



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

Distr.: General  
10 February 2009

Original: English

---

## Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Forty-third session

19 January-6 February 2009

### Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

#### Cameroon

1. The Committee considered the second and third periodic reports of Cameroon (CEDAW/C/CMR/3) at its 875th and 876th meetings, on 28 January 2009. The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/CMR/Q/3 and the responses of Cameroon are contained in CEDAW/C/CMR/Q/3/Add.1.

#### Introduction

2. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for its second and third periodic reports.

3. The Committee also expresses its appreciation to the State party for its written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by the pre-session working group. The Committee further expresses its appreciation to the State party for its oral presentation and further clarifications given in response to the questions posed orally by the Committee.

4. The Committee commends the State party for sending a delegation headed by the Ambassador of its Permanent Mission in Geneva and comprising representatives of the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family and the Ministry of Justice.

#### Positive aspects

5. The Committee notes with appreciation that in January 2005 the State party ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

6. The Committee notes with appreciation the close collaboration of the State party with United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and other civil society groups in the promotion of women's human rights and gender equality.



7. The Committee welcomes the State party's opening of a law reform process seeking to amend all discriminatory legal provisions which are considered to be contrary to the Convention. It also welcomes the adoption in July 2005 of a domestic law relating to the status of refugees. The Committee further welcomes the strategies developed by the State party to reduce poverty and improve the social conditions of the population, particularly of women.

#### **Principal areas of concern and recommendations**

8. **While recalling the obligation of the State party to implement all the provisions of the Convention systematically and continuously, the Committee views the concerns and recommendations identified in the present concluding observations as requiring priority attention. Consequently, the Committee calls on the State party to focus on those areas in its implementation activities and to report on action taken and results achieved in its next periodic report. It also calls on the State party to submit the present concluding observations to all relevant ministries, the parliament and the judiciary in order to ensure their effective implementation.**

#### **Parliament**

9. **While reaffirming that the Government has the primary responsibility and is in particular accountable for the full implementation of the State party's obligations under the Convention, the Committee stresses that the Convention is binding on all branches of Government, and it invites the State party to encourage its national parliament, in line with its mandate and procedures, where appropriate, to take the necessary steps with regard to the implementation of these concluding observations and the Government's next reporting process under the Convention.**

#### **Legal status of the Convention**

10. While noting that, in accordance with article 45 of the State party's Constitution, international legal instruments ratified by the State party take precedence over national laws, the Committee remains concerned at the absence of domestic legislation prohibiting discrimination against women and on sanctions for such discrimination.

11. **The Committee urges the State party to enact appropriate national legislation containing a prohibition of discrimination against women that encompasses both direct and indirect discrimination, in line with article 1 of the Convention, and sanctions, when appropriate, in line with article 2 (b) of the Convention.**

#### **Visibility of the Convention and the Optional Protocol**

12. The Committee is concerned that the provisions of the Convention and its Optional Protocol, as well as the Committee's general recommendations, are not sufficiently known across all branches of the Government, and by women themselves, in particular women living in rural areas.

13. **The Committee urges the State party to ensure that the Convention, the Optional Protocol and the Committee's general recommendations are made an**

**integral part of education and training for members of the legal profession and the judiciary. It also recommends that the State party guarantee that judges at all levels, particularly judges from customary courts, are adequately trained in human rights and on the provisions of the Convention and its Optional Protocol, and that women have access to the courts on equal terms with men. It further urges the State party to ensure that information on the Convention is provided to women and community leaders, through the use of appropriate media.**

#### **Remaining discriminatory provisions**

14. The Committee notes a lack of progress in the elimination of discriminatory laws and is concerned at the lack of priority given to comprehensive legal reform to eliminate sex-discriminatory provisions, and it regrets that the relevant bills in this context have not yet been promulgated. The Committee also remains concerned at discriminatory provisions that still remain, inter alia, in the Penal Code, the Civil Status Registration Ordinance and the Civil Code dealing with adultery, polygamy, ownership of trade, nationality, widowhood and the family home. The Committee reiterates the concern expressed in the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee against Torture (CAT/C/CR/31/6) regarding the fact that the Criminal Code exempts a rapist from punishment if he subsequently marries the victim. The Committee is also concerned about contradictions and inconsistencies resulting from the application of statutory and customary laws in the State party and that customary laws that discriminate against women and are incompatible with the Convention remain in force.

