



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
12 October 2023

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Eighty-sixth session

Summary record of the 1999th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday, 9 October 2023, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Peláez Narváez

Contents

Opening of the session

Statement by the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Report of the Chair on activities undertaken between the eighty-fifth and eighty-sixth sessions of the Committee

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

Follow-up to the consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

This record is subject to correction. Corrections 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 the present record to the Documents Management Section (DMS-DCM@un.org).

Any corrected records of the public meetings of the Committee at this session will be reissued for technical reasons after the end of the session.



Please recycle A small recycling symbol consisting of three chasing arrows forming a triangle.

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Chair** declared open the eighty-sixth session of the Committee.

Statement by the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

2. **Mr. Ori** (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)), recalling the work of the visionary women who had ensured that women's rights were adequately integrated into the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 75 years previously, said that women's equal representation in decision-making was vital in addressing global challenges. The Committee's work on its draft general recommendation No. 40 on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems, as well as its preparatory work on a general recommendation on gender stereotypes, were therefore commendable. In June 2023, OHCHR, together with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, had launched a revised version of a handbook for parliamentarians on the Convention, which would promote understanding of the obligations and standards contained therein and their incorporation into national law.

3. In September 2023, the Human Rights Council had held its annual discussion on integrating a gender perspective into its work and that of its mechanisms, focusing on gender parity. The same month, the Council had convened its annual half-day panel discussion on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, focusing on the impact of certain development projects on the rights of Indigenous women. The concept note for the panel had recalled the Committee's general recommendation No. 39 (2022) on the rights of Indigenous women and girls, highlighting the fact that Indigenous women's lack of land titles left them vulnerable to the adverse effects of development projects and drawing attention to the human rights abuses, including murder and arbitrary detention, suffered by Indigenous women human rights defenders who opposed non-consensual development projects.

4. OHCHR continued to support the treaty body strengthening process. At the thirty-fifth meeting of the Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies, held in May and June 2023, the Chairs had welcomed a working paper prepared by the Office on options for the development of an implementation plan for the predictable review calendar, digital uplift and harmonization of working methods. The Chairs had confirmed that any of the options for the introduction of an eight-year predictable schedule of reviews and the further digitalization of their work could and would be implemented by all human rights treaty bodies, if the necessary human, technical and financial resources could be provided by Member States. Firm commitment to continue supporting the strengthening process, including with respect to its budgetary implications, had been expressed by the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights.

5. The High Commissioner planned to engage with Member States to reach consensus on the options set out in the working paper and assist in developing the next biennial General Assembly resolution on the treaty body system, which should include a budget for implementing the conclusions. Despite the efforts of OHCHR to advocate for the effective functioning of the treaty body system, existing resources did not match the needs of the treaty bodies, whose work was increasing quantitatively and in terms of scope. The staffing shortage had a significant impact on treaty bodies' work and the working conditions of OHCHR personnel. It was vital that treaty body members and the Office's staff worked together to raise Member States' awareness of the limitations of the system.

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work (CEDAW/C/86/1)

6. *The agenda was adopted.*

Report of the Chair on activities undertaken between the eighty-fifth and eighty-sixth sessions of the Committee

7. **The Chair** said that she wished to express the Committee's deep concern for, and solidarity with, the inhabitants of Israel and the State of Palestine who were suffering the consequences of the recent violence. Owing to the conflict, Ms. Hacker had been unable to travel to Geneva for the start of the session.

8. There were 189 States parties to the Convention, and 81 had accepted the amendment to article 20 (1). The amendment would have to be accepted by 126 to enter into force. There were 115 States parties to the Optional Protocol. Since the beginning of the previous session, the Committee had received periodic reports from Belize, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Chad, the Congo, Greece, Monaco, Nepal, New Zealand and Viet Nam. Since the Committee had decided to make the simplified reporting procedure the default procedure for the submission of State party reports, 13 States parties had indicated that they wished to maintain the traditional reporting procedure.

9. During the intersessional period, she had participated in the thirty-fifth meeting of the Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies, who had welcomed the working paper prepared by the Office and the eight-year predictable schedule of reviews, provided that sufficient resources were made available. They had agreed to establish a coordination mechanism, in the form of a subsidiary body of the meeting of the Chairs, to simplify and harmonize working methods and coordinate on common and intersectional issues. In order to strengthen the role and impact of their annual meetings, the Chairs had decided that their conclusions would be implemented by all treaty bodies without the need for separate debate and agreement within each body, unless a body subsequently distanced itself from them. The Chairs had also requested a number of improvements to accessibility and the provision of reasonable accommodation in all treaty bodies.

