



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Concluding observations on the combined seventh and
eighth periodic reports of Cuba**

Addendum

**Information provided by Cuba in follow-up to the
concluding observations***

[Date received: 12 October 2015]

* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not formally edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.



1. For preparation of Cuba's answers on steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 17 and 41, the following documents were considered:

- United Nations General Assembly resolution 42/60 of 30 November 1987;
- General recommendation No. 6 on "Effective National Machinery and Publicity";
- The Beijing Platform for Action, in particular strategic objective H.2, paragraph 205, on actions to be taken by national machinery;
- Reports of Cuba to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);
- Reports of the seminars for evaluation of the Action Plan of the Republic of Cuba for follow-up of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

2. Following analysis of these premises, on the **recommendation of CEDAW in paragraph 17 (a), which calls on the country to establish State machinery for the advancement of women and enhance coordination between the Federation of Cuban Women and Government agencies, in particular through the provision of adequate financial and human resources**, we observe the following:

3. The Cuban experience has shown that the Federation of Cuban Women, as State machinery, has been effective in the advancement of gender equality and empowerment of women in society.

4. When the Fourth World Conference on Women recommended that States create and/or improve national machinery for the advancement of women, the Federation of Cuban Women had already been working for more than three decades on enhancing the role of Cuban women in society, as well as on empowerment and equality.

5. The prestige of the Federation of Cuban Women and results achieved during that period led the Cuban Government to recognize it as the national machinery for the advancement of women (Council of State decision of 7 April 1997).

6. This designation also took into account two key factors: its origin and structure. The Federation of Cuban Women emerged in 1960 from women's desire to give shape to a common endeavour that would bring together the efforts of different organizations. This led to the formation of an organization having national, provincial, municipal and community structures.

7. In that spirit and in keeping with principles of activism and volunteer service, more than 4 million members have led the way in pursuing changes in the country in the economic, political and social spheres.

8. Paragraph 203 (b) of the Beijing Platform recommends that Governments, "Based on a strong political commitment, create a national machinery, where it does not exist, and strengthen, as appropriate, existing national machineries, for the advancement of women at the highest possible level of Government; it should have clearly defined mandates and authority; critical elements would be adequate resources and the ability and competence to influence policy and formulate and review legislation; among other things, it should perform policy analysis, undertake advocacy, communication, coordination and monitoring of implementation ..."

9. These principles and precepts are in keeping with the design, functions and mandate of the Federation of Cuban Women.
10. The Federation of Cuban Women forms relationships of coordination with agencies and institutions of the Cuban Government, advances gender issues on the institutional agenda, promotes strategies, plans and programmes and implements public policies for women's empowerment and gender equality.
11. The Federation is authorized to propose laws under the Constitution (art. 88 (d)) and, in that respect, participates actively in the legislative amendment processes taking place in the country, following the adoption in 2011 of the Economic and Social Policy Guidelines.
12. The Secretary General of the Federation of Cuban Women has been, since the Constitution of the National Assembly in 1976 and at each legislature, a member of the Council of State. She is invited to meetings of the Council of Ministers, which provides a forum for decision-making and policymaking.
13. This has ensured fulfilment of the principle adopted as strategic objective H.1, paragraph 203 (a), of the Beijing Programme of Action, which is to ensure that responsibility for matters relating to the advancement of women is vested in the highest possible level of Government.
14. In addition, the National Assembly of People's Power, the supreme organ of State power, has a standing Commission on Children, Youth and Women's Rights and Equality, presided over by a high-ranking officer of the Federation of Cuban Women. As part of the preparation preceding each session of the Assembly, information is provided relating to gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as the implementation of the concluding observations of CEDAW (CEDAW/C/CUB/CO/7-8).
15. This corresponds to strategic objective H1 203 (e) of the Beijing Programme of Action, which calls upon Governments to "report, on a regular basis, to legislative bodies on the progress of efforts, as appropriate, to mainstream gender concerns, taking into account the implementation of the Platform for Action".
16. With regard to the availability of human and financial resources, the Federation of Cuban Women has the distinctive feature of being self-financing. Its income is generated by monthly contributions from members, as well as by services provided by the organization.
17. Nevertheless, the Federation of Cuban Women, in performance of its functions as national machinery for the advancement of women, receives financial support from the Cuban Government.
18. The Federation of Cuban Women, as the national machinery for the advancement of women, also serves as a theoretical and methodological authority on gender issues, mainstreaming in public policies and sectoral measures, family issues, and policies regarding, inter alia, care, prevention, social services, prostitution, and trafficking in persons.
19. Main tasks carried out related to the training of human resources, development of sectoral measures and public policies, and periodic evaluation of agencies.
20. It has also developed its role in preparing contributions and comparative studies on the status of women, responding to questionnaires from the Office of the

High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Commission on the Status of Women, in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and in the work of CEDAW, inter alia. It is also consulted by United Nations agencies, funds and programmes with representations in Cuba about questions relating to cooperation or exchange projects on such matters.