**15. The Committee reminds the State party of the importance of a coherent and unified legal system and urges the State party to accelerate its law review process and work effectively with the parliament to ensure that all discriminatory legislation is amended or repealed to bring it into compliance with the Convention and the Committee's general recommendations. It urges the State party to set a clear time frame for such reforms, including the passage of the proposed amendments to the Penal Code, the Civil Status Registration Ordinance and the Civil Code. It also requests the State party to raise the awareness of legislators regarding the need to give priority attention to such reforms in order to achieve de jure equality for women and compliance with the State party's international treaty obligations. In line with its previous concluding comments, made in 2000, the Committee reiterates the need for the State party to undertake a comprehensive reform of legislation as a matter of urgency in order to promote and protect equality and human rights for women.**

16. The Committee welcomes the draft law on the Family Code, which sets the minimum legal age for marriage at 18 years for both women and men, and reiterates the concern expressed in the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/15/Add.164) that the different minimum legal age for marriage, set at 18 for men and 15 for women, constitutes discrimination against women.

**17. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that the minimum age of marriage for women is raised to 18, in accordance with article 16 of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 21. It also urges the State party to adopt the draft law on the Family Code.**

**National machinery for the advancement of women**

18. The Committee welcomes the establishment in 2004 of the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms and the projects designed to combat the various forms of discrimination against women, but notes with concern that the National Commission does not have a specific mandate dealing with gender equality. Moreover, it is concerned about the lack of transparency and degree of independence of the National Commission and that it may not comply with the Paris Principles.

**19. The Committee calls upon the State party to review the composition and guarantee the independence of the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms and to assess its compliance with the Paris Principles. The Committee also recommends that the State party establish a deputy Gender Ombudsperson with a specific mandate to promote the rights of women.**

20. The Committee welcomes the national plan prepared by the State party for combating disparities between the sexes. It also welcomes the poverty reduction strategy paper and the initiatives developed by the State party for the advancement of women in the context of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. However, the Committee regrets that insufficient information was provided by the State party regarding the outcome and status of implementation of these initiatives. It also regrets the lack of information regarding the budget allocated by the State party for these purposes.

**21. The Committee calls upon the State party to provide detailed information on the outcome and status of implementation of the national plan for combating disparities between the sexes prepared by the State party and on the monitoring mechanisms that have been established. It also calls upon the State party to provide detailed and specific information on the budget that has been allocated for the initiatives aimed at the advancement of women. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the necessary authority and allocate adequate human and financial resources to coordinate implementation of the Convention and work effectively for the promotion of gender equality.**

**Temporary special measures**

22. The Committee welcomes the efforts made by the State party to accelerate equality between men and women, in particular the scholarship policy. However, it is concerned that those efforts benefit only a limited number of women and that there is a lack of monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of these measures. The Committee is concerned that no temporary special measures have been utilized by the State party as a matter of general policy to accelerate the achievement of de facto equality between women and men in all areas of the Convention and to improve the implementation of women's rights, in particular with regard to women in the workplace and the participation of women in politics. The Committee also notes a lack of understanding of the concept of temporary special measures, as stipulated in article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and further explained in the Committee's general recommendation No. 25.

**23. The Committee encourages the State party to provide for specific legislation for the adoption of temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general**

**recommendation No. 25 in order to accelerate the realization of women's de facto equality with men in all areas.**

#### **Stereotypes and cultural practices**

24. The Committee commends the State party for the efforts made to overcome stereotypes and prejudices related to responsibilities of women. However, the Committee remains concerned about the persistence of patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes concerning women's roles and responsibilities that discriminate against women and perpetuate their subordination within the family and society. It notes that such discriminatory attitudes and stereotypes constitute serious obstacles to women's enjoyment of their human rights and the fulfilment of the rights enshrined in the Convention.

