



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women
Twenty-first session**

Summary record of the 444th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 25 June 1999, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. González

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The meeting was called to order at 4.40 p.m.

Provisional agenda for the twenty-second session (CEDAW/C/1999/II/CRP.2/Add.7)

1. **The Chairperson** invited the members of the Committee to adopt the provisional agenda for the twenty-second session as contained in document CEDAW/C/1999/II/CRP.2/Add.7.
2. The provisional agenda was adopted.

Adoption of the report of the Committee on its twenty-first session
(CEDAW/C/1999/II/L.1 and CEDAW/C/1999/II/CRP.2 and Add.1-7)

3. **The Chairperson** invited the members of the Committee to adopt the report of the Committee on the work of its twenty-first session, as contained in documents CEDAW/C/1999/II/L.1 and CEDAW/C/1999/II/CRP.2 and Add. 1-7 with the amendments agreed on during informal consultations.
4. Documents CEDAW/C/1999/II/L.1, as amended, and CEDAW/C/1999/II/CRP.2 and Add. 1-7, as amended, were adopted.
5. The report as a whole was adopted.

Organization of the work of the twenty-second session

6. **The Chairperson** invited the members of the Committee to approve the dates of the pre-session working group and of the twenty-second session. In accordance with the calendar of conferences for 2000, the twenty-second session would be held from 17 January to 4 February 2000 in New York. The pre-session working group for the twenty-third session would meet from 10 to 14 January 2000.
7. It was so decided.

Closure of the session

8. **Ms. King** (Assistant Secretary-General, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women) commended the Committee for having reviewed the reports of seven States parties – three from Western Europe, one from Eastern Europe, one from South Asia and two from Latin America and the Caribbean.
9. The current session was the first one at which the Committee had received the answers to the list of issues and the questions posed by its pre-session working group on periodic reports in writing in advance. The States presenting those periodic reports – Chile, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland – had taken their obligations seriously, and the members of the Committee had been provided with full and comprehensive information on the implementation of the Convention. The Committee's new procedures for the consideration of periodic reports had added a new dimension to its work and would enable a vibrant dialogue to develop between States parties and the Committee. The Secretariat

looked forward to receiving comments from the Committee on ways to improve the new procedures.

10. The Committee had made progress during the current session with regard to the review of its rules and procedures and the development of its working methods. Important decisions had been taken, including with regard to the criteria for exceptional reports. The Committee had agreed to forward its general recommendation on article 24 of the Convention to the forthcoming twenty-first special session of the General Assembly for the overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD+5).

11. The current session had also been marked by the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention. It was particularly satisfying to note that the Deputy Secretary-General had opened the ceremony. The round table on the impact of the Convention at the domestic level had been successful and informative. The Division for the Advancement of Women planned to compile the statements made during the commemoration so that they could constitute a permanent record of the occasion. She also wished to develop an "alumnae group" of former members of the Committee so that contacts could be maintained.

12. She assured the members of the Committee of her commitment and that of her staff to achieving the goal of universal ratification of the Convention and acceptance of the amendment to article 20.1 on meeting time. She welcomed the Committee's decision that the Division should report on the progress of those efforts at each session. Efforts were also being made to encourage more timely reporting. In that connection, a subregional training workshop, for which Ms. Ouedraogo had agreed to act as resource person, would be held in Benin in July.

13. The Division was also beginning to explore the implications for the Convention of the adoption of the optional protocol. She pledged her full support to the Committee, as the protocol would usher in a new and exciting phase in its development.

14. She had circulated a folder prepared by the Focal Point for Women in her office, containing information on the recruitment of qualified women, the magazine *Network* and special measures for women in the Secretariat. Those documents, together with the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (A/53/376) in order to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution by the year 2000 set at the Fourth World Conference on Women, were directly related to article 4 of the Convention. The folder also contained a sample of typical vacancies.

15. Her staff was at the disposal of the Committee to assist it in its inter-sessional work; she would keep the members of the Committee fully informed about the preparations for the special session through the Chairperson. She also pledged to do her utmost to ensure that the language versions were delivered on time.

16. The Division would also do its utmost to seek clarification from the Bureau of the Commission on the Status of Women, acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly

entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" (Beijing+5), of the question of the Committee's representation at the special session and other special sessions. The Secretariat had understood that the question raised by Ms. Corti in that respect pertained to the Committee's substantive input as well as to its attendance. While a formal invitation to the Committee would normally be required, it was very late for a formal invitation to be issued for ICPD+5, which would open in a few days' time; perhaps the Chairperson could provide guidance to the Secretariat in that regard.

17. She looked forward to the Committee's next session, which would be held at the start of the new millennium, shortly after the session of the General Assembly at which, it was to be hoped, the optional protocol would be adopted, and early in the year of Beijing+5.

18. **The Chairperson** said that the time had come to take stock of the magnificent achievements made in the implementation of the Convention at the national, regional and international levels. The Committee had accomplished what it had set out to do when it had decided to hold two sessions annually.

19. While all countries were facing specific problems in the economic, political and environmental spheres, the Committee's work had revealed the extent to which the problems facing women – including teenage pregnancy, the curtailment of reproductive rights, the exploitation of prostitution and violence against women – were the same in all countries. At the same time, the will to combat those problems existed and some results were being achieved. The necessary legislative framework remained to be established.

20. After the customary exchange of courtesies, **the Chairperson** declared the twenty-second session closed.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.