



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

Distr.: General
1 October 2007

Original: English

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**
Thirty-ninth session

Summary record of the 809th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 10 August 2007, at 11.30 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Šimonović

Contents

Adoption of the report of the Committee on its thirty-ninth session

Provisional agenda for the fortieth session

Statement by the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women

Statement by the Chairperson

Closure of the session

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent *within one week of the date of this document* to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

Any corrections to the record of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

07-45554 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 12.05 p.m.

Adoption of the report of the Committee on its thirty-ninth session (CEDAW/C/2007/III/L.1, CEDAW/C/2007/III/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/COK/CO/1/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/BLZ/CO/4/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/BRA/CO/6/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/EST/CO/4/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/GIN/CO/6/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/HON/CO/6/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/HUN/CO/6/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/IDN/CO/5/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/JOR/CO/4/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/KEN/CO/6/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/LIE/CO/3/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/NZL/CO/6/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/7/CRP.1, CEDAW/C/KOR/CO/6/CRP.1 and CEDAW/C/SGP/CO/6/CRP.1)

1. **Ms. Dairiam**, Rapporteur, introduced document CEDAW/C/2007/III/L.1, containing sections of the Committee's draft report, and the conference room papers, containing its concluding comments, as amended, on the 15 reports by States parties which it had considered during the session.

2. **The Chairperson** said she took it that the Committee wished to adopt the sections of the draft report contained in document CEDAW/C/2007/III/L.1 and the conference room papers, as amended, setting out the Committee's concluding comments on the 15 reports by States parties.

3. *It was so decided.*

4. **Ms. Dairiam**, Rapporteur, introduced the draft report of the Working Group of the Whole, contained in document CEDAW/C/2007/III/CRP.1. The report provided details of the activities and action taken by the Committee under items 5, 6 and 7. Under item 6, Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee, the Committee would also adopt draft decision 39/I, pertaining to the Committee's request to the General Assembly for an extension of its meeting time. The Committee had taken note of the statement of programme budget implications that it had received in conjunction with that decision and wished to put on record its request that the basis for calculating the costs of the requested extended meeting time be revisited and that the parameters for calculating the current requirements be clearly explained.

5. **The Chairperson** said she took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft report of the Working Group of the Whole contained in document CEDAW/C/2007/III/CRP.1, as amended, for inclusion

in the Committee's draft report as its report on agenda items 5, 6 and 7.

6. *It was so decided.*

7. *The draft report of the Committee on its thirty-ninth session was adopted, as a whole and as amended, subject to finalization by the Rapporteur.*

Provisional agenda for the fortieth session
(CEDAW/C/2007/III/CRP.1)

8. **Ms. Dairiam**, Rapporteur, drew attention to the provisional agenda for the fortieth session, which was to be found in the report of the Working Group of the Whole (CEDAW/C/2007/III/CRP.1).

9. *The provisional agenda for the fortieth session was adopted.*

Statement by the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women

10. **Ms. Mayanja** (Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women) said that the thirty-ninth session had been most productive. The Committee had examined the reports of 15 States parties, one of which had reported for the first time. It had also studied voluminous materials submitted by NGOs and entities of the United Nations system.

11. Despite the gains reported in several areas, the Committee had found continuing discrimination against women in relation to all the provisions of the Convention. The dialogues held with the States parties during the session had been successful and constructive, however, and, together with the Committee's concluding comments, would provide a solid basis for future work. The Committee's activities created momentum for States parties to enact the necessary legislation to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and to introduce temporary special measures to ensure that the goal of equality was attained.

12. NGOs, which had once again attended in large numbers, had made a significant contribution to the Committee's work, and she encouraged them to continue advocating for the promotion and protection of women's human rights. The important role played by United Nations entities in supporting

implementation of the Convention should also not be overlooked.