**25. In line with its concluding observations of 2000, the Committee urges the State party to continue to take measures, including the enactment of national legislation, to modify or eliminate harmful traditional and cultural practices that discriminate against women, in accordance with articles 2 (f) and 5 (a) of the Convention. It urges the State party to intensify cooperation in this regard with civil society organizations, women's groups, community leaders, traditional leaders, teachers and the media. The Committee invites the State party to increase its efforts to design and implement long-term strategies, as well as education and awareness-raising programmes targeting women and men at all levels of society with a view to creating an enabling environment for the elimination of stereotypes and harmful traditional practices.**

#### **Violence against women**

26. The Committee welcomes the draft law on the prevention and punishment of violence against women and gender-based discrimination, but regrets that the draft law has not yet been adopted. It also expresses concern at the high rate of violence against women and girls, such as widespread domestic violence perpetrated by husbands and other male relatives, and at the fact that no specific law on violence against women has been adopted. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned that such violence appears to be socially legitimized by a culture of silence and impunity and is socially accepted in most cases. The Committee is concerned that cases of violence are underreported, that there is no specific legislation addressing domestic violence and that marital rape is not recognized as a criminal offence. The Committee regrets the lack of data and information on violence against women and girls, disaggregated by age group. It is further concerned about the lack of sufficient shelters for victims of violence and the delay in the adoption of the draft law on the prevention and punishment of violence against women and gender-based discrimination.

**27. The Committee urges the State party to accelerate the adoption of the draft law on the prevention and punishment of violence against women and gender-based discrimination and to give priority attention to combating violence against women and girls, in particular domestic violence. It requests the State party to raise public awareness, through the media and education programmes, of the fact that all forms of violence against women constitute discrimination under the Convention and therefore in violation of women's human rights. The Committee calls upon the State party to ensure that violence**

against women and girls, including domestic violence, marital rape and all forms of sexual abuse, constitutes a criminal offence; that perpetrators are prosecuted and punished and victims rehabilitated; and that women and girls who are victims of violence have access to immediate means of redress and protection. The Committee requests the State party to remove any impediments faced by women and girls in gaining access to justice and recommends that legal aid be made available to all victims of violence, including through the establishment of legal aid clinics in rural areas. The Committee recommends the implementation of training for the judiciary and public officials, in particular law enforcement personnel, health-service providers and community development officers, in order to ensure that they are sensitized to all forms of violence against women and girls and can provide adequate gender-sensitive support to victims.

#### **Female genital mutilation and other harmful practices**

28. The Committee is seriously concerned at the persistence in some areas of the country of harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and breast ironing, and that the State party has not taken sustained and systematic action directed at their elimination. It also reiterates the concern expressed in its previous concluding observations, as also expressed by the Committee against Torture (see CAT/C/34/Add.17) and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (see E/C.12/1/Add.40), that practices impeding the enjoyment of women's rights, such as female genital mutilation and breast ironing, are still occurring in some parts of the country and that there is no law to punish them. The Committee is also concerned that little sensitization is being done to eradicate these practices.

29. **The Committee urges the State party to enact national legislation to prohibit female genital mutilation, as well as any other harmful practice, such as breast ironing, in all instances, to strengthen its awareness-raising and educational efforts, targeted at both women and men, with the support of civil society, and to eliminate the practices of female genital mutilation and breast ironing and their underlying cultural justifications. It also encourages the State party to devise programmes for alternate sources of income for those who perform female genital mutilation as a means of livelihood.**

#### **Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution**

30. The Committee welcomes the measures taken by the State party to combat human trafficking and commends the State for the adoption of Law No. 2005/015 of December 2005 on child trafficking and slavery and the ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its two Optional Protocols. While noting the efforts taken by the State party to combat human trafficking and exploitation of children (including girls) for commercial ends, including the various subregional, regional and international initiatives, the Committee is concerned about the increase in the State party of trafficking and exploitation of women for commercial ends. It also regrets that most of the initiatives of the State party in this context address children and that there are no specific strategies to address the problem of exploitation and prostitution of women. Furthermore, the Committee regrets the lack of data provided by the State party with regard to the trafficking and prostitution of women and girls.