21. These methods have generated a process of continuous feedback about women's demands and opinions and the country's responses to different situations.

22. With regard to the CEDAW recommendation contained in paragraph 17 (b) that the country use the Convention as the legal framework for the design of a comprehensive national plan of action to promote gender equality and put in place monitoring mechanisms to regularly assess progress towards achievement of established goals, we observe the following:

23. Cuba has a National Action Plan for Follow-up of the Fourth World Conference on Women, signed by the President of the Council of State (Council of State decision of 7 April 1997). Development of this Plan took into account the reality of Cuban women, the national and international context, our legislation and commitments assumed by the Cuban Government, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and recommendations emanating from its Committee on the occasion of the consideration of Cuba's periodic reports.

24. The National Action Plan involves all agencies of the Central Administration of the State in the fulfilment of 90 specific measures based on the 12 areas of special concern identified at Beijing.

25. In that spirit, the Council of State and Council of Ministers convene national evaluation seminars on the National Action Plan, a process for which the Federation of Cuban Women assumes the role of coordinator and in which each ministry and agency of the Central Administration of the State reports on advances made and challenges faced in implementing measures for which they are responsible.

26. This periodic mechanism of accountability has made it possible to identify steps taken, incorporate new goals, and to work towards a higher standard.

27. The holding of the third evaluation seminar of the National Action Plan of the Republic of Cuba on the follow-up to Beijing, with the participation of all involved agencies in the country, reaffirmed the position of the Federation of Cuban Women as the national machinery for advancement of women.

28. Article 1 of CEDAW guides, supports, promotes and mainstreams actions in favour of gender equality and non-discrimination. For example, the table below shows in general terms correspondence between the National Action Plan and the articles of the Convention.

Table 1
Correspondence between the National Action Plan and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women

<i>National Action Plan</i>	<i>CEDAW</i>
Women and employment	Article 11
Women and mass media	Article 5
Community service, education, health, preventive and social work	Articles 10 and 12 on health and education
Access to higher levels of decision-making	Articles 7 and 8 on political participation
Legislation (general, family, penal and international)	All the articles, especially 15 and 16 on equality before the law and marriage and family
Research and statistics	All the articles, especially 3
Sexual and reproductive rights	Articles 12 and 16

29. In summary, the Action Plan in force expresses the political will of the Cuban State, constitutes the cornerstone of the development of policies for women and provides continuity in the pursuit and development of gender equality in the country.

30. Accordingly, the Plan satisfies national needs while making it possible to comply with international commitments, in particular those emanating from the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

31. With regard to **paragraph 41 of the concluding observations** on the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of Cuba ([CEDAW/C/CUB/CO/7-8](#)), in which the Committee calls upon the State party to **enhance the collection, analysis and dissemination of comprehensive data**, disaggregated by sex, age, race, ethnicity, location and socioeconomic status, and the use of measurable indicators to assess trends in the situation of women and progress towards the realization by women of substantive equality in all areas covered by the Convention, and encourages the State party to develop gender-sensitive indicators for use in the formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and, when necessary, review of women's and gender equality policies, we observe the following.

32. The National System of Statistical Information provides for the compilation, analysis and dissemination of demographic data through surveys and censuses, which includes information relating to the situation of women in all areas covered by the Convention.

33. Decree-Law No. 281 of 8 February 2011 concerning the "Government Information System" enabled the formation of technical committees on various aspects of information, including demographic. This committee has developed strategies and actions to gradually improve the compilation, analysis and dissemination of disaggregated data.

34. As part of this system, work is proceeding in close coordination with the Central Administration of the State on incorporating into national statistics the indicators contained in the Complementary Statistical Systems under their responsibility, based on a gender approach.

35. In this regard, the National Office of Statistics and Information, the Federation of Cuban Women, as national machinery for advancement of women, and the Centre for Women's Studies are conducting joint activities to ensure a gender approach in the country's statistical information.

36. An example of this is the preparatory work for the Gender Survey to be carried out jointly in 2016, which will contribute to developing a bank of demographic, social and economic indicators on women.

37. In addition, the past three years have seen the strengthening of the project and computerized application "An Overview in Figures of Children and Adolescents in Cuba", begun in 2009 between the National Office of Statistics and Information and UNICEF. The line of action followed by this project is geared to the Millennium Development Goals. This tool provides users with updated data disaggregated by sex and by territorial locations in the country.

38. The customary publications of the National Office of Statistics and Information, i.e. the Statistical Yearbook of Cuba, the Demographic Yearbook of Cuba, and yearbooks for provinces and municipalities, exemplify advances in data processing in the country.

39. Cuba played a pioneering role in Latin America in pursuing what was then the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), in the training of personnel, in carrying out time-use surveys, and in specialized publications and indicators of equality for women.