13. During the session, the Committee had taken action on three cases under the Optional Protocol, continued its discussion of draft general recommendations on migrant women and on article 2 and reviewed the results of the sixth Inter-Committee meeting and nineteenth meeting of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies. The outcome of the session had already been shared in an informal meeting at which States parties had been encouraged to submit overdue initial reports and briefed on the Committee's request for an extension of its meeting time, a request she strongly supported. She noted with appreciation the invitation extended by the Government of Switzerland for the Committee to hold an informal meeting in October 2007 in Geneva, which would serve as an opportunity for the Committee to further address its working methods.

14. She was heartened by the Committee's keen interest in the reform processes under way in the United Nations as they pertained to the strengthening of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and she hoped to count on its continued support in this respect. In her capacity as Special Adviser, she had benefited greatly from working with all the members of the Committee, and she would make every effort to ensure that strong links were maintained even after the responsibility for servicing the Committee had been transferred to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. She paid special tribute to the staff of the Division for the Advancement of Women, who, through their hard work and dedication to the service of the Committee, had contributed so much during the past 25 years to the promotion and protection of the human rights and freedoms of women worldwide. She closed by wishing the Committee the best as it settled into its new location in Geneva.

Statement by the Chairperson

15. **The Chairperson** said that the thirty-ninth session had been remarkable for several reasons. Not only had the Committee celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary, but it had also completed an enormous workload. In addition to examining the reports of 15 States parties, it had adopted decisions on three cases pursuant to the Optional Protocol, and it had held a number of informal meetings with States parties,

entities of the United Nations system, national human rights institutions and NGO representatives.

16. She extended her appreciation to the States parties for some excellent constructive dialogues with the Committee, enabling it to examine in great detail the current status of Convention implementation in those countries. In all instances, the Committee experts had sought, together with the Government representatives, to identify strategies for further action and to find solutions to the challenges of persistent discrimination against women.

17. The Committee had been especially pleased to examine for the first time a seventh periodic report, that of Norway. It had also reviewed progress in six States parties that had previously reported to the Committee some four years before, which had meant that many Committee experts had had direct recollections of those earlier discussions, thus demonstrating the importance of timely reporting in ensuring consistent monitoring. She thanked the members of the Committee for the dedication and expertise that they brought to their work.

18. The Committee's twenty-fifth anniversary celebration had provided an opportunity to reflect both on its accomplishments so far and on the challenges ahead. The first of those challenges was to put the Committee on a sustainable path for dealing with its increasingly heavy workload. In the past two years, the Committee had made considerable headway towards clearing the backlog of reports, which, however, had not yet been completely eliminated. It was therefore essential that the Committee's proposal to the General Assembly for an extension of meeting time be accepted and implemented. She would do everything in her power as Chairperson to ensure that outcome, and she looked to all Committee members to help secure the full support of the General Assembly later in the year.

19. Having three annual sessions on a permanent basis would enable the Committee to consider reports and to deal with cases under the Optional Protocol in a timely manner. However, it would still be necessary, as a temporary measure for the coming biennium, to meet in parallel chambers during one session in both 2008 and 2009. That would ensure elimination of the backlog, prevent a new one from forming and allow the start of a process of engagement with States that had ratified the Convention many years before but had never reported.

20. Another challenge ahead was strengthening the Committee's impact on the wider human rights framework through interaction with other human rights treaty bodies. That might be accomplished through, for example, harmonization of working methods, drafting of joint general recommendations or joint discussions. The Committee's past workload had placed serious constraints on its participation in such common endeavours, but with the eventual elimination of the backlog, it would be better able to help shape the harmonized treaty bodies system and contribute to developments in the human rights area generally.

21. The current session had marked a turning point: it was the last one, after 25 years, in which the Committee would be supported by the Division for the Advancement of Women. In January 2008, that responsibility would be transferred to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. She wished to thank the Government of Switzerland for its invitation to hold a three-day informal working session in Geneva, which would include an orientation session with the Office of the High Commissioner. She expressed appreciation to all staff of the Division for the Advancement of Women for their assistance to the Committee over the preceding 25 years and for their professionalism and hard work and their dedication to the cause of women's human rights. The Committee looked forward to ongoing cooperation with the Division in the years to come.

Closure of the session

22. **The Chairperson** declared the thirty-ninth session closed.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.