31. The Committee calls on the State party to take measures to address the main causes of trafficking and prostitution of women in order to further curb these phenomena. In this regard, the Committee calls upon the State party to educate women and girls on career options in order to eliminate prostitution as the only option. It also recommends that the State party domesticate and apply all regional and international instruments that have been ratified, create shelters for victims of trafficking and take all necessary steps to ensure the rehabilitation and social reintegration of the victims. The Committee also urges the State party to give priority attention to the protection, including witness protection, counselling and rehabilitation of victims, especially girl children. The Committee calls on the State party to enhance measures aimed at the prevention of trafficking, including economic measures to reduce the vulnerability of women and girls, as well as awareness-raising and information campaigns. The Committee also calls upon the State party to provide statistical and detailed information on the trafficking and prostitution of women and girls.

#### **Political participation and participation in public life**

32. The Committee welcomes the increase in the representation of women in decision-making positions and commends the State party's efforts to involve women at the organizational level of elections. However, it expresses concern that the rate of representation of women in these positions is low as compared to that of men. It is also concerned about the lack of women's representation at the international level and regrets that there are still many prejudices against promoting women in this regard, generally based on their alleged unavailability.

33. The Committee requests the State party to undertake national awareness-raising campaigns about the importance of women's participation in public and political life, particularly in rural areas. It calls upon the State party to step up its efforts to increase the participation of women in decision-making positions as well as in the public life of the country. It also recommends that the State party promote gender equality among political parties and strengthen efforts to increase women's participation in political and public life, including at the international level. The Committee encourages the State party to review the use of temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, recommending that the application of such measures to increase women's political representation include the establishment of benchmarks with timetables or increased quotas.

#### **Education**

34. The Committee welcomes the steps taken by the State party to promote gender equity in both formal and informal education in the country. In this regard, the Committee commends the State party for the scholarship policy, the Educational Support Programme, with a mandatory quota of 40 per cent for girls. However, the Committee is concerned that, because of a number of factors, including poverty and social stereotypes, not all girls benefit from these measures, in particular girls living in rural areas. The Committee is also concerned that fewer girls complete the secondary and higher levels of education. Furthermore, it is concerned about the inadequate educational infrastructure and teaching materials, the limited number of

qualified teachers, the marked difference in the quality of education between urban and rural areas and the lack of disaggregated, updated and statistical information on the rates of young women and young men who attend university.

**35. The Committee urges the State party to adopt comprehensive measures to improve the education of girls living in rural areas and to provide detailed and updated information on their educational situation. It also calls upon the State party to reinforce the training and recruitment of qualified teachers, allocate sufficient resources to ensure that schools have the required materials and undertake awareness-raising activities with a focus on helping parents to understand the important role of education for girls. The Committee also requests the State party to provide detailed and complete information on the number of young women and men who attend university, disaggregated by sex, age and field of study, in its next periodic report.**

### **Employment**

36. The Committee notes with concern that, while labour legislation offers women and men the same opportunity for employment and the right to equal pay and treatment for the same work, women are concentrated in certain sectors, namely, farming and domestic service. It also notes that women are predominantly employed in the informal sector, resulting in their exclusion from social security programmes. The Committee is further concerned about certain provisions that discriminate against women, such as Decree 81-02 of 1981, which allows a husband to oppose his wife's employment by invoking the interest of the household and children. The Committee further notes with concern the prevalence of sexual harassment in the workplace and the absence of legislation to address this.

