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

Pre-session working group

Forty-third session

19 January – 6 February 2008

**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-session working group

1. It is the practice of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to convene a pre-session working group for five days to prepare lists of issues and questions relating to the initial and periodic reports that would be considered by the Committee at one of its future sessions.
2. At its fortieth session, the Committee decided that the pre-session working group for the forty-third session would meet from 21 to 25 July 2008, immediately after its forty-first 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, as well as to ensure their timely translation.
3. The following experts were designated as members of the pre-session working group for the forty-third session:

Ferdous Ara Begum

Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani

Violeta Neubauer

Silvia Pimentel

Glenda Simms

Dubravka Šimonović

Maria Regina Tavares da Silva

4. The pre-session working group elected Violeta Neubauer as the Chairperson of the pre-session working group.
5. The pre-session working group prepared lists of issues and questions with respect to the periodic reports of Armenia, Bhutan, Germany, Guatemala, Haiti, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Rwanda. The pre-session working group also drew up lists of issues and questions on the implementation of the Convention in Dominica and Guinea-Bissau which had been invited to submit all their overdue reports as combined reports by March 2008 for consideration at the forty-third session in 2009. Failing receipt of the reports within the suggested time-frame, the Committee decided to proceed with consideration of the implementation of the Convention in those States parties in the absence of their reports. The pre-session working group also agreed to prepare list of issues and questions on the combined initial and second to the sixth periodic reports of Liberia which the State party had indicated would be submitted in September 2008, intersessionally. The list of issues and questions on the report of Liberia would be transmitted to the State party as soon as possible after the submission of its report to allow for timely translation.
6. To assist in the preparation of the lists of issues and questions, the pre-session working group had before it the reports of the seven States parties listed above, as well as the State party's core document, if available; the general guidelines for the preparation of the reports by States parties (CEDAW/C/7/Rev.3); the general recommendations adopted by the Committee; background information and draft lists of issues and questions prepared by the Secretariat (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights), based on an analytical comparison of current States parties' reports, and the Committee's discussion on earlier reports; and other relevant information, including concluding observations of the Committee and other treaty bodies. In preparing the lists of issues and questions for periodic reports, the pre-session working group paid particular attention to the States parties' follow-up to the Committee's concluding observations on previous reports. The pre-session working group agreed to use the titles (subject headings) adopted by the Committee at its forty-first session (Decision 41/II). The titles were applied flexibly and as appropriate for the State party concerned. The pre-session working group recommended that the Committee review its decision on the use of the titles at one of its next sessions.
7. The pre-session working group benefited from written and oral information submitted by United Nations entities and specialized agencies. It also received written information from non-governmental organizations. The pre-session working group also heard an oral presentation from a network of non-governmental organizations regarding one State party under consideration.

8. Lists of issues and questions adopted by the pre-session working group were transmitted to nine States parties concerned and are contained in the following documents:

List of issues and questions with regard to the combined third and fourth periodic report of Armenia (CEDAW/C/ARM/Q/4);

List of issues and questions with regard to the seventh periodic report of Bhutan (CEDAW/C/BTN/Q/7);

List of issues and questions with regard to Dominica (CEDAW/C/DMA/Q/7);

List of issues and questions with regard to the sixth periodic report of Germany (CEDAW/C/DEU/Q/6);

List of issues with regard to the seventh periodic report of Guatemala (CEDAW/C/GUA/Q/7);

List of issues and questions with regard to Guinea-Bissau (CEDAW/C/GNB/Q/6);

List of issues with regard to combined initial, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh periodic report of Haiti (CEDAW/C/HTI/Q/7);

List of issues with regard to the second report of Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (CEDAW/C/LBY/Q/2);

List of issues with regard to the combined fourth, fifth and sixth periodic report of Rwanda (CEDAW/C/RWA/Q/6).