10. On 21 June 2023, she had spoken at a training session on violence against women that had taken place in Spain, and on 22 June she had attended remotely the launch of the second handbook for parliamentarians on the Convention. On the same day, she had participated in a Lebanese forum for women with disabilities. On 26 June, she had been the main speaker at a European Union conference on challenges related to gender and the rights of women and girls with disabilities, and on 29 June she had represented the Committee at a remote meeting with the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

11. On 5 July 2023, she had delivered a speech at an annual meeting of traveller women in Spain, and on 10 July she had attended a remote meeting with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict to address the situation in a particular country; the Special Representative had later informed the Bureau of that situation and would brief other Committee members during the current session. On 13 September, she, along with Ms. Tisheva and Ms. Bethel, had met remotely with the head of the Every Woman Treaty campaign, who had presented a proposal for a second optional protocol to the Convention on gender-based violence against women. On 19 September, she had spoken remotely at an event on gender equality and women's empowerment in relation to eye health, and on 22 September she had participated in a remote meeting with the Chair of the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls.

12. On 2 October 2023, she had participated in a panel discussion on the rights of women, organized by Columbia University to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and on 3 October she had presented the Committee's annual report to the Third Committee and engaged in an interactive dialogue with representatives of States parties. Lastly, on 5 October she had given a speech at a conference organized by the United Nations Population Fund on women's right to choose bodily autonomy.

13. **Ms. Ameline** said that much of her intersessional work had related to draft general recommendation No. 40. She had attended a side event at the Human Rights Council on new forms of governance linked to systemic change. During the General Assembly, she had attended a side event on women's role in conflict prevention, the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 and international justice, as well as a meeting with the

Open Society Foundations on a fund for women's political leadership. She had helped organize a meeting in France with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict on the subject of women as a force for peace. In June 2023, she had attended a meeting hosted by the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights on national mechanisms for implementing and following up recommendations made by treaty bodies.

14. **Ms. Rana** said that on 20 June 2023, speaking as a panellist at a side event during the fifty-third session of the Human Rights Council, she had provided an update on the Committee's work on violations of women and girls' rights to education and work in Afghanistan. On 17 and 19 June, she had acted as convener at a conference on women's shelters in Nepal, and on 30 June she had contributed to training on gender transformative leadership in Nepal. On 17 July, she had given a keynote speech on changing masculinity at a summit on boys' empowerment in Singapore, and on 20 July she had participated in a briefing by the Task Force on Afghanistan on the current situation of gender persecution and gender apartheid in the country. On 21 August, she had contributed to a workshop on using the Convention to strengthen advocacy for members of a federation of persons with disabilities, and she also had been a member of the Nepalese delegation to the General Assembly, during which she had participated in discussions on women and peace and security, violence against women and gender equality.

15. **Ms. de Silva de Alwis** said that she had given a keynote speech on the Convention's role in addressing technology-based violence against women during an event to mark the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Korea, and she had participated in a discussion on the Committee's general recommendation No. 30 organized by the Department of State of the United States of America. At an event organized by the Open Society Foundations, she had spoken about the role of the Convention and the Convention on the Rights of the Child in possible International Criminal Court proceedings against the de facto regime in Afghanistan, and she had also given a speech on the Convention and gender persecution in Afghanistan at Princeton University. The German Law Journal had invited her to speak on gender persecution and sexual violence in countries affected by conflict, and she had also delivered a presentation at Osaka University. She had spoken at an event in Brussels on how the concept of women and peace and security could be expanded to include intellectual violence.

16. **Ms. Akizuki** said that, on 24 June 2023, she had given a presentation on the Committee's work at its eighty-third to eighty-fifth sessions at a symposium in Japan on the subject of the United Nations and gender. On 1 July, she had attended a women's gathering and given a speech on the status of gender equality in Japan and the role of the Committee. On 21 July, she had delivered a presentation on the Committee's consideration of the periodic report of Japan during a seminar.