**37. The Committee recommends the adoption of measures to guarantee the implementation of all the provisions of article 11 of the Convention and the implementation of the relevant conventions of the International Labour Organization that have been ratified by Cameroon. The Committee urges the State party to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in the labour market, including through the use of special temporary measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and general recommendation No. 25. It also recommends that the State party pay particular attention to women working in the informal sector with a view to ensuring their access to social services. The Committee urges the State party to review, as a matter of priority, discriminatory provisions with a view to their repeal or amendment, in accordance with article 11 of the Convention. The Committee also urges the State party to enact legislation prohibiting sexual harassment in the workplace, including sanctions, civil remedies and compensation for victims.**

### **Health**

38. The Committee welcomes a number of efforts undertaken by the State party to improve women's health since the examination of the initial report and notes with appreciation that the State party has accorded attention to maternal and adolescent health, with special emphasis on reproductive health issues, family planning and the fight against HIV/AIDS. However, the Committee remains concerned at the inadequacy of health-care facilities, particularly in rural areas, and regrets the lack



of information on access to health services disaggregated by sex, area, age and other variables.

**39. The Committee urges the State party to continue its efforts to improve the country's health infrastructure. It also urges the State party to improve women's access to quality and affordable health care and health-related services, particularly in rural areas. It also calls on the State party to strengthen its efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS.**

40. The Committee remains concerned at the high incidence of maternal mortality, the leading cause of which is the practice of unsafe abortion. The Committee is also concerned that no strategies for the reduction of maternal mortality have been developed. It further notes that women are not able to opt for abortion in the case of rape, even if abortion in this context does not constitute a criminal offence according to the Penal Code. It also regrets that no statistical information has been provided on the number of abortions, or on other causes of mortality for women, and that this lack of reporting is due to the State party's culture of silence.

**41. The Committee calls upon the State party to assess the impact of abortion on the maternal mortality rate and to give consideration to the reform or modification of its legal status. It also calls upon the State party to carry out measures in order to effectively implement the provisions that regulate legal abortion. Furthermore, it invites the State party to strengthen its programmes to enhance women's knowledge of reproductive health issues and recommends that sex education be widely promoted and targeted at adolescent girls and boys. The Committee requests that the State party provide detailed information on the number of abortions, both clandestine and legal, the main causes of maternal mortality and the measures taken to reduce maternal mortality, as well as their impact, in its next periodic report to the Committee.**

#### **Rural women**

42. While welcoming the efforts made by the State party to improve the situation of rural women, such as the Rural Development Sector Strategy, the mechanisms set up by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Committee regrets the lack of statistics provided to evaluate the impact of such programmes. The Committee is concerned at the disadvantaged position of women and girls in rural areas, which is characterized by poverty, illiteracy, difficulties in access to health and social services and a lack of participation in decision-making processes at the community level. The Committee is also concerned that traditional female stereotypes are more prevalent in the rural communities and that rural women often lack effective access to the ownership of land. It is further concerned about women's limited knowledge of their property rights and their lack of capacity to claim them.

**43. The Committee calls upon the State party to take the necessary measures to increase and strengthen the participation of women in designing and implementing local development plans and to pay special attention to the needs of rural women by ensuring that they participate in decision-making processes and have improved access to health, education, clean water and sanitation services. The Committee also urges the State party to take appropriate measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against rural women with respect to ownership of land. It also invites the State party to enhance the awareness of women, especially rural women, regarding their land and**

**property rights through legal literacy programmes. The Committee requests the State party to include in its next report comprehensive data on the situation of rural women in all areas covered by the Convention. It also requests the State party to provide statistical and detailed information on the direct support that has been provided, through different initiatives, to rural women. The Committee encourages the State party to seek technical and financial support from United Nations agencies.**

#### **Refugee women**

44. The Committee welcomes the adoption in 2005 of the domestic law relating to the status of refugees by the State party and appreciates the fact that the law incorporates the refugee definitions of the 1951 Convention and the Organization of African Unity Convention. The Committee welcomes the standard operating procedure on prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence established by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in collaboration with various partners, including the Directorate of National Security, Ministry of Interior. However, it is concerned that the State party has not yet adopted the Decree required in order for key provisions of the 2005 law to be implemented.

