosnia and Herzegovina combined fourth and fifth periodic report (CEDAW/C/BIH/4-5)

3 p.m. Bosnia and Herzegovina (continued)

### **Thursday, 25 July**

11:30 a.m. High-level panel discussion on women and HIV/AIDS organized by the UN Women/UNAIDS/UNDP Task Force on HIV/AIDS

### **Friday, 26 July**

3 p.m. Closing of the session

Live webcasts of the session can be viewed on <http://www.treatybodywebcast.org/>.

The Committee's concluding observations will be made available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws55.htm> on Friday 26 July, after which interviews can be arranged with Committee members.

To learn more about the Committee on the Elimination of the Discrimination against Women, visit: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/>

To arrange an interview with a Committee member, please contact Jakob Schneider (+41 22 917 9301 / [jschneider@ohchr.org](mailto:jschneider@ohchr.org))

For more information and other media requests, please contact Liz Throssell (+41 (0) 22 917 9434/ 079 752 0488) [ethrossell@ohchr.org](mailto:ethrossell@ohchr.org)

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