17. **Ms. Morsy** said that, at an event organized by the Women Development Organization of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on 7 and 8 June 2023, she had highlighted the importance of the draft general recommendation No. 40 and requested Member States to engage in regional consultations. On 30 June, she had been a panellist in a discussion on violence against women and girls in public and political life during the annual full-day discussion at the Human Rights Council on the human rights of women. She had given a speech on gender-based violence in the workplace at a meeting of Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa ministers responsible for gender and women's affairs held on 3 August, and she had been a keynote speaker at the Global Congress on Population Health and Development on 5 and 6 September; her speech had focused on women's empowerment and gender equality for a healthy population. On 18 September, she had delivered a keynote speech at an event of the Arab Women Organization, and in October she had held discussions with Member States of that organization and of the Women Development Organization on establishing a "train the trainers" programme on the Convention. She had also engaged with regional and country offices of UN-Women to plan regional consultations on draft general recommendation No. 40.

18. **Ms. Mikko** said that, in June 2023, she had participated in a panel on the theme of "women's rights are human rights" and had also delivered training to members of

parliament and other parliament officials on incorporating a gender perspective. She had launched her own photography exhibition on Zambian women and girls, participated in a digital summit and given a radio interview on the Committee's work.

19. **Ms. Gbedemah** said that, in June 2023, she had led a workshop in Eswatini on enhancing women's participation in public processes and engagement with human rights mechanisms, which had been organized by OHCHR. In August, she had facilitated a session on the Convention for parliamentarians in Namibia, at which she had highlighted the fact that the topic of gender-based violence was present in every article of the Convention and throughout the Committee's work. She had also spoken at Stellenbosch University in South Africa to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). In September, she had discussed the Convention at a training programme organized by Women in Law and Development in Africa to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

20. **Ms. Bonifaz Alfonzo** said that in July 2023 she had explained the role of the Convention in protecting migrant women at a forum organized by the United Nations Development Programme in Panama. She had participated in an event on the topic of statistics and women's rights organized by the Mexican National Institute for Statistics and Geography, and she had discussed the Committee's general recommendation No. 39 on the rights of Indigenous women and girls at an event in the Plurinational State of Bolivia organized by the Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean. She had attended a conference in Mexico on the issues of the gender gap in the workplace and how to improve the authorities' response to gender-based violence. Other activities had included discussion with civil society organizations on the role of the Convention in the universal human rights framework, and the Convention's relevance to lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons. She had also participated in two academic events on women's rights and had spoken about the importance of the Convention in protecting women's rights at an event hosted by OHCHR.

21. **Ms. Eghobamien-Mshelia** said that in August 2023 she had facilitated training in Nigeria for speakers in state houses of assembly on integrating United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security in state legislative processes. She had participated in the launch of the second phase of a Nigerian community dialogue project on a police task force on gender. Also in August, she had represented the Committee at a meeting on local government and human rights hosted by OHCHR in Geneva, and in Nigeria she had taken part in festivities to mark the International Day of Peace. In September, she had discussed the Committee's draft recommendation No. 40 at an event organized by the German Government in Berlin. She had also represented the Committee at a side event to the fifty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council that had focused on women and sport.

22. **Ms. Haidar** said that she had participated as a panellist in a conference to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action in June 2023, where she had spoken on women's rights and gender equality in the context of climate change and environmental degradation, with a focus on the Committee's general recommendation No. 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change. In July, she had participated in a workshop on reporting under the Convention that had been organized by OHCHR, held in Jordan and attended by the Palestinian authorities. In September, she had taken part in a panel discussion, held in Geneva, on the environment and the rights of women and children and the role of Indigenous Peoples. More recently, she had been invited to attend a side event to the fifty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council which had also focused on gender and climate change, with a view to preparations for the twenty-eighth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

23. **Ms. Xia** said that her activities had focused on advancing the implementation of the Committee's recommendations in its concluding observations on the ninth periodic report of China, and she had presented those concluding observations to the national parliament. She had also advocated in the national parliament for support for women in science and had discussed early years childcare with the Chinese health authorities.

24. **Ms. Akia** said that she had been invited by the Ugandan Government and civil society to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Maputo Protocol and consider its joint implementation with the Convention. At an event hosted by the German Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, she had emphasized the importance of the Convention and the Committee's draft general recommendation No. 40 in promoting education, including as a means to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. She had discussed the Committee's draft general recommendation No. 40 and its recommendations in its concluding observations on the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Uganda at a meeting with the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Uganda. She had also been invited by the Government of Uganda to discuss the implementation of those recommendations and gender and climate change in the context of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 37, and the possibility of ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

25. **Ms. Dettmeijer-Vermeulen** said that in June 2023 she had met with the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to explain the work of the Committee. In September, she had been a panellist at a meeting held in Geneva by the NGO Committee on the Status of Women to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary.

