

26 February 2009

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**
Pre-session working group
Forty-fifth session

**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. At its ninth session, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women decided to convene a pre-session working group for five days before each session of the Committee to prepare lists of issues and questions relating to the periodic reports that would be considered by the Committee at its next session.
2. At its thirty-first session, the Committee decided that the pre-session working group would also prepare lists of issues and questions relating to initial reports. The Committee also decided that each list would contain no more than 30 clear questions in total. In preparing the lists and questions relating to periodic reports, particular attention would be paid to States parties' follow-up to previous concluding observations, and the previous report would be taken into consideration. The practice of clustering questions under priority topics rather than addressing specific articles would continue with respect to periodic reports. At its forty-first session, the Committee decided to introduce subject headings in its concluding observations and lists of issues and questions. This practice was followed for lists of issues and questions with respect to initial and periodic reports.
3. The pre-session working group noted that, as initial reports will be considered on an article-by-article basis, with the exception of articles 1, 2, 7, 8, 15 and 16, the lists of issues and questions relating to initial reports would follow the same approach.
4. At its forty-first session, the Committee decided that the pre-session working group for the Committee's forty-fifth session would meet from 9 to 13 February 2009.
5. At its forty-third session, the Committee decided that the members of the pre-session working group for the forty-fifth session would be:

Ferdous Ara Begum

Violet Tsisiga Awori

Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani

Dorcas Coker-Appiah

Zohra Rasekh

6. The pre-session working group elected Ms. Coker-Appiah as its Chairperson.
7. In accordance with the list of States parties selected by the Committee at its forty-second session, the pre-session working group prepared lists of issues and questions with respect to the reports of the following seven States parties: Botswana, Egypt, Malawi, the Netherlands, Panama, the United Arab Emirates and Uzbekistan. The pre-session working group agreed to prepare intersessionally one outstanding list of issues and questions with respect to the report of Ukraine, since a translated version of the report was not available for consideration by the pre-session working group.
8. 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 core documents, where available. The pre-session working group also had before it background information and draft lists of issues and questions prepared by the Secretariat, based on an analytical comparison of States parties' current and previous reports and the Committee's discussion thereon, and concluding observations of the Committee and other treaty bodies, as well as relevant information available from other United Nations human rights mechanisms.
9. The pre-session working group benefited from written information submitted by United Nations entities and specialized agencies. It considered information submitted both orally and in writing by two national human rights institutions in respect of two States parties under review. The pre-session working group also received written information from non-governmental organizations and heard an oral presentation from a network of non-governmental organizations regarding one State party under consideration.
10. Lists of issues and questions drawn up by the pre-session working group were transmitted to the seven States parties concerned and are contained in the following documents:
 - (a) List of issues and questions with regard to the combined initial, second and third periodic report of Botswana (CEDAW/C/BOT/Q/3);
 - (b) List of issues and questions with regard to the combined sixth and seventh periodic report of Egypt (CEDAW/C/EGY/Q/7);
 - (c) List of issues and questions with regard to the sixth periodic report of Malawi (CEDAW/C/MWI/Q/6);
 - (d) List of issues and questions with regard to the fifth periodic report of the Netherlands (CEDAW/C/NLD/Q/5);
 - (e) List of issues and questions with regard to the combined fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh periodic report of Panama (CEDAW/C/PAN/Q/7);

(f) List of issues and questions with regard to the initial report of the United Arab Emirates (CEDAW/C/UAE/Q/1);

(g) List of issues and questions with regard to the fourth periodic report of Uzbekistan (CEDAW/C/UZB/Q/4).

11. In accordance with Committee decisions 22/IV, 25/II and 31/III, the lists of issues and questions focused on themes addressed by the Convention. The themes included the constitutional and legislative framework and national machinery for the advancement of women; the participation of women in decision-making; education and training; gender stereotypes; poverty and employment; violence against women, including domestic violence; trafficking in women and exploitation of prostitution; health, including sexual reproductive health; the situation of vulnerable groups of women, such as older women, rural women, women with disabilities, women belonging to ethnic minorities and refugees and migrants; equality before the law; and marriage, family relations and the economic consequences of divorce.
