



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

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## Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Pre-sessional working group

Eighty-eighth session

Geneva, 30 October–3 November 2023

### Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

#### Report of the pre-sessional working group

1. It is the practice of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to convene a pre-sessional working group for five days to prepare lists of issues and questions relating to the periodic reports that will be considered by the Committee at an upcoming session.
2. The Committee decided that the pre-sessional working group for its eighty-eighth session would meet from 30 October to 3 November 2023, immediately after the eighty-sixth session, in order to ensure that sufficient time would be available to States parties to submit their written replies to the lists of issues and questions and to ensure their timely translation.
3. The following experts were designated as members of the pre-sessional working group and attended the session:  
  
Brenda Akia  
Yamila González Ferrer  
Nahla Haidar  
Marianne Mikko  
Natasha Stott Despoja
4. The pre-sessional working group elected Ms. Haidar as its Chair.
5. The pre-sessional working group prepared lists of issues and questions in relation to the reports of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Saudi Arabia, in addition to lists of issues and questions prior to the submission of the reports of Ireland, Israel, Mauritius, Mexico and Romania under the simplified reporting procedure. The pre-sessional working group did not adopt a list of issues and questions prior to the submission of the seventh periodic report of the Bahamas, as initially scheduled, as the State party had informed the Committee that it would



submit its report under the traditional reporting procedure. The pre-sessional working group was guided by Committee decisions 49/IX, 59/IV and 64/II, according to which the Committee decided to limit lists of issues and questions and lists of issues and questions prior to reporting to 20 and 25 paragraphs, respectively. However, in practice and exceptionally, some lists of issues and questions contain a maximum of 23 paragraphs.

6. Ms. González Ferrer abstained during the adoption of the list of issues and questions prior to the submission of the seventh periodic report of Israel.

7. To assist in the preparation of the lists of issues and questions, the pre-sessional working group had at its disposal electronic versions of the core documents of the States parties listed above, with the exception of Saudi Arabia. It also had at its disposal the reports of the States parties listed above, with the exception of Ireland, Israel, Mauritius, Mexico and Romania, which will submit their periodic reports in response to the lists of issues and questions prior to reporting. It further had before it the general recommendations adopted by the Committee; draft lists of issues and questions and lists of issues and questions prior to reporting prepared by the secretariat; and other pertinent information, including concluding observations of the Committee and other treaty bodies, as relevant. In preparing the lists, the pre-sessional working group paid particular attention to the States parties' follow-up to the concluding observations of the Committee on their previous reports.

8. The pre-sessional working group benefited from written and oral information submitted by entities of the United Nations system, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations with regard to the States parties listed above.

9. The lists of issues and questions and lists of issues and questions prior to reporting adopted by the pre-sessional working group were transmitted to the States parties concerned and are contained in the following documents:

(a) List of issues and questions in relation to the tenth periodic report of the Lao People's Democratic Republic ([CEDAW/C/LAO/Q/10](#));

(b) List of issues and questions in relation to the fifth periodic report of Saudi Arabia ([CEDAW/C/SAU/Q/5](#));

(c) List of issues and questions prior to the submission of the eighth periodic report of Ireland ([CEDAW/C/IRL/QPR/8](#));

(d) List of issues and questions prior to the submission of the seventh periodic report of Israel ([CEDAW/C/ISR/QPR/7](#));

(e) List of issues and questions prior to the submission of the ninth periodic report of Mauritius ([CEDAW/C/MUS/QPR/9](#));

(f) List of issues and questions prior to the submission of the tenth periodic report of Mexico ([CEDAW/C/MEX/QPR/10](#));

(g) List of issues and questions prior to the submission of the ninth periodic report of Romania ([CEDAW/C/ROU/QPR/9](#)).

10. In accordance with Committee decisions 22/IV, 25/II and 31/III, the lists of issues and questions were focused on themes addressed by the Convention, as well as on the linkages between relevant themes and the Sustainable Development Goals. Those themes included the constitutional and legislative framework and the definition of discrimination against women; withdrawal of reservations to the Convention; the visibility of the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee's general recommendations and legal complaint mechanisms; women's rights and gender equality in relation to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, recovery efforts and global crises; limitation of freedom of movement, segregation

and exclusion of women in relation to public spaces and education settings; women's access to justice; upholding international humanitarian law and the protection of civilians, in particular women and children; women and peace and security; national machineries for the advancement of women; national human rights institutions; non-governmental organizations; temporary special measures for the advancement of women; stereotypes and harmful practices; gender-based violence against women and girls; forced evictions and house demolitions; trafficking in women and girls and exploitation of prostitution; the equal participation of women in political and public life; nationality and family reunification; birth registration; education; employment and sexual harassment in the workplace; health; economic empowerment and social benefits; climate change and disaster risk reduction; rural women; equality before the law; equality in marriage and family relations; and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by disadvantaged groups of women, such as older women, women living with HIV/AIDS, women with disabilities, Indigenous women, women and girls in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, women and girls from Bedouin communities, women of African descent, Creole women, Roma women, women belonging to other ethnic minority groups, women in detention, women human rights defenders, internally displaced women, women migrant workers, asylum-seeking and refugee women and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women.

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