

CLOSING REMARKS

by

Ms. Silvia Pimentel

***Forty-eighth session of the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women***

Dear Colleagues,

We have thus come to the end of the forty-eighth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. It is customary for the Committee's Chairperson to sum up the work completed and offer some reflections on our proceedings.

Let me start from the beginning of this session and assess our results. We considered the reports of seven States parties, namely Bangladesh, Belarus, Israel, Kenya, Liechtenstein, South Africa and Sri Lanka.

We held informal meetings with the entities of the United Nations system, and non governmental organizations. We also attended several lunchtime briefings organized by non governmental organizations. The Committee was pleased by the high level of attendance of NGOs, both international and national, which once again made a significant contribution to the work of the Committee.

The Committee also is thankful to those UN entities which provided us with detailed information, and I encourage both the UN entities and NGOs to deepen their advocacy for the promotion and protection of women's human rights and the implementation of the Convention.

During this session, we have held very fruitful meetings with Mr. Chaloka Beyani, the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons; Ms. Wendy Isaack of UN Women; Ms. Madeleine Rees of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; Ms. Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda and other members of World YMCA; members of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children; members of UNCHR, the Committee on the Rights of the Child; and Ms. Jane Connors, Director of the Special Procedures Branch of OHCHR.

In addition to adopting concluding observations relating to these seven States parties, we also further elaborated the draft general recommendation on dissolution of marriage and its economic consequences. In addition, members of the working group on women in situations of armed conflict were confirmed and preliminary work began on the draft general recommendation relating to this issue. Moreover, the Committee decided to elaborate a draft general recommendation on access to justice and to establish a working group in this regard.

The Committee also continued its work on the joint general recommendation on harmful practices with the Committee on the Rights of the Child and met with that Committee and its working group during the session. The Committee agreed with the draft outline proposed by the joint working group as well as authorized the CEDAW working group to commence drafting the general recommendation on harmful practices with the CRC working group.

The Committee adopted the report of the Rapporteur on follow-up. In this regard, the Committee considered follow-up information provided by States with respect to the implementation of the Convention. Upon recommendation of the Working Group, the Committee considered the reports before it and in all cases decided that such reports were partially implemented. In addition, the Committee received a request for an inquiry relating to a follow-up matter, but decided to continue with the follow-up procedure and to place the inquiry on hold. In addition, it was decided to transmit reminders to several States that had not yet submitted their follow-up reports. All such correspondence will be finalized following the session.

Dear Colleagues,

May I take this opportunity to extend my appreciation and congratulation to the States parties that engaged in the excellent constructive dialogues with the Committee. Many of the States sent high level delegations which were headed by Ministers or senior Government officials. This allowed us to examine in great detail the current status of implementation of the Convention in the respective countries. We identified gaps and challenges and in all instances Committee experts together with representatives sought to identify strategies for further action and to find solutions to the challenges of persistent discrimination. These dialogues confirmed the importance of regular and timely reporting and consideration so as to ensure a consistent monitoring of progress. In all cases, we

recommended that the Convention form the basis for the States parties' efforts aimed at achieving gender equality.

Before I conclude, may take this opportunity to sincerely thank all experts for the hard work accomplished during the past three weeks, in particular the country rapporteurs who have greatly contributed to our discussions during the dialogues with the representatives of the States parties. I am also grateful to my colleagues in the Bureau for their wise counsel and advise on the many issues that we have tackled. I hope that with our joint efforts, and with the support of the Secretariat, we are providing States parties clear guidance on the implementation of the Convention in order to make a difference in the lives of many women and girls that are victims of discrimination.

I would also like to extend the Committee's appreciation to Mr. Bradford Smith, our Secretary, and the Human Rights Officers – Ms. Astrid Abecassis, Ms. Janna Iskakova, Ms. Helle Iversen, Ms. Georgina Mendoza, Mr. Jakob Sneider, and Ms. Nathalie Stadelmann. I would additionally like to thank CEDAW's very capable Assistant, Ms. Irene del Pilar Sandoval and the three assistants, Ms. Izabella Majcher, Ms. Christina Lord and Ms. Roberta Wagner. On behalf of the Committee, we thank you for your dedication, efficiency and hard work. We would also like to thank the interpreters, précis-summary-writers, conference officers and all those who made this session successful.

I wish you all a safe journey home and I look forward to seeing you in New York in July at the forty-ninth session.

Thank you very much.