26. **Ms. González Ferrer** said that she had been involved in a number of educational activities in her country on the new family code and the Convention, gender in the work of parliaments (with reference to draft general recommendation No. 40), access to abortion, and family rights in the context of the Convention. She had been unable to attend a number of online events to which she had been invited owing to the blockade against Cuba.

27. **Ms. Bethel** said that, since 2023 marked 30 years since the Convention had been ratified by the Government of the Bahamas, she had proposed that 6 October be declared a day of national celebration of the Convention, with awareness-raising efforts to continue throughout October. Activities to consider numerous individual articles of the Convention had also raised awareness of the Convention in the Bahamas and the Caribbean. In September, she had been invited to discuss the Committee's draft general recommendation No. 40 at an online forum organized by the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law of the American University Washington College of Law.

28. **Mr. Safarov** said that he welcomed the comments by the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on women and technology and women in conflict. He had participated in a conference on safe sport that had been organized by the National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan as part of a campaign on the prevention of sexual harassment and violence in sport. Other activities had included his participation in training organized by the United Nations and the Azerbaijani Government on the implementation of the Committee's recommendations in its concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Azerbaijan, and in a meeting of the United Nations on the implementation of the Committee's recommendations in the context of events in Ukraine. He had acted as moderator of an event on women's empowerment in government and administration as part of the Government Innovation and Competitiveness Forum, held jointly by the Governments of Azerbaijan and the United Arab Emirates, and he had taken part in a human rights training programme for young activists and lawyers organized by OHCHR, the European Union, the European Law Student Association, the Azerbaijani Government and the non-profit organization Gender Hub Azerbaijan. Most of the other activities in which he had taken part had focused on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the thirtieth anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

29. **Ms. Manalo** said that she was involved in preparations with Philippine non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and her Government would lead those celebrations in the South-East Asia Region. She continued to raise awareness of human rights and of the Convention throughout her country.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

30. **Ms. Bonifaz Alfonzo**, speaking in her capacity as Chair of the pre-sessional working group for the eighty-sixth session, said that the pre-sessional working group had met in Geneva from 27 February to 3 March 2023. It had prepared lists of issues and questions in relation to the reports of Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, the Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka, and lists of issues prior to reporting for Argentina, Australia, and Trinidad and Tobago. To prepare the lists of issues and questions, the working group had been able to draw on the core documents of the States parties and the periodic reports of the States parties, with the exception of Argentina, Australia, and Trinidad and Tobago, which would submit their periodic reports in response to the respective list of issues and questions prior to reporting. The working group had also drawn on the Committee's general recommendations, draft lists of issues and questions prepared by the secretariat, the concluding observations of the Committee and other treaty bodies, and, in particular, the States parties' follow-up to the Committee's concluding observations on their previous reports. In addition, the working group had received information from entities of the United Nations system, NGOs and national human rights institutions. The lists of issues and questions had been transmitted to the States parties concerned.

31. **The Chair** said that, owing to the backlog of State party reports pending consideration by the Committee that had accumulated during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee had decided to postpone the consideration of the reports of the aforementioned States parties. It had decided to consider, at its eighty-sixth session, the reports of Albania, Bhutan, France, Guatemala, Jamaica, Malawi, Nicaragua, the Philippines and Uruguay.

Follow-up to the consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

32. **Ms. Akia**, speaking on behalf of the Rapporteur for follow-up to concluding observations, said that, at the end of its eighty-fifth session, the Committee had sent letters outlining the assessments of follow-up reports to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark and the Republic of Moldova. Since only the follow-up report of Denmark had been scheduled for consideration at the eighty-fifth session and it had been received on time, no reminder letters had been sent out at the end of that session. The Committee had received two follow-up reports: one from Kyrgyzstan, which had been received early, and the other from Pakistan, which had been received more than one year late. She invited the country rapporteur for Pakistan to assist in the assessment of the follow-up report and called for a volunteer to assist in the assessment of the follow-up report from Kyrgyzstan.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.