**45. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt as a matter of urgency the Decree in order for key provisions of the 2005 Law on the Status of Refugees to be implemented, mainly the provisions on registration, the refugee status determination procedure and the issuance of asylum-seeker and refugee certificates.**

#### **Family life**

46. In line with its previous concluding observations, the Committee is concerned at remaining provisions that discriminate against women in the context of family life. The Committee is particularly concerned about certain provisions in the Civil Code, which preserves the notion of the husband as the head of the family, and the Civil Status Registration Ordinance, in which polygamy is regulated as the exclusive preserve of men. The Committee is also concerned at discrimination against women in Cameroon in matters of inheritance and regrets that, according to most traditions, a woman has no right to inherit from her parents, especially her father, and that only male children are regarded as heirs.

**47. The Committee urges the State party to harmonize civil and customary law with article 16 of the Convention and to complete its law reform in the area of marriage and family relations in order to bring its legislative framework into compliance with article 16 of the Convention, within a specific time frame. The Committee also calls upon the State party to implement measures aimed at eliminating polygamy, as called for in the Committee's general recommendation No. 21 on equality in marriage and family relations.**

#### **Data collection and analysis**

48. The Committee welcomes the statistical information provided in the report of the State party. However, it regrets that the statistical information on the situation of women in all areas covered by the Convention was insufficient. The Committee is

also concerned about the lack of information on the impact of measures taken and on results achieved in various areas of the Convention.

**49. The Committee calls upon the State party to strengthen its system of data collection, including the use of measurable indicators to assess trends in the situation of women and progress towards women's de facto equality, and to allocate sufficient budgetary resources for that purpose. It invites the State party, if necessary, to seek international assistance for the development of such data-collection and analysis efforts. The Committee also requests the State party to include in its next report statistical data and analysis, disaggregated by sex and by rural and urban areas, indicating the impact of policy and programmatic measures and the results achieved.**

#### **Article 20, paragraph 1**

**50. The Committee encourages the State party to accept, as soon as possible, the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the meeting time of the Committee.**

#### **Preparation of next report**

**51. The Committee requests the State party to ensure the wide participation of all ministries and public bodies in the preparation of its next report, as well as to consult with non-governmental organizations during that phase.**

#### **Follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

**52. The Committee urges the State party to utilize fully, in the implementation of its obligations under the Convention, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which reinforce the provisions of the Convention, and requests the State party to include information thereon in its next periodic report.**

#### **Millennium Development Goals**

**53. The Committee also emphasizes that the full and effective implementation of the Convention is indispensable for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It calls for the integration of a gender perspective and for the explicit reflection of the provisions of the Convention in all efforts aimed at the achievement of the Goals, and requests the State party to include information thereon in its next periodic report.**

#### **Ratification of other treaties**

**54. The Committee notes that States' adherence to the nine major international human rights instruments<sup>1</sup> enhances the enjoyment by women of**

---

<sup>1</sup> The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. Therefore, the Committee encourages the Government of Cameroon to ratify the treaties to which it is not yet a party, namely, the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.**

**Dissemination of concluding observations**

**55. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Cameroon of the present concluding observations in order to make the people, including Government officials, politicians, parliamentarians and women's and human rights organizations, aware of the measures that have been taken to ensure the de jure and de facto equality of women, as well as of the further steps required in this regard. It requests the State party to continue to strengthen the dissemination, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, of the Convention, its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".**

**Follow-up to concluding observations**

**56. The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps undertaken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 15 and 27 above. The Committee also requests the State party to consider seeking technical cooperation and assistance, including advisory services, if necessary and when appropriate, for the implementation of those recommendations.**

**Date of next report**

**57. The Committee requests the State party to respond to the concerns expressed in the present concluding observations in its next periodic report under article 18 of the Convention. The Committee invites the State party to submit its combined fourth and fifth periodic reports in 2011.**